

Klamath River chinook forecast lower than 2019 outlook

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At the annual Ocean Salmon Informational Meeting held in Santa Rosa Feb. 27, state and federal fishery scientists presented updates on the numbers of California's spawning salmon, as well as the expected abundance for the upcoming fishing season.

The 2020 ocean abundance projection for Sacramento River Fall Chinook (SRFC), a main salmon stock harvested in California waters, is estimated at 473,200 adult salmon, higher than the 2019 forecasts.

However, the Klamath River fall chinook (KRFC) abundance forecast of 186,600 adult salmon is lower than the 2019 forecast and will likely result in reduced fishing opportunity in the areas north of Pt. Arena, according to a California Department of Fish and Wildlife press release.

"The outlook for Sacramento River fall Chinook is better than last year, but this season's fisheries will be tempered by protections needed to conserve low numbers of Klamath River fall chinook," said Jennifer

Simon, an environmental scientist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Ocean Salmon Project.

Recreational anglers and commercial salmon trollers at the meeting provided comments and voiced concerns to a panel of fishery managers, scientists and industry representatives. Stakeholder input will be taken into consideration when developing three alternatives for this season during the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) meeting, which will be held March 3-9 in Rohnert Park. Final regulations will be adopted at the April 4-10 PFMC meeting in Vancouver, Wash.

The PFMC may take a conservative approach when crafting 2020 ocean salmon seasons since both SRFC and KRFC stocks are still considered to be overfished under the terms of the federal Salmon Fishery Management Plan, according to the press release.

For more information on the salmon season setting process or general ocean salmon fishing information, visit the Ocean Salmon Project website or call the ocean salmon hotline at 707-576-3429.