

Public Testimony

Agenda D-1 - Salmon

Tim Wapato, Columbia River Intertribal Commission, told Council members his organization is in full support of the negotiated U.S.-Canada salmon treaty. His organization submitted Proposal 583 but this would be superceded by the treaty provisions so it can be withdrawn. CRIC recommended that when the Board and Council consider 1985 regulations for the troll fishery that they take the following actions: (1) reduce the May-June chinook fishery; (2) delay the opening of all-species fishery until July 10 or later; (3) that they use time and area closures during the fishery to slow down the rate of chinook harvest; (4) continue use of the 10-day all-species closure in late July or early August and closure of all-species fisheries on or about September 20; (5) review methods of adding hatchery fish to the chinook salmon for 1985-86 with the appropriate advisory and technical staff associated with the U.S.-Canada treaty interests. They are concerned that the allocations between Southeast and Canada for chinook is supposed to be 526,000 chinook, or 263,000 each; the addition of any fish to that is supposed to be based upon demonstrated availability of those stocks.

Gordon Pederson, ADF&G Regional Council Representative. The Regional Council didn't take a specific stance on most of the salmon proposals because a number of interests were involved. However, there was some consensus on several points. The winter/summer troll season should remain at April 15-September 30 for the summer season and October 1-April 14 for the winter season to ensure the existing winter chinook fishery. They also feel that since Alaska hatchery-produced chinook salmon do return in the Spring, changing the accounting period would result in the loss of the opportunity to harvest them in the Spring. They also feel that fishing for other species during chinook closures should be allowed. The Council were able to support the ATA proposal on the commercial trolling season for chinook during the summer - opening May 15 for eight days; close and then open again on June 3 for another eight days and then open again on July 1. They are firm on the July opening and also really want a early June opening because that is when the hatchery fish are returning.

Gary Slaven, industry representative for U.S.-Canada treaty negotiations. After the negotiations he returned to chair a meeting to gather industry recommendations for seasons. The seasons were explained in Mr. Pederson's testimony. In their discussions they took into consideration the treaty, the harvest ceiling they would be under, ADF&G's management concepts, the economics of the fleet in each area, and the timing of the hatchery fish. One particular concern of fishermen was that they are able to have income throughout the season if at all possible.

Jim Wild, ATA and Elfin Cove Advisory Committee, spoke on two proposals - #584 and #570. ATA does not support proposal #584 but they do wish to respond to ADF&G's call for more discussion with the staff, commercial gear groups, sports fishermen and other user groups of the resource because they have concern for protection of spawning habitat and streamside management of the estuaries. Proposal #570 was sponsored by the Elfin Cove Advisory Committee and has their support. Mr. Wild asked to have the proposal amended to allow non-chinook troll fishery during any chinook conservation closure occurring between June 15 through August 15 within state waters. This request was a result of the U.S.-Canada treaty negotiations.

Gretchen Goldstein, Sumner Strait Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee supported proposals #568, #570, #589, #636, and #594. They did not support proposals #569 (except the higher quota), and #580. On proposal #571, the Committee voted to close the fishery at 6 PM or whatever hour seemed to be the one to best manage the fishery. They felt this would put less pressure on single runs of coho and give more variety of escapement.

Gordon Pederson, Hoonah Advisory Committee. The Committee was opposed to proposals #568, supported #570, and could not support #591.

Craig Herd, Port Protection, Alaska. Mr. Herd spoke on proposal #594 which he supports as this restriction is no longer valid.

Tom Jacobsen, Port Protection, Alaska, spoke on proposals #571 and #594. He prefers shortened fishing day to eliminate inseason closures. He urged adoption of #594.

Bill Berger, Port Angeles, WA, supported Proposal #570, but felt it should be amended to allow a non-chinook troll fishery during any chinook conservation troll closure occurring between June 15 through the summer season. Lack of real fishing time is becoming a problem to salmon trollers in Southeast Alaska.

Tony Guggenbickler, Wrangell, AK, spoke about proposals concerning the outside troll catch of coho in relation to the inside catch of cohos. Since trolling is not compatible with movable net gear, they cannot compete. They should be allowed to harvest their fair share of the catch in outside waters.

Bill Froust, Sitka. He spoke against proposals #584-589, 591. He is also against proposal #571- if the tide came in at the wrong time of day, it can make another hardship in a fishery that is already in trouble.

Barry McClelland, Ketchikan, opposed proposals 586, 562 and 583. He also said it is very important that they have the opportunity to harvest their hatchery fish.

Earl Kryger, ATA. Opposed proposals #580, 584, 585-587, 591-592, and 594.

Lance Ingle, Wrangell, AK, Opposed proposals #593 and 594 and also commented on the high seas interception of salmon.

Sue Sturm, Sitka, AK, spoke on the high seas salmon interception by the Japanese.

Ann Lowe, Troll Pac, urged something be done about the high seas salmon interception. Troll Pac supports proposal #636a. If the treaty is not signed, they should be allowed to fish on the historic ten-year average prior to the 1978-79 reductions put on the fishery.

Charles Wilber, Sitka, AK, also urged action on the high seas salmon interception by the Japanese. He supported the ATA-proposed seasons and the proposal to move trolling to west of Cape Suckling to its historical grounds and opposed proposal #591.

Eric Jordan, Sitka Advisory Committee. The Committee met and developed several different options for seasons and held public hearings to discuss them. They recommended that they be able to fish 15 days between May 22 and June 10 to give some flexibility to adjust for the halibut season and other concerns, and then close it until July 6. Then they would fish chinook and cohos until the chinook quota and then go to fishing coho only like they did last year. Most of the Committee members could support the compromise proposals submitted by ATA.

Chris Sharpsteen, Petersburg, AK, supported ATA proposals and urged their adoption.

Dave Harville, Kodiak Fish & Game Advisory Committee. The Committee voted 8 to 1 against proposal #636 on the grounds that they fully utilize the resource now.

Dick Carlton, Port Alexander Fish & Game Advisory Committee. Supports the ATA proposal for seasons.

Richard Lundahl, Pelican Fish & Game Advisory Committee. Supported proposal #568. In case the treaty is not ratified, they voted to accept the high OY, up to 320,000. They supported proposal #570; voted no on #571 and #580, and supported #636.

Maurice Ingman, Ketchikan, AK, doesn't believe the trollers are the ones to blame for the high mortality rates. Many of the proposals the Ketchikan Advisory Board voted on will not be valid if the treaty is ratified.

Ron Williams, Bill Thomas, and Rudy James, Alaska Native Brotherhood. They supported proposals #578 and 579. They also feel that high seas salmon interception is the main problem, not the domestic fisheries.

Bill Dean, Gastineau Channel Advisory Committee. The Committee supported proposals #636, 659. It is important to protect the escapement runs, the recreational fishery, and are concerned with the inshore gillnet fisheries.

Agenda D-2/3 - Groundfish

Harold Thompson, Sitka Sound Seafoods. Sitka Sound Seafoods is one of two major employers in Sitka. It is important for the Council to consider economic consequences in their decision-making. Urged the passage of an emergency regulation for a longline-only sablefish fishery.

Tim Joyner, Sitka, retired oceanographer. He has had a chance to observe many systems around the world. Based on studies and personal experience, he feels longline fishery is the most feasible.

Dayton L. Alverson, asked the Council to support the industry agreements with Japan and act accordingly in the Gulf.

Jim Hubbard, F/V ARGO, Sitka, supported a longline only fishery in the Gulf because they have established the fishery and are not compatible with pot fishing.

John Dapcevich, Mayor, City of Sitka, read a Sitka City Resolution into the record supporting a longline only fishery and protesting the 10% sablefish allocation for joint venture fisheries.

Charles Christensen, Petersburg Vessel Owners Assn., supported the 20-mile closure around the Aleutians and supported a domestic longline-only fishery for sablefish. He also supported a March opening.

Al Burch, Dave Harville, Oscar Dyson, advised the Council of the results of a series of industry meetings. They urged the Council to support the industry-to-industry agreements with the Japanese.

Ken Tison, Sitka, AK. Pot and longline gear are not compatible. He has lost gear on more than one occasion. Supports a longline-only fishery for sablefish.

Jay Hastings, Hokuten Trawlers, asked Council to reconsider the 20-mile closure around the Aleutians as a result of the industry agreements. A significant reduction in the Hokuten fleet will alleviate the problems. They are only asking to fish areas where the U.S. is not fully utilizing the fishery.

Mark Lundsten, Seattle fisherman, supported as longline-only fishery for sablefish in the Gulf. Mr. Lundsten also read a letter from Jake Phillips into the record indicating Mr. Phillips is frustrated with the process. He also supported the longline only proposal.

Rick Lauber, Pacific Seafood Processors Assn., requested the Council support the industry-to-industry agreements with the Japanese. That agreement is contingent upon Council action.

Phil Werdahl, Jubilee Fisheries, supported the longline only fishery for sablefish in the Gulf.

Mick Stevens, North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owners' Assn, urged Council to rescind their 20-mile closure in support of the industry-to-industry agreements. Also he suggested that, as a result of the meetings, JVP and DAP for pollock in the Gulf need to be revised downward. He also suggested that the SSC construct a model to analyze and compare the relationships of abundance of target species with that of incidentally caught species. Once this is done, the SSC should take into consideration the anticipated fleet

size and projected harvesting capacity on a yearly basis. With this information the SSC can advise the Council as to the amount of incidental species needed for bycatch by the joint venture or domestic fleet.

Hugh Reilly, Highliners Assn., asked the Council to reconsider their December decisions on TALFF in the Gulf.

Chuck Kekoni, Assoc. of Alaska Halibut Fishermen, suggested a Gulfwide longline only fishery for sablefish if there is going to be any regulation at all. He felt there must be a way of setting areas aside to accommodate all gear types. Also, he suggested that now might be the time to have a moratorium on sablefish to study the problems of the fishery.

Dennis Hicks, Sitka, supported the longline-only proposal for sablefish.

Mike Erb, Sitka, supported the longline-only proposal for sablefish in the Gulf.

Bob Alverson, Fishing Vessel Owners' Assn. The Association opposes the Council's December action on bycatch because the way it was worded it gave a direct allocation of a resource to a specific gear type involved in only joint venture activity and designated a portion of a DAP resource to a JV operation. The supported sending out the longline-only proposal for public review.

Jon Adams, President, Deep Sea Fishermen's Union. The Union still supports the longline-only proposal for sablefish in the Gulf.

Jack Knutsen, FVOA, Seattle. Supports a Gulfwide longline-only sablefish fishery.

Ron Hegge, Alaska Longline Fishermen's Assn. Supported the longline-only proposal for sablefish which they submitted.

Richard White, Universal Seafoods, reviewed a previously submitted letter to the Council opposing the exemption of pots in the sablefish fishery.

Hadden Salt, F/Vs SALTY II, III, California. Against the pot ban; cited the Canadian experience with this gear which has proven successful.

Steve Johnson, Japan Deep Sea Trawlers Assn, Hokuten Trawlers. Requested the Council that they be allowed to fish in areas of the Gulf where the domestic industry is not fully utilizing the fisheries.

Clint Buckmaster, Sitka, supported the longline-only proposal for environmental reasons; pot gear is detrimental to habitat.

Joe Mettler, Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber supports a longline-only fishery for sablefish in the Gulf and joint Board/Council management of rockfish in the Gulf.

Tim Longrich, Kodiak. If the sablefish fishery in this area is made longline only, then pot vessels will move to other areas. He suggested a superexclusive area for pot fishermen.

Greg Cushing, Sitka, is concerned about the black cod fishery; he would like his children to be able to continue fishing. Longline fishermen are already handling the quota and a new gear type will only compound the problems of the fishery and lost pot gear preempts the grounds permanently for longliners.

Bob Chevalier, Independent Fishermen of Alaska, Sitka, supports longline only fishery.

Walt Pasternak, Sitka, does not support the industry-to-industry agreement. Mr. Pasternak criticized the Council and NMFS for allowing Japan back into the Gulf.

Dean Adams, Seattle, WA., supports the longline-only proposal for sablefish.

Mike Mayo, Independent Fishermen of Alaska, Sitka, supported longline-only fishery for sablefish in the Gulf.

Hank Ostrosky, Naknek, AK, feels inshore fisheries should have priority over offshore fisheries.

Anne Lowe, Troll Pac, supports the concept of longline-only fishery for sablefish in the entire Gulf and Bering Sea as the longliners can fully utilize this fishery. They are against any "quick fix," however, and urge the Council to look at the problem on a long-term basis.

John Coyne, Arctic Mist, Seattle, said that in the Washington fisheries both gear types have been able to coexist and have never tried to exclude one over another. He is against the longline-only fishery for sablefish in the Gulf.

Jerry Nelson, Baranof Fisheries, Seattle, told the Council that there is no difference in quality between pot-caught and longline-caught sablefish. He asked for more information on the previously mentioned incident of 35 lost skates of gear because of pot vessels.

Rod Armstrong, Korean Fisheries. The Korean delegation was very confused about the decisions made at the December meeting. The January allocations are caught and were not enough to allow for normal planning or cover the costs of observers, etc. They need to be allowed to return to the Gulf and are willing to make a commitment to reduce bycatches. The Korean Embassy does not think their country should be treated any differently than other foreign countries participating in fisheries off Alaska.

Peter Block, Universal Seafoods, urged the Council to support the industry-to-industry agreement.

Antone Bowers, F/V PANDRAD, Sitka, said that he supports the longline-only proposal. Longliners have demonstrated their ability to harvest the resource and bringing in another gear type would only cause problems. He suggested separate areas of the Gulf for each gear type, if necessary, and beginning the season in March or April, and hold inspections before leaving port.

Neil Huff, F/V ROCKY B, Seattle, has also had gear conflicts with pot vessels. He feels that allowing pot vessels to increase in the Gulf will eliminate longliners.

T.R. Crook, Sitka, supports longline only measure.

Vince Schafer, Sitka, complained that he was heavily penalized for fishing in the FCZ without a permit 3½ years ago, but the BARANOF got caught doing the same thing recently and got off much easier.

Ernest T. Mathisen, NORTH STAR, Seattle, thinks longline and pot vessels can fish together if they want to.