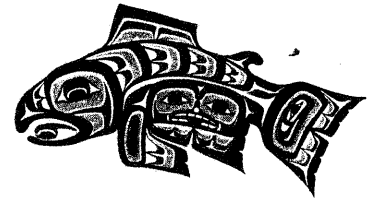


Quileute Natural Resources QUILEUTE INDIAN TRIBE

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TESTIMONY OF THE QUILEUTE TRIBE TO PFMC FOSTER CITY, CALIFORNIA June 20, 2002

My name is Mel Moon. I am the Director of Natural Resources for the Quileute tribe. I am giving testimony for the Quileute Tribe on the groundfish proposed management measure for 2003 (table 2-1 revised) options listed in the ABC OY chart. After review it is apparent that for this meeting the most pressing issue is the setting of 2003 yelloweye harvest levels. For the Pacific Coast Treaty Tribes in Washington State that fish for halibut, the critical issue is how to continue the halibut fishery in light of the incidental catch of yelloweye.

For these tribes, last year we estimated 1.5 metric tons of incidental catch of yelloweye were needed to conduct all fisheries. The actual catch during all fisheries for the Pacific Ocean Washington treaty tribes was approx. 2.25 metric tons (halibut, sablefish, salmon, Ceremonial & Subsistence). Consultation with the other tribes indicated that of the 2.25 mt, the Makah landed .75 mt, the Quinault landed less than 100 lbs and the Quileute landed 1.5 mt of the total. In comparison to all other non-tribal fisheries, the tribal catch has been consistently low. In light of the recent developments in the PFMC process, incidental encounter of yelloweye is of the highest concern for the coastal Tribes in '03, especially during the halibut fishery.

We are currently exploring alternative means to reduce potential impacts to yelloweye during this halibut fishery. Minimizing impacts may include regulations that consider the use of alternative baits, times, and depths of fishing.

We have a unique legal standing that presents a challenge to achieving or designing a lower catch plan on yelloweye. In March of 2001, Judge Rothstein of the U.S. District court, Western District of Washington, signed

a court order directing the 12 Treaty Halibut Tribes to follow a detailed management plan. The plan requires fixed start dates (mid- March) with successive dates and set percentage amounts for restricted and unrestricted fisheries in the 12 treaty halibut Tribes' usual and accustomed fishing grounds.

Under this prescribed, court-ordered structure, the 2003 Treaty Halibut fishery for the four Pacific coastal tribes would likely result in another 2.25 metric tons landed of incidental yelloweye. Of the same total the Quileute Tribe would likely catch 1.5 metric tons. We are currently exploring alternatives with all other halibut tribes to discuss possible new plans for 03 which could reduce this amount.

This alternative would involve an agreed-to intertribal allocation of halibut between all 12 treaty halibut Tribes. This new management plan would have to be submitted to and approved by the court. Individual allocation would allow tribes more flexibility in structuring their fisheries to reduce the impacts of incidental yelloweye during halibut fisheries. In addition to exploring these alternatives with other treaty halibut Tribes, we are working closely with the other co-managers to explain how to address these challenges.

Quileute Natural Resources actively manages its halibut fishery, which includes closely monitoring and recording yelloweye encounter. Our efforts include acquiring tribal and state funding to initiate a port sampling program in Neah Bay, LaPush and Westport. We are also engaged with the National Marine Fisheries Service to develop a near-term and long-term program to assess and monitor the stocks on a regional basis.

In regard to other groundfish species, we would support the '02 harvest and allocation principles and have them forwarded for '03.