

## SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CONSULTATION UPDATE AND RISK ASSESSMENT

In response to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reinitiating Endangered Species Act consultation on the effect of Council-area ocean salmon fisheries on Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW), the Pacific Fishery Marine Council (Council) formed the Ad Hoc SRKW Workgroup (Workgroup) in April 2019. The Workgroup was tasked with reassessing the effects of Council-area ocean salmon fisheries on the Chinook salmon prey base of SRKW. NMFS has developed a [webpage](#) dedicated to the Workgroup which includes meeting schedules, materials shared, and additional information SRKWs.

NMFS has indicated that a Biological Opinion on the effects of Council-area ocean salmon fisheries on the Chinook salmon prey base of SRKW will need to be in place by the onset of the 2020 Council-area ocean salmon fisheries.

One of the main goals of the Workgroup was to provide a draft risk analysis report to the Council at the September 2019 meeting. The Workgroup worked diligently to gather data, identify criteria, develop methods, and draft the risk assessment within the proposed timeframe (between May and September of 2019). Due to the short time-frame and the high degree of analysis needed to formulate the risk analysis, the Workgroup was not able to fully complete the task. At the September meeting, the Workgroup provided a draft risk assessment ([Agenda Item F.3.a, Supplemental SRKW Workgroup Report 1, September 2019](#)) which included background information and detailed modeling analysis and results performed to date. The Workgroup has continued their work in October and November.

The Workgroup has provided a report (Agenda Item E.4.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1) outlining the progress made since the September Council meeting, and tentative dates for future meetings beyond November if deemed necessary by the Council. The Workgroup will also hold a meeting via [webinar on October 29](#) to continue their work on the draft risk assessment. Additional material from the Workgroup is anticipated to be available prior to the onset of the November 2019 Council meeting. At the November 2019 Council meeting, the Scientific and Statistical Committee is scheduled on November 15 to review analytical methods and materials used to date by the Workgroup.

### **Council Action:**

- 1. Review Updated Risk Analysis and provide Final Recommendations, as Appropriate.**
- 2. Provide Guidance on Future Work and Proposed Schedule.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item E.4.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- E.4 Southern Resident Killer Whale Endangered Species Act Consultation                      Robin Ehlke  
Update and Risk Assessment
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Review Updated Risk Analysis and Provide Final Recommendations,  
as Appropriate

PFMC  
10/21/19