

**TESTIMONY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES
BEFORE PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

March 9, 2016, Vancouver, WA

Good day 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 and a treaty fisher on the Columbia River. I am here with Wilbur Slockish, and Shannon Wheeler to provide testimony on behalf of the four Columbia River treaty tribes: the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes.

Today I come before you as a representative of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, a sovereign nation, which signed one of the treaties in 1855. Well before the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho existed, the treaties were made between the U.S. government and the Tribes. In those treaties, the Tribes of the Pacific Northwest retained rights to hunting and fishing in all usual and accustomed areas.

Our focus in management is related to our first foods. Our first foods include water, salmon, game, and roots and berries. Our relationship to our first foods sustains us and is our version of ecosystem based management. Our people diligently work at maintaining and revitalizing this ecosystem.

We are rebuilding the habitat in our streams and rivers but do not do this by ourselves. We work with a large number of entities including the states of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, along with BPA, NMFS, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corp of Engineers. We also work with other Tribes, sport, and commercial groups.

In this work, we consider the perspectives of the outdoor recreation user groups, whether that be those who fish, hunt, hike, or participate in other recreational water use. However, we would like to remind those groups that all of this resource that you are enjoying today was made through sacrifice by our ancestors. The states historically placed restrictions on Tribes that they felt were needed to save the resource and treated us as just one of the user groups. We have worked hard over the years to change this and continue to work on this. In our treaties, we retained our sovereignty and our rights. The United States did not give us rights. We always had them. We want people to recognize the important role the Treaty Tribes have in managing and maintaining this resource. People should understand that the recreational user groups have access to the resource as a privilege that is extended to them, but the right to this resource is retained by our people, the Pacific Northwest Tribes through our treaties.

So take that to heart when you are fishing for salmon and remember that you are exercising a recreational privilege and not a right.

This year, we have brought a short presentation outlining some of the many ways the Columbia River Tribes are working on salmon recovery. This is not a complete list of our programs, but highlight a few that provide benefits to all of us. We are trying to restore these salmon for all user groups. We would like to proceed with these slides now.