

David Bitts  
*President*  
Larry Collins  
*Vice-President*  
Duncan MacLean  
*Secretary*  
Mike Stiller  
*Treasurer*

**PACIFIC COAST FEDERATION  
of FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS**



[www.pcffa.org](http://www.pcffa.org)

W.F. "Zeke" Grader, Jr.  
*Executive Director*  
Glen H. Spain  
*Northwest Regional Director*  
Vivian Helliwell  
*Watershed Conservation Director*  
**In Memoriam:**  
Nathaniel S. Bingham  
Harold C. Christensen

**Please Respond to:**

**California Office**

P.O. Box 29370  
San Francisco, CA 94129-0370  
Tel: (415) 561-5080  
Fax: (415) 561-5464

**Northwest Office**

P.O. Box 11170  
Eugene, OR 97440-3370  
Tel: (541) 689-2000  
Fax: (541) 689-2500

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair  
Pacific Fishery Management Council

April 4, 2015

Dear Ms. Lowman:

Our letter to CDFW Director Bonham in the April 2015 briefing book has been rendered partially obsolete by subsequent communications from CDFW and others, so we'd like to update it so as to be not quite so far behind.

First, it's now clear that CDFW is devoting considerable thought and effort to developing a method for managing winter run Chinook based on predicting the coming year's abundance, rather than using an average of past spawning escapements. We'd like to strongly encourage the Department to continue working along these lines, and we're prepared to follow CDFW's recommendation of a 17.9% impact for this year, or even to come in a bit under that impact rate.

Second, we now have a) two reasonable estimates of the size of age-2 winter run at the times in question, and b) some actual information, based on the non-retention GSI sampling done in 2010, on winter run encounter rates in ocean fisheries.

Both size estimates worked from known size-at-age points towards Sept.—Oct. size estimates; one worked forward from smolts, the other backward from jacks. Both concluded that age-2 winter run are very likely under 15" in September and October. At this size they are not only well under the minimum size for the recreational fishery but also, and for that reason, very unlikely to be taken aboard for measurement, hence likelier to survive hooking and releasing.

The single year of non-retention GSI sampling offers at least a smidgen of real information on the rate of encounter of age-2 winter run in ocean fisheries. 3 of 30 winter run sampled were age-2. Including the likely substantial natural mortality rate between age-2 and age-3, it appears that ocean fisheries are likely to have a very slight effect on a winter run cohort at age 2.

Sincerely,

Dave Bitts, President, PCFFA