

**SALMON HEARING SUMMARY ON MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES**

Date:	March 26, 2018	Hearing Officer:	Mr. Kyle Adicks
Location:	Chateau Westport Westport, WA	Council Member:	Mr. Phil Anderson
Attendance:	106	NMFS:	Mr. Jeromy Jording
Testifying:	43	Coast Guard:	LCDR Chris Morris
		Salmon Team Member:	Ms. Wendy Beeghley
		Council Staff:	Ms. Jennifer Gilden
Organizations Represented: Washington Trollers Association, Coastal Trollers Association, Westport Charter Boat Association, Ilwaco Charter Boat Association, Puget Sound Anglers / Ocean Anglers			

**Opening Remarks**

Mr. Kyle Adicks provided an overview and Ms. Wendy Beeghley reviewed the Alternatives for the commercial and sport salmon seasons.

**Synopsis of Testimony**

Of the 43 people testifying:

- 3 commented primarily on the commercial troll fishery.
- 36 commented primarily on the recreational fishery.

**Commercial Troll Comments**

- [Coastal Trollers Association; see attached letter] Need a steady supply of fish. Want catch numbers from Alternative 1, with the details and ratios from Alternative 2. Also ask that catch restrictions in Alternatives 3 and 4 be limited to 40 Chinook per week rather than 50. Concerned that there are no trip limits in Areas 1 and 2. Add language for a 60 percent trigger to Alternative 2. For the summer fishery, prefer the language in Alternative 1 with a few exceptions. Support subarea catch limits of 40 Chinook in Areas 1, 3, 4, and last year’s limit of 75 Chinook be assigned to Area 2. Regarding incidental halibut, prefer Alternative 3 but with landing limit of less than 35 per trip to extend opportunity. For trollers with VMS, support changes in lingcod ratios from 15:1 down to 5:1.
- Want to hold on to high range of 65,000 (32,000 for ocean troll). Need to craft a season in spring and summer that is aggressive up front, so as not to leave economic opportunity in the water. Halibut retention - something similar to last year, but with two halibut for free rather than one, and one Chinook for two halibut with a landing limit of 35. In general, avoid coho encounters in the summer season and transfer to recreational if possible, to have them on the water too.
- Strongly prefer Option 1; minimize closures whenever possible.

**Recreational Comments**

- Prefer five-day season (x 22)
  - Prefer a Sunday-Thursday season. (Reasons given: need a longer season to support the

local economy; longer season allows people to make plans earlier in the year; quality of coho improves with longer season).

- If it's going to be a five-day fishery, include the weekend, or least include Saturday and close down Sunday. Would like more Chinook, given coho restrictions.
- If a five-day week, consider Saturday through Wednesday.
- Consider the safety impacts on the boat launch if there is a Sunday-only recreational fishery. Will be tough for everyone. Also, consider a weekend-only fishery, and add more Chinook.
- Customers can go bottom fishing on Friday and Saturday. Get back to quotas that justify a longer season.
- Consider frontloading the season to target Chinook. For example, a mark-selective fishery for Chinook early in the season. Limit coho; one coho bag limit with two Chinook.
- Support opening Westport Area on Sunday, June 24. (x 2)
- Support five-day week to extend season for local economy. (x 2)
- Prefer seven-day season (x 8)
  - Prefer a seven-day season. (Reasons given: need Saturdays; traffic makes it difficult for people who work Monday through Friday to come for just one day of fishing)
  - Prefer a seven-day season even with lower limits; experience is more important than filling freezer.
  - Prefer a seven-day season OR a weekend fishery. Ideally would prefer Friday-Sunday.
- Eliminating the weekend is unfair. Consider ways to shorten the days per week and extend the season without eliminating the weekends.
- Don't like any of the options on the table. Bring back the fishery.
- Need less focus on fishing coho and more on fishing Chinook. Chinook fishing in June minimizes encounters with coho. Fish earlier for Chinook in order to extend the season. Also, create separate allocations for the charter and sport industries.

#### **Other Comments**

- Support Option 1, position of Puget Sound Anglers and Coastal Trollers Association. Also, reduce pinniped predation.
- Use Seafood Import Monitoring program technology to monitor catches in real time.
- Increase hatchery program/production. (x 3)
- Improve habitat.
- Address predation.

#### **Written Statements (Attached)**

1. Judy Berghuis, Westport resident
2. Rob Bearden, Mayor of Westport
3. Steve Wilson, Coastal Trollers Association
4. Steve Westrick, Westport resident and charter business owner
5. Larry Giese, Deep Sea Charters, Westport
6. Chuck and Jennifer Custer, C/V Freedom, Westport.

PFMC  
03/30/18

To Whom It May Concern:

A friend on Facebook told me there was something going on at the Chateau - so I ran down there and found out it starts at 7PM. That is a bit late for me to go back, but, I wanted to let you know my feelings on this important issue. I am a homeowner at Westport By The Sea for the last 4 years, but I have been coming to Grayland area for camping for over 10 years, and it's by far my favorite campground in Washington. There is something very magical about this area and for me it's the reason that I bought my condo here, and now since September 2017 I have been living here full time.

It saddens me to drive into downtown Westport and see so many local business's folded up (i.e. my dad played the banjo at Sourdough Lil's back in the day). I go out of my way to eat/shop in my district and I am totally committed to putting my money back into my community. This area is a gem and I hope that business picks up and shops that are here can remain here until they decide it's time to quit.

You have my whole support in extending the fishing season, with the added advantage that it trickles down to the small business owners of this amazing town.

Judy Berghuis  
PO Box 815  
Westport WA 98595



## City of Westport

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March 26, 2018

Dear Pacific Fishery Management Council and attendees,

My name is Rob Bearden, and I am the Mayor of the City of Westport. I had hoped to attend tonight's meeting, but there is a Westport City Council meeting tonight that occurs at the same time as the public hearing.

I strongly urge the Pacific Fishery Management Council to allow recreational and commercial salmon seasons for our area, and I specifically ask you to set a Sunday through Thursday, five days per week fishing schedule for recreational salmon fishing. Having a stretched out recreational salmon season is imperative to the success of our town. A short salmon season would be devastating to our city, our businesses, and our families that rely on visitors during salmon season to survive.

The recreational salmon fishery is vital to our tourism industry as it brings thousands of people into our city who sleep in our accommodations, eat at our restaurants, and shop at our businesses. The commercial fishery is vital to our seafood processing industry and to the country so that we may supply many with healthy, wild salmon.

Both recreational and commercial fisheries are of paramount importance to our families, as both provide numerous job opportunities for hard working men and women to support their families and spend money in our community. Businesses and families alike would be devastated by not establishing sufficient salmon fisheries for the 2018 season. Furthermore, it is imperative to our entire community that recreational ocean salmon fishing be a Sunday through Thursday, five days per week fishery.

Sincerely,

Rob Bearden  
Mayor, City of Westport

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Coastal Trollers Association

PFMC Public Testimony at Westport, Washington: March 26, 2018

My name is Steve Wilson, secretary of the Coastal Trollers Association. I have held a Washington troll license since 1988 and currently direct market my fish out of LaPush and into restaurants and farmer's markets in Snohomish, King and Pierce counties.

Our Coastal Trollers Association's goal is to protect and enhance **an economically viable** Washington salmon troll fishery. We look to bring a steady supply of fish to market throughout the spring and summer seasons, thereby increasing their value per pound.

We know from the meetings at Rohnert Park that our TAC of Chinook is at best only 2/3 of last season; I offer the following preferences for the 2018 salmon troll season.

Not a surprise, we desired the overall catch numbers from Alternative 1. That said we focused on Alternative two's details and catch ratios.

Looking at the spring, May-June, fishery, we ask that the catch restrictions in Areas 3 & 4 be limited to 40 Chinook per week, not 50, as written in Alt. 2. We need only look back to 2015 when that area was heavily fished and we exceeded the TAC trigger after only 16 days. Weekly trip limits for the remainder of the spring varied from 20 to 12 fish. Furthermore, we are concerned that there are no trip limits in Areas 1 & 2. The month of May from 2014 to 2017 has accounted for between 40 and 50% of the total of fish caught North of Cape Falcon for the entire season (the exception being 2015 as noted above). Therefore, we ask to add language for a 60% trigger to Alternative 2. (Statistics from pp. 164-166 of the PFMC document [Review of 2017 Ocean Salmon Fisheries](#)).

Looking at the summer fishery, we prefer most of the language in Alternative 1, open 7 days a week and going from July 1 through September 19, **with a few exceptions**. We support sub-area catch limits of 40 Chinook be included in Areas 1,3 &4, and last year's limit of 75 Chinook be assigned to Area 2. Again, we are looking at a 33% reduction in last year's total allowable catch, one that saw us catch ~11,500. The best Alternative on the table today allows for only 8,100.

Regarding our incidental halibut opportunity, the Coastal Trollers Association is comfortable with Alternative 3, but would prefer a landing limit less than 35 per trip. Again the rationale is to extend the opportunity to meet the demands of the regional restaurants.

For those trollers who have VMS on board, we also support the change in ratios of ling cod per Chinook salmon from 15:1 to 5:1. We appreciate the combined efforts of both our Coastal Trollers Association along with the Washington Trollers Association to bring this change to the Council.

To conclude, the Coastal Trollers Association appreciates this opportunity to share our preferences amongst the 3 salmon Alternatives. Thank you and I welcome your questions.

Monday March 26, 2018

Good evening Mr. Chairman and hearing panel and thank you for conducting this public hearing in Westport.

My name is Steve Westrick, a lifelong resident of Westport along with my family, my dad started here in the 1960s , and we've been in the Charter business ever since, and have witnessed a sea of changes over the years. I'm also a proud member of the Westport Charterboat Association.

Anyway, my charter vessel is the Hula Girl and I am also co-owner of Westport Charters where 7 other charter vessels work out of besides my own.

The bottom line for my testimony is to give strong support for an option that includes the 5-days per week, Sunday thru Thursday scenario for ocean area 2 which is Westport. Based on the low quota numbers projected for this season I truly believe the 5-day per week option is vital to help lengthen our salmon season over more of the calendar.

I also support opening the Westport area on Sunday June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Back to the 5-day week topic, we used this tool for many many years, I think we started in the 80's, and the reasons are the same today that they were then, and that is to stretch the season out, because when salmon closes, economic value is seriously compromised. Salmon is and always will be the Holy Grail that keeps things stimulated for our community. We appreciate the bottomfish and tuna resources but it's ultimately the length of the salmon season that helps our seasonal businesses and community thrive.

Thank You

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Westrick". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PFMC meeting in Westport 3/26/2018

My name is Larry Giese, Thank you for the opportunity to speak regarding the upcoming Westport area Salmon fishing season. I've been in business here in Westport for over 25 years. I am past president of the Westport/ Grayland Chamber of commerce, and I am the Treasurer for the Westport Charterboat Association. I am also the owner of Deep Sea Charters here in Westport. My business contracts with eleven Charter boats to take fishermen out on the ocean sport fishing. We have a total of just under 60,000 customers in our data base, I am representing not only the Skippers, Deckhands, and their families but all those people that may take a charter fishing trip here in Westport. These people eat at our restaurants, shop at our grocery store, stay overnight in our hotels and shop in our gift shops.

The last few years have been a disaster for our City in that we have had limited Salmon Seasons and this year appears to be just as limited or worse. Plain and simple we cannot go on with the seven day per week regimen we have in the past as it shortens the length of season. Please don't get me wrong, I want a seven day per week season just as much as anyone, but not when we have seasons like this one is shaping up to be. Sunday through Thursday makes so much sense from a Westport economic view as we can go Bottom fishing on Friday and Saturday and then Salmon fish on Sunday through Thursday. This could possibly stretch the season 3 more weeks which is good for all businesses in Westport.

We need to get back to quotas that would justify seven days per week, and maybe longer seasons. How do we do that? I think the government needs to fund more hatcheries, work on restoring habitat, and do something about the predators..... Seals..... Sea Lions..... Caspian Terns..... and Cormorants.

Thank you,

Larry Giese



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Freedom Sportfishing

Westport, WA

Our family owns and operates the Charter Vessel Freedom in Westport. We have owned the boat for more than 20 years.

These are just a few of the obstacles we face every year:

- Changing and increasingly burdensome regulations
- Increased fees and permits
- The Boldt decision
- Lack of hatchery support
- Sealion decimation of the resource
- Unpredictable distribution of resource
- Unpredictable season opportunities
- Weather
- Ocean Conditions
- Increased environmental supporters opposed to fishing

We are still here. We are still fishing. We are still fighting for the best fishing opportunities we can get.

We are also aware of the enormous weight our business carries to help support our town. Westport is a fishing town and many, if not all businesses depend on a good season. Along with the businesses are families. Our boat supports two families. Every Charter boat in town is the same. A short Salmon season not only effects our business and family but nearly every other business and family in town. A shortened season means less revenue for the entire town.

If there is a chance to lengthen the season to help protect our livelihood and well as the financial stability of our town we ask that you choose that option.

With the diminished abundance & quotas we need to have a Sunday-Thursday salmon fishery this year to stretch the season. It would be beneficial to our business, our customers and our town.

Long term we would like to see increased hatchery production and Sealion reduction to help increase the salmon population so there would be more abundance of this resource.

Thank You

Chuck and Jennifer Custer