

Senate Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources
Oregon State Capital
900 Court st. NE Room 347
Salem, Oregon 97301

Members: Sen. Michael Dembrow, Chair Sen. Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair Sen. Cliff Bentz Sen. Floyd Prozanski Sen. Arnie Roblan

Hello Chair Dembrow and Committee Members,

2019 is the year of the brown earth pig in Chinese New Year. It is ironic considering that HCR 35 proposes to recognize 2019 as International Year of the Salmon and expresses support for associated global initiative affirming importance of wild salmon. Currently, 37 % of the fish, (31.5 million tons) of all fish taken from our oceans yearly are forage fish and 90% of this forage fish are ground up to feed millions of pigs in industrialized pig farms. Pigs consume between 6 to 8 pounds of feed a day. We all need to eat and wild salmon need prey such as anchovies & sardines and if wild salmon are going to be honored and protected then so must their prey because the wild salmon do not survive without their forage fish.

Moreover, if Mother Nature wanted pigs to eat salmon she would have put them in the water instead of marine mammals, seabirds and the wild salmon. Their aquatic home is invaded and their fridges are being raided and they are left starving or dying as a by-catch because wild salmon, marine mammals and seabirds forage for live forage fish in which millions of pounds are being scooped up into huge nets for humans to grind up to pig and industrialized fish feed as well. On average it takes 3 to 5 pounds of fish meal to produce one pound of factory farm raised hatchery fish.

Therefore forage fish regulate the health and productivity of our oceans and estuaries allowing these environments to be habitable for wild salmon and yet forage fish are very loosely regulated. Purse seine nets are now back on the Columbia River after being banned for 60 years. Anchovies and sardines must be for seabirds, wild salmon, and marine mammals first because all these species play an important role in creating the health and productivity of our living oceans and estuaries. They all can only survive if humans do not take away all their forage fish from their oceans and estuaries creating conditions for which all these species starve to death. And they are currently starving to death along the west coast or being directly and indirectly targeted and killed for eating. Humans must learn to share and fisheries targeting forage fish ought to be more heavily regulated so that all these other species do not starve to death. The forage fish support life for wild salmon and many other species so they must be thought of as corner stone in these discussions.

Altogether humans must slow their rate of consumption and taking of forage fish and wild salmon aquatic habitat. The human animal is undermining the productivity and survivability for roughly 120 other non human animal species that rely on wild salmon for their very survival and sustenance not sport.

On another note ODFW has recently identified 42, 780 man- made barriers that inhibits wild fish migration. It will be absolutely impossible for wild fish to survive if they can not reach their spawning grounds. An Ocean and river temperature above 68 degrees kills wild salmon that are a cold water fish. It has been said that 70 % of a wild salmon is tree. Trees drop leaves into streams that start the food chain going that support wild salmon and the adult wild salmon return home to die and feed the forest for they have a symbiotic relationship. So clear cutting the trees, aerial spraying of herbicides and any activity which can potentially make the trees and forest sick thus potentially undermines survival for wild salmon.

In the end the survival of wild salmon will depend on humans protecting the fish's water quality and quantity and demanding that wild salmon have forage fish to eat and we must not forget the importance that top native non- human animal predators play in maintaining the health and productivity of oceans and estuaries. We now know that by removing these animals sends ripples throughout the food chain to influence the environment down to the plant life. We know wolves have the power to influence a river's flow. We know that allowing them back into their habitats to repopulate has increased the productivity and health of the ecology. Top non human animal predators such as marine mammals have an important job to do in weeding out the weak, eat the sick fish and they are responsible for prey distribution of healthy and strong fish throughout the PNW. It is only the human animal predate on the biggest and strongest fish and takes more than they are going to eat. Marine mammals, seabirds and forage fish strengthen the bio diversity of the ecology and strengthen the genetics of the wild salmon for these species to have an ancient relationship that spawns back for over ten thousand years in the Columbia River estuary. In 2019 Honoring and protecting these time honored relationships will help these all of these amazing species which need each other like we do to survive and thrive for future generations to come.

Sincerely,
Thanks for your time and consideration.

Ninette Jones
Portland, Oregon