

**TESTIMONY OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY TRIBES
BEFORE PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

March 12, 2019, Vancouver, WA

Good day members of the Council. My name is Wilbur Slockish. I am a member of the Klickitat Tribe of the Yakama Nation and a treaty fisher on the Columbia River. I am here to provide testimony on behalf of the four Columbia River treaty tribes: the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes.

As the Council considers finalizing its ocean fishery options for public review, the Columbia River tribes want to remind the Council of a few points.

In our treaties in the 1850's we specifically reserved our rights to hunt and fish and gather food at all of our usual and accustomed places. As sovereigns, we always had these rights and the treaties simply maintained these rights. There are no specific rights that individual non-Indians have to the fishery resource, but rather the opportunity to utilize the resource under a set of specific rules. It is incumbent on the United States to ensure that our treaty rights are protected.

Tribal people are working together not only to protect our treaty rights but also to ensure the protection and restoration of our fishery resources. We welcome working together with non-Indians on salmon restoration as well.

There has been a good deal of discussion about uncertainties with forecasts this week. It is important to recognize this uncertainty and be cautious in setting fisheries based on these forecasts. Even though tribal, state, and federal staff work to update and ensure forecasts are as accurate as possible, there will always be some level of uncertainty.

We would also like to specifically comment on the upper Columbia summer chinook. These fish are not ESA listed. They are one of the few stocks that we can specifically manage under the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement where treaty and non-treaty fisheries can each reach 50% of the harvestable number of fish. The STT report correctly indicates that under the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement, there is a provision of a minimum escapement goal of 29,000 fish returning to the river mouth. But the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement also has a harvest rate schedule that dictates specific harvest limits for treaty and non-treaty fisheries at different abundances. The tribes will be tracking carefully at the how different ocean options affect the harvest limits under the Management Agreement. We fully expect that as the ocean recommendations are finalized in April that the Council will not support any option that would violate of the harvest rate provisions of the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement. We will be happy to discuss any issues that arise related to summer chinook with the other *U.S. v. Oregon* parties at any time over the next few weeks.

This concludes the tribal statement.