



The LINE. A Publication of the Pacific Fishery Management Council

Volume 1, No. 4, November 2012. www.pcouncil.org | 800-866-7204 | pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

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 November 2012 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 salmon management schedule for 2013 has been set. It starts with a Salmon Technical Team meeting in January 2013. For details, see <http://tinyurl.com/a3yj4bt>.

PACIFIC HALIBUT.

The Council adopted changes to the Area 2A Pacific Halibut Catch Sharing Plan for 2013. In the Columbia River Subarea Recreational Fishery, the spring fishery will be open Friday through Sunday, and the early season will be kept open until 80% of the subarea allocation is reached, instead of closing on the third Sunday in July. In the Oregon Central Coast Subarea Recreational Fishery, the nearshore fishery was reduced from seven days per week to three (Thursday-Saturday). A total allowable catch trigger of 700,000 lbs will be used to reallocate the summer all-depth quota to the spring all-depth (75%) and nearshore (25%) fisheries; if the total allowable catch is about 700,000 lbs, the allocation will not change. In the salmon troll fishery, incidentally-caught Pacific halibut may be retained beginning on April 1, 2014.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES.

The Council adopted a new process to consider exempted fishing permit (EFP) research proposals. Proposals for new EFPs and notices of intent for recurring EFPs are now due at the November Council meeting, with final action in March. **Pacific sardines:** The 2012 sardine assessment shows a biomass estimate of 659,539 metric tons (mt). The Council adopted a harvest guideline of 66,495 mt, including set-asides for incidental catch, tribal allocation, and EFP research. A table at <http://tinyurl.com/a4o948z> shows the harvest period allocations for 2013.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES.

The Council recommended continuing bilateral negotiations with Canada on the US-Canada Albacore Treaty. They noted that any discussion should address Canadian catch in US waters; that any new fishing regime should be based on pre-1998 levels of Canadian catch and effort in US waters; and that problems regarding access to Canadian ports by US vessels should be resolved. • In its recommendations to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, which coordinates international management of highly migratory species, the Council said the US should not agree to conservation measures that disadvantage US vessels or their access to a fair share of the internationally allowed harvest. Further, any agreed-to measures must be equitably enforced by all participating countries and include bycatch and artisanal fisheries. For more recommendations, see <http://tinyurl.com/a4o948z>.

ECOSYSTEM BASED MANAGEMENT.

The Council approved a preliminary Fishery Ecosystem Plan for public review (<http://tinyurl.com/avzofkn>, with changes). The revised plan and related documents will be posted to the Council web page in the near future to allow public review.

Published by the Pacific Fishery Management Council pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration contract number NA10NMF4410014.

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT.

The Council is still working on revising its biennial groundfish management process, with further action planned for March 2013. • The Council is looking into ways to reduce barotrauma of rockfish when they are released in the recreational fishery. They plan to discuss this further in April 2013 in Portland. For more details, see <http://tinyurl.com/cto4tqh>. **Inseason changes for sablefish:** The Council recommended adjustments to the proposed sablefish trip limits for the 2013 limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries for sablefish north of 36° N. latitude. For the limited entry fishery, the limits will change from "1,100 lbs per week, not to exceed 4,200 lbs per 2 months" to "950 lbs per week, not to exceed 2,850 lbs per 2 months" for Periods 1-6. For the open access fishery, the limits will change from "300 lb per day or one landing per week up to 610 lb per week, not to exceed 1,220 per 2 months" for Periods 1-6 to "300 lb per day or one landing per week up to 700 lb, not to exceed 1,400 per 2 month" for Periods 1-5 and "300 lb per day or one landing per week up to 300 lb, not to exceed 600 lbs per 2 months" for Period 6. **Changes to Washington recreational fisheries:** Additionally, the Council recommended changes to the Washington recreational fisheries for 2013 to reduce yelloweye rockfish mortality: For Marine Areas 3 (La Push) and 4 (Neah Bay), restrict the recreational bottomfish fishery to the area shoreward of 20 fathoms from May 1 to September 30, except on days open to the halibut fishery. On days that the halibut fishery is open, no bottomfish except lingcod, Pacific cod, and sablefish can be retained seaward of 20 fathoms. **Catch share program:** The Council made decisions on chafing gear, safe harbors for lenders, and an opening date for the shoreside whiting season (May 15); for more details, see <http://tinyurl.com/bxmn6fw>. • The Council recommended that shoreside whiting surplus quota pound carryover be handled the same as in 2012, when surplus carryover pounds were not issued. • The Council did not select widow quota share reallocation alternatives for analysis, but recommended that the moratorium on trading of widow be extended until action on that reallocation is completed. • The Council will discuss electronic monitoring in the trawl fishery at the March Council meeting, and plans to hold a workshop before that.

APPOINTMENTS.

The Council is adding a second At-Large Trawl seat to the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, and adding a tribal seat to the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team. For the full list of Council appointments to advisory bodies, see <http://tinyurl.com/bvbsuxu>.

NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for March 6-11, 2013. A draft agenda is available at <http://tinyurl.com/cvkbbyu4>. • Comments can be sent to pfmc.comments@noaa.gov. Questions? Call us at 1-866-806-7204.