

SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT CONSULTATION

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 recommending conservation measure(s) or management tool(s) that limit Council-area fishery impacts on Chinook salmon prey availability for SRKW.

Since May 2019, 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). 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. In June 2020, the Council adopted the Workgroup's [risk assessment report](#).

In April 2020, the Workgroup began drafting potential recommendations for salmon management measures based on the results of the risk assessment. The shaping of the recommendations is an arduous task, as the Workgroup must review the available information, develop and discuss alternatives, consider public comment, and address varying levels of endorsement among Workgroup members. At the June 2020 Council meeting, the Workgroup provided a [supplemental report](#) describing a very general overview of the types of recommendations it had considered to date.

The Workgroup met in April, June, and August, and has another meeting scheduled in late September 2020. The meetings are open to the public, and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and stakeholders have participated in these meetings.

Utilizing input given during these meetings and Council direction, the Workgroup has provided a report (Agenda Item H.3.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1) that includes a purpose and need statement, scope of action, and a range of alternatives and recommendations for Council consideration. Under this agenda item the Council should adopt a range of management alternatives for public review and to solicit industry input.

From a logistical standpoint it has not yet been determined what the regulatory process for this action will be – either a regulatory amendment or an FMP amendment. The Council may want to discuss this and provide some guidance so that there is a clear path forward as we move into the final stages of the Council process. In November 2020, the Council is scheduled to discuss the SRKW topic again and consider adopting a preferred alternative for recommendation to NMFS.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt a range of management alternatives for public review.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.3.a, SRKW Workgroup Report 1: Pacific Fishery Management Council Salmon Fishery Management Plan Impacts to Southern Resident Killer Whales: Draft Range of Alternatives and Recommendations.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only (see [e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- H.3 Southern Resident Killer Whale Endangered Species Act Consultation Robin Ehlke
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Adopt a Range of Management Alternatives for Public Review

PFMC
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