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# INTRODUCTION

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This is the second report in an annual series of four reports prepared by the Salmon Technical Team (STT) of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) to document and help guide salmon fishery management off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. This report will be formally reviewed at the Council's March meeting. The third and fourth reports in this series will be developed at the close of the March and April Council meetings, respectively, to analyze the impacts of the Council's proposed and final ocean salmon fishery management recommendations for 2005.

This report provides 2005 salmon stock abundance projections, and an analysis of the impacts of 2004 regulations, or regulatory procedures, on the projected 2005 abundance. This analysis is analogous to that of a no-action alternative in a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, and is intended to give perspective in developing 2005 management measures. The report focuses on chinook and coho stocks that have been important in determining Council fisheries in recent years and on stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) with established National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) ESA consultation standards.

Chapter I provides a summary of stock abundance projections. Chapters II and III provide detailed stock-by-stock analyses of abundance, a description of prediction methodologies, and accuracy of past abundance predictions for chinook and coho salmon, respectively. Chapter IV summarizes abundance information for pink salmon. Three appendices provide supplementary information as follows: Appendix A provides a summary of Council stock management goals; Appendix B contains pertinent data for Oregon production index (OPI) area coho; Appendix C contains the Council's current harvest allocation schedules.

In 2002, the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) reached agreement on a management regime that constrains total fishery exploitation rates on key management units of naturally spawning coho salmon originating in Southern British Columbia, Puget Sound, and the Washington Coast. The agreement calls for the PSC Coho Technical Committee (CoTC) to develop a regional coho fishery planning model for application beginning in 2004. The CoTC has agreed to use Coho Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM) as the core for an initial version of the regional coho fishery planning model to provide a consistent basis for fishery planning processes in the United States and Canada.

The chinook fishery planning tools employed by the PSC and the Council are based on coded-wire tag (CWT) recovery data from the late 1970's to early 1980's. During this period, the predominant West Coast Vancouver Island (WCVI) troll harvest of chinook occurred from May through September. In recent years, Canada has conducted its chinook troll fishery off the WCVI in a much different pattern so as to minimize impacts on stocks of domestic conservation concern, particularly WCVI fall chinook and Interior Fraser (Thompson River) coho. Changes include the use of a smaller size limit (55 cm), taking the vast majority of chinook harvest from October to June, and dynamic inseason management to minimize impacts on WCVI chinook and Thompson River coho based on results of DNA sampling. The quality of impact projections of the WCVI troll fishery using existing chinook models becomes more uncertain as the magnitude of the harvest taken under these new fishing patterns increases. However, the available information on the stock and age composition of the WCVI chinook troll harvest under these recent fishing patterns does not form an adequate basis for modifying the Council's methods for preseason planning of chinook fisheries in 2005.

