

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

Each year, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) adopts ocean salmon fishing regulations for waters from three to 200 miles offshore. Concurrent with the PFMC process, state, federal, tribal, and industry representatives participate in a series of meetings, known as the North of Falcon process, to develop summer and fall regulations for the Columbia River.

The Commission is requested to adopt 2010 regulations for Columbia River and Buoy 10 recreational fisheries for the summer and fall timeframe. These modifications will help reduce the need for in-season management and provide the maximum angling opportunity within restrictive conservation requirements.

Based on a run size forecast of 88,800 adult summer Chinook (hatchery and wild origin), and a re-allocation of fish from the Colville tribes, approximately 5,600 fish each are available for harvest by non-Indian commercial and recreational fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam. These are the highest quotas for non-treaty recreational and commercial fisheries since summer Chinook seasons resumed in 2002 and 2005, respectively.

The 2010 sockeye forecast is for another large return (125,200 fish), although harvest opportunity will be constrained by a 1 percent federal take limit and because of a low predicted return of 14,300 fish to the Wenatchee River, which is only 62 percent of the escapement objective for this system.

Although federal take limits on naturally-spawning lower Columbia River tule and upriver bright fall Chinook will still constrain fall fisheries, the expected Chinook return in 2010 of 664,800 adults is considerably higher than 2009 (418,300 actual return). The expected return of 286,600 coho to the Columbia River is considerably lower than the strong 2009 return, resulting in reduced in-river commercial harvest opportunity.

ISSUE 1

COLUMBIA RIVER SUMMER AND FALL RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

ANALYSIS

In the NOF Process, the department, in consultation with Washington staff, sport and commercial constituents, and tribal representatives, established proposed regulations for 2010 Columbia River recreational and commercial fisheries for summer Chinook and fall fisheries for Chinook and coho. The fisheries adopted through this

process are consistent with Commission guidance and the “2008-2017 US v Oregon Management Agreement”. Fisheries are structured to optimize the harvest of Chinook and coho within Endangered Species Act limits and to provide a balanced opportunity for each fleet.

The larger expected return of summer Chinook will allow for expanded commercial and recreational fisheries in 2010. Based on public support during the NOF process for a longer retention season, the states are proposing the recreational fishery be limited to retention of hatchery-fish only (mark-selective).

Although forecasts are improved for most fall Chinook stocks, opportunities for both recreational and commercial fall fisheries will be similar to 2009 due to a lower allowable harvest rate for upriver bright fall Chinook. Although commercial fishing plans for the summer and fall seasons were discussed in detail during the 2010 NOF process, the actual seasons will be set via the Columbia River Compact process later this year. Commercial summer fisheries will likely be set in early June and the initial fall fisheries will be set in late July.

OPTIONS

- Option 1. Adopt modifications to the permanent rules (635-023-0128 and 635-023-0130) as proposed in Attachment 3.
- Option 2. Reject modifications.

STAFF

RECOMMENDATION Option 1.

DRAFT MOTION	I move to adopt the 2010 summer and fall Columbia River recreational fisheries as proposed by staff in Attachment 3.
EFFECTIVE DATE	June 16, 2010