

## Instructions/Charge to Reviewers

29 November 2011

Dear <reviewer>:

Thank you for agreeing to provide a peer review of the draft Biological Review Team (BRT) report concerning spring-run and fall-run Chinook salmon in the Upper Klamath and Trinity River (UKTR) Chinook salmon Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU). The purpose of your review is to assess the scientific validity of the report, including an evaluation of the assumptions, methods, results, and conclusions contained therein. Specific aspects of the review will vary, but may include: quality of the data collected or used for the assessment, appropriateness of the analyses, validity of the results and conclusions, and appropriateness of the scope of the assessment, i.e., were all relevant data and information considered.

The target audience for this report is the Southwest Region (SWR) of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The SWR received a petition to list spring-run and fall-run Chinook salmon in the Upper Klamath Basin and designate critical habitat for any listed ESU under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In review of the petition pursuant to the ESA, it was determined that the petition presented substantial scientific or commercial information indicating that the petitioned action may be warranted. As a consequence, the Region requested that the NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) convene a BRT to conduct the tasks listed in the request:

- 1) Compile and review the best available scientific and commercial information on genetics, biology, life history, population trends, reproductive isolation, and the ecological/habitat requirements of Chinook salmon necessary to: (a) evaluate whether spring-run and fall-run populations in the UKTR basins constitute separate ESUs or a single ESU as it is currently delineated, and (b) assess the biological status of either a spring-run only ESU or the UKTR ESU as it is currently delineated;
- 2) Evaluate the extent to which this information supports the current UKTR Chinook salmon ESU delineation or the separation of spring-run and fall-run Chinook salmon into separate ESUs; and
- 3) Depending on the outcome of the ESU evaluation, assess the biological status of either the UKTR Chinook salmon ESU as it is delineated or a spring-run only ESU using the viable salmon population parameters (McElhany et al. 2000) as a framework for the analysis.

The SWFSC convened a BRT to evaluate the data and information that they determined to be most relevant to the questions of ESU configuration and status, which included the information provided by the Petitioners and contained in their petition, other information deemed pertinent by the BRT, and the information provided to the SWR by other parties interested in this issue. The SWR will use the information and analysis provided by the BRT together with NMFS's ESU policy to make final determinations about the ESU delineations in the UKTR Basin ESU and to determine whether or not any ESUs warrant listing under the ESA. Peer reviews will be made publicly available, but not necessarily identified with individual reviewers.