

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
PREDATION OF COLUMBIA RIVER SALMONIDS

There has been an unprecedented effort to recover salmon and steelhead in the Columbia basin by NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Pacific Northwest states, and Columbia Basin tribes, along with many other agencies and organizations. These efforts equate to hundreds of millions of dollars invested annually and billions over the past decades. These efforts, however, are put at risk by the increasing impact of sea lions and avian predation. Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act Section 120, NOAA Fisheries has authorized the states of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho to lethally remove individually identifiable, predatory California Sea Lions in the vicinity of Bonneville Dam that are having a negative impact on the recovery of salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) would like to receive information from NMFS regarding the status of predatory sea lions on adult salmonids, and the efforts to reduce the amount of avian predation on juvenile salmonids in the Columbia River system. This could help inform the SAS in its understanding of Columbia River fisheries, including associated impacts from predation on ESA-listed salmon and steelhead. This information would be most timely during the March or April Council Meetings when the SAS is developing the ocean salmon fisheries structure for the upcoming year.

PFMC  
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