

current year divided by the estimated abundance of age-4 fish on September 1 of the previous year. The standard is intended to prevent harvest impacts on California coastal chinook from increasing substantially above levels that occurred between 1996–1999. The ocean harvest rate on Klamath River fall chinook is 0.16 for the Council's 2003 recommendation.

NMFS' consultation standard requires an exploitation rate of no more than 15 percent for Oregon coastal natural (OCN) coho, and no more than 13 percent for Rogue/Klamath coho. The Council's recommendations were 14.4 percent and 9.6 percent, respectively. The 2003 ocean abundance estimate for OCN is 117,900 coho, which is 164 percent of the 2002 preseason prediction of 71,800 coho, and 39 percent of the post-season estimate of 304,500 coho.

The Lower Columbia River (LCR) chinook ESU is comprised of a spring component, a far north-migrating bright component (Brights have a relatively long time interval between freshwater entry and spawning and are primarily destined for areas higher in the Columbia River drainage.), and a component of north-migrating tules (Tules spawn within a few weeks of river return, most to production areas lower in the drainage, and are distinguished by their darker color and advanced state of maturation.). LCR tule stocks are impacted substantially in Council fisheries, with the spring stocks and the bright component of the ESU impacted to a lesser degree. There are four self-sustaining populations of tule chinook in the Lower Columbia River (Coweeman, East Fork Lewis, Clackamas, and Sandy) that are not substantially influenced by hatchery strays. The current ESA consultation standards constrain the exploitation rate on LCR chinook to a Rebuilding Exploitation Rate (RER) for the Coweeman population to not more than 49 percent. The Council's 2003 recommendations have an estimated exploitation rate of 47 percent. This constraint was one of the major drivers for formulating Council fisheries this year.

Snake River wild fall chinook are listed under the ESA as a threatened species. Direct information on the stock's ocean distribution and on fishery impacts is not available. Fishery impacts on Snake River fall chinook are evaluated using the Lyons Ferry Hatchery stock as an indicator. The Lyons Ferry stock is widely distributed and harvested by ocean fisheries from southern California to Alaska. NMFS' ESA consultation standard requires that

Council fisheries must be managed to ensure that the Adult Equivalent (AEQ) exploitation rate on age-3 and age-4 adults for the combined Southeast Alaska, Canadian, and Council fisheries is not more than 70 percent of that observed during the 1988–1993 base period. The Council's 2003 recommendations, combined with expected impacts in Southeast Alaska and Canada fisheries, have an estimated age $\frac{3}{4}$ AEQ exploitation rate that is 67 percent of that observed during the 1988–1993 base period. In the last few years Snake River wild fall chinook have not been a driver in formulating Council fisheries, primarily due to low Canadian impacts. However, with some West Coast chinook stocks increasing in abundance, Canadian catch restrictions, especially in troll fisheries, have been easing. As a result, in the last 2 years the Snake River fall chinook age $\frac{3}{4}$ AEQ exploitation rate across all ocean fisheries has increased and is now close to the ESA limit.

This is the fourth year that NMFS provided guidance to the Council related to the Puget Sound chinook ESU. NMFS' consultation standards for Puget Sound chinook stocks are expressed in terms of total or southern U.S. fishery exploitation rate ceilings, or terminal escapement objectives. Under the current management structure, Council fisheries are included as part of the suite of fisheries that comprise the fishing regime negotiated each year by the co-managers under *U.S. v. Washington* to meet management objectives for Puget Sound and Washington Coastal salmon stocks. Because these management objectives and the management planning structure address fisheries wherever they exist, Council and Puget Sound fisheries are interconnected. Therefore, in adopting its regulations, the Council must determine that its fisheries in the ocean, when combined with the suite of other fisheries impacting this ESU, meet the management targets set for stocks within this ESU. NMFS estimated that the exploitation rates from Council-managed fisheries on Puget Sound chinook populations will range from zero to eight percent. Management actions taken to meet exploitation rate targets will, therefore, occur primarily in the Puget Sound fisheries, but the nature of the existing process is such that ocean fishery impacts will be accounted for, and are potentially liable to constraining measures to meet particular targets.

NMFS is evaluating the "Puget Sound Comprehensive Chinook Management Plan: Harvest Management Component as a Resource Management Plan" for

Puget Sound chinook under the ESA 4(d) rule (RMP). The RMP, jointly developed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Puget Sound Treaty Tribes, includes stock-specific harvest management objectives for Puget Sound chinook. NMFS has determined the 2003 ocean and inside fisheries are consistent with the RMP, and determined preliminarily that the RMP is consistent with the 4(d) rule. NMFS plans to complete its final 4(d) determination and biological opinion of Council fisheries by the end of May. Ultimately, fisheries will be managed consistent with NMFS' final 4(d) determination and biological opinion. In the unlikely event that NMFS' ultimate conclusion is that management measures regarding Puget Sound chinook are required beyond those being adopted by NMFS for the Council area fisheries and the measures planned by the state and tribes for the inside Puget Sound fisheries, such measures can be implemented through further adjustments to either Council salmon fisheries, or Puget Sound salmon fisheries which are not regulated by the Council.

Management Measures for 2003 Fisheries

The Council recommended ocean harvest levels and management measures for 2003 fisheries are designed to apportion the burden of protecting the weak stocks identified and discussed in PRE I equitably among ocean fisheries and to allow maximum harvest of natural and hatchery runs surplus to inside fishery and spawning needs. NMFS finds the Council's recommendations responsive to the goals of the Salmon FMP, the requirements of the resource, and the socio-economic factors affecting resource users. The recommendations are consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and U.S. obligations to Indian tribes with federally recognized fishing rights, and U.S. international obligations regarding Pacific salmon. Accordingly, NMFS has adopted them.

North of Cape Falcon, OR, the 2003 management measures have a slightly lower chinook quota and substantially higher coho quota relative to the 2002 season. The total allowable catch for 2003 is 124,000 chinook and 300,000 coho; these fisheries are restricted to protect depressed Lower Columbia River wild coho, Washington coastal, Puget Sound, and OCN coho. Washington coastal and Puget Sound chinook generally migrate to the far