



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

# West Coast Region Perspectives

## **Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission**

**August 20, 2018**

**Barry Thom  
Regional Administrator  
NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region**

# 2018 Updates and Draft 2019 Priorities

- SRKW Recovery / J50 Response
- Salmon Recovery
- Reintroductions and Passage
- Pinniped Predation
- Aquaculture
- HGMPs
- Groundfish Management and Increasing Fishing Opportunities
- Fishery Disasters
- Federal Tribal Treaty and Trust Obligations
- International Fishing Agreements



# Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery

SRKWs highly endangered,  
now number 75

Three main threats to the whales:

- quality and dearth of prey
- vessel traffic and noise
- chemical contaminants

## J50 Response

- Antibiotics delivered, feeding attempts made to J50
- International effort, including NMFS, Canada, Tribal, and WA state parties



# Enhancing SRKW Prey

With tribes, state, regional, and NGO partners, NMFS has identified priority Chinook salmon populations for SRKW prey augmentation

## Habitat Conservation

- New Orca Task Force and Salmon Recovery Council in WA State to align Chinook habitat conservation actions with priority Chinook populations
- PCSRF funding enhances SRKW prey availability in Puget Sound and coastal waters

## Hatcheries

- Exploring adjustments to hatchery programs to benefit the SRKWs while still protecting vulnerable salmon and steelhead populations



# Salmon Recovery

## Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force

- To generate quantitative abundance goals for listed/unlisted stocks to address long-term conservation and harvest aspirations
- 28 diverse members - states, tribes, and stakeholders
- Provisional goals being shared regionally this summer; report January 2019
- Will extend work to further explore and refine goals using scenario planning

## Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund

- Since 2000, awarded average of \$75M annually to implement more than 13,200 projects
- Restored and protected over 1M acres and opened over 10,500 miles of streams



# Reintroductions and Fish Passage

**Puget Sound:** Passage projects moving forward for Mud Mountain dam and Howard Hansen Dam

**Willamette River:** The Corps of Engineers is holding workshops on passage at Detroit Lake/North Santiam River

**California:** Reintroduction of winter-run Chinook to Battle Creek. Active reintroduction discussions occurring in McCloud and Yuba rivers.

White abalone reintroduction planned within 4 years



Photos USFWS

# Pinniped Predation

- Continued high predation on Columbia River- especially high predation levels for Willamette Steelhead
- Willamette River removal authorization request from Oregon currently under review
- Proposed legislation has received a lot of discussion.
- Ongoing predation issue at Hood Canal floating bridge



# Aquaculture



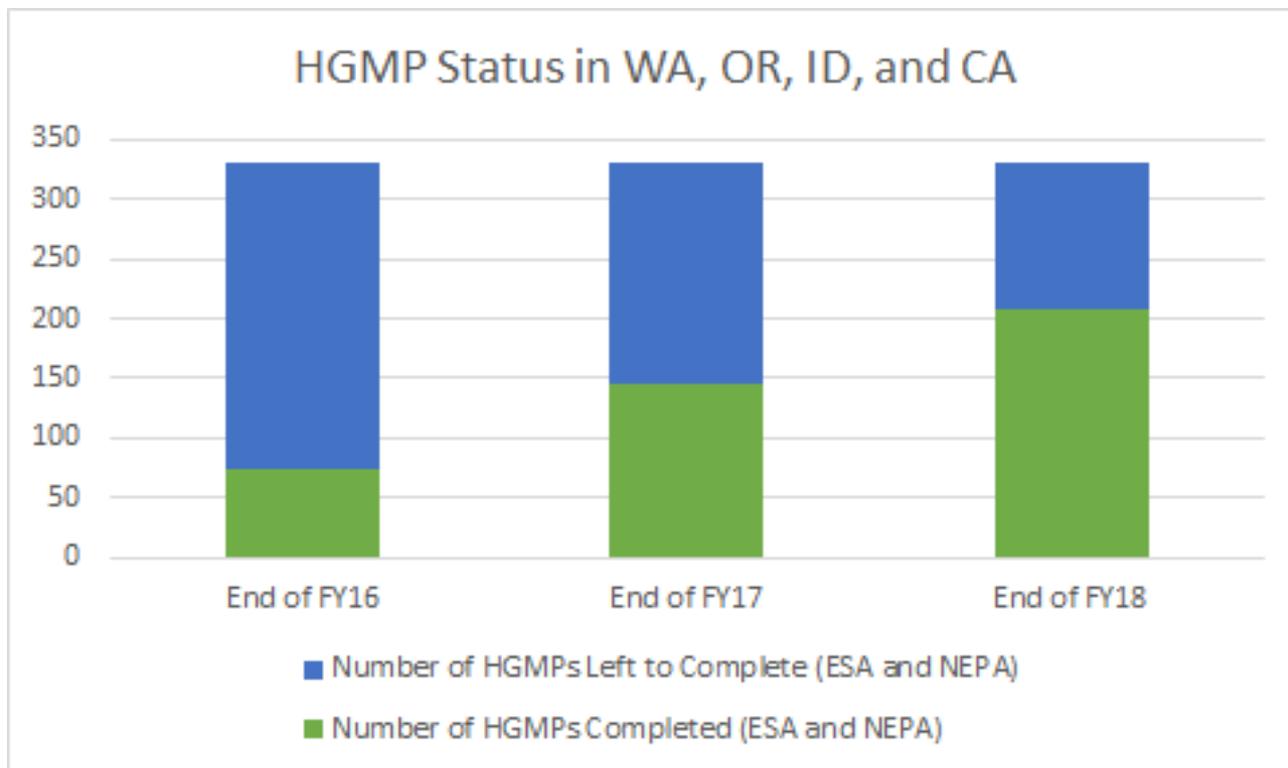
- White abalone captive broodstock – one of NMFS Species in the Spotlight
- Salmon conservation programs – CA central coast coho, Sacramento winter run Chinook
- Shellfish – implementation of a Biological Opinion for shellfish farming in Washington
- Pacific Ocean AquaFarms Offshore Project: New investors, new name – assisting NOAA HQ with NEPA related work on permitting



# Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans

Completed ESA section 7 consultations on 90 HGMPs in FY18, including all of the programs contained in *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement

Significant progress on backlog in recent years



# Fisheries Management

## Sustain and Increase Fishing Opportunities

- Successful rebuilding of groundfish stocks leading to new harvest opportunities
- Opened new areas for recreational fishing off OR
- Extended recreational seasons and more liberal depth restrictions for 2019 and 2020
- More lingcod opportunities for commercial and recreational fishermen off WA and OR
- Streamlining regulations for 2019 to provide more flexibility to vessels targeting midwater rockfish
- HMS EFPs to test gears in US EEZ that sustainably target swordfish

## Electronic Monitoring

- Final rule for EM program including whiting and fixed gear vessel
- Developing proposed rule for EM on bottom trawl and non-whiting midwater trawl vessels

# Fishery Disasters Update

- In June 2018, Secretary Ross allocated \$200M in fishery disaster assistance, including \$119M for affected West Coast/Alaska fisheries
- Spending plans in the form of cooperative agreements/grants are being developed between PSMFC and the recipients
- 15 additional requests for fishery disaster assistance on the West Coast and decisions on these requests by Secretary Ross are pending



# Federal Tribal Treaty and Trust Obligations

- The US v OR parties completed a new 10-year Agreement
- Working on a new long-term plan for Puget Sound fisheries with WA and tribal co-managers
- Co-chair of the Federal agency response to the tribal Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative

# International Agreements

## Pacific Salmon Treaty

- Renegotiating 5 of the 6 annexes of the Treaty
- Key challenges for Puget Sound Chinook and SRKWs
- The US and Canada have now reached an agreement in principle and are in the process of submitting that to their governments for review and approval

## IATTC

- 93rd Meeting of the IATTC in late August - rebuilding pacific bluefin and observer safety concerns are top U.S. priorities

## Pacific Whiting Treaty

- Whiting stock at high levels past two years
- Fishing is good in US and Canada; a promising start in the Makah fishery this year
- Starting a Management Strategy Evaluation process; draft results in Summer 2019

## Columbia River treaty

- NMFS has the lead for the Ecosystem components of the negotiation

# Thank You

