

New Study reveals cost of salmon fisheries closure

Last year’s closure of the commercial ocean salmon troll fishery off the West Coast is estimated to have cost \$5.8 million to \$8.9 million in lost income for fishermen, with the loss of 200 to 330 jobs, according to a new model that determines the cost of fisheries closures based on the choices fishermen make.

Scientists hope the model, described for the first time this week in Marine Policy, will help policy makers anticipate the economic toll of fisheries closures.

“Such foresight may be especially useful as conditions in the California Current off the West Coast grow increasingly variable, leading to more potential closures,” said lead author Kate Richerson, a marine ecologist with NOAA Fisheries’ Northwest Fisheries

Science Center and the University of Washington.

“We’re probably only going to see more of these closures in the future,” she said, “so being able to predict their effects and fallout for coastal communities puts us ahead of the curve in terms of considering those impacts in planning and management decisions.”

The new model estimates the future losses associated with fisheries closures based on the way fishermen reacted to previous closures. It anticipates, for instance, that many fishermen will simply quit fishing rather than shift their efforts to another fishery instead. In this way, the model accounts for the difficulty fishermen face in entering other fisheries with limited permits, Richerson said.

The research is the first

attempt to predict the effect of fisheries closures before they happen, said Dan Holland, an economist at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center and coauthor of the study.

The model, developed prior to the 2017 closure, also can help identify the most affected communities.

For example, Coos Bay and Brookings, Ore., and Eureka, Calif., were among the hardest hit by the 2017 salmon closures because they are geographically located in the center of the closure that stretched from Northern California to Oregon.

The closure led to the estimated loss of about 50 percent of fisheries-related employment in Coos Bay and about 35 percent declines in fishing-related income and sales.

Predicted percentage declines in overall fishing-

related income are lower than declines in salmon income, since many fishermen were predicted to continue to participate in other fisheries.

The study estimated that the closure led to a loss of \$12.8 million to \$19.6 million in sales. Richerson noted that the model estimates only the economic consequences of the closure to the commercial ocean salmon fishery and does not include the toll on recreational fisheries or in-river fisheries, which would make the total losses even higher.

The closure recommended by the Pacific Fishery Management Council and adopted by NOAA Fisheries was designed to protect low returns of salmon to the Klamath River in Northern California.

Boating safety inspections being offered by USCG

An annual free boat safety inspection performed by Coast Guard Auxiliary Floatilla 52 will be offered to assure a safe 2018 boating season.

The inspection provides a decal for inspected boats, which visually signals to the Coast Guard that the vessel’s safety inspection has been completed.

To make this inspection day convenient, it will take place at Breen Marine located at 4390 Highway 101, between Bi-Mart and Napa in Florence. There will be three inspection lanes for quick and easy maneuvering.

Breen Marine will have required discounted safety equipment on sale at the location and all proceeds from the



Participants who pass the free inspection will receive a decal.

event will benefit the Florence STEP (Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program).

The event will be held Saturday, April 21, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., along with a second inspection day set for Saturday, May 12, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

OREGON OCEAN FISHING LOOKING UP FOR 2018 COASTWIDE, ACCORDING TO STUDY

SALEM — Ocean salmon anglers can look forward to more opportunity this year based on recommendations made Tuesday for federal waters (outside three miles) during a Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting in Portland.

Sport salmon fishing in the ocean off the Columbia River will open June 23 and is expected to run through Labor Day, Sept. 3, unless salmon quotas are reached earlier.

The area from Cape Falcon south to Humbug Mt. opened for Chinook on

March 15 and will remain open until Oct. 31. The forecast for Coho is down this year for both the Oregon coast and Columbia River, largely due to poor ocean conditions.

Sport fishing for hatchery Coho will be open from Cape Falcon south to Humbug Mt. from June 30 through Sept. 3, or until the quota of 35,000 fish is met.

A small season for wild and hatchery Coho in this area is also scheduled for Sept. 7-8 and each Friday and Saturday after until Sept. 29, or the

quota of 3,500 Coho is met, which may happen quickly.

Unlike the full closure to salmon fishing last year, the area south of Humbug Mt to the OR/CA border will be open to sport fishing for Chinook from May 19 through Aug. 29. The strong forecast for Rogue River fall Chinook is a bright spot for the coast this year.

Commercial troll fishing for Chinook will be open intermittently along the whole Oregon coast from May through the summer. In 2017, all

commercial salmon trolling was closed south of Florence.

“While this won’t be a banner year for ocean salmon fishing, overall it’s an improvement from 2017. This is particularly true for communities on the Southern Oregon coast, which were hit hard by 2017’s salmon closures,” said Chris Kern, ODFW Deputy Fish Division Administrator.

“I want to thank the many advisors, tribal members, agency staff, and members of the general public, who all worked hard to ensure that conser-

vation goals for salmon stocks are met while providing fishing opportunities for communities up and down the west coast,” added Kern.

The PFMC recommendations will be forwarded to NOAA Fisheries for approval and implementation.

The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission will be asked to adopt matching rules for State waters (inside 3 miles) at their April 20 meeting in Astoria.

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