



YUROK TRIBE

190 Klamath Boulevard • Post Office Box 1027 • Klamath, CA 95548



March 15, 2019

Phil Anderson, Chairman
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101
Portland, Oregon 97220-1384

Re: Yurok Tribal management objective for 2019

Aiy-ye-kwee':

On behalf of the Yurok Tribe, I am writing to inform you of our management intent for the Yurok Tribe's 2019 fishery for Klamath Fall Chinook. We will manage our fishery to harvest 80% of the Tribal share of the Klamath Fall Chinook harvestable surplus, while also managing for 40,700 natural spawners (MSY value for Klamath Fall Chinook).

Proportion of Tribal Share

The Yurok Tribal fishery has been managed to harvest 80% of the Klamath Tribal share since 1988, when the Hoopa Yurok Settlement Act was passed by Congress. It is not our intent to bring inriver inter-tribal allocation issues to this body, given such issues are not within the purview of the PFMC. However, during the March PFMC meeting, the Hoopa Valley Tribe (HVT) provided testimony that in 2019 their management objectives will "...include accessing up to 50% of the inter-tribal reserve of KRFC....". Therefore, we feel obligated to clarify our intent to continue our practice of managing for 80% of the Tribal share.

The HVT's unilateral decision to increase their harvest share in 2019 creates a conservation dilemma for Klamath Fall Chinook, as it could result in 130% of the tribal share being harvested, resulting in management for less than the MSY value of 40,700 adult natural spawners. This predicament is a conservation concern for the Yurok Tribe, but should also be a legal concern for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), given the legal responsibilities NMFS has pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and National Standard 1 Guidelines regarding obligations to meet conservation objectives and to rebuild a fishery once it has reached an "overfished" status. It is not appropriate for NMFS to allow ocean fisheries to take Klamath fall Chinook during 2019 unless our trustee, the federal government, takes unequivocal action to ensure that the HVT manages their fishery to stay within their 20% share of the Klamath Tribal share.

Managing for Maximum Sustained Yield

As noted above, the Yurok Tribe anticipates managing for MSY (40,700 natural adult Fall Chinook) during 2019. We are aware of NMFS's guidance to the PFMC to "target a natural-area

adult KRFC escapement greater than 40,700 for 2019 fisheries to further stabilize the population and promote rebuilding", given the overfished status of Klamath Fall Chinook. We appreciate any conservation efforts the non-tribal sector chooses to take to conserve Klamath Fall Chinook, however we want to make it clear that we will be managing for MSY during 2019.

The Yurok Tribe has undergone great sacrifice during the past three years due to the recent collapse of the Klamath Fall Chinook fishery. During 2016 we managed for the second smallest allocation in our history, far below what is necessary to meet our subsistence needs. In 2017, for the first time ever, we closed our subsistence gill net fishery completely and dedicated most of our 650 fish share to the spawning escapement, given our concern regarding the conservation of the species. Last year was the third consecutive year that we did not conduct a commercial fishery, given the low forecasted abundance for Klamath Fall Chinook.

In light of the sacrifice our people have made during recent years to conserve Klamath Fall Chinook, and given that stock abundance has rebounded to some extent, we plan to manage for the MSY target (40,700 natural adult spawners) and take advantage of this opportunity to provide increased fishing opportunity for Yurok People. As noted above, we will also be managing for 80% of the Klamath Tribal share. If you have any questions regarding our management plan for the 2019 fall Chinook fishery, please don't hesitate to contact myself, or Dave Hillemeier (Fisheries Department Director) at the address in the letterhead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joseph L. James", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Joseph L. James, Chairman