



Westport Charter Boat Association Testimony
PFMC Public Hearing on 2022 Ocean Salmon Regulations
March 22, 2022

Good evening Mr. Adicks and other members of the Council and staff who are here tonight. My name is Brian Mirante and I am the President of the Westport Charter Boat Association, an organization that has been in existence for over 60 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the fisheries resources off the Washington Coast and to advocate for healthy and vibrant recreational fishing opportunities for salmon, bottom-fish, halibut, and albacore. We are a community minded organization that recognizes the importance of the supporting infrastructure that makes it possible for the charter boat industry to exist here in Westport.

In looking at the alternatives and the preseason forecasts, we are pleased to see that the Coho runs appear to be in much better shape than last year, particularly the Queets Coho. We support management measures that will return healthy numbers of Queets Coho to the river so that it can rebuild to a healthy status.

Generally, the status of Chinook stocks North of Cape Falcon appears close to last year however we note that the exploitation rate for the ESA listed natural Tule stock is over its 38% threshold even at last year's quotas, which is a cause for concern. We also understand that the harvest ceilings have yet to be determined for the Northern British Columbia and West Coast of Vancouver Island fisheries and that those determinations will likely change the overall exploitation rate from what is currently represented in the model. So, for Chinook, it's a bit of a wait and see game before we really know how many fish we will have to work with.

From a season perspective, we place a high value on season stability that includes a season length that lasts through its scheduled time period. In the event that

Chinook causes us to advocate for a five-day week, we will also support liberalizing the season to seven days per week in season as soon as WDFW staff are able to project catches that will provide for a full season. We prefer a seven day a week fishery from the start provided we have a reasonable chance to have a full season without in season changes that are more restrictive and disrupt recreational angler's plans.

We will have representation throughout the balance of the preseason process including both the North of Falcon and PFMC process. We will provide a more detailed recommendation once the Chinook picture is better known.

We want to thank the Council for again holding a hearing "in Westport" and we hope that we can be in person next year. Thank you for listening to our views, I would be happy to answer any questions.

Submitted by:

Brian Mirante, President
Westport Charter Boat Association