

**TESTIMONY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES
BEFORE PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
April 11, 2025, San Jose, CA**

Good day members of the Council. My name is _____. I am Commissioner with the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission and _____. I am here with _____ to provide testimony on behalf of the four Columbia River treaty tribes: the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce tribes.

During the 1850's, Issac Stevens promised in treaties he negotiated with our tribal governments that the tribes and our rights to hunt, fish, and gather our sacred foods would always be protected. These promises have not been fulfilled. Almost immediately after the treaties were signed there were incursions into tribal lands, water was diverted from streams and dams begun to be built. Logging and mining accelerated as well. Impacts to our resources were occurring long before the construction of the large mainstem and Snake River dams. As the hydro-electric system began to be developed in the 1900's, promises were made to mitigate for the harm they have caused our fish.

Part of the mitigation was the development of hatchery programs. These programs today struggle with inadequate funding not only to produce fish but also to maintain and refurbish the aging infrastructure. These problems are further aggravated by ongoing problems with our federal government.

But one of the other important issues with the hydro-system is that it has created environments that are not simply detrimental to salmon and steelhead but are beneficial to a host of predators of salmon and invasive species. Our staff will be making a presentation on Sunday evening to members of the SAS and other interested members of the Council family on recent information on addressing sea lion and avian predators in the Columbia River. We will highlight many of the efforts that the tribes along with our state and federal co-managers are engaged in as well as additional work that needs to be done. Addressing excessive levels of predation in the Columbia will have significant positive benefits to the fish that we all depend on. There is clearly a significant amount of work that needs to be done.

It is these and other salmon restoration activities that need to be all of our focus or we will continue to have meetings like here today where a smaller and smaller pie gets divided in ways that do not meet the needs of the tribes or any other fishers.

As the Council works to develop final ocean fishery plans, we will continue to monitor the process to ensure that the requirements of the U.S. v. Oregon Management agreement are met.

This concludes our statement. Thank You.