

CHINOOK SALMON BYCATCH RESERVE

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provides this report to fulfill Term and Condition 3.b from the [December 2017 Biological Opinion](#) on bycatch of Endangered Species Act-listed salmon in West Coast groundfish fisheries.

Term and Condition 3.b states, “NMFS shall monitor the use of the Reserve in 2019 and will provide a report to the Council during the process of developing the biennial specifications for 2021-2022. The report will summarize the use of the Reserve and recommend, if needed, changes to the regulations governing the Reserve”.

Regulations governing the Chinook salmon bycatch reserve were not effective until 2021 ([86 FR 10857](#); February 23, 2021). Therefore, we are providing this report to the Council during the development of the biennial specifications for 2023-2024.

We do not recommend any changes to the regulations governing the reserve. Changes are not needed because the regulations adequately ensure the reserve is available only to address unexpected high bycatch levels, and it will not be available as a matter of course to allow the sectors to exceed their bycatch guidelines.

We monitor the use of the reserve and report that the reserve was not utilized in 2021. Bycatch estimates for Chinook salmon in groundfish fisheries are publically available on the PacFIN website via the [APEX reporting system](#). Table 1 shows the reserve was not utilized in 2021 because Chinook salmon bycatch in the whiting and non-whiting sectors was below each sector’s threshold.

Table 1. Chinook salmon bycatch by sector in 2021. Source: PACFIN IFQ021 - Combined Sector Salmon Bycatch ESA Report, February 9, 2022.

Sector	Threshold (number of fish)	Total catch (number of fish)	Percent Threshold of	Reserve utilized?
Whiting	11,000	2,179	20	No
Non-whiting	5,500	1,067*	19	No

* Assumes recreational catch of 500 fish based on previously observed landings