

ADDRESS BY JOE DEMANTLE JR. AND JESSIE FOSTER TO NORTH
PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

There are two things we would like to talk about. The first is the Bering Sea bottomfish plan, and the second is the FMP for the High Seas Salmon Fishery Off the Coast of Alaska East of 175° East Longitude. Although we have in the past presented information to the Council concerning difficiencies in these plans, we notice that these difficiencies have not been corrected.

In regard to the Bering Sea Groundfish plan, International North Pacific Fisheries Commission Documents 2067, 2120, and 2121 reveal that approximately 45,000 chinook salmon are taken in the Bering Sea by the foreign trawl fleet, principally Russia and Japan. Our reading of the documents reveal that high seas mortality, and interruption of migratory cycles have not been investigated in this "incidental" catch of our kings. We have learned from our scientist that high seas mortality and interruption of migratory cycles are important factors in judging the impact of a high seas interception fishery. The figure being taken in the Bering Sea is certainly not "incidental", and immediate efforts should be taken through the observer program and time area closures to reduce this take of our kings. It is very important for the Council to take these steps now for we in Western Alaska do not want to have to watch American flag trawlers harvested our salmon in future years. The effort to protect our in-shore fishery will only get messier as Americans move into this fishery. We feel that a specific section in the FMP for the Bering Sea Groundfish Plan is required to treat this chinook interception.

In regard to the Council Plan for High Seas salmon management, we feel that the comments of Truman Emberg in which the contradictions between the Council plans and the recently ratified protocol amending the North Pacific Fisheries Act of 1954 were explained. The major concern is irregardless of the FMP and the Council's intentions, the annex to the Convention, Section 1, (d) provides as follows:

"Except for the areas described in (a) above, there shall be no salmon fishery operations east of 175 degree East Longitude unless such fishery operations are agreed to for a temporary period among the Contracting Parties.

We believe that a clear mechanism between the Council, its FMP, and the perogatives of the U.S. Commissioners to the INPFC is required. The American Section has liberty to negotiate around the FMP. We concurr with Mr. Emberg that the FMP should be considered a provisional document until a structured relationship between the Council and the American Section is created. Once the executive sessions of the INPFC begin, the Council is out.

The second issue involves the difficulty with allowing foreign fisheries inside the American conservation zone when Americans are prohibited from doing so. This special consideration will be viewed by Americans as discrimination, and will cause a further breakdown in western Alaskan confidence in government fisheries decisions. We can only see problems ahead for preservation of this fisheries, and we petition the Council to announce that their is no harvestable surplus of salmon of Alaskan origin, and irregardless of the Convention, the Japanese gill net fishery within the fisheries conservation zone must be eliminated to protect migratory stocks.

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