

**TESTIMONY OF
THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES
BEFORE PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
MARCH 9, 2007
Sacramento, CA**

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Council. My name is Bruce Jim. I am a member of the Fish and Wildlife Committee of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon. I am here today to provide additional testimony on behalf of the four Columbia River treaty tribes: the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes. We have treaty fishing rights to many stocks of fish caught in the PFMC fisheries that have been re-affirmed under the *U.S. v. Oregon* court case. We are co-managers of the Columbia River salmon runs.

As the Council considers the options for 2007 ocean salmon fisheries, we have several issues of concern that we wish to remind the Council of. In our view, these issues warrant caution in planning ocean fisheries. First, as was mentioned in previous discussions regarding PSC issues, there is still some uncertainty about impacts on U.S. stocks in West Coast Vancouver Island fisheries especially related to changing Canadian fishing plans. Without a full understanding of impacts in Canadian fisheries, it is challenging for the Council to make appropriate decisions regarding U.S. fisheries. Uncertainty over expected Canadian harvest makes us concerned over what the true impacts will be to Snake River fall Chinook as well as our tule stock fish.

Currently, we are just able to model reasonable in-river fall season tribal fisheries given the expected river mouth escapement of Spring Creek Hatchery tules. Our current predictions indicate that we should be able to meet the hatchery broodstock needs with a small buffer. Our preference would be to have a somewhat larger buffer. It is likely that the needed fishery shaping to meet the Coweeman fall chinook impact limits will result in a few more Spring Creek tules escaping ocean fisheries. We will continue to monitor the ocean planning and if impact projections should change for any reason, we would plan on bringing this to our state co-managers attention as well as the Council.

Therefore, the tribes continue to urge the Council to continue to take a precautionary approach to planning ocean fisheries. The tribes do not want to be faced with an unfair portion of the conservation burden for Columbia River stocks.

We would likely not be in this situation with Columbia River stocks if we had proper

improved management of the Columbia River hydro-power system. Even spring creek tules are adversely impacted by in-adequate early season spill to protect out-migrating juveniles. Other Columbia River stocks are adversely affected by a host of improper hydro-system actions, from lack of spill, high temperatures, barging, and irrigation withdrawals. The mortality caused by the hydrosystem reduces the numbers of fish available for fisheries. While Coweeman impacts do not impact our tribes' fisheries, these fish face many of the same habitat problems as other Columbia River stocks. Urbanization, agriculture, poor forest practices and pollution all impact Coweeman Chinook. Habitat and passage issues throughout the Columbia basin need to be the focus of our attention in order to recover Columbia River salmon.

Because of inappropriate water management, ongoing hydrosystem problems, not enough supplementation, and other failures to restore salmon, the Council is forced to make difficult decisions that stretch our abilities to even assess impacts of fisheries and fail to meet the needs of treaty and non-treaty fishers in the Columbia and Snake River. The tribes hope we can work together to solve these problems.

This concludes my statement. Thank You.