

TRIBAL REPORT ON ADOPTION OF 2008 MANAGEMENT OPTIONS FOR
PUBLIC REVIEW

**TESTIMONY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES BEFORE PACIFIC
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

The four Columbia River treaty tribes, the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, and Nez Perce tribes, present the following statement regarding the 2008 ocean salmon options. We have treaty fishing rights to many stocks of fish caught in the PFMC fisheries that have been re-affirmed under the *U.S. v. Oregon* court case and we are co-managers of the Columbia River salmon runs.

As the Council considers the options for 2008 ocean salmon fisheries, we have several issues of concern that we wish to remind the Council of.

Currently, we are pleased that all of the ocean options appear to allow us model reasonable in-river fall season tribal fisheries given the expected river mouth escapement of Spring Creek Hatchery tules and upriver bright fall Chinook. We are also pleased that all three options predict that more than 50% of the upriver coho will reach Bonneville Dam. Our concern remains though that the modest increases in Columbia River forecasts are dependant on the large jack returns in 2007. If the expected relationships between jacks and adults do not work this year, Columbia river runs may not be as good as predicted. Given other indications of poor survival of many other Chinook stocks, we believe the Council still needs to be cautious in setting ocean fisheries. Our tribes do not want to be faced with all of the conservation burden for Columbia River stocks.

This years' ocean fisheries are clearly severely constrained. The tribes believe we would not be in this situation with salmon stocks up and down the coast if we had improved management of freshwater and estuarine habitat as well as hydro and irrigation development. Urbanization, agriculture, poor forest practices and pollution have all impacted salmon up and down the coast. Habitat and passage issues need to be addressed coastwide to resolve our salmon problems. If we managed the freshwater and estuary habitats better, salmon would be able to deal with times of low ocean survival better. The Columbia River treaty tribes work actively within our tribal areas to improve the management of the Columbia River hydro system and to protect and restore habitat as well as improve water quality. We support other tribal and non-tribal efforts in other basins to restore salmon as well.

The tribes actively support predator control which needs adequate funding. Because of our severely disrupted ecosystems, many species that prey on salmon have become out of balance. We believe that exotic species that prey on salmon should be eliminated. But we also believe that many natural predators need control. The tribes are actively involved in efforts to reduce predation by sealions below Bonneville dam on spring Chinook. But these sealions and seals are in the Columbia River and other rivers all year long and they impact many stocks of fish. Seal and sealion populations need to be managed. It is not only Salmon that are impacted, but also sturgeon and lamprey.

The tribes also support increased efforts to control predatory bird populations. Caspian terns and cormorants have become very problematic in the Columbia. Increased efforts need to be made to control these birds that can have very high impacts on many stocks of juvenile salmon and steelhead especially around the nesting islands in the lower Columbia.

Climate change is another serious issue that will take a great deal of effort to both understand and to attempt to minimize adverse impacts on fish. The tribes believe we need to devote more resources to addressing this issue.

There are many efforts that we can all make together to increase salmon survival and restore salmon populations. By working together we can help the salmon and all of our fisheries. This concludes our statement. Thank You.

PFMC
03/14/08