

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
2010 SALMON METHODOLOGY REVIEW

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) would like to address Agenda Item F.5 under the general rubric of “methodology review.” This item consists of the meeting summary of the Tule Chinook Workgroup and we are particularly interested in consideration being given to abundance-based exploitation rates.

There is a fifth “h” in the all H model that seems to get left out of the discussions on Columbia River Salmon recovery, and that is history. Simply put, if harvest were culpable in any amount commensurate with the focus it receives, there would have been no fish to manage fifty years ago. Harvest is often the focus of regulation because it is a surrogate for a host of other problems, mostly related to water and habitat.

Those groups with the strongest ties in terms of economics and cultural heritage to the fisheries of their region are the most ardent supporters of salmon recovery. Ironically, the more restrictive the regulations, the less advocacy can be expected for the very stocks that need protection. There is vigorous competition for resources salmon need to survive. The advocacy provided by various fishing communities is a necessary counterbalance to avoid long-term adverse effects.

We believe that in order to avoid eventual museum status for our salmon populations, efforts must be made to keep users viable as well as the resource. We advocate an abundance-based harvest scenario for Tule Fall Chinook, but with a harvest floor that allows some level of *de minimus* fishing at low levels of abundance. Even a very few exploitation points of leeway on a particular stock can open up substantial harvest opportunities on other commingled harvestable stocks. A *de minimus* policy would also provide a measure of flexibility in cases where streams that hold little promise of recovery could “hold hostage” entire fisheries.

We firmly believe if the harvest sector ceases to become viable or is seriously disrupted for an extended period of time, the viability of the resource will also be greatly compromised, as the advocacy will diminish and ultimately disappear.

PFMC
11/05/10