



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
West Coast Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
LONG BEACH, CA 90802

February 26, 2024

Sent Via Email

Agenda Item C.1.a
Supplemental NMFS Report 2
March 2024

Mr. Brad Pettinger, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place
Portland, OR 97220
bradpettinger@yahoo.com

Dear Mr. Pettinger:

By this letter, I am approving Amendment 24 to the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The purpose of Amendment 24 is to modify language in the FMP to clarify the technical process for reviewing updates to the models used to determine the Chinook salmon threshold (threshold) established under Amendment 21 and recalculating the threshold using that updated information. The revised text will not change the approach used to establish the threshold.

In November 2020, the Council adopted management measures for Southern Resident killer whales (SRKW) under Amendment 21 (86 FR 51017, September 14, 2021) to the Salmon FMP. The whales are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Chinook salmon, some of which are listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA, are their preferred prey. The Salmon FMP was amended by adding Section 6.6.8 which describes provisions to limit the impacts of the Council-managed ocean salmon fisheries on SRKW by limiting the extent to which they reduce Chinook salmon prey availability for SRKW. Amendment 21 established a threshold for U.S. waters north of Cape Falcon, Oregon. If preseason projections of Chinook abundance in a given year are less than the threshold, then a list of management actions will be implemented through the management measures for ocean salmon fisheries that year.

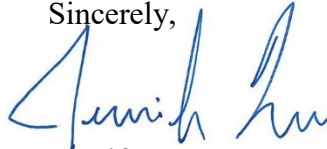
The Council prepared Amendment 24 to the FMP under provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) and transmitted it to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on November 16, 2023, for approval by the Secretary of Commerce. On November 27, 2023, NMFS published a Notice of Availability in the Federal Register and solicited public input on the proposed Amendment 24 (88 FR 82819). During the public comment period, NMFS received one comment from the public in support of Amendment 24.

NMFS has determined that Amendment 24 is consistent with provisions of the MSA and other applicable laws. There are no implementing regulations with the FMP amendment.



NMFS appreciates the Council's close cooperation and assistance throughout the Amendment 24 process, and we look forward to continuing to work with the Council to ensure sustainable fisheries and resource conservation.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Quan.

Regional Administrator

cc: F/WCR – S. Penna,
F/GCNW – S. Lynch