

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
PRELIMINARY REBUILDING PLANS

Drs. Robert Kope (Northwest Fisheries Science Center) and Michael O'Farrell (Southwest Fisheries Science Center), along with other members of the Salmon Technical Team (STT), joined the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to answer questions about the five draft salmon rebuilding plans (Agenda Item D.2, Attachments 1-5). The SSC recognizes the extensive work involved in producing five rebuilding plans in such a short period of time. The SSC appreciates the large amount of biological information presented about each of the stocks in Section 3. However, Section 3 lacked sufficient detail on the data sources and underlying analyses for the SSC to conduct a thorough technical review.

The SSC discussion focused on the projection of future abundance (Section 4 in each of the attachments). The projection models had no relationship between spawners, productivity, and recruitment, nor did models for Chinook salmon consider how cohorts propagate through the age structure. The SSC suggests that a potential improvement given time constraints would be using autocorrelated draws from an abundance distribution. Similarly, it may be beneficial to explore correlation between abundance and management error. The SSC appreciates the exploration of two different abundance distributions to explore different productivity regimes for some of the plans. The SSC recommends modifications to the model that consider the underlying biology, or more fully developed arguments for why the existing models are sufficiently informative without incorporating the underlying biology.

The SSC recommends that the plans could describe the relative influence of contributing factors to the current overfished status, as was done for the Strait of Juan de Fuca Natural Coho. The SSC concurs with the STT's recommendations to involve the Habitat Committee in further evaluating the status of habitat, as many of the stocks met the criteria for overfished status due, in part, to environmental conditions beyond the purview of the Council.

The SSC recommends that the SSC Salmon Subcommittee review the rebuilding plans prior to the March Council meeting. Ideally, this review would take place far enough in advance for the STT to take action on any subcommittee recommendations.