



## Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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### PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL RELEASES ALTERNATIVES FOR 2020 WEST COAST OCEAN SALMON FISHERIES

Rohnert Park, California – The Pacific Fishery Management Council has adopted three alternatives for 2020 ocean salmon fisheries off of Washington, Oregon and California for public review. The Council will make a final decision on salmon seasons at its meeting in Vancouver, Washington, on April 5-10. 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).

Forecasts for many Chinook and coho stocks are lower than last year. In addition, the Council is constrained by requirements to conserve Fraser River (Canada) coho and other natural coho runs; to conserve lower Columbia River natural tule<sup>1</sup> fall Chinook; and to protect Sacramento River winter Chinook and Klamath River fall Chinook.

“Developing the seasons for this year’s ocean salmon fisheries will be challenging for ocean fishermen and managers,” said Council Executive Director Chuck Tracy.

“Meeting our conservation objectives continues to be the highest priority for the Council,” said Council Chair Phil Anderson. “In addition, the Council is considering the

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<sup>1</sup> Tule Chinook generally spawn lower in the Columbia River than salmon that continue to migrate up the mainstem.

needs of Southern Resident killer whales as part of its deliberations. Poor ocean conditions and their effects on salmon productivity continue to make it challenging for the Council to meet its management objectives and sustain healthy fisheries. With five salmon rebuilding plans in place in 2020, the Council will look to adopt seasons designed to meet the requirements of the plans, and provide meaningful commercial and recreational fisheries.”

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

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 coho salmon stocks remain categorized as overfished (Queets River, Strait of Juan de Fuca) or not overfished rebuilding (Snohomish), which is also a concern when structuring 2020 fisheries.

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

Tribal negotiations are underway, but at this time the Chinook and coho quotas for tribal ocean fishery alternatives range from 20,000 to 45,000 for Chinook salmon (compared to 35,000 in 2019), and from 0 to 30,000 coho (compared to 55,000 coho in 2019). Under the range of alternatives, seasons open May 1 and continue through either August 31 or September 15.

#### *Commercial season alternatives*

North of Cape Falcon, the non-Indian ocean commercial fishery consist of two alternatives with traditional Chinook seasons between May and September. Chinook quotas for all areas and times range from 22,875 to 30,000, compared to 26,250 in 2019. Coho quotas in the both alternatives range from 2,500 to 5,600 marked coho, compared to 30,400 in to 2019. The third alternative has the season closed in this area.

#### *Sport season alternatives*

North of Cape Falcon, the ocean sport fishery includes two alternatives with Chinook recreational quotas ranging from 22,125 to 30,000, compared to 26,250 in 2019. For coho, recreational quotas range from 22,500 to 29,400 hatchery coho, compared to 159,600 in 2019. Starting dates range from June 14 to June 28, and in all alternatives, recreational fisheries are scheduled to run through mid-to-late September. Chinook retention is allowed through-out the proposed seasons, but coho retention is limited in some of the alternatives. The third alternative has the season closed in this area.

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

Fisheries south of Cape Falcon are limited by the need to reduce catch of Oregon Coast natural coho and Klamath River fall Chinook. Klamath River fall Chinook and Sacramento River fall Chinook contribute significantly to ocean harvest, and currently remain categorized as overfished. Klamath River fall Chinook has a relatively low abundance forecast, which will limit salmon fisheries in Oregon and California. On the other hand, Sacramento River fall Chinook, which comprises a large percentage of the catch in California and Oregon fisheries, are expected to be relatively abundant. This year's management alternatives are designed to provide fishing opportunity for this more abundant Sacramento River fall run while reducing fishing impacts on Klamath River fall Chinook

### *Commercial season alternatives*

Commercial season alternatives south of Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain are constrained this year to protect Klamath River fall Chinook. Chinook salmon seasons are open April or May through September or October, with closed periods in most months.

The commercial alternatives in both the California and Oregon sectors of the Klamath Management Zone provide a range of Chinook quotas between May and August, with some additional time without quotas for the Oregon sector in April and May. Two alternatives have the California Klamath Management Zone closed for the season.

Commercial seasons south of Horse Mountain vary considerably between the alternatives, with constraints primarily intended to protect Klamath River fall Chinook. In general, the commercial alternatives in these management areas (Fort Bragg, San Francisco, and Monterey) provide similar or reduced levels of opportunity compared to last year.

### *Sport season alternatives*

Chinook fishing in the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay areas all open March 15 and run continuously through October 31, consistent with the 2019 season.

Oregon ocean recreational alternatives include mark-selective coho fishing seasons in starting in late June and running through early to mid-August in the area south of Cape Falcon. Quotas range from 18,000 to 30,000 marked coho (compared to 90,000 in 2019). In addition, non-mark-selective fisheries are proposed in two alternatives for the area between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain starting in late August or September,

with quotas of 3,000 to 4,000 coho (compared to last year's 9,000).

The range of alternatives include proposed fisheries for the Klamath Management Zone in both California and Oregon with fishing opportunity lower than last year.

California ocean recreational alternatives for Fort Bragg, San Francisco and Monterey will see similar or increased opportunity compared to last year due to an increased Sacramento River fall Chinook abundance forecast. Seasons vary between management areas.

### **Concerns regarding Southern Resident Killer Whales**

The Council has worked collaboratively with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to understand the effects of Council-area fisheries on Southern Resident killer whales, which are listed as endangered. Based in part on information provided by the Council's ad-hoc Southern Resident Killer Whale Workgroup, NMFS provided guidance on the structure of the 2020 salmon fisheries to address the needs of the whales while providing salmon harvest opportunity. All alternatives keep total Chinook abundance well above the NMFS guidance.

### **Management Process**

Public hearings to receive input on the alternatives are scheduled for March 23 in Westport, Washington and Coos Bay, Oregon, and for March 24 in Eureka, California. The Council will consult with scientists, hear public comment, revise preliminary decisions, and choose a final alternative at its meeting in Vancouver, Washington, on April 5-10.

The Council will forward its final season recommendations to NMFS for its approval and implementation no later than May 6.

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 U.S. 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 2020 salmon management](#)
- Final Alternatives and analyses of the biological and socioeconomic impacts will be posted on the Council web page on or about March 20 ([look for 2020 Preseason Report II on this page](#))
- [Description of 2020 salmon management process](#)
- Fact sheet: [Salmon](#)
- Fact sheet: [Geography of Salmon](#)
- Fact sheet: [Common Terms Used in Salmon Management](#)