

SOUTHERN OREGON / NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COAST (SONCC) COHO
HARVEST CONTROL RULE – FINAL ACTION

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have been engaged in a public process to develop a harvest control rule (HCR) for Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast (SONCC) coho since April 2020. The Council formed the Ad Hoc SONCC Coho Workgroup (Workgroup) with the primary task of developing a range of HCR alternatives for Council consideration, from which the Council would adopt a preferred alternative for recommendation to NMFS. The timeline to complete the work was 18 months, with a final preferred alternative to be considered at the November 2021 Council meeting.

At the June 2021 Council meeting, the Workgroup provided a draft Risk Assessment with several alternative HCRs for Council consideration. The Council provided [guidance](#) to the Workgroup to focus, in part, on HCRs that include constant (fixed rate) total (ocean and freshwater) exploitation rates that include 0 percent (absent fishing) and a range between 7 and 20 percent.

At the September 2021 Council meeting, the Workgroup provided a draft Risk Assessment for Council consideration that included 10 HCR Alternatives. NMFS gave a [presentation](#) which drew from data provided in the Risk Assessment, and was designed to provide the Council with NMFS' perspectives and relevant information from the Risk Assessment for the SONCC Coho Salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU). At the September 2021 meeting, the Council provided further [guidance](#) to the Workgroup, asking that additional information be included in the Risk Assessment.

At the November 2021 Council meeting, to help inform the Council in its decision-making process, reports and/or statements were provided by the SONCC Workgroup, NMFS, Yurok tribe, Hoopa Valley tribe, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS), and through public comment. All material is available in the November 2021 briefing book under [Agenda Item F.3](#). NMFS summarized their recommendations from the September 2021 meeting and provided additional comments on fishery implementation and opportunity for potential data and methodology improvements.

CDFW moved to adopt recommendations from their supplemental report as presented below. Council member discussion included input from Tribal, Oregon, California, and NMFS representatives. Concerns were raised that the proposed action had not been analyzed, was outside the range of alternatives adopted for public review, and would likely be difficult to implement. The Council adopted the recommendations contained in [November 2021, Agenda Item F.3.a, Supplemental CDFW Report 1](#), as follows:

Harvest Control Rule 5 as described in Agenda Item F.3.a, the Fishery Harvest Control Rule Risk Assessment. This amounts to a total fishery exploitation rate (ER) limit of 15% on SONCC coho salmon, to be implemented as follows:

- *Evaluation of attainment of the limit occurs on a postseason basis each year using the annual postseason exploitation rate, which is the sum of the fishery exploitation rates experienced in the year across all ocean and inland sources*

of fishery mortality (ER). The annual ERs are then averaged over the available postseason record for the period following HCR adoption, and this average must not exceed the adopted limit of 15%.

- *Postseason estimates of the ocean ER will be generated using the Coho Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM), whereas the in-river ER component will be determined using data provided by co-managing agencies as described in Appendix C and Appendix I of the risk assessment report.*

In addition, ocean fishery seasons shall be designed pre-season each year such that Coho FRAM projections of ocean fishery impacts to SONCC coho salmon do not exceed 9% more frequently than once every four years, which is a reduction in the status-quo allowable ocean impact rate of not more than 13%.

Since the November 2021 Council meeting, NMFS has requested an emergency Council meeting be held to revisit the Council’s November action. Following protocols described in [Council Operating Procedure 1](#), the Council’s Executive Director, Chair, and Vice Chair coordinated with voting Council members who agreed to proceed with this emergency meeting.

Council Action:

- 1. Consider rescinding the motion adopted by the Council in November 2021 regarding SONCC coho.**
- 2. If rescinded, review the Risk Assessment and Range of Alternatives and adopt a Final Preferred Alternative Harvest Control Rule.**
- 3. Consider Amending the Pacific Salmon Fishery Management Plan, as Appropriate.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item B.1.a, NMFS Report 1.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- B.1 Southern Oregon / Northern California Coast (SONCC) Coho Harvest Control Rule – Final Action Robin Ehlke
- a. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Consider Rescinding a Motion Adopted in November 2021 Regarding the SONCC Coho Harvest Control Rule, Review the Risk Assessment and Range of Alternatives, and Adopt a Preferred Harvest Control Rule, and Consider an Amendment to the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan, as Appropriate.

PFMC
01/14/22