

## Agenda Item Summary

### BACKGROUND

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) adopted ocean salmon fishing regulations on April 9, 2014 for ocean waters from three to 200 miles off shore (federal jurisdiction). The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) will be asked to adopt matching permanent regulations for ocean waters from zero to three miles off shore (state jurisdiction). Temporary rules that allowed state waters fisheries to begin concurrently with federal rules are already in place.

Ocean salmon seasons adopted by the PFMC are structured to address conservation and Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements for various Chinook and coho stocks. Forecasts for the Klamath and Sacramento Chinook populations indicate a strong return for 2014, though not as large as 2013. Forecasts for other Chinook stocks are similar to or greater than 2013 and Columbia River coho forecasts are significantly improved over 2013. The overall forecast for Columbia River fall Chinook is for a modern-record (since completion of Bonneville Dam in 1938) return of 1.6 million fish.

The Department is also required by Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 635-500-0135 to adopt regulations for ocean mixed-stock and terminal area fisheries that meet three specific criteria: 1) provide access by fisheries to harvestable surpluses of Chinook salmon that may exist, 2) maintain traditional in-river fisheries in most coastal river basins, and 3) meet spawning escapement goals in wild coastal Chinook populations. These fisheries also cannot impact other regional depressed salmon stocks under PFMC or Oregon management plans.

Staff is proposing sport and commercial troll seasons in two traditional terminal areas for 2014: Elk River - off Port Orford, and Chetco River - off Brookings. These terminal fisheries are successful at harvesting stocks returning to these locations with little interception of other Chinook stocks.

The remaining items in the draft OARs are housekeeping updates to reflect current practices in the fisheries.

### ISSUE 1

### OCEAN RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERIES

### ANALYSIS

Due to the continued strength of Sacramento and Klamath fall Chinook stocks, the PFMC adopted ocean Chinook fisheries off Oregon south of Cape Falcon that are similar to the relatively robust seasons in 2012 and 2013. Some additional constraints were necessary this year due to impact limitations on listed Coastal California Chinook.

Strong catches of Chinook in ocean troll fisheries should continue in 2014. Improved forecasts for Columbia River hatchery coho and

higher allowable impacts for lower Columbia River wild coho allow for substantial recreational coho fishery opportunity south of Cape Falcon, including mark-selective fishing in June, July, and August, and non-mark-selective fishing in September.

Details of the season structures and quotas adopted by the PFMC for commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries are contained in Attachment 5.

## OPTIONS

### 1. Ocean salmon fisheries (Staff Recommendation)

Adopt the federal regulations for state waters as proposed in Attachment 3.

### 2. Adopt more conservative or prohibit all fisheries

## ISSUE 2

## OCEAN SPORT AND COMMERCIAL CHINOOK REGULATIONS FOR TERMINAL AREAS

## ANALYSIS

### Elk River Ocean Terminal Fishery

The 2014 forecast for Elk River Chinook is 4,800 hatchery fish, which is less than the three-year average return. The 2014 forecast for the Sixes River is 1,400 Chinook, which is similar to the three-year average return.

In 2013, the sport season was November 1-30 with bag limits of two Chinook per day, but no more than one non adipose fin-clipped Chinook per day and ten per season. The 2013 commercial season was November 1-30 with a landing and possession limit of 20 Chinook per day and a minimum size of 26 inches. The Department is proposing the same season and bag limit and landing limit regulations for 2014 for both fisheries.

The commercial fishery has historically been a no quota fishery, and staff is proposing no quota for 2014. Commercial catch in 2013 was 1,182 fish and the highest catch observed since 1993 was 2,200 in 2004; neither of these years was operated under a quota.

No changes to the OARs are necessary if the Commission adopts the staff recommendation.

### Chetco River Ocean Terminal Fishery

The 2014 forecast for the Chetco River is 3,200 Chinook. The forecast for the Winchuck River is about 300 fish.

The Chetco terminal area includes the area between the north shore of Twin Rocks and the Oregon/California border. In 2013, the sport season was October 1-13 with a one Chinook per day (clipped or unclipped)/five per season bag limit and 24 inch minimum length. A total of 814 fish were caught. As in past years, the October dates were structured to encompass two full weekends of recreational opportunity.

The 2013 commercial season was the earlier of October 13-31 or a 750 Chinook quota, with a 20 Chinook daily landing limit and 28 inch minimum length. This quota was not reached in 2013, with only 155 Chinook landed. The proposed quota for 2014 is 600 Chinook.

Based on discussions with recreational fishers that participate in this fishery, the Department is proposing a modification to the daily bag limit designed to encourage retention of hatchery-produced fish while maintaining adequate wild fish protection. In prior years, the daily and season bag limits were one fish per day and five per season from this area. Fin-clipped and non fin-clipped Chinook could be retained. For 2014, the Department is proposing a bag limit of two Chinook per day, but no more than one may be non fin-clipped, and no more than five non-clipped Chinook may be retained for the season. In order to accomplish the goal of achieving two weekends of recreational opportunity, proposed dates for 2014 are:

- Recreational October 1-12, encompassing two weekends
- Commercial troll October 12-31.

**OPTIONS**

1. Elk River Terminal Area (Staff Recommendation)

No changes are recommended.

2. Chetco Terminal Area (Staff Recommendation)

Sport - October 1-12 with a one daily/five seasonal Chinook bag limit (clipped or unclipped) and 24 inch minimum length.

Commercial - October 12 through the earlier of October 31 or a 600 Chinook quota, with a daily landing and possession limit of 20 per day and a 28 inch minimum length.

3. More conservative fisheries

<b>DRAFT MOTION</b>	I move to approve the 2014 regulations for ocean sport and commercial salmon fisheries, and ocean terminal sport and commercial fisheries as proposed by staff and as reflected in the draft Oregon Administrative Rules shown in Attachment 3.
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b>	June 10, 2014.