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PUBLIC NOTICE

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PACIFIC COAST GROUND FISH FISHERY **Chinook salmon bycatch in the shoreside Pacific Whiting fishery**

On December 15th, 1999 a Biological Opinion was issued addressing the potential effects of Pacific Coast groundfish Fishery Management Plan for the California, Oregon, and Washington groundfish fishery under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act on threatened and endangered species, pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA).

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is concerned that current Chinook salmon bycatch rates in the 2010 shoreside Pacific Whiting fishery have been consistently higher than 0.05 Chinook/mt of whiting. This catch ratio is the guideline outlined in the 1999 Biological Opinion addressing potential effects of incidental Chinook salmon mortality in the whiting fishery. Consultation shall be reinitiated if: the shoreside catcher/processor, mothership, or Tribal components of the fishery exceed or are expected to exceed the bycatch rate of 0.05 chinook/mt of whiting; and the expected total bycatch of chinook in the fishery is expected to exceed 11,000 fish.

This notice serves as a reminder to those actively participating in the fishery that NMFS could take action if Chinook mortality remains high. NMFS intends to closely monitor all Pacific Whiting sectors for further developments.

Current catch data can be found at:

<http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Groundfish-Halibut/Groundfish-Fishery-Management/Whiting-Management/>