

SALMON MANAGEMENT OPTION HEARING SUMMARY

Date: April 1, 2008 Location: Red Lion Hotel, Eureka, California Attendance: 167 Testifying: 19	Hearing Officer: Mr. Dan Wolford Other Council Members: NMFS: Mr. Mark Helvey Coast Guard: LT Scott Parkhurst ENS Matt Hardgrove Salmon Technical Team: Mr. Allen Grover Ms. Jennifer Simon Council Staff: Mr. Chuck Tracy
Organizations Represented: Humboldt Salmon Trollers Marketing Association; Coastside Fishing Club; Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations; Klamath Zone Coalition; Recreational Fishing Alliance	

Synopsis of Testimony

Of the 19 people testifying:

- 1 commented primarily on the commercial troll fishery.
- 8 commented primarily on the recreational fishery.
- 2 commented on both the recreational and commercial fisheries.
- 4 commented primarily on economic or other aspects of the fisheries.
- 3 commented primarily on fishery management or habitat/water use issues.

Special Opening Remarks

Mr. Wolford gave a brief overview of the meeting process and objectives. Ms. Jennifer Simon gave a brief overview of the recreational and commercial options and associated biological impacts.

Commercial Troll Comments

All of those testifying supported Option II or III, there was no support for Option I.

Recreational Comments

All those testifying supported Option I. Several people supported additional fishing time for the KMZ in August or September with a catch record card with an annual limit of 10 salmon.

Other Comments

Several people supported implementing emergency regulations allowing recreational fisheries to maintain the economic viability of coastal communities. There was wide concern about compressing the available fishing time into 10 days during holiday weekends causing overcrowding at the limited ramps in Humboldt County and the possibility of weather preventing fishing on the open dates. Several of those testifying expressed frustration with the water management situation in the Sacramento Basin, and requested the Federal agencies to address water use issues. Several people supported funding increases for better scientific data collection, including the proposed GSI study. Several people felt sea lion removal would benefit salmon populations. One person felt the KRFC recovery criteria of two consecutive years with a natural spawning escapement of at least 40,700 was not advisable because it allowed recovery based on one successful brood. Two people requested development of management objectives and research for Klamath River spring Chinook.

Written Statements (Attached)

Ben Doane, Klamath Zone Coalition
Petey Brucker, SRRC, KFA, KSAGA, KSMC
Gregg Niekrass

PFMC
04/3/08

TO- Pacific Management Council
Date: April 1, 2008
From: Petey Brucker- SRRC, KFA, KSAGA, KSMC
RE: PFMC- 2008 Fishing Season Comments

Dear Mr. Isaacson,

The following are comments and recommendations that I have for the Pacific Fisheries Management Council I regards to the 2008 Salmon Fishing Season.

In 1992, 16 years ago, the restrictions and closures to Klamath Management Zone ocean and in-Klamath river fishing were devastating. Fishing in the ocean or river were curtailed due to the collapse of at least one year class. Now California and Oregon ocean salmon fisheries are still recovering from a poor fishing season in 2005 and a disastrous one in 2006, when Klamath River fall Chinook returns were below their spawning escapement goal. The catch of salmon in 2007 in these areas was also well below average, as the first effects of the Sacramento River fall Chinook stock collapse was felt. The potential closure of ocean fishing for the 2008 season is devastating news to beleaguered salmon fleets on the west coast.

We recognize and support the PFMC as it takes steps to try and prevent the reoccurring collapse of the Pacific Coast salmon runs and stocks from different river systems, highlighting the Klamath River Basin salmon. The PFMC has tried to take steps to offer increased protection for years when low returns are predicted. They have also worked to refine the model predictors and worked to better understand the impacts of fishing to different stocks and try and develop a better informed regulation to target stronger runs and reduce harvest of the weaker ones.

Although the PFMC has worked hard to try and prevent the re-occurring collapse of various stocks and runs of Pacific Cost salmon, more short and long conservation and transitional step are needed now due to the foreboding trend indicators in the data and signs on the horizon.

Some of these include:

Bad Trend Indicators

- ▶ Wild fall and wild spring-run Chinook of the Klamath River Basin (Basin) have been decreasing since 1992.
- ▶ The lowest 4 year average of wild fall-run grilse occurred 2002-05 in the Basin with an average 487 fish/yr.
- ▶ Average wild adult escapement (2004-06) decreased 75% from 1994-03 average while mixed wild/hatchery natural spawning (2004-06) decreased 51% and average escapement to hatcheries (2004-06) decreased only 23% from 1994-03 average.

- ▶ Escapement to hatcheries has been increasing 6% per year since 1980.
- ▶ The hatchery produced portion of total run has been increasing 1-2% per year.
- ▶ 2006 juvenile out-migration trapping data throughout the Klamath River Basin indicates an extremely low year class, as is reflected in the STT's Pre-Season Report. The 2008 SSRT Pre-Season Report to the PFMC states,

“While no Conservation Alert has been triggered this year, the STT is concerned that 2007 observed escapements for several stocks are outside the bounds of the data.

In 2007, Central Valley Chinook had a record low number of jacks in the escapement last year. Klamath River fall Chinook also had record low jack returns in 2007, and are thus outside the bounds of the data used to forecast ocean age-3 abundance.

The escapement index for north migrating Oregon coast fall Chinook has declined sharply for the past four years and the stocks failed to meet their post-season escapement goal in 2007 for the first time since 1983.

The STT is concerned that the 2008 forecasts for stocks south of Cape Falcon may be overly optimistic.”

There are various signs on the horizon longer term cumulative impacts and short term problems facing the Klamath salmon. I have provided you with some of these below and have also made recommendations to this year's proposed salmon fishing season regulations for 2008. These include:

Bad Signs for Klamath/Trinity Chinook on the Horizon

▶ **Poor Ocean Conditions** – Ocean conditions appear to be NOAA-

SST - The fact that so many of the stocks south of Cape Falcon are experiencing declining trends suggests that recent ocean conditions have been very unfavorable for survival.

▶ **Toxic Algae** – **The presence of blue green toxic algae, microcystis aruginosa,** is increasing in the Klamath River, as is illustrated in the 2007 emergency postings on the lower 150 miles of the Klamath River that warned people of the dangers of being in the river. This toxic algae also affects fish acutely and cumulatively and is a growing concern for Klamath River fish, including Chinook salmon.

▶ **Disease** -Extensive annual impacts to juvenile out-migration from various diseases appears to be increasing in the Klamath River during the spring and early summer. The incidence and extent of disease may be increasing in the Klamath River due to poor water quality conditions and lack of dynamic water flows.

▶ **Invasive Fish Species** – The presence and suspected increase in invasive fish species in the Klamath River is occurring.

▶ **Climate Change** - Predicted climate change and impacts to salmon at the edge of their range, for which Klamath/Trinity Chinook are close to the edge and Spring-run

Chinook are even more so at-risk. Assessment predict a loss of up to 20% of the existing rainfall in the Klamath River by 2050.

Proposed KRFC Rebuilding Strategy

We have reviewed the PFMC strategy for rebuilding the Klamath FALL Chinook Stocks and offer these comments. In number 13, 14, and 15.

Council Proposed KRFC Rebuilding Strategy

After review of the stock and EFH assessments, the Council is required to recommend actions to:

- A) end any excessive fishing mortality;
- B) specify criteria for determining the end of the Overfishing Concern;
- C) achieve the conservation objective of the stock; and
- D) specify actions necessary to rebuild the stock. The STT completed a stock assessment, which was presented to the Council in March 2008, and included a number of recommendations intended to address the required actions identified above.

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1. Consider the Overfishing Concern of KRFC ended when a natural spawning escapement of at least 35,000 adults is achieved in three out of four consecutive years or when a natural spawning escapement of at least 40,700 adult KRFC is achieved in two consecutive years.
 2. Target a natural spawning escapement of 40,700 adult KRFC until the Overfishing Concern is ended (the rebuilding period). When implementing *de minimis* fisheries during the rebuilding period, provide for an age-4 ocean impact rate of no more than 10 percent when preseason stock abundance forecasts result in pre-fishing spawning escapement projections of less than about 54,000.
 3. No further modifications in parameterizing the Klamath Ocean Harvest Model (KOHM) components are recommended at this time.
 4. During periods of stock rebuilding, fall fishing opportunity in areas impacting KRFC abundance should be restricted.
 5. The practice of reopening the upper Klamath and Trinity rivers to recreational fishing once hatchery egg take goals are met should be suspended during rebuilding periods or when an Overfishing Concern is imminent.
 6. All river fishery strata should be sampled at a minimum sampling rate of 20 percent for catch and biological information, including coded-wire tags (CWTs) used to estimate impact on natural area spawners and returns of hatchery fish.
 7. No change to the current FMP conservation objective for KRFC.

8. Encourage implementation of a 25 percent constant fractional marking program at Iron Gate Hatchery.
9. Encourage further research on disease issues in the Klamath Basin as they relate to population dynamics and fishery management.
10. Encourage expanded studies of tributary and mainstem production and survival rates of KRFC.
11. Encourage studies of early-life marine survival rates for KRFC.
12. Continued Council involvement in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) relicensing process, and consideration of Council recommendations by FERC.
13. Develop stock identification and improved life history understanding of wild stocks in the mainstem and tributaries, including wild fall and spring Chinook throughout the Klamath River Basin.
14. Develop a Fish Management Plan and Conservation Objectives for Klamath/Trinity Spring-run Chinook.
15. In the Klamath River Basin, there is significant hatchery production of fall chinook and less so of spring Chinook, resulting primarily from mitigation programs for dams constructed in both Upper Klamath and Trinity Rivers. (PFMC –Pacific Coast Salmon Plan -1999 -Amendment 14) Need to develop prioritized research and monitoring study design to identify impacts between wild and hatchery species and provide remedial actions.

Management of Klamath/Trinity Spring-run Chinook salmon

Spring-run Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) were once the dominant run type in the Klamath/Trinity Basin, Spring run populations are at less than 10% of the historic level and at least 7 runs (in the Klamath Basin) are now extinct. (NOAA Fisheries –1998 Chinook Status Review). The Spring-run Chinook in the Klamath Basin currently utilize an estimated 3 % of their historical habitat. Several of these historic stocks proliferated above the dams on the Klamath, Trinity and Shasta rivers. The run decline is largely due to the construction of dams/fisheries barriers, alteration of the natural hydrograph (natural and human related), increased sediment production, excessive fishing, and negative impacts to essential habitat caused by agriculture, forestry-logging/fire management, historic hydrolic mining, and others. Impacts to the Spring run Chinook have also resulted from drought, and other natural events.

In the middle to late 20th century, the decline of the depleted populations continued as a result of further dam construction (for example, of Trinity and Iron Gate Dams) and, in 1964, heavy sedimentation of habitat that resulted from catastrophic landslides due to heavy rains on soils denuded by logging (Campbell and Moyle 1991). The large run in

the Shasta River disappeared coincidentally with the construction of Dwinnell Dam in 1926 (Moyle et al. 1995).

By the 1980s, spring-run Chinook had been largely eliminated from much of their former habitats because the cold, clear water and deep pools that they require were either absent or inaccessible. In the Klamath River drainage above the Trinity, only the (Spring Chinook) population in the Salmon River and Wooley Creek remains; it has annual runs of 150-1500 fish (Campbell and Moyle 1991, Barnhart 1994). Numbers of fish in the area continue to decline (Moyle 2002). with only 90 returning adults counted in the 2005 cooperative snorkel surveys on the Salmon River.

NMFS debated designation of the Klamath spring-run Chinook as a distinct ESU, but decided that it was too closely related to fall-run Chinook to justify separation (Myers et al. 1998). Nevertheless, the presence of genetic differences and of great differences in life history suggest that it should be managed as a distinct ESU (as was done for the Sacramento River spring-run Chinook) or as a distinct population segment. Protection and restoration of streams used by spring-run Chinook salmon would provide additional protection for coho salmon because the two salmon have similar temperature and habitat requirements.

Within the lower Klamath watershed, the Salmon River remains the most pristine tributary. (Moyle 2004) Spring Chinook require deep pools for summer holding and cooler waters for juvenile rearing, such as those in the Salmon River. Because the Trinity River run of several thousand fish per year is apparently sustained largely by the Trinity River Hatchery, the Salmon River population may be the last wild (naturally spawning) population in the basin. The Trinity River Hatchery releases over 1 million juvenile spring-run Chinook every year, usually in the first week of June. Apparently, all spawners in the mainstem Trinity River below Lewiston Dam are of hatchery origin.

Short and Long Term Recommendation for Management of Klamath Trinity Chinook Species, Runs and Stocks and

Long Term

- The PFMC should recognize that Chinook salmon are in poor condition and should anticipate species and run sizes getting worse in the near future.
- The PFMC and fishing community should develop a short term and long term program that provides disaster or emergency assistance to impacted businesses and communities in the Klamath Management Zone and in the Klamath and Trinity Rivers. Also included in this program should be the purchase of a certain amount of boats and businesses from fishing interests, as well as offer retraining for those that sign up for this transitional economic fishing community stimulus.
- All fishing opportunities in the river or ocean should include a scientific research component that enlists the fishers assistance in data collection and information gathering and sharing. Although the ocean has a program being developed between

the scientists, managers and fishing community, a similar program is needed for the in-river fishing for tribal and non-tribal sport alike.

- PFMC and other fish managers should insure that adequate stock identification is secured both for the Klamath Chinook in the ocean and for the key stocks of fish in the Klamath/Trinity River system for hatchery and wild fish, as in the Klamath River Salmon, Scott, Shasta, Trinity and other tributaries, and for both the spring and fall runs of Chinook. The need to develop accurate and effective stock identification methods for the various stocks and runs of the Klamath River Basin are emphasized because we currently do not understand the impacts of fishing to the wild stocks of the Klamath River Basin. The analysis associated with the Deminimus Fishing Rule in Amendment 15 identifies the increased potential for above average impacts to the wild stocks of the tributaries, such as the Salmon, Scott, Shasta, and other tributaries for Fall Chinook during this fishery.
- Stock identification is needed to understand the life history and fishing impacts to the Klamath/Trinity Spring-run Chinook because the PFMC and other related state and federal fish managers have in the past and still inadequately manage and protect these fish. This is evidenced by the PFMC's continual failure to develop the required fish management plan and conservation objectives for Klamath/Trinity Spring-run Chinook salmon.
- The PFMC should insure that the minimum research needs are met to continue to examine stock behavior in the ocean and in the river
- The PFMC should insure that the Klamath Fishery Management Council has adequate funding and support to fulfill their on-going management role and function with regard to Klamath River salmon stocks.
- **Create a KRSC cohort reconstruction model like the KRFC model to allow for run size predictions and quotas to prevent over fishing.**
- **Do not recommend open season fishing for KRSC as long as they are in worse condition then KRFC and need appropriate management.**
- **Manage KRSC to recover the Salmon River and South Fork Trinity components**

Short Term - 2008 Salmon Fishing Season Recommendation

The post-August 2007 commercial and sport ocean salmon fisheries have already harvested approximately 4,000 KRFC from the 2008 abundance and the 2008 regulation should consider this.

► Initiate Creel surveys for KRSC harvest between the mouth of the Klamath and Weitchpec.

► There is no quota to be met or to trigger closures/protection for Klamath Spring Chinook in the ocean and/or river. The PFMC does not have the required Fish Management Plan or Conservation Objectives for Klamath Trinity Spring Chinook run, as listed in Amendment 14.

In the 2008 fishing season there is anticipated a great increase in fishing pressure for springers due to ocean and other river closures. The two fish a day bag limit for Klamath Spring-run Chinook is not driven by a fish management plan or conservation objectives thus there is no limit of how many fish can be taken nor a quota that when met would trigger a closure. The proposed fishing regulations iterate this when it is described as an "Open Season" for Klamath Trinity spring-run Chinook.

These fish are not protected and/or let alone included in the management of the Fall Chinook. NOAA says a Chinook is a Chinook in the Klamath/Trinity river. Although we greatly appreciate what protective measures are adopted more recently for the Klamath/Trinity Spring Chinook, The management is not consistent between agencies for Fall and Spring Chinook articulating a clear differences and separation of evolution between these fish. They are separated by habitat use and needs, life history patterns, run timing in as adults and out as juveniles, wild vs hatchery stocks, and many more differences. It is often quite confusing for me and my community who have stopped fishing Spring Chinook in the largest as almost only wild run left on the Klamath River and are a prime stock to consider for reintroduction above the PacificCorp dams.

The Salmon River Spring Chinook are the fish/run anticipated of use in the reintroduction. We need to build this run up and offer adequate protection to do this immediately, other wise we may be wasting and not really managing this valuable resource for the future. .

► Allow no Chinook harvest from Weitchpec to Iron Gate from Jan 1 – September 1 like the Commission has chosen to do for the South Fork Trinity.

August 31 closure are proposed in Trinity to protect wild Spring Chinook runs. They are closed until August 15th on the Klamath River above Weitchpec. These should be changed to August 31. Closure at the mouth of the Salmon River is needed because the majority of the salmon in the Klamath River above Weitchpec between August 15 and Aug 31 are either stranded or migrating wild Spring Chinook trying to get to the salmon river or they are summer run Chinook.

► Allow no Chinook harvest within 500 ft. of the mouth of Salmon River, Camp Creek and Bluff Creek from January 1 – September 1. These areas are important cold water refugia areas that have documented KRSC use through the month of August.

The regulations should close the mouth of Salmon in particular to protect wild Spring Chinook fish until September 15th if not all year. This is a key cleaner cold water refugia for the migrating adults in the Klamath River, not to mention the significance it has for the Spring run in the spring and summer months, until mid-September when the Klamath

River water temperatures cool. The PFMC should also consider closing fishing at the mouths such as the Scott , Shasta and other key refugia and holding areas all year or at least until September 15th, to better protect springers at least, if not also offer additional protection to the fall run Chinook which have questionable viability levels currently when considering the 3 year age class this year..

In conclusion, I would like to thank you for your attention. I look forward to your response. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further with me, please let me know.

Respectfully,



Petey Brucker for the
SRRC, KSMC, KSAGA and KFA

Remarks for the PFMC Public Hearing, April 1, 2008 in Eureka, CA

Good evening, my name is Ben Doane and I'm here tonight to represent the Klamath Management Zone Fisheries Coalition, a group of ocean sport fishing enthusiasts, commercial fishing interests, concerned city and county officials, fisheries dependant businesses and port authorities.

My information resources are the PFMC's Preseason Report I – February 2008, Preseason Report II – March 2008 and the Klamath River Technical Advisory Team's Klamath River Basin Fall Chinook Salmon Age-Specific Escapement, and Run-size Estimates 2007 Run – 12 February 2008

KRFC September 1, 2007 stock forecast: 31,600 age 3 fish, 157,000 age 4 fish and 1,900 age 5 fish. KR Tech. Advisory Team estimated the Age 2 (jacks) 2007 return at 1,661 fish. The 2008 escapement forecast is 26,900 natural spawners with a 2007 equivalent fishing season and 74,300 natural spawners with 0 fishing in 2008.

Considering Option#1: Nine (9) days of fishing.

The impact On Klamath River Fall Chinook in both CA/OR KMZ 1300 is fish.

The impact on Sacramento River Fall Chinook in the CA KMZ is 48 fish which equals 3.69% of the total estimated CA/OR KMZ catch. Impact in the OR KMZ is 35 fish which equals 2.69% of the total estimated CA/OR KMZ catch. Combined impact is 6.38% of the total estimated KMZ catch or 83 fish. In the whole of the KMZ the total impact in August is 22 SRFC under Option #1.

Preseason Report II indicates that the Klamath River in-river recreational fishery and federally recognized tribal fisheries will share no less than an estimated 45,900 fish (Option #1 with an escapement of 40,700 natural spawners) and as many as 56,641 fish if the KRFC are managed to an escapement of 35,000 natural spawners. It appears that there is a sufficient number of KRFC to allow the KMZ an ocean sport fishing season while achieving an escapement of 40,700 KRFC natural spawners in the Klamath River system and with limited impact on SRFC stock.

Considering Options #2 and #3: Zero ocean sport fishing.

The total closure of the KMZ ocean salmon season would be a disaster from which many commercial fishermen and fisheries dependant businesses may never recover, even with federal assistance money.

My experience with the weather conditions in the KMZ, having fished from 1964 fishing season to the 2007 fishing season, is that fishermen will be very lucky to get on the water 50% of nine days that are allowed in Option #1. Mother Nature will no doubt further reduce our potential impact on all salmon stocks.

The KMZFC strongly recommends that the PFMC adopt nothing less restrictive than Option #1 while considering a less restrictive option that would include three days on each of the Memorial Day and 4th of July holiday weekends and the last two full week of August (8/16 to 8/31). The additional impact on the SRFC stock in late August is negligible as the vast majority of that stock will have already entered the Sacramento River system in which they spawn. Additionally, the KMZFC believes that it is necessary for the proper management of the salmon resource to complete the Genetic Stock Identification Studies. The completion of the GSI will enable fisheries agencies to more accurately determine the catch location and the catch rate of the various salmon stocks.

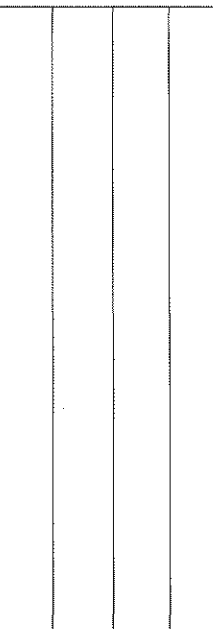
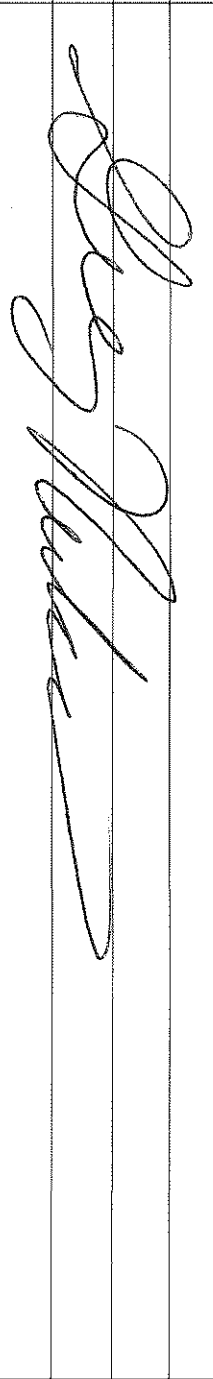
Your support of the KMZFC's requests will be greatly appreciated. Thank You.

PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUCL
ATTENDANCE SIGN-IN SHEET

DATE: Tuesday, April 1, 2008

GROUP: Salmon Hearing

PLACE: Red Lion - Eureka, CA

NAME	ADDRESS/AFFILIATION
<p>Greg Nickerson 20 DAYS OR LICENSES Aluminum Boats The BABY EGGS MAKE them Sun Man Jack the BABYS at first there are Have a licenses</p>	<p>Boat owner if we do not have 20 fish we will not buy a fishing let why Do the FINDING use monoflow lead BALS Honda motor to <u>GILBERT</u> machines & one SALMON HAS 20 hours the FINDING Do fit the way father did it with no white notages, that the killer kill you kill them all. the Boarder BAG those fish are the fish know SALMONS to fish and you will not JOB if we dont buy & fishing</p>
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