

Mr. Chairman,

The tribes would like to reiterate that treaty fisheries be recognized as exempt from any fishing impact mitigation alternative that would negatively impact treaty fishing rights. It is our understanding that all of the Council-developed alternatives currently contain this exemption even if not explicitly stated in the current draft of the EIS; however, it should be noted that this would apply to all alternatives going forward in the EFH DEIS. We will continue working with NOAA Northwest Region Staff to develop and/or specify appropriate habitat protections.