



The LINE. A Publication of the Pacific Fishery Management Council

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The Line is a summary of West Coast fisheries news, for fishermen, published five times per year. This issue reports on the decisions made at the April 2013 Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting. The Council (www.pcouncil.org) recommends commercial & recreational fishery management measures for Federal waters off the coasts of Washington, Oregon & California. The Council has five public meetings a year. All Council recommendations are subject to approval by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). To sign up for our full newsletter and other notices, go to <http://tinyurl.com/3s5edce>.

SALMON.

The Council adopted a set of ocean salmon seasons that will provide both recreational and commercial opportunities coastwide. Please see the detailed salmon recommendations for 2013 on our website at: <http://tinyurl.com/2013salmon>. • *Essential fish habitat*: The Council is considering changes to essential fish habitat for salmon, including looking at a new alternative that would address essential fish habitat in areas where salmon are being, or have been, reintroduced. Final action on this is scheduled for the Council's September meeting in Boise, Idaho. • *Klamath water*: The Council is encouraging the Department of the Interior to ensure that there is enough water in the Klamath River for salmon this year, given the high number of salmon returning and the expected dry water year.

HALIBUT.

The Council adopted limits for incidental Pacific halibut catch in the salmon troll fishery of no more than one halibut per three Chinook, except one halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement and no more than 15 halibut may be landed per trip starting May 1, 2013 thru April 30, 2014. • The Council adopted limits for incidental Pacific halibut catch for the primary fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington beginning May 1, 2013 of 75 lb of halibut for every 1,000 lb (dressed weight) of sablefish landed and up to two additional halibut may be possessed or landed in excess of the 75 lb per 1,000 lb ratio per landing. In 2014, if the Pacific halibut total allowable catch is sufficient to provide an allocation, limits would be established at the March 2014 Council meeting and retention allowed starting April 1, 2014.

ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT

The Council adopted a major new Fishery Ecosystem Plan. The plan, which is advisory rather than regulatory, will help the Council consider predator-prey relationships, habitat, climate, human impacts, and other ecosystem issues when making management decisions. A discussion of protecting currently unmanaged forage fish will begin at the June meeting in Garden Grove, California, where the Council will review the list of authorized West Coast fisheries and assign a committee to work on the matter.

ROCKFISH, FLATFISH, WHITING AND OTHER GROUND FISH.

Stock complexes: The Council is discussing how to restructure groundfish stock complexes. The draft alternatives presented at the April Council meeting, and an alternative recommended by the Council's Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, will be analyzed further. The Council plans to adopt preliminary preferred alternatives in June. The Council prioritized restructuring the "Other Fish" and slope rockfish complexes. • *Whiting*: The Council set aside 2,500 metric tons of Pacific whiting to accommodate research catch and bycatch in pink shrimp fisheries. • *Barotrauma*: The Council changed the mortality rates it uses to manage

cowcod, canary, and yelloweye rockfish when descending devices are used to prevent barotrauma. More work needs to be done before new mortality rates are adopted. • *Essential fish habitat*: A request for proposals to changes in essential fish habitat for groundfish will be released May 1, with proposals due to the Council July 31. • *Electronic monitoring*: The Council will move ahead with electronic monitoring of compliance in the trawl catch share program. Electronic monitoring will reduce the need for observer coverage. If funding is available, the Council begin exploring this issue during a scoping session at its September 2013 meeting. • *Inseason adjustments*: The Council adopted the recreational measures contained in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife report for Marine Area 4 relative to cabezon and lingcod length limits and cabezon bag limits (<http://tinyurl.com/dybzg9b>). The Council also adopted the trawl Rockfish Conservation Area adjustments for 2013 and 2014 as noted at <http://tinyurl.com/c87ucxa>.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES (SARDINES, ANCHOVIES, MACKEREL, ETC.)

The Council considered the results of a recent workshop on Pacific sardines, and may take action in two areas. First, the Council is considering using a CalCOFI temperature measurement rather than the Scripps Pier temperatures, in order to estimate sardine productivity in any given year. The CalCOFI temperature series appears to show a better relationship with sardine productivity. Second, the Council is considering changing the start date of the sardine fishery from January 1st to July 1st. Both issues are slated for final action at the June 2013 meeting.

VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEMS

The Council is discussing a VMS requirement for tuna vessels longer than 24 meters. This issue will be taken up in June along with consideration of changes to the declaration requirements for vessels with VMS units acquired for the groundfish fishery.

OTHER BUSINESS.

Dr. Tim Sippel was appointed to the Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Dr. Ian Taylor was appointed to the Groundfish Management Team. • The Magnuson-Stevens Act, which guides fisheries management in the U.S., is due to be reauthorized soon. The Council discussed the changes it would like to see, including electronic monitoring and more flexible rebuilding plans.

NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council will be held June 20-25 in Garden Grove, California. The September meeting will be held September 12-17 in Boise, Idaho. You can listen to Council meetings online; see our website (www.pcouncil.org). Follow the Council agenda on Twitter at @PFMCagenda, and follow us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/PacificFisheryManagementCouncil>.