

AD HOC SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE WORKGROUP (SRKW) REPORT ON SRKW ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CONSULTATION UPDATE

At the March 2020 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) approved the Risk Assessment provided by the Workgroup as a final draft and directed the Workgroup to develop an executive summary for the report and to proceed with development of draft management measure recommendations. The Workgroup has completed the task of finalizing the Risk Assessment report, including an executive summary, and has submitted the full report for Council consideration and potential adoption (Agenda Item E.2.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1).

With the completion of the Risk Assessment, the Workgroup has shifted its focus to drafting potential recommendations for Council consideration, and has met twice since the March 2020 Council meeting. The shaping of these recommendations remains a work in progress as the Workgroup reviews the available information, develops and discusses alternatives, considers public comment, and addresses varying levels of endorsement among Workgroup members. However, alternatives generally fall into the following categories:

- Consider a low abundance threshold established for the North of Falcon (NOF) management area based on a weighted sum of stock-specific preseason salmon abundance forecasts, weighted by the proportion of the abundance for each stock thought to occur in the NOF area. As currently discussed, the threshold could act as a trigger for additional management criteria when abundance fell below the threshold.
 - Management actions in salmon directed fisheries in the NOF area could affect quota setting, since these are largely quota controlled fisheries, while management actions in salmon directed fisheries in the South of Falcon (SOF) areas could affect dates of operation since those fisheries manage by season structure.
 - The area-specific abundance estimates being considered in the threshold approach are based on methodology previously reviewed by the Scientific and Statistical Committee.
- Support initiating review of conservation objectives for Klamath River and Sacramento River fall Chinook salmon stocks and consider changes as needed.
- Support developing an age-structured stock assessment for the Sacramento River Fall Chinook salmon stock using cohort reconstruction methods.

These categories encompass the current list of recommendations, but no conclusions have been made, and additional potential measures may be developed.

The Workgroup will continue to work on developing recommendations for Council consideration. The Workgroup currently has three meetings scheduled between now and the November 2020 Council meeting (June 30, August 4, and September 29).

The Workgroup appreciates the support of the Council and any direction the Council might be able to give at this time.

PFMC
06/11/20