

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Eric A. Olson, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director



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January 5, 2009

Lincoln "Mike" Simon, President
White Mountain IRA Council
P.O. Box 84082
White Mountain, AK 99784

Dear Mr. Simon:

I am writing today to discuss an issue that is of importance to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), Alaska Native tribes, and local communities. The issue concerns the proposed measures under consideration for limiting Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. We wish to inform you of the Council's current position on this issue, the schedule for action, and opportunities for you to provide comments and feedback as this effort progresses.

The draft analysis of this issue has recently been completed and was released by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on December 5. The analysis is accessible electronically through the NMFS Alaska Region's website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/bycatch/default.htm>. CDs or printed copies may be requested from this website. You may also call NMFS at 907-586-7228, to obtain a printed copy or CD.

The Council will review this analysis and is scheduled to take final action on this issue at its April 2009 meeting in Anchorage. At final action, the Council will select measures to recommend to the Secretary of Commerce to minimize Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The Council will consider public comments received on this document, as well as public testimony at Council meetings, when making its final decision. The agenda for the April 2009 Council meeting will be posted on its website prior to the meeting at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc>.

Enclosed with this letter is a flyer that summarizes the Council's proposed measures, the schedule for Council action, and ways for the public to provide input. Individual Council members and staff have participated in several regional meetings (as listed in the flyer) in our continued effort to provide outreach on this proposed action.

The Council is planning an outreach meeting in Nome on January 22. The meeting will be held from 9 am to 12 pm at the Nome Eskimo Community hall, at 200 West 5th Avenue. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an overview of the proposed action, and to listen to local concerns, questions, and recommendations. We are trying to provide a way for other Bering Strait villages to participate in this meeting remotely. If you are interested in hosting audio dial-in/internet viewing during the meeting, please contact Heidi Herter, UAF Marine Advisory Program at heidi.herter@uaf.edu or 907-443-8410 (in Nome) or 1-800-478-2202, ext. 8410.

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Additional information about the Council is provided on our website, including a booklet entitled *Navigating the North Pacific Council Process*. This booklet provides information on the Council's overall role in fisheries management, how the Council process works, and how you can participate. The booklet is provided on our website at: http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/misc_pub/Navigating_NPFMC.pdf.

Please be assured that the Council will continue to seek input from Alaska Native and rural communities in the continued development of salmon bycatch limitation measures. If you have questions about the salmon bycatch issue, please contact Diana Stram at 907-271-2809 or diana.stram@noaa.gov. We hope to see you in Nome.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Oliver". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Oliver
Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council