

From: finleycm@peak.org
To: "goto500 pfmc" <goto500.pfmc@noaa.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 20, 2018 9:29:34 AM
Subject: salmon recovery webinar

To: Robin Elkhe, STT From: Carl Finley
These are my public comments on the SRFC recovery webinar.

Discussion of your pre-season predictions of SRFC stock size in 2015, 2016, and 2017 acknowledged that they were poor, overpredicting by probably 35 to 55% (my rough estimate) which resulted in estimating too large an allowable catch, a contributing factor to over fishing. This is soft-peddling reality; you have been in a pattern of over-prediction of SRFC stock size since 2003. Enclosed is a graph, "Percent difference from PFMC average annual preseason SI forecast relative to actual SI observed, 1985-2017", which I found on the Fishbio Blog website. I suspect some honest soul in management provided the data to them. I have not seen it in your publications, although you do provide this data for KRFC. This graph should be in the Pre-season I Report, just as you provide the KRFC data.

This graph is quite informative. Look at the the 2003 break point ; prior to it, it is bouncing around somewhat randomly, but with a trend to under-prediction. After the break point, it is obviously skewed to over-prediction, with two of the three "under "years being little better than a wash. 2003 is close to a break point of a lot of negative things surrounding climate and ocean conditions that have not really changed. Look at the CVI since 2007. It is not very pretty ,and if you think things are going to magically return to pre 2007 , you are a fool.

At the simplest level, has the jack/adult relationship changed? I believe that you are still using 29 to one. It may not be valid any more. Is 29 to one sacrosant ? Just by changing that 29 number you can move the zero line. But then, it could be too early for such a radical action.

I vaguely remember some of these recovery plan exercises in the past. They were just pro forma, because one could just count on ocean conditions,drought, whatever, to turn around and everything is OK again. I suggest those days are gone. Was the Ridiculously Resilient Ridge just a once in a lifetime anomaly? Have you noticed the 70% prediction for an El Nino this winter? About the time you think you are getting out of the woods there will be another one ahead of you.

You should of course recognize the Habitat Committee, but keep in mind that they are basically powerless.

Enough for now. I am a former Oregon salmon troller who had the good sense to bail after 2007. I considered the Ridiculously Large Disaster Relief my buy-out. I have lots of friends who are now trapped in the fishery with their boats unsaleable millstones around their necks.

I will continue to watch with interest as this issue develops.
Carl

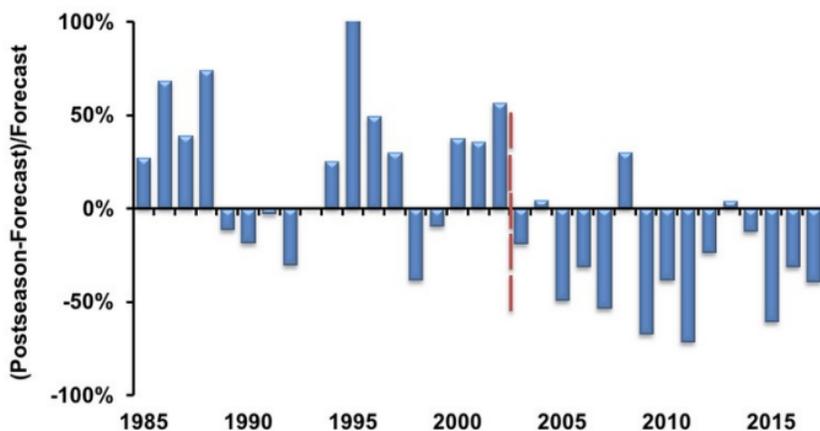


Figure 1. Percent difference from PFMC average annual preseason Sacramento Index forecast relative to the actual Sacramento Index observed, 1985-2017.

From: finleycm@peak.org
To: "goto500 pfmc" <goto500.pfmc@noaa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, August 21, 2018 9:37:02 AM
Subject: additional comment

----- Forwarded message -----

From: <finleycm@peak.org>
Date: Thu, Aug 23, 2018 at 5:03 PM
Subject: Fwd: additional comment
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

To: Robin Ehlke, STT From: Carl Finley

Here is the rest of my comment on rebuilding SRFC. I had a little senior hiatus.

I believe that the "catching power" of the troll fleet and CA sport fleet at small sizes is being seriously underestimated.

This is not a criticism. These small stock sizes were rare in the past, so data was sparse. Now they are common, and will be so in the future.

I personally was amazed by what the guys in Newport were pulling out of, basically, nothing. I remember reading last August that the Frisco charter fleet was catching lots of fish and claiming the forecast was faulty. They are doing the same thing this year. We have all observed this in the past, and it is generally wrong... anecdotal accounts. Intuitively, one expects catch to worsen as stock size and the active fleet shrink, but the fleet seems to do better than one would expect. Two possible explanations:

Only the best fishermen with good vessels are left.

There could be a basin effect with salmon, just as with groundfish.

There is also a random "luck of the draw" factor with respect to accessibility.

The combination of over-estimating abundance and under-estimating catching power is an overarching theme in fisheries history. I can provide citations, but I doubt that you need them.

Carl

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From: <finleycm@peak.org>
Date: Thu, Aug 23, 2018 at 5:05 PM
Subject: Fwd: jack abundance
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Robin,STT

Forgive me for being such a pest. This weeks Fishbio Blog has an excellent post about the increasing numbers and changing proportion of jacks in the central valley. The owner/author, I believe his name is Doug, is damn sharp and brave. Carl