



Quinault Indian Nation

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Ms. Dorothy M. Lowman
Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, OR 97220-1384

March 1, 2014

Dear Chair Lowman:

In 2007 the four Coastal Treaty Tribes – Makah, Quileute, and Hoh Tribes, and the Quinault Indian Nation formed the Olympic Coast Intergovernmental Policy Council (IPC) with the State of Washington and the Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary (OCNMS). This forum was established to facilitate effective communication among the state, federal, and tribal governments and to provide management advice to the OCNMS. The IPC recognizes among its purposes identifying common goals and prioritizing research to inform management.

As part of those purposes and in light of ongoing concerns with how essential fish habitat (EFH) protections might impact their "usual and accustomed" (U&A) areas, the four Coastal Treaty Tribes along with our Washington State and NOAA partners recently committed to undertake a more rigorous look at habitats within our shared jurisdictions. This process, agreed to by all parties at a February 4 meeting of the IPC will seek to delineate known habitats as well as their value to the ecosystem (e.g. ecological, cultural, economic, etc.). Such an undertaking will require the scientific expertise of the state, NOAA, and each of our tribes. This could then serve as the scientific basis for management initiatives ranging from EFH designations and protections to ecosystem-based management and marine spatial planning activities.

We applaud OCNMS and WDFW for withdrawing their EFH proposal pending more scientific deliberation on existing habitats and their contribution to our shared ecosystems. We all share the goals of ensuring healthy ecosystems as well as the resources and communities that depend on them for generations to come. The Coastal Tribes think it is imperative to do so in a deliberate and scientifically sound way. It will take considerable work to better understand and document the various habitat types, and the Tribes stand committed to doing this work that is necessary for protecting the health of our ocean.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Johnstone".

Ed Johnstone, Quinault Fisheries Policy

Cc: John Stein, NWFSC
Will Stelle, NMFS Western Region
Donald McIsaac, PFMC