JOINT TESTIMONY BY THE QUINAULT, HOH, QUILEUTE TRIBES ON THE TENATIVE MODELING OF 2000 MANAGEMENT MEASURES BY THE PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman and Council, the Quinault, Hoh, and Quileute Tribes wish to make a brief statement regarding the tentative modeling of the ocean treaty troll fishery options.

- Again this year, it is the desire of the Quinault, Hoh, and Quileute Tribes to continue to meet the escapement floors or goals for runs originating in the area from Grays Harbor to Quillayute River. This continues to be an important objective for management of ocean fisheries off the coast of Washington.

- The Queets wild coho are of particular concern this year. The wild stock is coming of one of the lowest escapements and lowest observed smolt yield on record. Even with no preterminal and terminal area fisheries, the resulting escapement will be well below half the escapement floor established for this stock, if Queets supplemental coho are not counted.

- We want to continue to emphasize that any selective fishery proposals advanced by the Council must be consistent with the U.S. District Court’s stipulation and order regarding mass marking and selective fisheries.

- For chinook, several important contributing stocks continue to be depressed. However, we intend to live up to the commitment that we made in 1988 to not increase our impacts on Columbia River chinook stocks of concern.

- We still remain early in the process of establishing, cooperatively, with other Tribes and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, potential ocean fisheries that will ensure acceptable levels of escapements for natural stocks of concerns as well as for our important hatchery stocks.

- For the ocean treaty troll fishery, we offer the following treaty troll management measures for tentative modeling and analysis by the Salmon Technical Team:

  Option 1 - zero (0) coho
  20,000 chinook for May/June chinook only fishery.

  Option 2 - 10,000 coho August/September all species fishery
  30,000 chinook (20,000 May/June, 10,000 all species)

  Option 3 - 12,400 coho August/September all species fishery
  30,000 chinook (20,000 May/June, 10,000 all species).

The coho proposals are consistent with previously adopted PFMC measures for 1994, 1997, and 1998. Given the reduced abundance of key natural coho stocks North of Cape Falcon, we cannot support adoption of last year’s adopted coho option for consideration as a reasonable option this year.
In light of the reduced abundance of key natural coho stocks we also believe that the Council should adopt a zero (0) coho option for non-treaty fisheries North of Cape Falcon for purposes of analysis, public comment, and consideration.

In fashioning our proposal for treaty troll chinook harvest levels we have focused on impacts on Columbia River stocks. The treaty troll chinook harvest levels proposed may require further adjustment to insure that impacts on Puget Sound chinook stocks are acceptable.