

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

Wednesday, April 8, 2009

Milbrae, California

The Columbia River tribes support the supplemental tribal report on “Salmon Methodology Review” submitted by the Washington Coastal Tribes. This is an extremely important issue for the tribes.

We would like to add a couple of additional points as well.

First, we need to develop a system where the STT can estimate the actual impacts from ocean fisheries by late August so that if changes are needed in in-river fisheries to stay within allowed allocation and harvest rate limits, there is time to implement these changes. This is important not only for treaty/non-treaty allocation issues for upriver stocks. But since both LCR coho and Lower River tules have a combined ocean and in-river ESA harvest limit, we believe this is necessary to ensure fisheries can meet the ESA requirements.

Second, we believe that as selective fisheries grow in magnitude and in geographic areas, there is an increased risk of higher mortality on released fish due to multiple encounters. We believe that the SSC should be tasked with doing a risk assessment to determine the potential and level of this risk as selective fisheries increase. We believe the STT will need tools to incorporate this risk into their estimation of impacts of ocean fisheries.

Third, genetic data have been collected in ocean fisheries. We understand that data collected in 2008 in Area 1 is just recently available and Washington staff will be making comparisons with FRAM stock composition expectations. We believe that an effort needs to be undertaken to more fully examine if or how we can incorporate these and other genetic data into ocean fishery management. We do not believe that genetic data will be a fix-all for answering questions about which stocks we are impacting in ocean fisheries. And, it may also be too expensive to use widely. But we do think there may be some use for it and that appropriate uses should be investigated.

This concludes our statement.

Thank you.