

SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CONSULTATION UPDATE

In response to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) reinitiating Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation on the effect of Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council)-area ocean salmon fisheries on Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW), the 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, and potentially recommend conservation measure(s) or management tool(s) that limit Council-area fishery impacts on Chinook salmon prey availability for SRKW.

Over the past year, the Workgroup has focused on developing a risk assessment to help inform the Council of potential impacts to SRKW as a result of implementing the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Multiple drafts of the risk assessment have been provided for Council review, and the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) conducted a technical review and provided an [SSC report](#) in support of the analytical methods and materials in the risk assessment. The technical work and analysis are considered complete, and an executive summary has been included in the risk assessment document. The Workgroup has submitted their final version of the risk assessment for Council consideration (Agenda Item E.2.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1 [*electronic only*]).

The Workgroup has also begun the task of drafting potential recommendations for salmon management measures based on the results of the assessment. The Workgroup met in April and plans for additional meetings between June and September 2020. The Workgroup will work closely with the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and stakeholders during this process.

Any recommendations developed for Council consideration will go through the Council process to solicit industry input and public comment. Once this process is complete, the Council could provide final recommendations for NMFS consideration as part of a long-term Biological Opinion evaluating the implementation of the Salmon FMP incorporation of these potential recommendations.

The Council is currently scheduled to discuss the SRKW topic again in September and November 2020.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt the Workgroup's risk assessment document as final.**
- 2. Review the Workgroup's draft management measure recommendations and provide guidance.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.2, SRKW Workgroup Report 1: Pacific Fishery Management Council Salmon Fishery Management Plan Impacts to Southern resident Killer Whales Risk Assessment (*electronic only*).
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- E.2 Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) ESA Consultation Update Robin Ehlke
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Risk Assessment, Review Draft SRKW Workgroup Management Measure Recommendations, and Provide Guidance.

PFMC
05/14/20