

SALMON HEARING SUMMARY ON MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES
WASHINGTON REPORT

The public hearing focused on Washington state salmon management alternatives was held online on the evening of Tuesday, March 23. Representatives on hand included:

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council)	Mr. Kyle Adicks (Washington)
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):	Mr. Jeromy Jording
United States Coast Guard (USCG):	Mr. Chris German
Council Staff:	Dr. Kit Dahl
Salmon Technical Team (STT)	Ms. Wendy Beeghley (Washington)

Participants

An estimated 30 participants attended the online hearing, including those listed above, Council representatives Mr. Phil Anderson and Mr. Butch Smith, and other agency staff.

Opening Remarks

Mr. Adicks provided opening remarks for the hearing as the Council representative for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Ms. Beeghley reviewed alternatives for the commercial and recreational salmon seasons, and for incidental halibut retention in the salmon troll fishery.

Summary of Testimony

The overlying theme of public testimony was a preference for Alternative I except that the coho total allowable catch (TAC) in Alternative II was generally favored.

Commercial Testimony

Three people provided comment on the commercial fishery including representatives from the Washington Trollers Association and the Coastal Trollers Association. They supported the quotas and season structure from Alternative I, including the exchange between the commercial fishery of 8,000 marked coho for 2,000 Chinook and the status quo measures for incidental Pacific halibut catch represented by Alternative I of the incidental halibut measures. However, they favored the Alternative II coho TAC of 110,000 marked fish. They recognized the constraints placed on fisheries by Washington coastal coho and Columbia River chinook, but also expressed concern about the continued economic impact of poor fishing seasons and the ongoing pandemic on coastal towns. They noted the large difference in projected ex-vessel value between Alternatives I and II, which will directly affect small fishing businesses as well as processors and other fishing-related businesses. Testimony was split between use of the 27-inch size limit from Alternative I and the traditional 28-inch size limit from Alternative II.

Recreational Testimony

Two people provided comment on the recreational fishery, representing the charter fleet. Similar to the commercial testimony, Alternative 1 was favored but with the coho TAC from Alternative II. One person asked the Council to give consideration to trying to limit the number of coho that will likely be released when setting daily species limits and daily total salmon limits for the fishery.