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Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
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RE: Opposition to HB 3232 and HB 3232-1

Dear Chair Helm, Vice Chair Hartman, and Members of the Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water Committee,

Earlier this year, in both Washington and Oregon, legislative measures drafted to address the shocking declines of salmon were introduced as “conservation measures” based on the type of fishing gear used. In House Bill 3232 and HB 3232-1 the legislative measures sought to reduce the use of gillnets. The legislation failed in the Washington State Senate, and Oregon did not move forward with the proposed bill this session.

Both legislative measures, pertaining to gillnets, and now HB 3232, based on alternate fishing methods, are legislative attempts to unravel the historical rules adopted in 2012 by ODFW, which sought to find balance between commercial, recreational and conservation fishing efforts. This legislative directive would undermine the Columbia River fisheries co-management agreement which exists between the Columbia River treaty tribes and the states of Oregon and Washington which is established under [US v Oregon](#).

As such, on behalf of the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation Tribal Council, who oppose HB 3232, I am requesting that any legislation which would dictate changes to Oregon fisheries management be rejected by this committee. We would recommend that the committee direct their efforts to instead enable the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to professionally conduct harvest management activities as is and has been their role and function for many decades.

HISTORY

In 2012, Oregon and Washington held numerous public meetings for fisheries stakeholders including the commercial, recreational and conservation communities. The states moved

forward with a new fisheries framework which includes redirecting Columbia River commercial fisheries towards non-gillnet gear types and is focused on harvesting hatchery-origin Chinook and coho salmon.

Both states implemented testing, and in certain situations commercial implementation of, a variety of potential commercial gears including beach and purse seines, hook and line, pound nets and troll gear. In 2017, upon completion comprehensive modelling and review, Oregon determined that alternate fishing gears, such as those outlined in HB 3232, did not appear capable of fully replacing the value generated by the gillnet fishery due to differences in catch rates and stock composition.

Concurrent with this determination the ODFW commission adopted rules establishing a sub allocation of the most at-risk salmon stocks in the Fall management season to manage for ESA harvest impacts. This allocation, which was referred to as a “cap” in HB3232 testimony, is actually reflective of the allowable incidental take of listed salmon species in the Fall management fishery. It has nothing to do with a cap on the allowable catch for that season. HB 3232 would remove the alternate gear sub allocation without an assessment of the need to do so.

Going forward my client would like to see these fisheries management discussions be managed by the professionals employed by ODFW. Columbia River fisheries have a decades long history of co-management which includes the four treaty tribes, three states and multiple forums. Legislative dictates do not lend themselves to creating equity amongst Oregon fisheries stakeholders and only confound an already complex but functional management relationship.

Sincerely,

Molly McGrew
Lobbyist, Yakama Nation Tribal Council