



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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March 23, 2016

Dear Washington Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Participants:

The purpose of this letter is to provide information about coastal Washington CPS fisheries – Pacific sardine, Pacific mackerel, Northern anchovy – including recent management actions, fishery regulations and upcoming meetings.

This letter continues a shift in how we address management of and share information for coastal sardine, mackerel and anchovy fisheries. With the recent approval of a trial emerging commercial fishery for Pacific mackerel, it makes sense to begin to think of a “CPS” fishery. Sardine and mackerel fishery seasons run concurrently, and all three species are subject to federal regulation through the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) fishery management plan; and capture of all three overlaps – typically bycatch or incidental catch in a CPS fishery is other CPS species. Resource and ecosystem considerations are also supported by a comprehensive perspective.

Key upcoming CPS management activities:

- The rule proposing a new emerging trial commercial fishery for Pacific mackerel was approved in February 2016 and is effective March 29, 2016. Attachment 1 describes the steps needed to acquire the appropriate licence and permit, and current catch limits.
- Management measures for the 2016-2017 Pacific sardine fishing year will be considered and adopted in April at the Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting in Vancouver, Washington. Attachment 2 includes information on the most recent sardine assessment, and meeting details.
- Anchovy have received much attention lately – a workshop to evaluate potential assessment approaches for short-lived, data-poor stocks such as anchovy is scheduled for May 2016. Reports to the Council are scheduled for September and November 2016. The Council could take action on recommendations or alternatives resulting from the workshop and associated analysis at the November meeting. See attachment 3.
- Two additional state rule actions are in process: 1) like current restrictions for sardine, the amount of mackerel that processors can reduce will be limited; and 2) the sardine regulation will be amended to better align it with existing federal and state rule and accomplish a few minor housekeeping changes. Separate notification will be sent with opportunity to comment in May.

As referenced above, attachments to this letter address each species/fishery in more detail. I welcome feedback on this format. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call me: (360)591-5872

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorna Wargo".

Lorna Wargo

Attachment 1

Pacific Mackerel

The Washington rule proposal to establish an emerging trial commercial fishery for the directed harvest of Pacific mackerel was approved by WDFW Director Jim Unsworth in February. This fishery was established following industry requests to provide targeted mackerel fishing opportunity. Prior to this action, mackerel could only be landed incidentally in other CPS fisheries. The final rule is enclosed; the entire rule package can be found at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/about/regulations/>

The rule will be in effect March 27, 2016, just prior to the April 1 season opening. Fishers interested in participating in this fishery will need to obtain an Emerging Commercial Fishery License and a Trial Fishery Permit for Pacific mackerel. The license can be obtained from WDFW Licensing located in the headquarters office at Olympia. The fee is \$290 for residents and \$400 for non-residents. The permit is generated, separately, once the license application is received and can take a week to process. There is no fee for the permit. The permit must be on a vessel before entering the fishery. Attached you will also find an example of this permit; this example is not a valid permit, it is merely to show what you will receive when you apply for a permit. Please feel free to contact Kristen Hinton at (360)490-3826 if you have questions.

Pacific mackerel were fully assessed to determine stock size in 2015 and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) adopted the harvest guidelines and catch targets for both the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 fishery years at their June 2015 meeting.

Beginning April 1, 2016, Washington fishers can participate in the 2015-2016 Pacific mackerel fishery which will remain open through June 30, 2016 or until the annual catch target of 20,469 metric tons is taken. Landings of mackerel total approximately 4000 mt through March, 2016, less than 200 metric tons of Pacific sardine have been landed to date, thus the incidental Pacific sardine allowance per mackerel landing is 40%.

The 2016-2017 Pacific mackerel fishery will open July 1, 2016 and close June 30, 2017 with an annual catch target of 20,161 metric tons. The incidental allowance of Pacific sardine will be adopted by the Council at their April meeting.

Table 1. 2015-2016 Pacific Sardine Annual Catch Limit and Accountability Measures

Annual Catch Limit (applies to all sources of catch)	Quinalt Indian Nation Live Bait CPS Fisheries Non – CPS Fisheries	7,000 metric tons
Annual Catch Target (applies to CPS Fisheries)		4,000 metric tons
<i>Incidental Sardine Allowances</i>		<i>Per Landing Allowance</i>
CPS Fisheries (Mackerel, Market squid, Anchovy)		
Up to 1,500 metric tons sardine		40%
1,500 to 4,000 metric tons sardine		30%
4,000 metric tons sardine		5%
Non-CPS fisheries (e.g. hake)		2 metric tons

Attachment 2

Pacific Sardine

Stock status of Pacific sardine is evaluated annually, alternating between a “full” and “update” assessment. During an “update,” new data are added but the underlying assessment model is not changed. A review of the recent update assessment was held on March 10, 2016 at a meeting of the PFMCS CPS subcommittee of the Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) at Sacramento.

The outcome of the assessment is a preliminary projection of Pacific sardine biomass for the 2016-2017 fishing year, and that projection is below CUTOFF, the threshold for allowing a directed fishery. The biomass estimate and harvest specifications for Pacific sardine will be considered for approval and final adoption at the April Council meeting to be held at Vancouver, Washington. The SSC, CPS management and advisory bodies meet on April 9 and 10. At present, the Council agenda has CPS matters scheduled for Sunday, April 10, 2016.

April 8-14, 2016 Council Meeting

Hilton Vancouver Washington
301 W. Sixth Street
Vancouver, WA 98660 USA
Phone: 360-993-4500

The meeting agenda can be found here:

<http://www.pcouncil.org/council-operations/council-meetings/current-meeting/>

Attachment 3

Anchovy

Two stocks of northern anchovy are found off the U.S. west coast: northern and central. The central subpopulation spans the coast from San Francisco south to Punta Baja, Mexico; the northern subpopulation extends north from San Francisco to British Columbia. In the federal management arena it is helpful to remember that Washington and Oregon are fishing on the *northern subpopulation of northern anchovy*.

State management

Washington regulations allow commercial (and recreational) fishing for northern anchovy in federal waters as well as inside state waters (0-3 miles), including the lower Columbia River, Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor. The Washington Forage Fish Management Plan provides policy guidance for management in these areas as well as the ocean. This Plan, adopted by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission in 1998, places priority on the ecosystem value of forage or CPS species. Consistent with that policy, in 2009 Washington adopted regulations that impose daily and weekly possession limits for anchovy. The limits preclude development of large-volume fishing operations; yet, accommodate long-standing commercial bait fisheries that serve the high value recreational bottomfish and commercial albacore tuna fisheries.

Federal management

The current management benchmarks for northern anchovy were adopted by the Council in 2010 and these are shown in the table below. The overfishing limit (OFL) values are based on the estimates of biomass and the acceptable biological catch (ABC) values account for a 75% uncertainty buffer in the OFL. The annual catch limit (ACL) was set equal to the ABC. And finally, an annual catch target (ACT) of 1,500 mt for the northern subpopulation of northern anchovy was established.

Of these values, the most pertinent to fisheries are the ABC and ACT. When catches reach these values, management action is triggered.

Stock	Stock MSY proxy	US Distribution	OFL	ABC	ACL	ACT
Northern anchovy, northern subpopulation	130,000	N/A	39,000 mt ($F_{msy} = 0.3$)	9,750 mt	Equal to ABC	1,500 mt
Northern anchovy, central subpopulation	123,000mt	100,000 mt	100,000 mt	25,000 mt	Equal to ABC	

Northern anchovy are designated a “monitored” stock in the federal CPS management plan. This designation simply distinguishes between stocks requiring frequent assessment and those that don’t because catches are low. The last complete assessment for the central subpopulation was done in the mid-1990s and the northern subpopulation has never been formally assessed.

Efforts are now underway to address the need for current information on the status of both subpopulations to inform management. These efforts include expanded fishery sampling and scientific analysis. At its November 2016 meeting, the Council is tentatively scheduled to consider how they could use the new information to change or update harvest policy and possibly adopt new harvest control rules.

You can expect to see updates on anchovy issues in upcoming months.