

National Marine Fisheries (NMFS) Report on Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Activities

Recent Regulatory Activities:

Final Rule to implement Amendment 16 to the CPS Fishery Management Plan (FMP): On February 1, 2018, NMFS notified the Council that Amendment 16 to the CPS FMP had been approved. The final rule ([80 FR 6472](#)) was published in the Federal Register on February 14, 2018, and became effective on March 16, 2018. Amendment 16 allows minor directed fishing on CPS finfish during a directed fishery closure. The Notice of Availability for Amendment 16 ([82 FR 51381](#)) was published on November 6, 2017 with a public comment period that ended January 5, 2018. The proposed rule ([82 FR 55551](#)) was published on November 22, 2017 with a public comment period that ended December 28, 2017.

Proposed rule to establish Multi-Year Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for the finfish stocks in the Monitored Category of the CPS FMP: NMFS issued a proposed rule to codify in the Code of Federal Regulations the ACLs that had been in effect for calendar year 2017 for three Monitored CPS finfish stocks (jack mackerel, central population of northern anchovy, northern population of northern anchovy). These ACLs were published in the Federal Register in October 2016 ([81 FR 74309](#)), but without regulatory text and only effective for 2017. Codifying these ACLs will make them effective indefinitely, which is in accordance with the Council's recommendation, the FMP's management framework for these stocks, and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The public comment period for this action closed on February 8, 2018. NMFS intends to finalize this rule taking the recent Court ruling into consideration and following further clarification from the Court regarding its decision.

Current Fishery Status:

Pacific Sardine 2017-2018 Landings: Under a final rule published on June 30, 2017 ([82 FR 29776](#)) the Pacific sardine fishery is closed to directed non-tribal fishing for the July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 fishing year because the estimated 2017 biomass has dropped below the biomass threshold of 150,000 metric tons (mt) specified in the harvest guideline control rule. Pacific sardine may still be harvested as part of the live bait or tribal fishery, as minor directed fishing,¹ or as incidental catch in other fisheries, limited by an ACL of 8,000 mt. Since July 1, 2017, approximately 260 mt of Pacific sardine have been landed.

¹ Under Amendment 16, minor directed fishing may continue until the applicable harvest guideline or ACL is taken, provided the amount retained does not exceed 1 mt per day per vessel or person, and which is limited to 1 fishing trip per day by any vessel.