



# Quinault Indian Nation

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OCT 05 2001

October 3, 2001

PFMC

Mr. Chuck Tracy  
Staff Officer, Salmon  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 200  
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Dear Mr. Tracy:

We have completed review of the Salmon Technical Team's (STT) 9/4/01 draft report, *Queets Coho Stock Assessment*, and offer the following comments. First, we want to thank the STT for seeking this review and accepting our comments. In addition, we want to commend the Team for their objective analysis of this important topic.

We concur with all of the conclusions reached by the STT. The small run sizes observed in 1997-1999 were not due to excessive harvest, but resulted from poor survival conditions, mostly in the marine environment. We believe that deteriorated freshwater conditions caused by unusually large and frequent high-flow conditions also contributed to poor returns in those years.

We agree that the Queets coho stock is not likely to cause an overfishing concern in the near future. Marine conditions are improving, and there are sufficient management safeguards in place to prevent overfishing of this run.

We support the STT recommendation for a comprehensive review of available information regarding appropriate MSY escapement ranges. The data set for Queets coho is among the most reliable and consistently formulated sources for coastal coho salmon. This review will help formulate an up-to-date and comprehensive understanding of Queets coho production characteristics and the significance of recent changes in marine and freshwater productive capacities. We look forward to assisting the STT in this task.

Please contact me at (360)276-8211 ext. 368 if you have any questions regarding these comments.

Sincerely,

Ed Johnstone, Fisheries Policy Spokesperson