

2021 PACIFIC COAST STEELHEAD MANAGEMENT MEETING

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Title: Estimating the impacts of recreational fisheries on depressed stocks: challenges and solutions from the past, present, and future

Abstract: The overarching mission of many fish and wildlife agencies is to preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable recreational opportunities. Balancing these dual, and sometimes conflicting, objectives becomes ever more challenging as natural resources become scarcer. Therefore, generating reliable estimates of abundance and exploitation are of paramount importance to ensure that management goals are met and allowable impacts are not exceeded. However, deriving quality estimates in a timely and cost-effective manner can be difficult due to limited resources, which can lead to a lack of information and ultimately constrain opportunity. During our talk, we will discuss the range of approaches and resulting challenges our agency has faced in managing recreational fisheries that have been subject to impact limitations both past and present. Specifically, we will provide an overview of some solutions that we have either recently adopted or are aiming to implement soon to improve our ability to generate defensible estimates of catch, encounter rates, mortality, and impact rates.