

SALMON ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) RECONSULTATION UPDATE

The Council took up this topic at its April 2015 meeting under Agenda Item E.3; the [situation summary](#) for that item describes authorities and requirements pursuant to section 7(a)(1) to the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In 2013, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Sustainable Fisheries Division requested to reinitiate section 7 consultation for listed salmonids caught in Pacific Coast groundfish midwater trawl fisheries; this request was subsequently expanded to all fishing under the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. At the April Council meeting, NMFS representatives told the Council they would like to complete the reinitiated section 7 consultation by the end of 2015.

[Agenda Item E.3.a, NMFS Report, April 2015](#), outlines potential alternative approaches to structuring the ESA section 7 consultation threshold. This threshold prompts the agency to consider additional reasonable and prudent measures (RPAs) in the event the threshold is exceeded.

In April, the Council requested additional information from NMFS in order to further develop the proposed action for the ESA section 7 consultation. This information includes a description of past section 7 consultations for the groundfish trawl fishery, a breakdown of Chinook catch by fishery sector, and past and present stock composition estimates for Chinook taken in the fishery. The Council expects its advisory bodies to use this information to develop recommendations on the structure of the reconsultation threshold and mitigation measures, including those that could be implemented inseason to prevent the reconsultation threshold from being exceeded.

Agenda Item D.3.a, NMFS Report 1 responds to the Council's request for a breakdown of Chinook salmon bycatch in different groundfish fishery sectors. The report also presents information on stock composition based on coded wire tag returns and summarizes a 2011 report on the use of genetic mixture analysis to obtain stock composition estimates for Chinook salmon bycatch from the 2009 and 2010 Pacific whiting at-sea sectors. (The full report was included in the April Council briefing materials as [Agenda Item E.3.a, Supplemental NMFS Report 2, April 2015](#).) The attached report notes "Further genetic analysis on Chinook caught in 2011-2013 for all sectors of the Pacific whiting fishery are expected to be added to this document by September 2015."

Agenda Item D.3.a, NMFS Report 2 is the Biological Opinion completed in 2006 for the Pacific Coast groundfish fisheries. This document contains the consultation history prior to that Opinion and details the basis for estimated incidental take, upon which the current reinitiation threshold is based.

Council Action:

Provide Recommendations on Consultation Standards for Groundfish Fisheries.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.3.a, NMFS Report 1, Salmon Bycatch in the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fisheries.

2. Agenda Item D.3.a, NMFS Report 2, Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation, Supplemental Biological Opinion, March 11, 2006.

Agenda Order:

- D.3 Salmon Endangered Species Act (ESA) Reconsultation Update Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Provide Recommendations on Consultation Standards for Groundfish Fisheries

PFMC
05/22/15