



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Marc Gorelnik, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director

May 25, 2021

Mr. Barry Thom, Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service, West Coast Region
1201 NE Lloyd Blvd., Suite 1100
Portland, OR 97232-1274

Re: Council Recommendations for Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan Amendment 21: Management Measures for Southern Resident Killer Whales

Dear Mr. Thom:

This letter transmits the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) final recommendations on Amendment 21 to the *Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (FMP). The amendment addresses the effect of Pacific Council-area ocean salmon fisheries on the Chinook salmon prey base of Southern Resident Killer Whales. A management threshold of Chinook salmon abundance has been identified and, when preseason Chinook abundance north of Cape Falcon falls below that threshold, a series of management actions will be implemented through annual regulations. The Pacific Council met November 13 and 16-20, 2020 and concluded a multi-meeting process spanning 19 months to consider input from stakeholders and the public, review a range of alternatives and their associated impacts through draft Environmental Assessment documents, develop FMP amendatory language, and to adopt final preferred alternatives.

The Pacific Council recommends that a threshold for annual preseason Chinook abundance in the area north of Cape Falcon, Oregon be established based on the arithmetic mean of the seven lowest years during 1992-2016 based on Chinook abundance in time-step 1¹ of the Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (Alternative 3.1.2.c²). This currently equates to an abundance of 966,000 Chinook, but this value could change if the models used to calculate the abundance are updated.

When a given year's preseason abundance projection falls below the established threshold, the following management actions will be implemented in the Exclusive Economic Zone through annual regulations:

¹ Time-step one is defined as the annual pre-fishing abundance starting October 1 using the Fishery Regulation Assessment Model (FRAM).

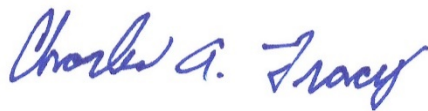
² The alternatives mentioned in this letter correspond to those in Agenda Item F.2.a, [SRKW Workgroup Report 1](#) and [SRKW Workgroup Report 2](#) in the November 2020 Briefing Book, found on the [Pacific Council's website](#).

1. Reduce the overall quota for non-Indian fisheries north of Cape Falcon to no more than the value generated by a regression analysis of historic time-step 1 Chinook abundance and the overall non-Indian Chinook quota north of Cape Falcon (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 1A).
2. No more than 50 percent of the non-Indian commercial troll Chinook salmon quota will be assigned to the spring (May-June) period (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 2A).
3. Close the Columbia River Control Zone Expansion, as described in the attached FMP amendatory language, to salmon retention from the start of non-Indian ocean salmon fisheries until June 15 (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 3A).
4. Close the Grays Harbor Control Zone to salmon retention from the start of non-Indian ocean salmon fisheries until June 15 (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 3B).
5. Delay the start of the commercial troll fishery between Cape Falcon and the Oregon/California border until April 1 (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 5A).
6. Close the Oregon and California waters of the Klamath Management Zone to commercial and recreational salmon fisheries from October 1 through March 31 of the following year (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 5B and Option 6B).
7. Close the Klamath River Control Zone Expansion to salmon retention from September 1 through March 31 of the following year (Alternative 3.1.2.e, Option 6C).
8. Close commercial and recreational salmon fisheries in the Monterey management area from October 1 through March 31 of the following year (Option 3.1.2.e, Option 6A).

Details of the Pacific Council's final preferred alternatives and the adopted FMP changes can be found in the enclosed amendatory FMP language and the *Draft Environmental Assessment* prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

Should your staff have any questions regarding the Pacific Council's recommendations, please have them contact [Ms. Robin Ehlke](#) or [Mr. Mike Burner](#) of my staff.

Sincerely,



Charles A. Tracy
Executive Director

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Enclosures: Draft Environmental Assessment for Amendment 21 to the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan: Salmon Fishery Management Measures To Allow For Prey Availability and Foraging Opportunities for Southern Resident Killer Whales (RTID 0648-XA696)

Amendment 21: Adopted Changes to the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan

Cc: Pacific Council Members

Mr. Jeromy Jording

Ms. Peggy Mundy

Dr. Michael O'Farrell

Mr. Jon Carey

Mr. Richard Heap

Ms. Megan Waters

Mr. Mike Burner

Ms. Robin Ehlke