

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 22, 2022. Representatives on hand included:

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council)	Mr. Kyle Adicks (Washington), Hearing Officer
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):	Mr. Jeromy Jording
United States Coast Guard (USCG):	Mr. Chris German
Council Staff:	Dr. Jim Seger
Salmon Technical Team (STT)	Mr. Kyle Van de Graaf (Washington)

Participants

An estimated 33 participants attended the online hearing, including those listed above, and other agency staff. Council members Mr. Phil Anderson and Mr. Butch Smith also attended.

Opening Remarks

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

Summary of Testimony

The overall theme of public testimony was a preference for Alternative I.

Commercial Testimony

A representative of the Washington Trollers Association provided public comment. They supported Alternative 1 and specifically the 65,000 chinook and 210,000 coho total allowable catches (TACs), along with season structures and regulatory language that would maximize the efficiency of the troll fishery, limit expenses (including diesel), and provide marketing opportunities in the spring. They also support the related halibut measures. In supporting this package, they noted that the 65,000 chinook TAC is more consistent with the long-term lower Columbia River tule Chinook exploitation rate attributed to the ocean troll fishery in years past when coho was not a constraint. Seasons need to be balanced and shaped to provide as strong a fishery as possible for the fleet and fishery dependent small businesses that are part of socio-economically vulnerable coastal communities.

Recreational Testimony

Three people provided comment on the recreational fishery, including representatives of the Puget Sound Anglers Association (PSAA) and its Ocean Chapter, Westport Charterboat Association (WCA), and one individual supporting the charter boat association position. Similar to the commercial testimony, Alternative 1 was favored. The PSAA, emphasized achieving the longest season possible while meeting Endangered Species Act (ESA) related guidelines. For the WCA, the importance of returning healthy numbers of spawners to the Queets River, in order to continue to rebuild that stock, was a particular area of emphasis. While the exploitation rate for lower

Columbia River natural tules was a concern (over 38 percent in Alternatives 1 and 2) it was noted that fisheries for northern British Columbia and the West Coast of Vancouver Island had not yet been determined and that, once determined, the exploitation rates showing in the current model would likely change. While the preference is for a 7-day a week fishery, more important is being sure that the fishery is able to continue through to the end of the season (so there is not an early closure).

Other Testimony

One individual testified on lower Columbia River tule conservation and ESA concerns, noting that the high and middle alternatives would not meet objectives for that stock. He felt that reductions in Washington fisheries should be considered to achieve that end.

PFMC

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