

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON ANNUAL REGULATIONS AND 2A CATCH SHARING PLAN CHANGES - FINAL ACTION

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) solicited public input via an online survey. Based on public input (324 survey participants), ODFW provides the following information for consideration by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) in determining which alternatives to adopt for further public review.

Columbia River Subarea

Revise the Start Date of the All-Depth Fishery

Revise the season opening date so that it more closely aligns with the opening dates in other Washington or Oregon Subareas.

Status quo: Opens the first Thursday in May

Alternative 1: Opens the second Thursday in May

Alternative 2: Opens the second Friday in May

Alternative 3: Consult with stakeholders and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) prior to the November Council meeting to determine the season opening date for the following year.

Rationale

In recent years there has been an increase in effort and catches in the Columbia River Subarea, causing the all-depth season to become shorter and shorter. To try to spread the fishery out more into the summer, beginning in 2018 the days open per week were changed from Thursday through Sunday to Thursday, Friday, and Sunday with Saturday closed. However, in 2018 due to a combination of being open prior to any other Subarea in Washington or Oregon (other than the Southern Oregon Subarea near the OR/CA border) and very good weather, there was a large effort shift into this fishery causing the quota to be taken in only five days.

Revising the season opening timing so that it opens on the same date as other subareas in Washington and/or Oregon should alleviate some of this effort shift, potentially allowing the Columbia River subarea's all-depth fishery to be open for a few additional days. Survey participants were approximately equally split between Alternative 2 and Alternative 3, with slightly more in favor of Alternative 3. Therefore, **ODFW recommends Alternative 3, and will work with WDFW and fishery participants to determine the opening date.**

Revise the number of days open from three to two

Revise the number of days open from three (Thursday, Friday, and Sunday) to two (Friday and Sunday).

Status quo: open Thursday, Friday, and Sunday (3 days per week)

Alternative 1: open Friday and Sunday only (2 days per week)

Rationale: The intent of reducing number of days is to extend the season over a longer period of time, farther into the summer. This would likely not change the total number of days open, just spread them out more. Survey participants favored Alternative 1 over the Status Quo. **Therefore, ODFW recommends changing the open days per week to two days, Friday and Sunday.**

Catch Sharing Plan Language

ODFW does not have proposed changes to the language in the Catch Sharing Plan for the above items at this time. As the alternatives are finalized, ODFW will draft the appropriate language revisions to the Catch Sharing Plan, in consultation with staff at the NMFS West Coast Region.