



## Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, March 16, 2018

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### PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CHOOSES OPTIONS FOR 2018 SALMON SEASON

Rohnert Park, California – The Pacific Fishery Management Council has adopted for public review three alternatives for the 2018 salmon seasons off the West Coast of the United States. The Council will select a final alternative at their next meeting in Portland, Oregon April 6-11. Detailed information about season starting dates, areas open, and catch limits for all three alternatives are available on the Council’s website at [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org).

Fisheries north of Cape Falcon (in northern Oregon) are limited by the need to reduce catch of lower Columbia natural tule Chinook and coho stocks of concern. Additionally, three stocks of coho (Queets River, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Snohomish) currently meet the criteria for overfished status, which is also a concern when structuring 2018 fisheries. The Council also provided guidance to structure ocean fisheries so that the ocean escapement of Columbia River upriver bright fall Chinook is at least 200,000 fish, which will allow more access to that healthy stock in Columbia River treaty Indian and non-Indian fisheries.

Fisheries south of Cape Falcon are limited by the need to reduce catch of Oregon Coast natural coho, Klamath River fall Chinook, Sacramento River fall Chinook, and Rouge/Klamath coho. Klamath River fall Chinook and Sacramento River fall Chinook contribute significantly to ocean harvest, but both met the criteria for overfished status as a result of poor returns over the past three years. However, the forecast for Klamath

River fall Chinook is substantially improved over last year, and both stocks are projected to meet their spawning escapement objectives under this year's management alternatives.

"Although some abundance forecasts are improved over last year, the 2018 salmon runs still present a challenge for ocean fishermen and managers throughout the west coast," said Executive Director Chuck Tracy. "In the north, low returns of some Puget Sound and Washington coastal coho runs and lower Columbia River natural tule fall Chinook will constrain fisheries. In the south, the conservation needs of Sacramento River fall Chinook and Rogue/Klamath coho will constrain fisheries."

"Once again, the Council adopted a range of management alternatives for public review designed to conserve and rebuild a broad range of Chinook and coho stocks of concern. Commercial and recreational fisheries will face restrictions in areas along the entire west coast in response to the Council's conservation efforts" said Council Chair Phil Anderson.

### **Northern Oregon and Washington (north of Cape Falcon)**

#### *Sport season alternatives*

Ocean sport fishery alternatives north of Cape Falcon in Oregon and off the Washington coast include Chinook recreational quotas ranging from 22,500 to 32,500, a decrease from 2017. For coho, recreational quotas range from 16,800 to 42,000 hatchery coho, compared to 42,000 in 2017. Starting dates range from June 23 to July 1, and in all alternatives, recreational fisheries are scheduled to run through early September. Both coho and Chinook retention are allowed in all alternatives.

#### *Commercial season alternatives*

Non-Indian ocean commercial fishery alternatives north of Cape Falcon include traditional Chinook seasons between May and September. Chinook quotas for all areas and times range from 22,500 to 32,500, compared to 45,000 in 2017. Coho quotas in the commercial fishery alternatives range from 3,200 to 5,600 marked coho, similar to 2017.

#### *Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon*

Chinook and coho quotas for tribal ocean fishery alternatives range from 30,000 to 50,000 for Chinook salmon, and from 12,500 to 40,000 for coho. Seasons open May 1 and run through September 15.

### **California and southern Oregon (south of Cape Falcon)**

### *Sport season alternatives*

Chinook fishing in the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay areas all open March 15 and run continuously through October 31.

Oregon ocean recreational alternatives include mark-selective coho fishing seasons starting in late June and running through mid-August or Labor Day Weekend in the area between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mt. Quotas range from 20,000 to 40,000 marked coho. In addition, non-mark-selective fisheries are proposed for the area between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mt. in September, with quotas of 4,500 to 9,800 coho.

Due to improved forecasts of Klamath River fall Chinook abundance in 2018 compared to 2017, the Klamath Management Zone was reopened in both California and Oregon this year.

Ocean sport fishing is restricted below Horse Mountain, California compared to recent years, due to the stock status of Sacramento River fall Chinook. Alternatives for 2018 fisheries were structured to allow for spawning escapement in excess of what is required under the Salmon Fishery Management Plan in an effort to begin the rebuilding process for both Klamath River fall Chinook and Sacramento River fall Chinook.

### *Commercial season alternatives*

Commercial season alternatives south of Cape Falcon to Humbug Mt. are constrained this year to protect Sacramento and Klamath River fall Chinook. Chinook salmon seasons open May through October with closed periods in May through August.

The commercial alternatives reopen salmon fishing in both the California and Oregon sectors of the Klamath Management Zone this year, although the Oregon portion is closed in Alternative III. Fishing opportunity is provided primarily by a range of monthly Chinook quotas between May and September.

Commercial season alternatives south of the Klamath Management Zone are also restricted this year to protect Sacramento River fall Chinook. All areas are limited to about two to three months of fishing or less.

## **Management Process**

Public hearings to receive input on the alternatives are scheduled for March 26 in Westport, Washington and Coos Bay, Oregon, and for March 27 in Salinas, California. The Council will consult with scientists, hear public comment, revise preliminary decisions, and choose a final alternative at its meeting April 6-11 in Portland, Oregon.

The Council will forward its final season recommendations to National Marine Fisheries Service for its approval and implementation by May 1.

All Council meetings are open to the public.

## **Council Role**

The Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 for the purpose of managing fisheries 3-200 miles offshore of the United States of America coastline. The Pacific Council recommends management measures for fisheries off the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington.

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## **On the Web**

- Pacific Fishery Management Council: <http://www.pcouncil.org>
  - Draft Alternatives for 2018 salmon management: <https://www.pcouncil.org/2018/03/52933/draft-council-adopted-salmon-management-measures-tables-for-public-review-from-march-2018-pfmc-meeting/>
- Final Alternatives and analyses of the biological and socioeconomic impacts will be posted on the Council web page in the near future (on or about March 22).
- Description of 2018 salmon management process: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/>
  - Fact sheet: Salmon: <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/17-Salmon-August-2017.pdf>
  - Fact sheet: Common Terms Used in Salmon Management: <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/19-Salmon-common-terms-July-2017-NEW-FORMATx.pdf>