




Pacific Fishery Management Council

7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, OR 97220-1384
Phone 503-820-2280 | Toll free 866-806-7204 | Fax 503-820-2299 | www.pcouncil.org
Dorothy M. Lowman, Chair | Donald O. McIsaac, Executive Director

January 15, 2016

Mr. Robert Turner
Asst. Regional Administrator, Sustainable Fisheries Division
National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region
510 Desmond Drive SE
Lacey, WA 98503

RE: Pacific Fisheries Management Council's salmon season-setting for 2016


Dear Mr. Turner:


As the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council) begins its 2016 salmon season-setting process, we would like to draw your attention to a potential concern related to the Pacific Council's ability to model 2016 fishing alternatives, achieve its fishery and conservation objectives, and to ensure its fisheries are consistent with treaty Indian fishing rights. As you know, the Pacific Council appreciates and has relied on close coordination with the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) on a variety of fishery management issues, including the formulation of pre-season alternatives. Traditionally, the PSC, particularly its Joint Chinook Technical Committee (CTC), provides the Pacific Council an agree-to projection of salmon abundance and catch in northern fisheries.

The Pacific Council understands the tremendous amount of work that goes into data sources and calibration of the PSC Chinook Model and is grateful for the strong contributions by the CTC. Unfortunately, in 2015 the Pacific Council conducted its season-setting process without the benefit of CTC-agreed modeling results. As we move into 2016, the Pacific Council is concerned that there may remain a lack of CTC consensus on data critical to modelling alternatives and that there may again be a lack of CTC consensus on 2016 abundance projections.

I am writing to request that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) encourage the PSC and its advisory groups to reach agreement on the 2016 calibration of the PSC Chinook model and to convey those results to the Pacific Council in a timely manner so as to allow adequate preparation for the Pacific Council's meeting April 9-14, 2016. If it becomes apparent that this cannot occur, we would appreciate a recommendation from NOAA Fisheries on how it suggests the Pacific Council proceed in its modeling of alternatives within the 2016 season-setting process.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and your commitment to ocean salmon fisheries.

Sincerely,



Donald O. McIsaac, Ph.D.

MDB:kma

cc

Council Members
Mr. Chuck Tracy
Mr. Mike Burner
Salmon Technical Team
Salmon Advisory Subpanel