

Option 1:

Allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon five days a week with a limit of no more than three adults to be retained over any period of seven consecutive days. The retention of adult Chinook salmon would be prohibited on Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from August 1, 2005 through November 30 or until the quota is met. During the modified closures anglers could continue to catch and release adult Chinook salmon, harvest two Chinook salmon less than 22 inches total length per day, and retain one hatchery steelhead. No more than 12 Chinook salmon may be possessed, of which no more than 3 may be over 22 inches total length. Based on historical harvest information, this option would allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon in the lower Klamath through approximately September 6, upper Klamath through approximately October 4, lower Trinity through October 21, and upper Trinity through October 6.

Option 2:

Allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon five days a week with a limit of no more than two adults to be retained over any period of seven consecutive days. The retention of adult Chinook salmon would be prohibited on Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from August 1, 2005 through November 30 or until the quota is met. During the modified closures anglers could continue to catch and release adult Chinook salmon, harvest two Chinook salmon less than 22 inches total length per day, and retain one hatchery steelhead. No more than 12 Chinook salmon may be possessed, of which no more than 2 may be over 22 inches total length. Based on historical harvest information, this option would allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon in the lower Klamath through approximately September 8, upper Klamath through approximately October 7, lower Trinity through November, and upper Trinity through October 12.

Option 3:

Allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon four days a week with a limit of no more than two adults to be retained over any period of seven consecutive days. The retention of adult Chinook salmon would be prohibited on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from August 1, 2005 through November 30 or until the quota is met. During the modified closures anglers could continue to catch and release adult Chinook salmon, harvest two Chinook salmon less than 22 inches total length per day and retain one hatchery steelhead. No more than 12 Chinook salmon may be possessed, of which no more than 2 may be over 22 inches total length. Based on historical harvest information, this option would allow anglers to retain adult Chinook salmon in the lower Klamath approximately September 17, upper Klamath through approximately October 17, lower Trinity through November, and upper Trinity through October 21.

V. Reasons for Modifications of Originally Proposed Language of Initial Statement of Reasons:

Salmonids from the Klamath River basin are managed through a cooperative system of state, federal, and tribal management agencies. Regulations developed through this system are designed to meet natural and hatchery escapement needs for these stocks, while providing equitable harvest opportunities to ocean (sport and commercial) and river (sport and tribal) users. The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) is responsible for adopting recommendations for the management of sport and commercial ocean fisheries in the fishery management zone (three to 200 miles offshore) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California. When approved by the Secretary of Commerce, these recommendations are implemented as ocean fishing regulations by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Department and the Commission adopt regulations for State waters (inside three miles) that are consistent with federal regulations.

The in-river angling community testified before the Fish and Game Commission asking for an increase in river allocations from 15% to 20%. Projections of the abundance of adult Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon in the 2005 season are considerably lower than 2004. Based on this low abundance, all user groups including ocean commercial, ocean recreational, river recreational and tribal fishers will be impacted. Consequently, the Fish and Game Commission voted not to increase the in-river allocation and tentatively adopted an in-river quota of 15% (1,262) of the adult Chinook salmon. This action was taken at the Commission's Klamath River regulation discussion hearing on March 18, 2005.

It is unlikely that the in-river allocation will be re-evaluated and increased. The Department held three public meetings to discuss reduced river allocations and the potential impacts to anglers, communities and small businesses which rely on the Chinook salmon fishery in the Klamath River basin. The consensus among the river community was to identify regulation options that would extend the fishing season for adult Chinook salmon. The anglers and members of the surrounding community have indicated that extending the fishing season through Labor Day (September 5, 2005) would be desirable. The Department has developed three options with this in mind. All three options reduce the number of days per week anglers would be allowed to retain an adult Chinook salmon combined with a reduction in the adult Chinook salmon weekly possession limit.

VI. Summary of Primary Considerations Raised in Opposition and in Support.

To be incorporated in the FSOR.

Updated Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Hook Size Change for Anadromous Waters of the Klamath River System: Current regulations in subsection (b)(91.1)(A)2. of Section 7.50 define Special Fishing Methods Restrictions for all anadromous waters of the Klamath River below Iron Gate Dam. These requirements restrict the use of single barbless hooks having a shank longer than 2 inches, or any multiple barbless hook having a gap between the point and shank greater than 3/4 inch. For clarification and in the interest of consistency, the Department is recommending language from Section 2.10, Hook and Weight Restrictions be incorporated in subsection (b)(91.1)(A)2. of Section 7.50. This recommendation would eliminate the 2 inch shank restrictions on single barbless hooks and create a maximum gap for single barbless hooks of 1 inch. The proposed regulation would continue to restrict the use of any multiple hooks with a gap greater than 3/4 inch. This recommendation will make fishing gear restrictions for all anadromous waters of the Klamath River system consistent with statewide restrictions for river and streams excluding the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Quota Adjustment: Under current regulations in subsection (b)(91.1)(C), the allowable Chinook salmon harvest in the Klamath River system is based on spawning run-size predictions and spawning escapement goals. The harvest and the distribution of the catch are regulated by seasons, daily and weekly bag and possession limits, and area quotas and allocations.

Annual adjustment of the quota is necessary to meet natural and hatchery escapement needs for Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon stocks, while providing equitable harvest opportunities for ocean (sport and commercial) and river (sport and tribal) users. The total river system recreational harvest of fall-run Chinook salmon is currently regulated by a quota. In 2004, the share, or impact quota, for the Klamath River basin allowable sport catch was 4,700 adult fish (15 percent of the total allowable harvest by non-tribal fisheries, including ocean-commercial, ocean-recreational and recreational-river fisheries).

~~Projections of the abundance of adult Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon in the 2005 season are not yet available from the PFMC. Consequently, the Department is suggesting that the Commission consider a range of 0 - 21,000 adult Chinook salmon quota for the river recreational fishery for notice requirements.~~ **Projections of the abundance of adult Klamath River fall-run Chinook salmon in the 2005 season are considerably lower than 2004. Consequently, the Fish and Game Commission at their March 18, 2005 meeting tentatively adopted an in-river quota of 1,262 adult Chinook salmon.** ~~The Commission also will consider modifying the share of the allowable catch allocated to the river recreational fishery (which was 15 percent in 2004). Adjustment of this share is included in the recommended 0 - 21,000 range of the quota. As in prior years, the river recreational fishing quota would be split evenly between the fisheries within each sub-quota areas above and below the Highway 96 bridge at Weitchpec.~~

Closures to Modify Allocations: The Department believes that the regulations should, if possible, allow fishing opportunities for adult fall-run Chinook salmon throughout the entire Klamath River Basin. Currently, the annual recreational impact quota is split evenly, with 50% of the quota allocated to the Klamath River below the Highway 96 bridge at Weitchpec and 50% to the remainder of the Klamath River Basin above the Highway 96 bridge at Weitchpec, including the Trinity River. Proposed regulations define three sub-quota areas above the Highway 96 bridge at Weitchpec. The three quotas ensure equitable harvest of adult fall-run Chinook in the upper Klamath and Trinity rivers.

The 2005 quota to be recommended by the PFMC is not currently known; however, **the Fish and Game Commission tentatively adopted a 15% (1,262) fish quota for** ~~it is expected to be similar to what was established for the 2004~~ **2005** season. All closures for adult Chinook salmon will be designed to maximize and distribute the harvest of adult fall-run Chinook salmon while managing the fishery within the impact quota.

The current quota system requires the Department to monitor angler harvest of adult Chinook in each sub-quota area on a real-time basis. Due to funding and personnel reductions, the Department will be unable to deploy adequate personnel to conduct harvest monitoring in the upper Klamath River above the Highway 96 bridge at Weitchpec and the Trinity River above Willow Creek for the 2005 season. Instead, the following recommendations are based on data analysis and management experiences from previous years that estimate harvest in the upper reaches of the Klamath River Basin relative to known harvest in the lower Klamath River.

1. Klamath River Main Stem - Allowable Fishing Season from the Highway 96 Bridge at Weitchpec to 3,500 feet below Iron Gate Dam: The Department has reviewed all available Klamath Chinook harvest and run-timing data for the Klamath River from several previous years. Based on this review, the Department has developed a Harvest Predictor Model (HPM) which incorporates creel data from the Klamath River from Iron Gate Dam downstream to the confluence with the Pacific Ocean. The HPM is driven by the positive relationship between the number of fall-run Chinook salmon harvested in the lower Klamath River and the number of fish harvested in the upper river. The HPM will allow the Department to implement fishing closures to ensure that anglers do not exceed established quota targets.

2. Upper Trinity River Main Stem - Allowable Fishing Season from Old Lewiston Bridge to the Highway 299 West Bridge at Cedar Flat: The Department has reviewed all available Trinity River Chinook harvest and run-timing data for this area. Based on this review, the Department has developed a HPM which incorporates creel data from the Klamath River from Iron Gate Dam downstream to the confluence with the Pacific Ocean and the Trinity River from Lewiston Dam downstream to the confluence with the Klamath River. The HPM is driven by the positive relationship between the number of fall-run Chinook

salmon harvested in the lower Klamath and Trinity Rivers and the number of fish harvested in the upper Trinity River. The HPM will allow the Department to implement fishing closures to ensure that anglers do not exceed established quota targets.

3. Lower Trinity River Main Stem - Allowable Fishing Season from Hawkins Bar Bridge (Road to Denny) Downstream to the Mouth of the Trinity: The Department has reviewed all available Trinity River Chinook harvest and run-timing data for this area. Based on this review, the Department has developed a HPM which incorporates creel data from the Klamath River from Iron Gate Dam downstream to the confluence with the Pacific Ocean and the Trinity River from Lewiston Dam downstream to the confluence with the Klamath River. The HPM is driven by the positive relationship between the number of fall-run Chinook salmon harvested in the lower Klamath River and the number of fish harvested in the lower Trinity River. The HPM will allow the Department to implement fishing closures to ensure that anglers do not exceed established quota targets.

~~**Maintain Daily Bag Limit, Weekly Bag Limit and Possession Limit:** The 2005 quota to be recommended by the PFMC is not currently known; however, it is expected to be similar to what was established for the 2004 season. Consequently, the Department is not recommending any changes in the daily bag, weekly bag, and possession limits for the 2005 Klamath River sport fishery.~~

Options designed to maximize and distribute the harvest of adult fall-run Chinook salmon:

The Department is proposing three regulatory options designed to maintain the harvest of adult Chinook salmon in the Klamath River through Labor Day (September 5, 2005) weekend. All three options are based on the probable in-river quota of 1,262 fish and input received from the angling community at three public meetings.

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