

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

Chinook and coho salmon support important commercial and recreational fisheries in state-managed near-shore waters (zero to three miles off the Oregon coast) and federally-managed off-shore waters (three to two hundred miles off the Oregon Coast). These mixed stock fisheries are managed under constraints imposed by stocks listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and by allocation agreements among the states, between the United States and Canada and between the states and treaty tribes. Within these constraints, harvest quotas, seasons and management guidelines are established annually for off-shore and near-shore fisheries off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. Constraints for these fisheries include:

Chinook:

1. The allowable exploitation rate on wild Snake River fall Chinook in domestic and international ocean fisheries, which is not to exceed 70% of a pre-ESA baseline.
2. The allowable exploitation rate on lower Columbia River tule fall Chinook in domestic and international ocean and freshwater fisheries, which is likely to be 38% (new abundance-based range of 30%-41%; pending forecast in February).
3. The allowable ocean harvest rate on northern California coastal fall Chinook as measured by Klamath River Age 4 fall Chinook impacts, which is not to exceed 16%.
4. The minimum ocean escapement needed to attain the Maximum Sustainable Yield goal for North Fork Lewis River fall Chinook of 5,700 adult spawners.

Coho:

1. The total marine and freshwater allowable exploitation rate on Oregon Coastal Natural and lower Columbia River Natural coho, which is likely to be 15% (pending calculation of marine survival index in February).
2. The allowable ocean harvest rate of Rogue and Klamath coho, which is not to exceed 13%.

Ocean commercial and recreational fisheries for Chinook in California and Oregon areas south of Cape Falcon were highly constrained or closed in 2008-2010, due to reduced abundance of Sacramento fall Chinook. In 2011, forecasted returns to the Sacramento improved and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) adopted more traditional levels of commercial and recreational Chinook fishing in these areas. A moderate mark-selective recreational fishery and a limited non-mark-selective recreational fishery for coho were also approved. In Oregon and Washington areas north of Cape Falcon, the PFMC adopted reduced commercial and recreational quotas for Chinook due to Lower Columbia River (LCR) tule constraints, but coho quotas were identical to 2010.

The 2012 forecasts for Columbia River and Oregon coast coho stocks are

likely to be lower than 2011 returns; however, the allowable exploitation rate for 2012 is likely to be the same rate used in 2011. Forecasts for Columbia River Chinook are likely to be high, as in 2011. The combination of these will likely mean similar ocean fishery opportunities for Chinook and possibly reduced opportunities for coho in areas north of Cape Falcon. Forecasts for the Sacramento are anticipated to be large and forecasts for the Klamath are expected to be improved over 2011. Ocean Chinook opportunities south of Cape Falcon should be similar or better than 2011. However, the recreational mark-selective coho fishery will likely see a decline due to reduced abundance of coho. Coho limitations may constrain Chinook fishing opportunities in some areas.

Final 2011 escapement data, 2012 forecasts, and preliminary 2012 PFMC options for ocean salmon fisheries will be provided at the March 9, 2012 Commission meeting.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- The PFMC has multiple advisory committees, which provide public input to the regulatory process. The Salmon Technical Team, the Salmon Advisory Sub-panel, and the Scientific and Statistical Committee are made up of industry representatives, state, federal, and tribal scientists, and members of the public from Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho.
- The Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association and ODFW will sponsor an Ocean Salmon Industry Group (OSIG) meeting on February 28, 2012 to review 2012 forecasts and allow public input on ocean fishery options. A copy of ODFW's presentation to OSIG will be provided to the Commission on March 9, 2012.
- The PFMC will host a public hearing on March 26, 2012 in Coos Bay to receive comments on ocean salmon season options.
- Proposals for the Columbia River and Buoy 10 fisheries will be developed in the North of Cape Falcon negotiations that will occur during the period March 12-April 6.

ISSUE 1

OCEAN COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL SALMON FISHERIES

ANALYSIS

At its March 2-7, 2012 meeting, the PFMC will develop, and release for public review, a set of preliminary fisheries proposals for regulating ocean salmon fisheries in federal waters in 2012. A detailed description of the PFMC fishery options will be provided at the March 9, 2012 Commission meeting and will be summarized during the staff presentation.

The PFMC will adopt 2012 salmon fishing regulations for ocean waters from three miles to two hundred miles off-shore (federal jurisdiction) during its meeting April 1-6, 2012. The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission will be asked to adopt similar regulations for near-shore ocean waters from zero to three miles (state jurisdiction) at its meeting on April 20, 2012. The Commission has historically adopted federal regulations without change. Commission policy requires that changes from PFMC actions first be presented to the PFMC with a copy to the Secretary of Commerce, and adopted only after the Commission has

received, or waited a reasonable time, for a response from PFMC.

Regulations adopted in 2011, which are in effect through April of 2012, specify the opening of ocean Chinook seasons on March 15, 2012 for some Oregon areas south of Cape Falcon, unless the PFMC recommends a rescission of these regulations prior to that date.

OPTIONS

1. N/A

**STAFF
RECOMMENDATION**

1. N/A

DRAFT MOTION

N/A

EFFECTIVE DATE

N/A