



Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government
(Formerly known as the Native Village of Fort Yukon, IRA)
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January 30, 2026

Angel Drobnic, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
1007 West 3rd Avenue, Suite 400
Anchorage, AK 99501

Jon Kurland, Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region
PO Box 21688
Juneau, AK 99802

RE: Comments on DEIS for Chum salmon bycatch in Bering Sea pollock trawl fishery

Dear Chair Drobnic and Administrator Kurland,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on federal fisheries management provisions to reduce bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock trawl fishery. The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government (GZGTG) (a.k.a the Native Village of Fort Yukon), a federally recognized Indian tribe in the State of Alaska and is hereby providing written comments on the chum salmon bycatch for the upcoming February 2026 meeting.

The Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government requests immediate, significant, and mandatory reductions in chum salmon bycatch by the BSAI trawl fleet. Our community relies on the Yukon River salmon for subsistence, and current bycatch levels are unsustainable and disrespectful to our culture and food security.

The undersigned businesses that operate in Alaska support the implementation of meaningful measures to reduce wasteful bycatch of chum salmon by the trawl fishery. We encourage the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries to adopt a combination of Alternative 2 with a cap set at 100,000 chum salmon, Alternative 5 Option 1 with a corridor cap of 50,000, and Alternative 4 to set Incentive Plan Agreement tools into regulation.

Protecting salmon is invaluable to our way of life as we have been here from time immemorial, we risk losing our most precious vital resource. It is imperative that you implement restrictions on chum salmon bycatch for the Bering Sea pollock trawl fishery to safeguard our salmon maintenance of healthy populations of salmon and other species caught by the pollock trawl fleet.

We support the most restrictive alternatives for bycatch caps in the upcoming EIS and urge the Council to prioritize local, traditional, and subsistence needs over commercial high-volume trawl interests. The

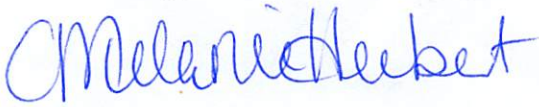
Council must adopt management measures that minimize bycatch of chum salmon in the offshore pollack fishery to the greatest extent possible.

The federal fishery fleets and management system should always be pushing towards zero bycatch. Bycatch is disrespectful to the species that we live in reciprocal relationship with and harms the environment and communities. Subsistence practices are in line with this management and stewardship ethic and have been so since time immemorial.

To be clear, we believe that the bycatch caps currently under consideration are too high. As we have stated previously, we believe the goal should be zero salmon bycatch.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office at the phone number above.

Sincerely,



Melanie Herbert
Acting Executive Director
Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government