



Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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WEST COAST SALMON SEASON DATES SET

Portland, Or. – This week the Pacific Fishery Management Council adopted ocean salmon season recommendations that provide recreational and commercial opportunities for most of the Pacific coast, and achieve conservation goals for the numerous individual salmon stocks on the West Coast.

The recommendation will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service for approval by May 1, 2018.

“It has been another challenging year for the Council, its advisors, fishery stakeholders and the public as we strive to balance fishing opportunities with the conservation needs we are facing on Chinook and coho salmon stocks, both north and south of Cape Falcon,” said Council Executive Director Chuck Tracy. “The Council has recommended ocean salmon seasons on the west coast this year that provide important protections for stocks of concern, including Lower Columbia River natural fall Chinook, Puget Sound Chinook, Washington coastal coho, and Sacramento River fall Chinook.”

“This year’s package includes some very restrictive seasons in both commercial and recreational fisheries along the entire coast. Low abundances of Chinook and coho are in part due to the poor ocean conditions the adult fish faced as juveniles when they entered the ocean, and poor in-river habitat and water conditions. Tribal, commercial, and recreational fishers continue to bear a large part of the burden of conservation,” said Council Chair Phil Anderson.

Washington and Northern Oregon (North of Cape Falcon)

Fisheries north of Cape Falcon (near Nehalem in northern Oregon) depend largely on Columbia River Chinook and coho stocks. Overall, Columbia River fall Chinook forecasts are considered low to moderate compared to the recent 10-year average. Hatchery coho stocks originating from the Columbia River together with natural stocks originating from the Queets River and Grays Harbor are expected to return at low levels resulting in very low harvest quotas as was the case in 2017.

North of Cape Falcon, the overall non-Indian total allowable catch is 55,000 Chinook coastwide (compared to 90,000 last year) and 47,600 marked hatchery coho (the same as last year). Fisheries are designed to provide harvest opportunity on healthy Chinook returns primarily destined for the Columbia River, while avoiding coho stocks of concern.

Commercial Fisheries

Non-Indian ocean commercial fisheries north of Cape Falcon include traditional, but reduced, Chinook seasons in the spring (May-June) and summer season (July through mid-September). Non-Indian ocean commercial fisheries in this area will have access to a total of 27,500 Chinook (compared to 45,000 Chinook last year), and a marked coho quota of 5,600 (the same as last year).

Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon are similar in structure to past years, with quotas that include 40,000 Chinook and 12,500 coho (the same as last year).

Recreational Fisheries

The recreational fishery north of Cape Falcon opens to all salmon on June 23 in most areas (July 1 in Westport) and ends September 3 or when Chinook or coho quotas are reached. Recreational fisheries in this area will have access to total of 27,500 Chinook (compared to 45,000 Chinook last year), and a marked coho quota of 42,000 (the same as last year).

California and Oregon South of Cape Falcon, Oregon

Fisheries south of Cape Falcon (in northern Oregon) are constrained primarily by Klamath River fall Chinook, Sacramento River fall Chinook and Oregon Coastal Natural coho. The commercial fishery consists of modest Chinook fisheries, particularly in California. Recreational fisheries in Oregon contain both Chinook and coho opportunity, with coho opportunity including both mark-selective and non-mark-selective fisheries.

Commercial Fisheries

Commercial fisheries from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mt. will open on May 4 and will continue through August 29 with intermittent closures. This area will also be open continuously in September and October, with weekly limits and a depth restriction in October.

Fisheries from Humbug Mt, Oregon to Humboldt South Jetty, California will be open intermittently from May through August. Monthly quotas will be in place for the Oregon portion of the Klamath Management Zone (KMZ) from June through August. In the California portion of the KMZ, monthly Chinook quotas will be in place from May through August. The quotas all feature landing and possession limits, and the Californian portion of this area will be open five days a week.

Between Horse Mountain and Pigeon Point (Fort Bragg and San Francisco areas), the area will be open for a week in late July, most of August and all of September. From Pigeon Point to the Mexico border (Monterey), the Chinook season will be open during the first week in May and the last two weeks of June. There will also be a season from Point Reyes to Point San Pedro (subset of the San Francisco area), consisting of two five-day periods in October.

Recreational Fisheries

Recreational fisheries from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mt will allow Chinook retention from now through October. Coho fisheries consist of a mark-selective quota fishery of 35,000 in mid-summer (compared to 18,000 last year) and a non-mark-selective quota fishery of 3,500 in September (compared to 6,000 last year).

Fisheries from Humbug Mt, Oregon to the Oregon/California border will be open from mid-May through late August. The area from the Oregon/California border to Horse

Mountain, California will be open from June through Labor Day.

Fisheries from Horse Mountain to Pigeon Point (Fort Bragg and San Francisco areas) will be open from mid-June through October. The area from Pigeon Point to the U.S./Mexico border (Monterey area) is open now through early July.

For details on all seasons, please see the season descriptions on the Council website at <http://www.pcouncil.org>.

Management Process

The Council developed three management alternatives in early March for public review and further analysis. The review process included input from federal, state, and tribal fishery scientists and fishing industry members; public testimony, and three public hearings in coastal communities. The Council received additional scientific information and took public testimony at its April Council meeting before taking final action. The decision will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service for their review of consistency with the Endangered Species Act and other applicable law, and promulgation of federal regulations.

In addition, the coastal states will take independent actions through state processes that will include adoption of fishery regulations under state authority that are compatible to the Council's actions and include state water fisheries.

Council Role

The Pacific Fishery Management Council recommends management measures to National Marine Fisheries Service for fisheries off the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington under its fishery management plans for groundfish, salmon, highly migratory species (such as tunas), and coastal pelagic species (such as sardines and anchovies). The Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 to manage fisheries 3-200 miles offshore of the U.S. coastline.

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On the Web

- Pacific Fishery Management Council: <http://www.pcouncil.org>
 - Season recommendations for 2018 salmon management: <https://www.pcouncil.org/?p=53627>
- Preseason Report III Council Adopted Management Measures and Environmental Assessment Part 3 will be posted on the Council web page in the near future (on or about April 20).
- Description of 2018 salmon management process: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/>
- Fact sheet: Salmon: <https://tinyurl.com/yatybp6h>
- Fact sheet: Common Terms Used in Salmon Management: <https://tinyurl.com/ycbo4qbb>