

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
**North of Falcon Background Information**

**What is North of Falcon?**

- Each year (February-April) state, federal, and tribal fishery managers plan recreational and commercial salmon fisheries for the state and tribes
- Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) establishes ocean salmon seasons from three to 200 miles off the Pacific Coast
- "North of Falcon" (NOF) process involves a series of public and state/tribal meetings to come to an agreement for the upcoming year's salmon fisheries
- NOF is north of Cape Falcon in northern Oregon and encompasses Oregon and Washington (Columbia River, Coast, and Puget Sound)

**What Governmental Policies affect the NOF process?**

- The Boldt Decision (1974): upheld by the Supreme Court and based upon treaties with the Puget Sound Treaty tribes to allow the state and tribes to manage their own fisheries (co-managers) and share half of the harvestable salmon
- Endangered Species Act (ESA): fisheries must not pose jeopardy ESA-listed fish such as Puget Sound Chinook (1999)
- Pacific Salmon Treaty (U.S./Canada): helps ensure enough fish destined for the southern U.S. are allowed to pass through Canadian waters to allow fishing opportunity and enough fish to reach the spawning grounds (and vice versa for fish returning to Canada)
- Conservation objectives are agreed to by the co-managers to ensure enough fish get past fisheries and reach rivers to spawn and recover the population

**What are the steps?**

- Estimate the forecasted returns of individual hatchery and wild stocks of salmon
  - Determine if enough fish are returning to allow for harvest
- Predict harvest for tribal and state recreational and commercial fisheries for Oregon and Washington; include the northern fisheries (Alaska and Canada) too
- Analyze forecast and harvest scenarios using the Fisheries Regulations Assessment Model (FRAM) to determine whether proposed fishing plans meet management objectives (e.g., ESA impact limits)
- Negotiate with the recreational anglers, commercial fishers, and tribes to allow a fair sharing of catch and ensure conservation objectives are met
- Combine all Puget Sound and ocean fisheries into the "Agreed-to Fisheries Document" that the recreational (sport) fishing rules pamphlet is based upon

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**Glossary**

**AEQ:** Adult equivalents (number of wild salmon that would have returned to the river if not killed in fisheries)

**CERC:** Critical exploitation rate ceiling (maximum fishery impacts allowed when a stock is in critically low abundance, see Escapement LAT)

**Constraining stock:** Wild fish for a particular river that is estimated to be the most over-impacted that will limit (or reduce) fishing opportunities

**CWT:** Coded-wire tag (placed in nose of juvenile salmon and recovered from adults that return to estimate where the fish is from)

**Encounters:** Number of fish harvested plus released fish

**ESA:** Endangered Species Act

**ERC:** Exploitation rate ceiling (maximum allowable rate of returning wild salmon that can be killed in fisheries without compromising stock recovery)

**Escapement LAT:** Escapement Low Abundance Threshold (minimum number of naturally spawning salmon needed to recover that stock; if below then stock is in critical status)

**Exploitation Rate (ER):** Percent of total mortality (i.e., in fisheries and on spawning grounds) that occurs in fisheries, including landed and non-landed fishery mortality components

**Forecast:** Estimated number of adult salmon that will return

**FRAM:** Fisheries Regulation Assessment Model (used to combine forecasts and harvest of fisheries to estimate number of wild fish that will return to the rivers to spawn)

**LCN:** Lower Columbia Natural Tule Chinook (sometimes called LCR, Lower Columbia River, tule)

**Release Mortality Rate:** Percent of fish released that die due to the encounter with handling

**MSF:** Mark-selective fisheries (hatchery targeted fishery where wild fish are released)

**Escapement:** Number of wild salmon returning to the spawning grounds for a particular stock

**NOF:** North of Falcon (process to establish salmon seasons for state and tribal fisheries)

**NT:** Non-treaty fisheries (sport and commercial including net and troll)

**SUS:** Southern United States (WA, OR, CA)

**SUS PT ER:** Southern U.S. (WA, OR, CA) pre-terminal exploitation rate (caught in marine waters within the southern U.S.)

**T:** Treaty fisheries (tribal ceremonial/subsistence and commercial: net, freshwater net, troll (tr))

**Total ER:** Total exploitation rate for Alaska, Canada, and southern U.S.