

HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS

A VOICE FOR SALTWATER SPORTFISHERS

2021 Winter NEWSLETTER

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The mission of Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers is to represent North Coast fishermen's historic and ongoing right to sport fish along the Northern California coast; advocate reasonable and rational sport fishing seasons and regulations; educate our members and the general public about the economic and cultural contributions of sport fishing to our local economies; and promote sustainable stewardship of the resource.

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Submission of article topics and photos should be sent to jcphasa@gmail.com.

Comments are always welcome and should be sent to jcphasa@gmail.com.

HASA would like to expressly thank our friends for their time and contributions to our newsletter .

All past HASA newsletters can be viewed at <https://humboldtasa.com/mdocuments-library/> and <http://humboldttuna.com/smf/index.php?board=37.0>

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This is issue #42.



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President's Message



Well, 2020 is in our wakes, and hopefully stays there! As the various vaccines become more available, and more of us are inoculated, I hope for a speedy return to normalcy. Though it is a lot of work to put together, I find that one of the things I most missed about last year was our annual spring fund raiser dinner and auction. I've simply come to enjoy the whole event: the atmosphere of anticipation as the seasons are about to open, the jokes and fishing stories, and the excitement of seeing who will win what item or service. As we go to press it looks very much like we won't be out of the COVID woods in time to hold our spring event for a second year in a row. The Board is actively looking for ways to hold alternative events. Perhaps a fall fund raiser instead of in the spring? How about some kind of on-line auction, or a huge summer picnic and auction? If you have ideas, and especially if you have experience in this area, please contact us.

As usual, the news is full of information regarding issues that impact us. Salmon stock assessments, PFMC halibut quota fights, Melissa Dodd's first graders' fishing stories, an introduction to Nordic Aquafarms, and even automotive tire technology. We try to keep abreast of events and policy changes, but if you become aware of something you think should be brought up, please don't be afraid to send it to our editor, Joe. He'd also love to have a new round of photos to publish every newsletter.



Don't forget that with the new year, a new group of us are required to take and pass the State's boater safety exam. Beginning this year, all persons 40 years old or younger must pass the test. Starting in 2022 this will apply to all persons 45 years old and younger. The age limit will continue to increase till 2025, when all boat skippers regardless of age must have taken the class. www.boaterexam.com/usa/california/?msclkid=6f7bf94185991e47d4f0995e017932bb will take you to the course. The cost is currently \$29.95. Fines for non-compliance are \$100 for the first offense, \$250 for the second, and \$500 for the third.

I hope to see and hear you on the water soon!



2021 Winter Groundfish Update

Tom Marking, HASA GAP representative

COVID IMPACTS

This has been an eventful year for us all, especially for the fisheries. Due to the COVID problems, State, Federal, commercial and recreational fishing were all affected; none really in a positive manner. Federal trawl surveys, needed to gather data for stock analyses, was curtailed or eliminated. This will definitely affect future assessments that will result in more conservative stock estimates that translate into reduced Annual Catch Limits (ACL) in the future ; thus, lost opportunity for recreational anglers. We were particularly affected in our 2020 halibut season by the lack of monitoring personnel to collect real-time data on the size and numbers of fish caught. This resulted in a premature closing of our fishery because the Pacific halibut we caught last year were substantially smaller than the last six year average weight that was used as a proxy. Additionally, staff for all the agencies are under pressure to add protection for their personnel, adding expense to already tight budgets. Commercial deliveries were substantially reduced due to restaurant closures and lack of market. Fish ticket yields were and are drastically lower resulting in fish processing plants closing their doors for good. This will have long lasting impacts on the fishery and impacts will continue into 2021 and future years. This has been especially devastating to the commercial sector and processors.



RECREATIONAL OUTLOOK

A bright spot for us sport anglers is the increase in sub-bag limits for black rockfish, canary rockfish and cabezon back to ten in the bag limit. The numbers have supported a sub-bag limit for black rockfish of 5-6 for the last four years, but California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) was being overly cautious in their catch projections. However, there is still a concern with black rockfish. Over the past four years, there has been a shift of more tonnage to the non-trawl commercial sector, away from the recreational sector, concurrent with a reduction in non-trawl ACL from 420 to 347 metric tons for 2021. The sports share is about 247 mt (harvest goal or HG). CDFW projected we will only harvest about 195



mt with a bag limit of ten. However, in 2015/16 with a bag limit of ten black rockfish we brought in 365 mt. Over the past several years, while the allowance was only 3-4 black rockfish, the fishing effort dropped dramatically. We run the risk of blowing through the HG if we resume our past catch success. In the Groundfish Subadvisory Panel (GAP), we suggested a sub-bag limit of 6 to start with and see what happens; but, surprisingly, CDFW opted to go for the ten fish limit for black rockfish. We will be very interested to see what happens this year with harvest levels for black

rockfish and canary rockfish. The rockfish effort is directly affected by the salmon season since that has a relationship to effort on the water. If we have another poor salmon season, we may be OK if fishing effort is reduced from past years.

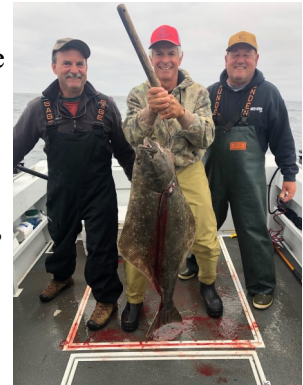


And we were finally able to get the Mendocino Area increased back to 30 fathoms for the season. Mendocino now has the same season structure as the North with May 1 to October 31 at 30 fathoms, and all depth for November and December. This is due to reduction of the yelloweye rockfish rebuilding timeline. Rebuilt status is projected for 2029, down from 2072. The ACL for yelloweye mortality is projected at 6.0 mt with a HG of 11.6 mt for the recreational sector, and 37.9 mt for all sectors. That is a substantial increase over about five years ago when it was down around 14 metric tons.



PACIFIC HALIBUT

Once again, the annual meeting for the International Pacific Halibut Commission (Commission) in late January was very contentious with the Alaskan fishermen at odds with the Canadians over the allocation and distribution interim agreements. This kettle has been boiling for about a decade since the assessment methods changed from a Regional Model to a Coastwide Model using bottom area as the delineating factor. Canada has never agreed to that model as a basis for distribution. Also, in 2016, the Quantitative Specialists for the Commission put forth a new Time/Space Model that is supposed to smooth out the patchy distribution sampling of Pacific halibut for all areas. Both the three Pacific States (Area 2A) and Canada (Area 2B) took a substantial cut in allocation due to this Model, with the shift in biomass going to the Gulf of Alaska.

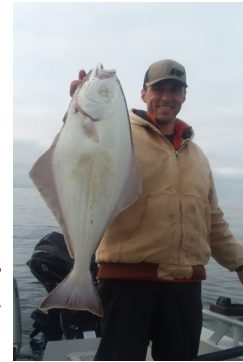


And since Canada has half the votes on the Commission, they dug in their heels and things have really been heated for the past four years. There is currently an Interim Agreement in place for both areas 2A and 2B until 2022. Concurrently, more investigation by the Management Strategy Evaluation Team (called the Management Strategy Advisory Board, or MSAB) is ongoing and will report back to the Commission. I have been on the MSAB since inception in 2012 and we have developed eleven management procedures (MP) that investigate long term biological stability over the next 100 years. All eleven MP's work for long term sustainability, but various Areas are affected differently in allocation distribution. Overall, the stock is healthy, but the distribution method is the focus of contention.



Needless to say, the Alaska folks are not happy with any option that does not give them the maximum amount as projected in the Time/Space Model. How this is resolved is yet to be determined. For Area 2A, we will continue to receive 1.65 million pounds in Total Catch Exploitation Yield (TCEY) until 2022, when the arm wrestling starts again. The Tribes are adamant that Area 2A deserves this amount and they believe they have the documentation to support this claim. If reduced, they will probably file in Federal Court to maintain the 1.65 million pound TCEY. Their catch history shows an increase in numbers and weight of harvest and they have much better data than the Commission on the northern

Washington coastline. Area 2A is the lower end of the fishery and what we harvest has little impact on the rest of the population. We are only a few percent of the total fishery, and we have negligible impact. The Commission has not surveyed in California for a number of years and have no intention of doing any sampling for at least the next three years. So the migration of smaller fish we had last year into our region will go unrecorded and unrecognized. This penalizes us for biomass, but if the Tribes are successful, it will be a moot point in any event. Surveying is expensive, and our biomass density does not yield revenue neutrality that is important to the Commission. So, we are in the shadow of the Washington Tribes and we give them all the support that we can.



It will be interesting to see if our harvest of smaller fish continues for this year. That was most likely a new cohort of fish showing up from the 2011/12 recruitment cycle that has been recorded elsewhere, and we have been waiting for them to grow up and be reflected in the harvest data. It's crucial that CDFW measure the fish we catch this year, so we can get an accurate accounting of the size and weight of these smaller halibut. CDFW has sent out an email for us to comment on three alternatives for season structure in 2021. We need to let them know our opinion. I thought Mark has an interesting idea of holding back 8,000 pounds in reserve for after September so we would have a fall fishery. I would support that personally; seems like a good idea! Be sure to get your comments back to the CDFW.

The season structure will most likely be set at the March meeting after going to the Commission. Hopefully, the halibut will stick around and not migrate off to parts unknown.

Tight lines folk!

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Fishing Stories

From Melissa Dodd's First Graders at Dow's Prairie

I was camping and I caught a fish and another. And my brother caught one and it was a trout and it was five pounds, or maybe it was a sardine. -Fanuatanu

I had a dream about fishing. I caught a catfish. It was the size of a shark or bigger. Then I caught a tiny catfish. -Jason

I never went fishing in my entire life. Come here suckas! Let me catch ya and eat ya. -Josiah

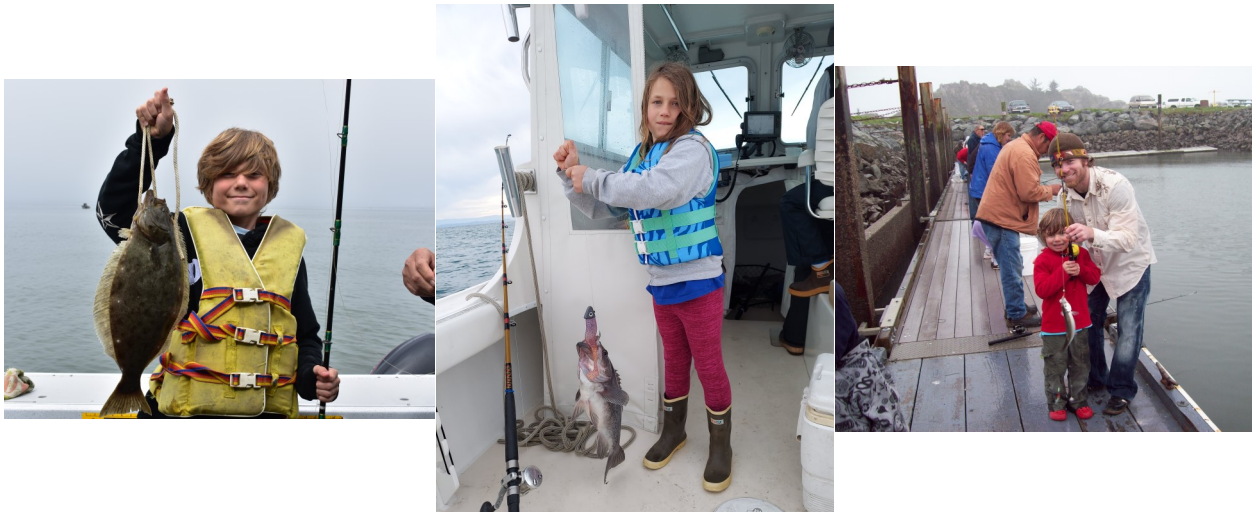
When I caught my very first fish it was a Rainbow Trout. I don't remember my second -Ethan

We went crabbing super-duper early. We caught fish. It was heavy and I caught it and it was a rainbow one. -Lana

My mom's dad took us fishing and we caught a nine or ten pound small-fish. -Braxton

When we camped in the summer of 2020, I was at a lake and we saw a fish swim by. I went hand fishing. It was small so I put it back. -Annalee

We were out in the bay fishing for halibut. We didn't get any halibut but we caught a leopard shark. -Owen



An Introduction to Nordic Aquafarms

By David Noyes, Nordic Aquafarms SVP of Technology and avid brook trout fisherman

Nordic Aquafarms is currently in the process of permitting their land-based aquaculture facility planned for the Samoa Peninsula in Humboldt County. The company hopes to eventually produce Atlantic Salmon at the facility but is still in the early stages of permitting with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The company applies a forward thinking and sustainable approach to aquafarming by moving fish production out of the ocean and onto land. Raising fish in enclosed tanks allows us to filter and treat all water going into and out of the facility. Our system captures and removes 99% of all discharge solids. Our membrane bioreactor technology then uses 0.04 micron ultrafiltration to capture other waste and bacteria and a massive 300 mJ/cm² dose of UV disinfects the water and kills any remaining pathogens before discharge. Producing our fish in fully contained indoor facility also prevents any interaction with wild fish and prevents escape.



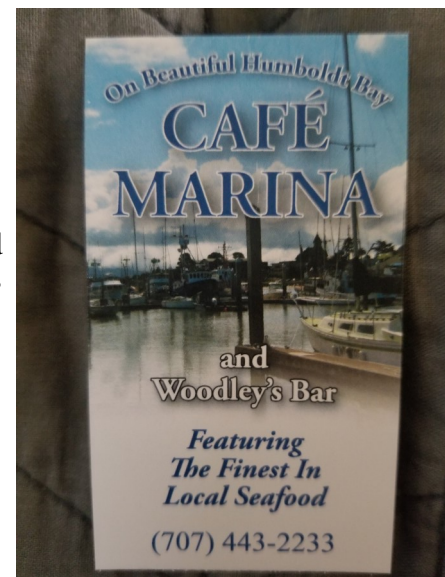
Nordic relies on clean cool water for growing our fish. We have already started partnering with local stakeholders to explore ways Nordic can support efforts to restore and protect local water while educating the community on how to preserve this critical resource. Nordic will also be demolishing the former pulp mill and finishing the clearing and cleanup of the existing brownfield site before construction. Removal of asbestos, lead, and other toxic materials of identified concern will benefit the community and the bay.

We are also actively supporting Humboldt State University, College of the Redwoods and Humboldt County Office of Education in their interest to revive (or establish) educational opportunities and career technical education related to aquaculture. These programs will allow Nordic to support and recruit a local, educated work force and will create other career pathways in this growing economic sector. Core STEM programs like these also build awareness and understanding of what is required to sustain and support functional and healthy ecosystems.

Nordic is focused on producing a premium fish, sustainably and with no negative impact on the oceans. We look forward to demonstrating this as we move forward in our partnerships and collaborations in the community and move together in achieving our shared goals.

For more information about Nordic Aquafarms, to arrange a meeting, or to schedule a presentation for a local group or service club, please contact Nordic's Humboldt-based Community Liaison at Lynette Mullen at:

lynette.mullen@gmail.com



How Badly Do You Want 5G?

Larry DeRidder, HASA President

There is a major interdepartmental government battle brewing over some aspects of the widespread growth of 5G communication networks. Since the government ceased intentionally degrading the signal (when accuracy was about 330 feet about 95% of the time) nearly twenty years ago, GPS signals have become extremely accurate (about 16 feet). GPS use has grown far beyond simply air and sea navigation. But inaccurate GPS signals could once again become the norm. The reason is that GPS satellite signals are very weak compared to other sources and can become overwhelmed by nearby signals. When 4G networks were introduced, many of the services we take for granted now, such as video calls, Uber and Snapchat didn't exist, and self-driving cars were not on the horizon. The proliferation of online activity is pushing us toward a network which operates ten times faster or more - and that's 5G. But there are complications which will directly affect offshore boaters and anglers.



In April 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) granted a company named Ligado a license to operate a 5G network at a frequency within the GPS band. The problem is that spillover from a 5G network at that frequency can cause interference with the GPS signal quality. This has stirred an internal government fight, as the departments of Defense, Commerce, Interior, Homeland Security, and Transportation have all filed objections. Non-government entities including the scientific community, recreational and commercial boaters, first responders and others have also filed objections with FCC. Even several members of Congress have now taken action to protect GPS, all to no avail. Curiously, about ten years ago the same company (under the prior name LightSquared) tried to obtain a license to operate within the GPS band. Initial FCC approval at that time was ultimately denied and the company filed bankruptcy. This time they seem to have more support from within FCC.

In addition to GPS, the accuracy of weather forecasts is at risk. NOAA weather satellites using Advance Technology Microwave Sounder (ATMS) gather data about water vapor concentrations at 23.8 GHz. Atmospheric water concentrations are crucial to predicting a storm's intensity and duration. It's simply the best frequency for this purpose. But in 2020, the FCC auctioned off rights to transmit at 24 GHz to a 5G network. NOAA research indicates that a 24 GHz transmission will result in spillover to 23.8 GHz that will result in about a 77% data loss from ATMS. The head of NOAA informed Congress that this would set back weather forecasting 40 years because this would cause a 30% reduction in forecast accuracy. NASA, the Department of Defense, and the American Meteorological Society have all expressed their concerns to the FCC. Again, FCC is standing their ground.

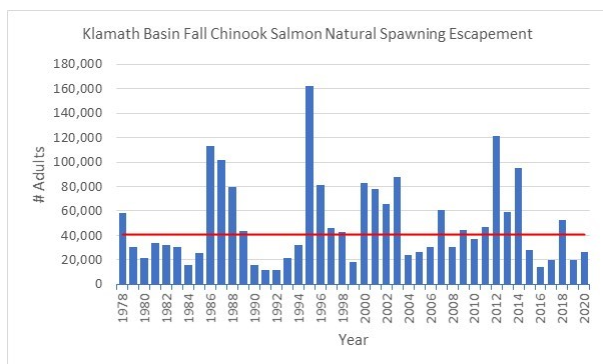
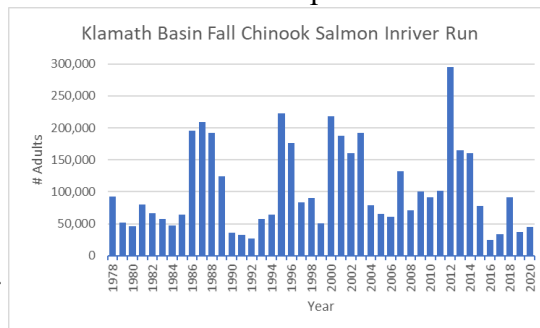


If nothing changes at the Federal level, it's possible that all of our current GPS gear will need to be upgraded to deal with the interference caused by commercial 5G satellites, and it isn't at all clear how NOAA will deal with weather forecasts.

Klamath Fall Chinook Salmon Returns –2020

Joe Polos, HASA Salmon Representative

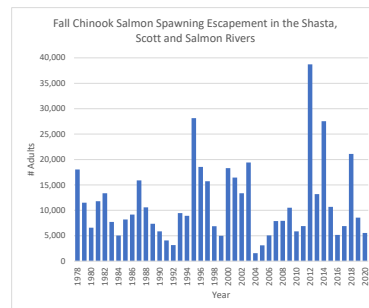
2020 was another disappointing year for natural spawning Klamath Basin fall Chinook salmon, but not as bad as 2019. Due to the low ocean population size in 2020, ocean and inriver fisheries were managed under the “deminimus” fisheries control rule of the salmon management plan. This rule allows for fisheries to be implemented even though the minimum natural escapement is not going to be met. Under the adopted seasons and quotas for 2020 ocean and inriver fisheries, the inriver Klamath River fall Chinook run was expected to be 59,100 adults of which 36,200 were expected to be natural spawners. A total of 45,407 adults (86% of the projection) were estimated to have entered the Klamath River and 26,190 of these (72% of the projection) spawned in natural areas. Returns to Iron Gate (Klamath) and Trinity River hatcheries totaled 8,331 adults (68% of the projection). Inriver adult harvest totaled 5,212 by Tribal fisheries (61% of their quota) and 5,117 by the recreational fishery (394% of their quota).



The 2020 inriver adult run was the 7th lowest observed since comprehensive harvest and escapement monitoring was initiated in 1978. The natural spawning escapement in the Klamath Basin has not met the minimum floor of 40,700 adults in five of the last six years, although the minimum floor was not targeted in 2020. Klamath fall Chinook are considered in an overfished condition because of the low natural spawning escapement in recent years.

The spawning escapement into the Shasta, Scott, and Salmon rivers (which ranked 9th lowest) decreased from the 2019 spawning level. The Chinook salmon in these three rivers on the Klamath River are especially important because they have minimal interference from hatchery strays.

The jack return to the Klamath River in 2020 was 9,077 fish (the 13th lowest) and a little lower than the 9,991 jacks that returned in 2019. Jacks are used to project the number of 3-year-old Chinook salmon in the ocean, so this number of jacks will result in a 3-year-old ocean estimate a little smaller than in 2020.

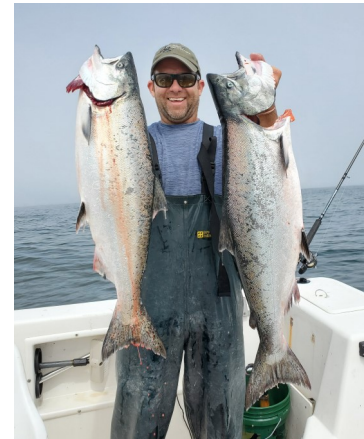


What is coming up? The California Department of Fish and Wildlife will host its annual salmon information meeting (via webinar) on February 25, where they will present information on last year’s harvest and river returns, and the outlook for 2021 ocean salmon fisheries. Direction to participate in the meeting can be found at: [Salmon Information Meeting Attendance Instructions \(ca.gov\)](#). The Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) hosting webinars for its

season setting meetings March 2-5 and 8-11 to develop season alternatives and April 6-6 and 12-15 to adopt a season. There will also be a public meeting webinar on March 23 for the PFMC to receive comments on the season alternatives. Currently, ocean stock assessments are being finalized and this information will be used to conduct ocean fishery impact modeling for the various alternatives developed during the March meeting.



The extended season we had last year was the result of implementing the “deminimus” fishery control rule and the closures to the early part of the recreational season to the south due to COVID, which allowed their harvest impacts to be rolled into our area and extended our season. We won’t know if the “deminimus” fishery control rule will be in play this year until the stock assessments are completed but there will be significant interest in restricting ocean and inriver fisheries to meet the minimum spawning escapement floor of 40,700 adult natural spawners. At last year’s PFMC meetings resource agencies asked for an



alternative that met the spawning escapement floor be developed and it is likely that this will be the case this year. And there will be more interest in alternatives that meet the minimum spawning escapement floor because Klamath has not achieved this in five of the last six years.



We will know the season alternatives after the March 2-11 PFMC meeting and will provide an update as soon as those are developed. For more information concerning the development of the 2021 ocean fisheries, see the PFMC’s web site: <https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/upcoming-meeting/>.

Notes from Newsletter Manager: In our continuing quest to make this newsletter more interesting to our membership we will continue to request articles from the HASA membership. Please think about writing an article or fishing tip or favorite recipe. If you know somebody that would like to contribute an article please get them in contact with me. I can be reached at jephasa@gmail.com. The deadline for submission of materials for the 2021 Spring newsletter will be somewhere around mid-May. Please contact me if you have any question.

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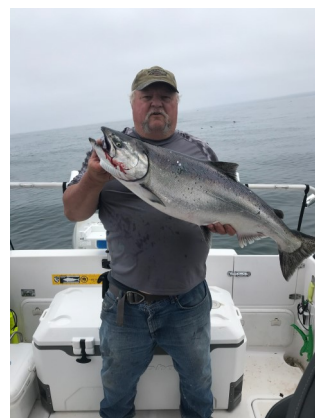
Thanks, Joe

Urban Deaths of Spawning Coho Salmon

Larry DeRidder, HASA President

On December 3, 2020, Science published an interesting study related to why Coho salmon often prematurely die upon entering urban streams. The study took place in the Puget Sound and San Francisco Bay areas. It's well known that under normal conditions only a very few Coho born in any stream eventually return to spawn - on the order of one tenth of one percent. But in many urban streams even that small number is cut in half as many adults die within hours of entering streams and before spawning. Funding was provided by the National Science Foundation. Initial studies were initiated by NOAA Fisheries and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in King County, Washington. Scientists from the University of Washington and Washington State analyzed what they referred to as a "giant chemical soup" found in these streams, particularly after a hard rain. They detected over 2,000 chemicals in the water.

Studies comparing trace compounds found in water from different watersheds gave initial clues by allowing scientists to eliminate possibilities. Eventually they narrowed the suspect to a molecule containing 18 carbon atoms, 22 hydrogens, two nitrogens and two oxygens, but its source was unclear. Ultimately it was determined that a chemical called 6PPD, which is used to prevent automobile tires from breaking down too quickly, reacts with ozone to produce 6PPD-quinone, which when washed into streams during a rainstorm is highly toxic to adult Coho salmon. Currently it's unknown why adult Coho salmon appear to be particularly susceptible to this chemical. Studies are now in progress to see if other salmon species and steelhead are also at risk.



Though there are ways to remove 6PPD-quinone from water, it would be extremely difficult to do so on every spawning stream. A more likely result is a search for an alternative product which will protect tires from early degradation due to ozone exposure, but which is not lethal to adult Coho. And, once discovered, tire manufacturers must be persuaded to make the change. Who knows, this discovery could be a major step toward a Coho salmon resurgence along the California coast.



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Halibut Recipes

Submitted by Larry DeRidder

Both of these recipes are from a book put out by Rocky Point Resort, near Petersburg, Alaska. These two recipes are shared with permission from author/compiler Susan Payne. Carol and I have been to this resort a couple of times, and she holds the De Ridder family "big halibut" badge with a 178-pound fish. We definitely recommend this lodge, particularly if anyone in your party gets seasick on the open ocean. Just don't expect to lose any weight while staying there!



Halibut Enchiladas

1 to 1 1/2 pounds lightly cooked halibut (olive oil works well) 8 oz.
softened cream cheese
1 can chopped green chiles, drained
10 flour tortillas
2 cups basic white sauce
Monterey Jack cheese
Cheddar cheese
Salsa

Mix halibut, cream cheese and green chiles (drained) with a fork. Roll up in flour tortillas. Put in a Pam-sprayed baking dish. Top with about 2 cups of a basic white sauce, then top that with grated cheeses. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Garnish with a strip of chunky salsa down the middle.

Connie's Baked Halibut

2 pounds halibut
2 Tablespoons dry onion soup mix
1 cup sour cream
1 cup bread crumbs
2 Tablespoons Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1/4 teaspoon paprika
1/4 cup melted butter

Cut halibut into 3/4 inch cubes. Combine soup mix and sour cream. Mix bread crumbs, cheese, parsley and paprika. Dip fish in sour cream till well coated, then roll in bread crumbs. Place on cookie sheet separated by a couple of inches from other fish pieces. Drizzle with melted butter. Bake at 500 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes.



Recycling: \$15,000 First Place Prize Available

Larry DeRidder, HASA President

In recent years we've all become more active in the recycling realm. Used lures and fishing line are excellent examples. We're all aware of the dangers to wildlife from discarded line. But what happens to line that has been collected and set aside for recycling? Mostly it is saved from a watery grave, only to end up in a landfill. Don't get me wrong -- that's still far better than being abandoned in the water. But, cleaning used line of its accumulated hooks, weights, swivels and encrusted gunk is simply too time consuming to be cost effective. Additionally, there aren't any recycling programs for items like old soft plastic baits. In the spirit of "there must be a better way" the U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water has teamed up with fishing gear manufacturer Berkley and set aside \$30,000 as prize money for a contest. If you have an idea for a better way to reuse or recycle monofilament or braided lines, or soft baits, you have until May 14, 2021 to submit your idea. Three prizes will be awarded: First place is \$15,000, Second place is \$10,000, and third place is \$5,000. Full details are available at BoatUS.org/Contest.



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Humboldt Wind Energy Project Update

Editor's Note: Following up on the Sharon Kramer's article on the potential offshore wind energy project in the fall 2020 newsletter, the Humboldt Bay Harbor District was considering hiring a consultant, LACO Associates, to develop a plan to develop port facilities to support the wind energy project. The article can be found here: [Harbor District Exploring Major Port Redesign to Support Proposed Offshore Wind Energy Project | Lost Coast Outpost | Humboldt County News.](#)

On February 11, the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation and Conservation District Board approved funding the contract with LACO. From the Board's agenda: "The proposed contract would develop a conceptual master plan and opportunities and constraints analysis of almost the entire coastal dependent Industrial properties between the Samoa Bridge and the former pulp mill (RMT II)."

You can hear the presentation and discussion from 1:05:22 to 1:38:45 on the recording of the meeting: humboltdbay.org/sites/humboltdbay2.org/files/GMT20210212-020059_awagschal_0.m4a

This will be something we will want to follow as this will be a major construction project that may affect the bay fisheries.



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