

Closures: More expected in future

Continued from Page 1

more potential closures, said lead author Kate Richerson, a marine ecologist with NOAA Fisheries' Northwest Fisheries Science Center.

"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 closures based on the way fishermen reacted to previous closures like the one off the West Coast last year.

It anticipates, for instance, that many fishermen will simply quit fishing rather than shift their efforts to another fishery. 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 impacts of 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, along with Eureka, Calif., were among the hardest hit by the 2017 salmon closures because they're geographically in the center of the closure, which 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 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, meant to protect low returns of salmon, led to a loss of \$12.8 million to \$19.6 million in sales.

The model estimates only the economic consequences to the commercial ocean salmon fishery and does not include the toll on recreational fishing or in-river fishing.

Hiking club to take walking tour of Hampton mill

Angora Hiking Club will visit Hampton Lumber's Warrenton Mill, 550 N.E. Skipanon Drive, at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 7.

Participants should meet at the Lighthouse Museum at the four-way stop.

A brief video showing an overview of plant operations, will be followed by a complete plant tour, lasting about one hour.

Participants will be given hard hats and protection equipment. All are asked to wear sturdy shoes and long pants.

Hampton Lumber owns 140,000 acres of forest in Oregon and Washington and manages about 300,000 acres of public forest in British Columbia.

Hampton has owned the Warrenton mill for nine years and has 142 employees.

There will be a short walk after the tour along the Warrenton Estuary to Nygaard Logging and back.

Membership is not required to partici-



Courtesy Angora Hiking Club

Participants dressed in safety gear for last year's hike at Hampton Lumber Mill.

pate. Annual dues to Angora members is \$10.

For more information, contact chief guide Bill Herold at 503-468-0474 or hike leader Kathleen Hudson at 503-861 2802.

Rockfish: New fishery could bring relief to industry

Continued from Page 1

state in recent years. The new fishery is expected to add to these economic benefits.

"People have been waiting a long time for this, so it's a great opportunity to expand opportunities while still protecting those fish that need it," said John Holloway of the Recreational Fishing Alliance in Oregon and chairman of the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel at the Pacific Fishery Management Council. The council endorsed the new fishery, which begins this month.

Since 2004, recreational fishermen pursuing rockfish in Oregon had been limited to shallow depths during peak summer months to avoid impacts on overfished deeper water species such as yelloweye rockfish. That left some coastal communities with no recreational fishing for groundfish, a mainstay of the coastal economy.

The new fishery, which operates around offshore reefs

at midwater depths, will help disperse fishing pressure from nearshore reefs and reducing the likelihood that nearshore fishing will hit its limits and close early, as it did last year. It will also give charter boats an alternative to salmon fishing in years of low salmon abundance.

Holloway was one of the first to recommend the new recreational fishery a decade ago, drawing on a commercial fishing method using a "long leader," a type of hook and line gear that suspends hooks and lures at least 30 feet off the sea floor. The method avoids sensitive groundfish species such as yelloweye rockfish that dwell on the bottom and still are recovering from overfishing in the 1990s.

Recreational fishermen tested the long-leader method under an Exempted Fishing Permit authorized by NOAA Fisheries that gave them special permission to fish in Rockfish Conservation

Areas usually closed to fishing.

"The fishing community helped demonstrate to us that long leaders caught the fish they wanted to catch, and now the fishing community is benefiting," said Gretchen Hanshaw, branch chief for groundfish in NOAA Fisheries' West Coast Region. "It took some time, but fishing communities and the economy should all benefit."

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife provided on-board observers to support the exempted fishing permit, as well as assistance in developing an environmental assessment and drafting new regulations allowing the fishery.

During test fishing over a three-year period, fishermen caught hundreds of rockfish weighing 5.4 metric tons, but only two yelloweye, Holloway said.

"We were fishing in the middle of the area and hardly catching any yelloweye," he said.

Business Cards

Should say something about you

We can help you
make just the right
impression.

Designer on duty.

Get 500 professional
business cards for just \$43.

503-861-3331

THE COLUMBIA PRESS

