SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON REVIEW OF 2021 FISHERIES AND SUMMARY OF 2022 STOCK FORECASTS

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) discussed the Review of 2021 Ocean Salmon Fisheries and Preseason Report I for 2022. Dr. Michael O'Farrell (Southwest Fisheries Science Center, Salmon Technical Team [STT] Chair) provided a brief summary of the reports and members of the STT were available to answer questions. The SSC appreciates the work of the STT in compiling the reports and providing an early look at key pieces of Preseason Report I in draft form, which was very helpful. The availability of the Preseason Report I was not announced until Monday March 7, limiting review of the remainder of the report. Sampling of fisheries in 2021 was not affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; however, the disruption of tagging and marking of juveniles in 2020 will affect recoveries of coded-wire-tags (CWTs) from adults of that cohort and may affect planning and implementation of mark-selective fisheries on that cohort.

The Council is tasked with specifying annual catch limits (ACLs) for Sacramento River fall Chinook (SRFC, indicator stock for the Central Valley fall Chinook complex), Klamath River fall Chinook (KRFC, indicator stock for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Chinook complex), and Willapa Bay natural coho. Preseason Report I presents ACLs for these three stocks (Table V-4). The forecasts for SRFC and KRFC are derived from forecast models that have been reviewed and approved by the SSC in previous years. The Willapa Bay natural coho forecast methodology was reviewed and endorsed by the SSC in November 2021. The SSC found the calculations of the acceptable biological catches (ABCs) and corresponding ACLs correct based on the forecasts for all three stocks.

The Council adopted rebuilding plans in 2019 for five salmon stocks: SRFC, KRFC, Queets River coho, Juan de Fuca coho, and Snohomish River coho. In 2021, SRFC met the criteria for rebuilt status. The three-year geometric mean spawning escapements for the other stocks in 2022 are:

- KRFC. The three-year geometric mean natural area spawning abundance is 25,039 which is less than the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) of 30,525. The stock meets the criteria for overfished status.
- Queets River coho. The three-year geometric mean adult spawning escapement is 2,654 which is less than the MSST of 4,350. The stock meets the criteria for overfished status.
- Juan de Fuca coho. The three-year geometric mean adult spawning escapement is 6,002 which is less than the MSST of 7,000. The stock meets the criteria for overfished status.Snohomish River coho. The three-year geometric mean adult spawning escapement is 46,418 which is more than the MSST of 31,000, but less than the S_{MSY} of 50,000. The stock meets the criteria for not overfished / rebuilding status.

Hood Canal coho meet the overfished criteria as the three-year geometric mean adult spawning escapement is 9,990 which is less than the MSST of 10,750.

None of the Chinook or coho stocks were determined to be subject to overfishing; however, the exploitation rates for 2021 were not available except for SRFC and KRFC.

A stock is approaching an overfished condition if the three-year geometric mean of the most recent two years and the 2022 forecast of spawning escapement given last year's fishing regulations is less than the MSST. The KRFC and Juan de Fuca coho meet the criteria for being at risk of approaching an overfished condition.

The results presented in Preseason Report I are point estimates and associated uncertainties are generally not reported. The SSC reiterates its strong recommendation that Council salmon reports provide and incorporate appropriate measures of uncertainty as is currently done for groundfish, coastal pelagic species, and highly migratory species.

The SSC notes that there remains considerable uncertainty about which aspects of the Preseason Report I the SSC is specifically charged with reviewing and endorsing under the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and about the process of initiating potential changes to salmon reference points (e.g., MSST and MFMT; see the Salmon Subcommittee Report attached to Agenda Item C.10.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1, June 2021).

PFMC
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