

Finding of No Significant Impact

2021-2022 Puget Sound Salmon and Steelhead Fisheries Plan
Puget Sound Region, Washington

Based on the attached Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed action of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to assist with the development and implementation of the co-managers (Washington State and Puget Sound Treaty Tribes) agreed-upon 2021-2022 salmon and steelhead fishing seasons such that they are consistent with provisions of the Puget Sound Salmon and Steelhead Fisheries Plan (Plan), we have determined that the proposed action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment. In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, an Environmental Impact Statement will therefore not be required.

This determination is supported by the following:

1. The document was developed with input from subject-matter experts and review of the Puget Sound Salmon Management Plan (including the Chinook Harvest management Component), Hood Canal Salmon Management Plan, Pacific Salmon Treaty, other Puget Sound and Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) fisheries restrictions and other applicable laws and regulations to meet overall conservation and harvest management objectives. A comprehensive list of references is included in Section 6.0 of the Environmental Assessment.
2. The EA analyzes the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action, a “No Action” alternative, which would result in the co-managers continuing with the previous year’s fisheries management regime, and a “No Fishing Action” alternative. The potential effects of the Proposed Action are the same as the potential effects of the No Action alternative in all but the following resource areas analyzed: Wildlife- Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) No Action would be Low, negative and the Proposed Action would be Low, positive. For Salmon Carcass Nutrient Benefits the No Action would be Low, positive and the Proposed Action would be Low, negative. Fish- Chinook, Chum, Pink and Sockeye Salmon. For Chinook Salmon the effect of the No Action alternative would be medium negative while the effects of the Proposed Action would be Low, positive. For Chum Salmon No Action effects would be Moderate, negative and the Proposed Action would be Low, negative effect. For Pink Salmon No Action effects would be Low, positive and the Proposed Action would be Negligible, negative. For Sockeye Salmon No Action would be High, negative and the Proposed Action would be Low, negative. For Marine derived nutrients the No Action would be Low, positive and the Proposed Action would be Low, negative. For Environmental Justice the No Action would be Low, negative and the Proposed Action would be Moderate, negative. For Indian Trust Assets the No Action would be High, negative and the Proposed Action would be Moderate, positive. The Environmental Assessment found the No Fishing Action alternative would not meet the purpose and need of the project, which is to provide for the meaningful exercise of federally protected tribal treaty fishing rights on harvestable hatchery-origin and natural-origin salmon and steelhead management units among other objectives. In addition, while the No Fishing Action alternative would result in no salmon or steelhead harvest occurring within Puget Sound, the alternative would not preclude these same stocks from being harvested by fisheries outside of Puget Sound in ocean fisheries under PFMC control.

3. The proposed action, conducted with the terms of the Incidental Take Statement, is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the listed threatened and endangered species (Threatened and Endangered Species Act of 1983, as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.). Species specific determinations for Puget Sound Chinook Salmon, Puget Sound Steelhead, Southern Resident Killer Whale, Puget Sound/Georgia Basin bocaccio, Puget Sound/Georgia Basin yelloweye rockfish, Humpback Whale (Mexico), Humpback Whale (Central America) are all “Likely to Adversely Affect, Not Jeopardize”, while Eulachon and Green Sturgeon are “Not Likely to Adversely Affect, Not Jeopardize” by National Marine Fisheries Service, Biological Opinion, May 19, 2021.

4. Given the slight differences between the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives and that the effects on the resource areas under the Proposed Action alternative are no higher than low negative, and in some instances a positive, we conclude the proposed action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.


Bryan K. Mercier, Regional Director

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Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior

Date