

**SALMON HEARING SUMMARY ON MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES  
WASHINGTON REPORT**

The public hearing focused on Washington state salmon management alternatives was held in Westport, WA on the evening of Monday, March 23. Representatives on hand included:

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):	Mr. Kyle Adicks (WDFW) Mr. Butch Smith (Council Vice-Chair)
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):	Susan Bishop
United States Coast Guard (USCG):	<i>Not in attendance</i>
Council Staff:	Ms. Angela Forristall
Salmon Technical Team (STT):	Mr. Kyle Van de Graaf (WDFW)

**Participants**

An estimated 37 participants attended the hearing, including those listed above. The USCG was not able to attend the hearing due to the partial government shutdown.

**Opening Remarks**

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

In response to a question from a member of the public, Mr. Adicks explained that the final season structure adopted at the April Council meeting must meet conservation objectives for all stocks. He noted that additional information from fisheries still being developed (such as those in Alaska, British Columbia, and inside fisheries) will be updated and may change the currently projected impacts.

**Summary of Testimony**

A total of seven attendees provided public comment, including four commercial and three sport representatives. The overlying theme of public testimony was a preference for Alternative I for the commercial fishery and support for the most liberal and consistent season possible for the recreational fishery.

Commercial Testimony

The president of the Washington Trollers Association (WTA) supported the non-treaty total allowable catch (TAC) (120,000 Chinook and 130,000 coho) and the season structure in Alternative I, or as close as possible while meeting conservation requirements. They also supported incidental Pacific halibut provisions under Option I, which specifies a 35-fish trip limit. They expressed a preference for time and area adjustments over quota reductions if needed and emphasized the value of inseason management tools. They noted that Lower Columbia River natural tulle Chinook will likely constrain ocean fisheries and requested that allowable impacts be shifted back to ocean fisheries where possible. The speaker noted that Alternatives I and II currently fall short of conservation objectives, though inputs from Alaska and British Columbia are still unknown so this could change. They highlighted higher projected ex-vessel revenue under Alternative I compared to Alternative III and underscored the importance of the fishery to multigenerational fishing families and coastal communities. They concluded by emphasizing the strong economic importance of the spring fishery, when demand for

hook-and-line caught Chinook salmon is highest and market prices are higher, leading to preference for the majority of the Chinook quota to be available in the spring fishery.

A member of the WTA with 60 years of experience in the commercial fishery, and part of a multigenerational fishing family, expressed support for the WTA president's comments, noting they also participate in recreational fishing outside of trolling.

Another speaker highlighted the long careers of many fishermen present but stressed that attracting younger participants will require a consistent and economically viable fishery.

An additional testifier asked about the potential for a commercial chum troll fishery in Puget Sound. In response, Mr. Adicks explained that there is no license type for commercial salmon trolling in Puget Sound, and that creating a new license type or increasing the number of licenses in Puget Sound would require legislative action and offered to follow up after the hearing with more details.

### Recreational Testimony

Three individuals provided comments on the recreational fishery, including representatives and members of the Westport Charter Boat Association (WCBA), Puget Sound Anglers (PSA), and Mutineer Charters. Alternative 1 was favored.

The president of WCBA provided a brief background of WCBA and noted the charter sector served over 20,000 anglers last year. He emphasized the pride WCBA takes in collaborating with other fishing fleets to achieve balanced seasons and fair allocation. He highlighted current constraints on Puget Sound fisheries due to Chinook status and stressed the importance of stable, predictable seasons, noting that inseason disruptions harm businesses and customers. He also encouraged fair sharing of impacts between inside and ocean fisheries and looking at sharing that approaches a historic average. Pending more information from Canadian and Alaska fisheries, he indicated that Alternative I better supports a mid-June through September season, while Alternative III could reduce opportunity and cause economic hardship. He also supported using tools like season structure and bag limits before reducing quotas.

A Westport charter operator, who serves approximately 7,000 anglers annually (about half on trips targeting salmon), supported the WCBA president's comments. They emphasized that long, well-managed salmon seasons also sustain other sport fisheries and benefit the broader community, noting that Westport has faced recent economic challenges, including the loss of several local restaurants in the past year.

A representative of Puget Sound Anglers thanked attendees for the strong turnout. He had received feedback from anglers in Washington Marine Areas 2, 3, and 4 that were supportive of the season structure in Alternative II, but with quotas from Alternative I. For the Ilwaco subarea (Area 1), anglers requested consideration of an additional option featuring a Chinook-only season through July 15, similar to the structure proposed for Westport under Alternative II, and a five-day-per-week all salmon season if quotas are as low as Alternative III.

### **Closing Remarks**

Mr. Kyle Adicks thanked the participants for attending the hearing and for providing information for use in the Pacific Fishery Management Council process. He also reminded the audience of other

upcoming fishery planning meetings in the North of Falcon forum and the upcoming Council meeting in Portland, Oregon from April 7-12.

Organizations in attendance included, but were not limited to:

- Coalition of Coastal Fisheries
- Washington Trollers Association
- Westport Charter Boat Association
- Puget Sound Anglers

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