

52nd Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
January 4-6, 1983
Baranof Hotel
Juneau, Alaska

PUBLIC TESTIMONY:

Tim Wopato, Executive Director of the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission introduced Commission members to the Board and Council: Catherine Brigham, Harold Culpus, Levi George, Wilbur Johnson, and Nathan Jim. Each member spoke in support of the treaty. They stressed the importance of planning now for the future generations.

Tom Jacobsen, Chairman of the Sumner Strait Interim Advisory Committee, reported that the Committee has reviewed the proposed changes to the Southeast Alaska Troll Fishing Regulations and commented as follows on proposals which affect the FCZ: On Proposal #218 on season options, the Committee would support Option 6. On Proposal #219, the Committee would oppose the establishment of a mid-season closure. Regarding Proposal #220, the Committee disagrees with Option 1 and supports Option 2 which they believe would provide a more objective method of determining the necessity of a closure. On Proposal #230, Option 3 was favored which would standardize the number of lines for all trollers. The Committee supports the use of treble hooks as described in Proposal #233, and also supports Proposal #257 as an effort to relieve trolling pressure in Southeast Alaska.

Garri Constantine, a troller from Douglas, Alaska, discussed the problem of off-shore fleets which are not monitored or controlled. He feels that the Japanese fleets have not contributed to the conservation of salmon and should be asked to contribute. Mr. Constantine would like to see 100 percent observership on all foreign vessels. It is important to know the impact of these fisheries on North American salmon before anything can be done.

Clark Eaton, a troller from Gig Harbor, Washington, and a member of the Alaska Trollers Association, told the Council and Board that he feels a big problem of fisheries is the building of dams. He also said that he cannot support the proposed U.S./Canada treaty in its present form. He feels that the OY is a manipulative tool for allocations, not conservation.

John Wilcox, a member of the Juneau Hand Troll Association, spoke on the proposed treaty. Mr. Wilcox said he could not support the proposed treaty. He feels there is a need for new negotiators and that new negotiations should begin.

Leo Land, representing the Alaska Native Brotherhood of Haines, Alaska, said that he would like to see the U.S. and Canada be able to come to some equitable agreement on the treaty.

Bert Adams, a member of Alaska Native Brotherhood from Yakutat, Alaska, supported Proposal #208. Mr. Adams was also accompanied by members of the Yaktat Kwaan Corp. They proposed closing trolling for 10 miles in front of the river mouths, which would involve approximately seven miles of federal waters. This closure would protect the gillnet fishery. Walter Porter, a member of the Yaktat Kwaan Corp. and the Hand Trollers Association in Yakutat, said that dry summers are causing problems for the trollers and the necessity for emergency closures indicates a problem which needs to be addressed. Mr. Walter Johnson, also of the Yaktat Kwaan Corporation and Chairman of the Yakutat Advisory Committee, indicated that the Advisory Committee has the same concerns. Mr. Bill Thomas said that he is opposed to the proposed treaty as presented.

Charles Jones, of the Craig Advisory Board, reported that the Advisory Board had reviewed the proposed regulation changes and voted as follows: In favor of Option 6 under Proposal #218; opposed to Proposal #219; endorse Option 2 under Proposal #220; endorse Proposals #224, 232, 233, 250, 257, 263; opposed to Proposals #254, 256, and 265. The Craig Advisory Board would like more input on Board and Council proceedings. He also asked why fishermen can not register at the same time they apply for their permit. It was noted by the ADF&G Board that this procedure is now being implemented. In reference to the proposed treaty, Mr. Jones asked why the U.S. is starting with such a small yield. Steve Pennoyer of the ADF&G answered Mr. Jones by explaining how the figures were attained.

Gary McMaster, Chairman of the Pelican Advisory Board, commented in support of the proposed troll plan.

Ed Bergeron, Board member of ATA, expressed the desire of the ATA Board to bring back the use of treble hooks.

Jim Wild, of the Elfin Cove Advisory Committee, explained to the Board and Council that fishing is the sole income of the 25 residents of Elfin Cove. Without more fish being added to the OY, they will no longer be able to make a living. Mr. Wild commented on several of the proposed regulation changes. On Proposal #233 regarding the use of treble hooks, Mr. Wild feels that the test results were not interpreted correctly; he would like to see the reinstatement of the use of treble hooks. On Proposal #257, Mr. Wild would like to see this approved to allow troll gear statewide.

Paul Johnson, a fisherman from Elfin Cove, expressed concern about inter-dam salmon loss and that the fishermen don't get anything back for the fish they save.

Martin Frederickson, Sitka Handtrollers Assn., spoke on several of the proposal regulations. The Association would comment on these proposals as follows: Oppose Proposals #210, 222, 229, and 233; support Proposals #218 (Option 1), #223; #230 (Option 1), #232, and #258.

Maurice Ingman, of the Ketchikan Advisory Board, also responded for the Advisory Board and himself on the proposed regulations, as follows: In favor of Proposals #210, #223, #230, #232, #257, and #258; opposed to #209, #218, #219, and #220. The Advisory Board is opposed to the proposed treaty as they feel it favors Canada.

Jeri Museth, speaking for Troll PAC, Elfin Cove, and herself, reported that Troll PAC rejects the treaty until a more equitable arrangement is made. They have submitted a letter to Governor Sheffield to that effect.

Gary Slaven, a Petersburg troller and on the Board of ATA, expressed the concensus of the Board of ATA and the fishermen in Petersburg that the proposed treaty is not fair to the American fishermen. It is necessary to maintain the level of fish at least at the figure of 300,000 or they won't have a fishery.

Joe Palmas, Charlie Jim, Sr., Joe Hotch, and Bill Thomas of the Alaska Native Brotherhood, Grand Camp from Angoon, spoke on the importance of subsistence to Angoon and Haines. They stressed the fact that they, too, wish to take necessary measures to preserve and protect salmon.

Walt Pasternak, Sitka fisherman and a member of the ATA Board, spoke in support of Proposal #218, saying that the financial effects of not having a season was substantial. In reference to the Columbia River, he said it seems that our job is to get the fish to the mouth of the river, then it is no longer our responsibility. He spoke in support of the ATA's Proposal #220 in reference to re-definition of "acceptable numbers of coho moving into the inshore fishing areas." Mr. Pasternak also expressed the concern that the number of our representatives on the Pacific Council is not equal to the representation that they have on ours and that Alaska should have more representation on the SSC. He feels that Alaskan fishermen should hold the line on salmon while the Canadians should make a greater conservation effort.

Earl Krygier, a biologist representing the ATA, spoke on Proposal #223. He would ask the Board to amend 5 AAC 33.365 to include the following: "That the Dept. shall manage the salmon fishery to allow single-species fishing when particular species of salmon are closed to trolling for conservation allocation purposes." The justification is that single-species fisheries are feasible with hook and line fishery although incidental hooking of non-targeted species may occur. For the most part, gear and area regulations can minimize impacts on particular species. Economic impacts to fishermen will also be minimized. The key to

effective single-species fishing is education of the fishermen in necessary techniques.

Mr. Krygier analyzes data from the Salmon Troll Log Book Program. He used the logbooks to determine the percentage of kings taken along with the other species during the coho-only season. Out of the total 44 logbooks used, he found that 7 percent of the total catch was king salmon during the coho-only closure.

ATA supports Proposal #259. By adopting this policy the Board would recognize the serious problems that exist in many streams outside of Alaska and insure that non-fishery related impacts are not considered to the detriment of the Alaskan fishermen when management programs are developed.

John Lecture, Seafood Producers Co-op, opposes the proposed treaty. He feels Washington has not contributed anything and they should be asked to rather than ask our fishermen to make additional sacrifices. He supported opening a Westward troll fishery. He is concerned because the fishery has not been re-opened as originally intended, and this has a great impact on their Co-op.

Chris Sharpsteen, a power troller from Petersburg, said he feels that the Canadians have overfished and overharvested for ten years and have only made token gestures at conservation. Alaska has taken cuts for two years. He does not think it's fair for Alaskan fishermen to have to solve a problem they did not create. He feels the base period in the proposed treaty needs to be negotiated on a more realistic average, perhaps 10 to 20 years. He urged rejection of the proposed treaty.

Eric Jordan, a resident of Sitka, said that Alaska, Washington, and Oregon are at, near, or ahead of their escapement goals for chinooks with the exception of B.C. and the Columbia River. Washington and Oregon have a multitude of fisheries--sport, guided sport, Indian, ceremonial, etc. In reference to the proposed treaty, Mr. Jordan feels that the Canadians have over-exploited and are being rewarded for doing so by the terms of the treaty.

Edward Wojeck, Executive Director of Alaska Trollers Assn., presented a position paper on the proposed treaty. Essentially, they feel the treaty is unacceptable to the fishermen in Southeast Alaska.

Two options for the 1983 management of the chinook salmon fishery in Southeast Alaska were also presented in the paper. Option 1 suggested a summer season from April 15-September 20, with closures imposed to address conservation requirements in Alaska and regions outside the state, as follows: 1) Apr. 15-May 15, season closed to benefit Alaskan stocks; 2) a seven-day closure in June to benefit stocks originating in the lower 48; and 3) closure of the season for ten days in August to benefit stocks destined for Canadian streams.

Option 2 suggests the ADF&G design a season using historical catch data that results in a commercial catch of approximately 285,000 to 288,000 chinook salmon. After the season commences, the fishery would proceed without interruptions through its termination. This option would probably require a closure from April 15-May 15 to benefit Alaskan systems, a closure in June to benefit systems in the lower 48, and a closure in August to benefit Canadian systems.

Dennis Watson, a troller from Craig and member of the Craig City Council, told the Board and Council that the business community of Craig will be greatly impacted if the treaty goes through. They are opposed to the it. Mr. Watson also commented on the larger number of net scarred fish being taken.

Alan Stein, a gillnetter from Pt. Baker, told the Council that the Canadians take 35 percent of the coho on the Stikine, and that the proposed treaty is unacceptable.

Barry McLelland, ATA, from Ketchikan, said that the total catch has been reduced by half in six years (including figures proposed for 83/84) with the Westward fishery closure, even though the abundance of fish has increased. He feels this is a form of reallocation rather than conservation.

Geron Bruce, United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters Assn., said that he fishes all four areas covered by the proposed treaty. He feels that the treaty had changed since the November presentation and he cannot support it in its present form.

Henry Mitchell, Bering Sea Fishermen's Assn., testified that his organization is opposed to the treaty at this point. They are willing to sit down and work with a review group to look at ways to improve it.

Tony Guggenbickler, a member of the ATA Board, commented on the single-species fisheries as it relates to the King season. The percentage of injuries caused by hooking increased as the size of the fish increased; the larger the fish, the higher the mortality. It is important to release the fish immediately. Mr. Guggenbickler discussed ways to release kings on coho gear.

John DeBoer, Petersburg Advisory Board, brought in various hooks for the Board and Council to consider. Mr. DeBoer has fished West of Cape Suckling for many years and says he has a problem with the Prince William Sound staying closed. It was originally closed for conservations purposes but things are now in good shape and would like to fish there again. The Petersburg Advisory Group thinks things are pretty grim in the trolling industry. The proposed treaty was not out yet when the group met, so he cannot comment on it at this time.

Lee Krause, Seafood Producers Co-op., says the Co-op opposes the treaty for two reasons: the deliverers cannot live with further

reductions; and because it is unfair to Alaskan trollers. In reference to the single-species season, problems can be solved; it is much better to have the single-species season than to close fishing entirely.

Greg Shapley, a power troller and member of the Craig Advisory Committee, says that while Alaska has not been able to see much more than a fairly stable 300,000, Canada took a million this year. Mr. Shapley also favors a short season rather than a quota system.

Elwood Thomas, Klawak, feels that closures should be uniform up and down the coast. He doesn't agree with closed season when there is a good run.

Dick Carlton, Chairman of the Port Alexander Advisory Committee, told the Board and Council that hand trolling is the basic livelihood of Port Alexander residents. The Committee would support a flexible-type in-season management of the troll fishery.

Gordon Pederson, member of the Icy Straits Trollers Assn., reported the Association's comments on Proposal #214 and #215. They would oppose #214 regarding the closure of the Chatham Strait during migration; they would support emergency closures, when necessary. In reference to Proposal #215, they would like to see the repeal of the eight-on, six-off fishing periods.

Gordon Williams, a troller from Angoon and a member of the Angoon Advisory Committee, said that Alaskan fishermen have cut catches for two years; Canada should have to reduce their catch for a year and then see what develops.

Don Bierce, a troller from Sitka, reviewed the major changes and restrictions imposed over the past ten years and their effect on the fishing industry. In regard to Proposal #218, he feels the season approach to management makes more sense. He would oppose Proposals #208 and 220.

Public testimony was completed. Eugene Fred of Angoon, submitted written testimony. Mr. Fred wrote on the importance of preserving the chain of life and preserving fish stocks for future generations.