

**Report of Jim Harp  
on the 2001 North of Cape Falcon Process**

**April 3, 2001**

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to give a brief report on this year's North of Cape Falcon meetings. As you know, each year the managers representing the states of Oregon and Washington and the treaty tribes of the Washington Coast, Puget Sound, and the Columbia River meet with the affected constituents to consider the condition of the resource and determine allowable fisheries that are possible under the circumstances. This year, we met on March 13 and 14 in Portland and again on March 27, 28, and 29 in Tukwilla.

It is always a difficult process as we try to shape Treaty and Non-Treaty fisheries for areas from the ocean to in-river for the various stocks of concern. This has continued to be a difficult process this year partly due to the continued depressed status of several stocks including meeting the new management objectives we have adopted for listed Puget Sound Chinook. There also continue to be issues to discuss surrounding the application of selective fisheries.

On the positive side we are forecasting significant improvements in coho production from many areas and should be able to have some of the best coho fisheries in many years. The challenge is to be able to access the abundant coho production while still meeting our conservation objectives for weaker coho stocks, like OCN, and a number of listed Chinook stocks.

We've spent considerable time in the NOF process defining specific fisheries strategies to address conservation concerns for Puget Sound Chinook salmon. The state of Washington and the tribes have a comprehensive and technically defensible management plan that has been tentatively approved by NMFS. We can report considerable success in developing fishing plans for 2001 that meet the requirements of this plan. However, we still have some more work to do and some difficult decisions to make. We are continuing to work this week on some additional fishery measures to meet our Puget Sound Chinook objectives and are optimistic we will get there before the week is over.