

Comments on "THE EFFECTS OF SALMON FISHERIES ON SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES"

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Hello. I'm writing to convey my comments on the draft report titled in the subject line of this message.

It's clear, from many years of study, that the lack of West Coast Chinook salmon abundance is causing (not just correlated with) increased mortality and decreased birth rates among the Southern Resident Killer Whales.

We do not need to know exactly which stocks of Chinook the SRKWs are currently eating in order to act NOW to protect both the Chinook and the SRKWs. To put it plainly: The SRKWs are eating whatever scarce Chinook they can find in their desperate search for this vanishing primary food source. Any and all recovery of Chinook species on the West Coast will help the SRKWs survive and multiply.

Thus I propose the following action: Stop all commercial and recreational Chinook harvest for a trial period of 10 years, while allowing tribal Chinook harvest only at levels sufficient for tribal (not resale) use. This no-harvest period will (1) allow greater Chinook and SRKW recovery and (2) provide direct evidence of the impact of Chinook fisheries on the SRKWs.

This action is completely feasible. Humans, unlike the SRKWs, have many other food sources by which to survive a temporary West Coast Chinook fishery closure. It's also not unprecedented—rockfish harvest, for example, is no longer allowed in Washington State.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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