



State of Washington
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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May 3, 2019

Dear Washington Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Participant:

The purpose of this letter is to provide information about coastal Washington CPS fisheries – Pacific sardine, Pacific mackerel, Northern anchovy, and Market Squid. Highlights for select CPS and a brief recap of decisions from the April Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting held April 9-16 at Rohnert Park, California affecting Pacific sardine are presented below. More CPS fishery information is enclosed, including an informational sheet on squid fishing.

Pacific Sardine

Notable for this year, the estimated biomass for the 2019-2020 season is 27,547 metric tons (mt) which is below the overfished threshold of 50,000 mt. Understandably, the overfished status of Pacific sardine is discouraging given the now four year primary directed fishery closure. In this case, the term “overfished” is somewhat misleading in that it implies fishing is the cause of the low biomass without any indication of environmental drivers. An alternative term, “depleted” has been suggested as more appropriate. The next step is for NMFS to officially designate Pacific sardine overfished, at which time the Council and NMFS have two years to complete a rebuilding plan. The designation is likely to be made sometime this summer.

For the 2019-2020 season that opens July 1, the Council adopted fishery management measures that support some opportunity while ensuring conservation standards are met. For the fifth year, the primary directed fishery will not open. Specific landing limits apply to minor directed (small scale) and live bait CPS, and non-CPS fisheries. For details, see 2019-2020 CPS Fishery Summary Table 1., enclosed.

Finally, despite the primary directed fishery closure, holders of Washington Pacific sardine limited entry licenses are reminded that the license needs to be renewed for 2019. However, per Washington regulation, license fees are refunded at the end of the year if no fishery opportunity is provided. Please contact WDFW Licensing if you have specific questions: 360-902-2464.

Squid

In the event market squid become available locally or if delivery of squid caught off Oregon is feasible, preparations have been made to facilitate access to this fishery opportunity. Squid may be fished with purse seine gear in federal waters and by permit in Washington state waters (0-3 miles). Permits can be obtained at the same time as the squid license. Please see the enclosed “frequently asked questions” page for more information.

Northern Anchovy

Albacore tuna fishers and dealers are reminded that anchovy caught for personal use as bait is required to be reported on the albacore tuna ticket. This is important to demonstrate need and ensure future access to this resource.

Unlike other CPS fisheries, no logbook is required for anchovy fisheries. However to improve our understanding of this fishery, we are requesting voluntary participation by both purse seine gear and lampara gear fishers. Currently, fish tickets are the only source of information of catch timing and location. The logbook can provide key data that fish tickets cannot. For example, anchovy used as bait reported on albacore tuna tickets are assigned to the tuna catch area, not the location where the anchovy were harvested. In addition, logbooks support reporting of non-target catch that is not landed or sold. Such documentation is simply a sound resource conservation measure. Finally, we will continue to sample anchovy landings this year to collect biological data crucial to better understanding population dynamics.

CPS logbooks are available at the WDFW Licensing counter at Olympia, the Montesano regional office, or can be mailed upon request.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 360.249.1221 or 360.581.5611, or by email at Lorna.Wargo@dfw.wa.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorna Wargo". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Lorna Wargo

Enclosure: 2019-2020 CPS Fisheries Summary
Washington Squid FAQ

2019-2020 CPS Fisheries Summary

Pacific Sardine

Stock status of Pacific sardine is evaluated annually, alternating between a “benchmark” 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 March 2019 via webinar by the PFMC CPS subcommittee of the Science and Statistical Committee. The outcome of the assessment is a projection of Pacific sardine biomass of 27,547 mt for the 2019-2020 fishing year, and that projection is below the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) of 50,000 mt. Pacific sardine is considered overfished when biomass is below MSST.

At its recently concluded April meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council adopted an annual catch limit (ACL) for Pacific sardine of 4,515 mt and an annual catch target (ACT; Table 1). The ACT accommodates two research projects (EFPs) with a combined tonnage request of 405 mt, the live-bait fishery, and incidental catch in CPS and non-CPS fisheries. Incidental catch allowances for Pacific sardine were tailored to meet fishery-specific needs and ensure that total catch did not attain the ACL as that would prohibit sardine retention. New this year, California is implementing mandatory electronic reporting of bait caught in the live bait fishery. This should facilitate close tracking of the directed take of sardine in this fishery which supports immensely valuable recreational fisheries. The Quinault Indian Nation does not intend to fish sardines in 2019-2020. For reference, landings of Pacific sardine since closure of the primary directed fishery are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. 2019-2020 Pacific Sardine Annual Catch Limit and Accountability Measures

Annual Catch Limit (applies to all sources of catch, i.e., CPS and non-CPS fisheries)	4,515 mt
Annual Catch Target	4,000 mt
<i>Incidental Sardine Allowances</i>	
Pacific mackerel, Squid, Anchovy directed fisheries	20% by weight per landing
If the ACT is attained, for all CPS fisheries	1 mt per trip
If live bait fishery landings attain 2,500 mt, for live bait	1 mt per trip
Non-CPS fisheries (e.g. hake)	2 mt per landing

Table 2: Post-closure sardine landings (mt) by fishery for California, Oregon, and Washington

Fishing Season	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019 ⁵
CPS Incidental ¹	164.1	514.5	275.3	177.3
Non-CPS Incidental	0.6	1.1	10.3	7.2
EFP ²	N/A	N/A	N/A	357
Live Bait ³	2,097	1,614	1,894	1,647
Tribal	66	85	0	0
Minor Directed ⁴	N/A	N/A	7.3	49
Total	2,328	2,217	2,187	2,237
ACL	7,000	8,000	8,000	7,000

¹Incidental Pacific sardine limited to 40 percent landed weight in CPS fisheries

²Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) take (PFMC April 2018)

³Based on voluntary logbook submission and information from other CDFW sources

⁴Minor directed fishery allowed under CPS-FMP Amendment 16 beginning March 2018

⁵2018-2019 data are preliminary and subject to change

Pacific mackerel

Recall in 2016, WDFW established a trial fishery for Pacific mackerel. Under the trial designation, licenses are not limited. It is anticipated that this fishery will provide opportunity in conjunction with sardine, when sardine are more abundant; to date, no landings in the fishery have been made. The coast-wide annual catch target for the current fishing year is 22,840 with total CPS fishery landings less than 2,500 mt.

A trial fishery license and fishery permit are required; processing the permit takes one to two weeks. Note for 2019-2020, the directed opportunity for Pacific mackerel will be constrained by the 20% incidental per landing limit of Pacific sardine. This limit meets the fishery plan mandate for an overfished stock.

A benchmark stock assessment for Pacific mackerel will be reviewed April 23-25, 2019 at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center at La Jolla, California. The assessment presents the biomass estimates that will be used to set harvest guidelines for the next two fishing seasons, 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. The preliminary stock assessment report will be available in the Council's advanced briefing book online in May at www.pcouncil.org. The assessment will be presented at the June 19-25, 2019 meeting at San Diego for review and subject to adoption, to set final harvest specifications and management measures for the 2019-2020 season that begins on July 1.

Northern Anchovy

In Washington, anchovy are harvested by both purse seine and lampara gear. A separate baitfish license is required for each gear type but neither is limited. This population is not formally assessed but operates under a long-term annual catch target of 1,500 mt that applies to landings into Oregon and Washington combined (Figure 1). There are seasonal closures in the spring to protect out-migrating salmon in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor; elsewhere on the coast, the fishery is open year-round. A fishery monitoring program collects biological data from landings at Westport and Ilwaco.

As noted in the cover letter, logbooks are not mandatory in the anchovy fishery but fishers are encouraged to participate voluntarily to supplemental catch and biological information.

Figure 1. Northern Anchovy landings in Washington and Oregon, 2000-2018.

