

Agenda Item Summary

BACKGROUND

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) adopted ocean salmon fishing regulations on April 15, 2019 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).

Ocean salmon seasons adopted by the PFMC are structured to address conservation and Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements for various Chinook and Coho salmon stocks. Forecasts for Sacramento River and Klamath River fall-run Chinook Salmon are improved, but both stocks remain designated as “overfished” by the PFMC. Forecasts for many other salmon stocks are also lower than 2018 forecasts. The overall 2019 forecast for Columbia River fall-run Chinook Salmon is 329,000 fish and is lower than the 2018 actual return estimate of 420,700 fish. Coho Salmon returning to the Columbia River and Oregon Coastal Coho Salmon are both forecast to be higher than the 2018 forecasts as well as 2018 actual returns.

At the time of this writing, staff is still determining whether or not to propose commercial troll or recreational fisheries in the Elk River and Chetco River terminal areas.

ISSUE

OCEAN RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERIES

ANALYSIS

Due to the “overfished” status of Klamath River and Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon, the PFMC adopted ocean Chinook Salmon fisheries for south of Cape Falcon that reflect higher escapement goals to these systems. Effects of this will primarily occur in commercial troll fisheries, as recreational fisheries in this area harvest far fewer Chinook Salmon. The main constraints in planning 2019 Chinook Salmon fisheries were meeting PFMC’s revised escapement goal for Sacramento River fall-run Chinook Salmon and remaining within the limits of the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) for California Coastal Chinook Salmon stocks.

The forecasts for Coho Salmon (Columbia River and Oregon coast) are higher than 2018 forecasts and will allow for continued recreational Coho Salmon fishery opportunities south of Cape Falcon, including mark-selective fishing in July and August and limited 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 4.

OPTION

Ocean salmon fisheries (Staff Recommendation)

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

**DRAFT
MOTION**

I move to adopt the 2019 regulations for ocean recreational and commercial salmon fisheries as proposed by staff and as reflected in draft OARs shown in Attachment 3.

**EFFECTIVE
DATE**

April 22, 2019.