

salmon abundance. The CV consists of the Sacramento and San Joaquin River systems.

Sacramento River Fall Chinook Returns

In 2007, an estimated 87,996 natural and hatchery adults returned to the Sacramento River. This is the second lowest return on record and it is below the lower boundary of the PFMC FMP conservation goal of 122,000 to 180,000 adults. The Sacramento River adult fall Chinook salmon returns since 2003 are shown in Table 1.

Year	Naturals		Hatchery		Totals	
	Adults	Jacks	Adults	Jacks	Adults	Jacks
2003	427,957	22,051	113,698	13,085	541,655	35,136
2004	210,736	35,105	86,000	41,339	296,736	76,444
2005	226,611	13,461	188,682	6,774	415,293	20,235
2006	194,911	6,644	81,625	3,449	276,536	10,093
2007*	68,101	1,574	22,313	447	90,414	2,021

* Preliminary data

CV Chinook Jack Returns for All Runs

In addition to the missed FMP conservation objective, the CV Chinook jack returns for all runs (fall, late-fall, winter and spring) was 5,939 fish which is a record low level. The annual CV jack returns are used to calculate CV ocean abundance. The CV adult and jack Chinook salmon returns since 2003 are shown in Table 2.

Year	Naturals		Hatchery		Totals	
	Adults	Jacks	Adults	Jacks	Adults	Jacks
2003	473,595	26,216	113,698	13,085	587,293	39,301
2004	243,825	40,977	86,000	41,339	329,825	82,316
2005	267,720	17,870	188,682	6,774	456,402	24,644
2006	227,374	9,606	81,625	3,449	308,999	13,055
2007*	100,870	5,492	22,313	447	123,183	5,939

* Preliminary data

The reasons for the low 2007 CV fall Chinook salmon returns are not clear at this time, but negative ocean conditions are a possible factor which has also affected west coast salmon stocks from British Columbia to Oregon. The 2008 CV abundance will be published in the PFMC *Preseason Report / Stock Abundance Analysis for 2008 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* which will be available in late February.

Further Commission action affecting the CV salmon sport fishery will take place after the PFMC meets to discuss 2008 salmon fisheries. On March 14, 2008, the PFMC will develop the ocean salmon fisheries regulatory options for public review and the final PFMC regulation recommendations will be made on April 11, 2008.

Proposed Regulations

The Department is proposing bag limit reductions for the CV salmon fisheries in response to any federal action in the ocean. For public notice purposes, the Department is proposing the following range of bag limits from present regulations as shown in the following paragraphs.

1. American River, subsection 7.50(b)(5)
 - a. Subsections (A) through (D) – bag limit range of 0 to 3.
 - b. Subsection (E) – bag limit range of 0 to 2.
2. Auburn Ravine Creek, subsection 7.50(b)(12.5) – bag limit range of 0 to 2.
3. Bear River, subsection 7.50(b)(18.5)(B) – bag limit range of 0 to 2.
4. Coon Creek, subsection 7.50(b)(43.5) – bag limit range of 0 to 2.
5. Dry Creek, subsection 7.50(b)(59.5) – bag limit range of 0 to 2.
6. Feather River, subsections 7.50(b)(68)
 - a. Subsection (C) – bag limit range of 0 to 3 from January 1 to last day of February and July 16 to September 30.
 - b. Subsection (C) – bag limit range of 0 to 1 from March 1 through July 15.
 - c. Subsection (D) – bag limit range of 0 to 1 from March 1 through July 15.
 - d. Subsection (D) – bag limit range of 0 to 3 from July 16 through the last day in February.
 - e. Subsection (E) – bag limit range of 0 to 3 from July 16 through the last day in February.
7. Merced River, subsection 7.50(b)(118)(B) – bag limit range of 0 to 1.
8. Mokelumne River, subsection 7.50(b)(124)(A) and (B) – bag limit range of 0 to 3.
9. Napa River, subsection 7.50(b)(129)(B) – bag limit range of 0 to 1.
10. Sacramento River, subsection 7.50(b)(156)
 - a. Subsection (H) – bag limit range of 0 to 2 from August 1 through January 14.
 - b. Subsection (J) – bag limit range of 0 to 2 from July 16 to January 1.
11. San Joaquin River, subsection 7.50(b)(168.5)
 - a. Subsection (A) – bag limit range of 0 to 1
 - b. Subsection (B) and (C) – bag limit range of 0 to 1 from January 1 to October 31.

12. Stanislaus River, subsection 7.50(b)(186)(B) – bag limit range of 0 to 1.
13. Tuolumne River, subsection 7.50(b)(198)(E) – bag limit range of 0 to 1.
14. Yuba River, subsection 7.50(b)(212)(A) – bag limit range of 0 to 2 from January 1 to February 28 and August 1 through October 15.

(b) Authority and Reference Sections from Fish and Game Code for Regulation:

Authority: Sections 200, 202, 205, 215, 220, 240, 315 and 316.5, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 200, 202, 205, 206, 215, and 316.5, Fish and Game Code.

(c) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change:

None.

(d) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change:

None.

(e) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication:

No public meetings are being held prior to the notice publication. The PFMC will hold a series of public hearings to receive input prior to finalizing the recreational ocean salmon recommendations in April.

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action:

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change:

The Commission could reduce season duration for salmon, require additional gear restrictions, or close entire river systems all fisheries which include trout, steelhead, striped bass, sturgeon and other non-salmonids.

(b) No Change Alternative:

The no change alternative would result in continued low abundance of CV salmon, additional federal measures on listed CV salmon stocks, or severe restrictions on California's ocean salmon fisheries.

(c) Consideration of Alternatives:

In view of the information currently possessed, no reasonable alternative considered would be more effective in carrying out the purposes for which the regulation is proposed, or would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the proposed regulation.

V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action:

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment. Therefore, no mitigation is necessary.

VI. Impact of Regulatory Action:

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following initial determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

(a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete with Businesses in Other States:

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states. The proposed changes are necessary for the continued preservation of the resource and therefore the prevention of adverse economic impacts.

(b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California:

None.

(c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business:

The agency is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

(d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State:

None.

(e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies:

None.

(f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts:

None.

(g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4:

None.

(h) Effect on Housing Costs:

None.

Informative Digest (Policy Statement Overview)

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) annually reviews the status of west coast salmon populations. As part of that process, it recommends ocean salmon fisheries regulations aimed at meeting biological and fishery allocation goals specified in law or established in the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP). These recommendations coordinate west coast management of sport and commercial ocean salmon fisheries in the Federal fishery management zone (3 to 200 miles offshore) off the coasts of Washington, Oregon, and California.

Although there are no PFMC regulatory options to review at this time, there exists a strong possibility of ocean water closures off California and PFMC recommendations for additional salmon fishery closures in inland waters due to projected low Central Valley (CV) fall Chinook salmon abundance. The CV consists of the Sacramento and San Joaquin River systems.

The reasons for the low 2007 CV fall Chinook salmon returns are not clear at this time, but negative ocean conditions are a possible factor which has also affected west coast salmon stocks from British Columbia to Oregon. The 2008 CV abundance will be published in the PFMC *Preseason Report / Stock Abundance Analysis for 2008 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* which will be available in late February.

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