

**SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON EXECUTIVE ORDER 13921:  
PROMOTING AMERICAN SEAFOOD COMPETITIVENESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) was briefed by Dr. Jim Seger from the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) regarding Executive Order 13921 at our virtual meeting held on September 8, 2020. The SAS provides the following in order of priority:

1. Ease restrictions on control of salmonid predators
  - a. Description of recommended action: This action would require amendment of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to allow a more comprehensive approach to managing salmonid predation in all areas inhabited by salmon.
  - b. Rationale: Predation on salmon smolts is a key limiting factor, with both birds and harbor seals targeting out-migrating juvenile fish. Predation on adult salmon by Stellar and California sea lions is a key limiting factor on returning adult fish. Allowing a more comprehensive control program in all salmon habitats would increase the supply of salmon available for harvest by fishermen and would also contribute to the prey base for apex ocean predators like killer whales.
2. Increase Hatchery Production
  - a. Description of recommended action: Increase salmon hatchery production within watersheds of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's jurisdiction. Tribal, Federal and state entities would be responsible for implementing this action.
  - b. Rationale: Increased hatchery production of Pacific Coast salmon – especially Chinook and coho - has the ability to rapidly increase the salmon availability to all sectors within salmon fisheries. It will provide increased economic benefits to coastal and inland communities. It will also benefit tribal communities culturally and economically. Increased production would also contribute to the prey base for apex ocean predators like killer whales.
3. Increase funds dedicated to dredging and infrastructure improvements for ocean ports
  - a. Description of recommended action: This action would depend on Federal, State and local funds being maintained or increased through Federal appropriations, State budgets, and local taxing Districts.
  - b. Rationale: Access to the ocean and adequate facilities for offloading catch, procuring ice and fuel, and repairing and maintaining vessels are vital for maintaining and increasing America's seafood supply. Dredging funds have been difficult to obtain beyond basic channel maintenance activities. Port infrastructure

improvement and development efforts are entirely dependent on funding sources being available.

4. Increase funding for creel surveys in salmon fisheries and biological sampling of salmon catch

- a. Description: Increase funding for creel surveys and biological sampling of ocean salmon fisheries. Tribal, Federal and state entities would be responsible for implementing this action.
- b. Justification: Funding should be increased to ensure that sufficient samples are collected so that the estimates of fishing effort and catch rate are sufficiently precise so that there is at least a 90 percent confidence that the true values are within 10 percent of the point estimates. Necessary sample sizes will vary by time and area depending on variation within the data.

For surveys to be useful and valid, adequate and unbiased data must be available for analysis and interpretation with a view toward objective evaluation of the reliability of the conclusions based on the data. Creel survey sample size should be increased during times and at locations where data are highly variable which otherwise would result in estimates that have unacceptably large confidence intervals.

5. Relieve burdensome Federal regulations

- a. Description of recommended action: Remove regulations that require annual review/action and cause unnecessary financial burden to the fishery participant. Federal entities would be responsible for implementing this action.
- b. Rationale: USCG regulations can be overly burdensome and do not provide flexibility to the fishing fleet. A prime example is the annual requirements for life raft repacking. The calendar year-based requirement fails to take into account shifting fishing seasons and potential closures, and is not tied temporally to the use of the life raft. These requirements are cost prohibitive, and without any certain benefit from the annual repacking versus a biannual repacking. A longer refresh cycle could lead to enhanced fleet safety by freeing up funds for other maintenance and safety projects.