

SALMON HEARING SUMMARY ON MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES
OREGON REPORT

The public hearing focused on salmon management alternatives affecting Oregon was held in person in Newport, Oregon with remote participation also available, on the evening of Tuesday, March 24. Representatives on hand included:

Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):	Mr. John North (ODFW)
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):	Shannon Penna
United States Coast Guard (USCG):	<i>Not in attendance</i>
Council Staff:	Ms. Angela Forristall
Salmon Technical Team (STT):	Ms. Cassie Leeman (ODFW)

Participants

An estimated 51 participants attended the hybrid meeting, with 11 in person and 40 online. Participants including the representatives listed above, Council Vice-Chair Butch Smith, Council member Lynn Mattes, and members of the Salmon Advisory Panel (SAS). The USCG was not able to attend the hearing due to the partial government shutdown.

Opening Remarks

Mr. North opened the hearing in his role as Council representative for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW).

Mr. Mike Sorenson (SAS) expressed appreciation for the collaboration between sport and commercial SAS members in developing season opportunities and thanked ODFW staff for their support during the March meeting. He noted that while Alternative I currently indicates that objectives are being met for many stocks, this could change when the analysis is updated at the April meeting.

Mr. John Alto (SAS) stated that this year's alternatives were developed based on fleet input. He highlighted that a buffer on allowable age-4 Klamath impacts has significantly affected troll opportunities, particularly off California. He also noted that Alternative I includes consideration of unlimited spreads per line in the fall.

Ms. Cassie Leeman provided a review of the commercial and recreational salmon season alternatives.

Summary of Testimony

A total of 12 people provided testimony:

Five provided comments on the commercial troll fishery alternatives

Seven provided comments on the recreational fishery alternatives

Commercial Testimony

There was mixed support among commercial stakeholders who provided verbal testimony. Several

testifiers supported Alternative I outright, while one suggested a blended approach combining elements of Alternatives I and III. One supporter of Alternative I recommended modifying the season south of Heceta Bank to Humbug Mountain by shifting the dates from June 23–30 to June 1–8 to avoid a gap in fishing opportunities in that area.

Another individual supported Alternative II, citing the opportunities it provides between the Heceta Bank Line and Humbug Mountain.

Two additional individuals were signed up to provide virtual comment on the troll alternatives, however one was not online during the public comment period and the other had technical issues coming off mute. These individuals both indicated support for Alternative III on the sign-up form.

There was support expressed for a halibut trip limit of 35 fish.

Recreational Testimony

All individuals who provided verbal comment on the sport fishery alternatives expressed support for Alternative I. While there was broad agreement on this preference, several testifiers recommended adjusting the timing of the mark-selective coho fishery to run from June 13 through August 23, noting that fish tend to be smaller and less abundant early in the season, while later in the season there is a higher encounter rate with natural-origin fish.

One testifier also noted that recreational vessels operating out of Newport are primarily small, private boats with relatively low impacts on age-4 Klamath River fall Chinook.

In addition, testifiers expressed support for maintaining a full Chinook season, with one individual emphasizing the importance of maintaining a two-Chinook limit throughout August.

Other Comments

In response to a question about why commercial fishing opportunities are not available in August while sport opportunities are, it was explained that the sport fishery has comparatively lower impacts during this time. A related question was raised regarding differences in impacts between sport and commercial “credit card” fisheries (fall fisheries impacts on Sacramento and Klamath River fall Chinook, where impacts are applied to the following fishing year). It was explained that the sport fishery has lower impacts due to the size of fish caught. It was also noted that impacts to Columbia River tule Chinook are not treated in this manner, but instead are accounted for annually.

Clarification was provided that halibut retention is allowed prior to May 16, with any trip limits during the pre-May 16 fisheries the same as those that were implemented in 2025 (a 35-fish limit per trip).

Concerns were raised that the effort data being used may no longer reflect current participation levels in the commercial fleet. In response, it was noted that the most recent available data from active fishing seasons are used and that this issue has been carefully considered by modelers.

There was also discussion regarding data and observational inputs for both commercial and

recreational fisheries. It was explained that coded wire tag recoveries are a key component of the data used to inform the model and are expanded to account for sampling and tagging limitations. For the sport fishery, data collection includes port cameras to estimate effort and dockside sampling conducted by state creel samplers.

One individual representing the *Salmon Come Home* campaign expressed concern about impacts to returning Klamath River fall Chinook and urged consideration of the alternative with the lowest impacts on that stock. They also raised concerns about how close the alternatives are to the allowable exploitation rate for Oregon Coast coho and requested careful review of those figures as the process continues.

Finally, appreciation was expressed for the availability of a hybrid meeting format.

Closing Remarks

Mr. North thanked participants for attending and providing their input and noted that additional written testimony can be submitted on the Council's website.

PFMC
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