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July 19, 2018

Dan Tonnes
National Marine Fisheries Service
7600 Sand Point Way NE
Seattle, WA 98115

Lee Corum
Endangered Species Biologist, USFWS
Washington Fish and Wildlife Office
510 Desmond Dr. SE, Suite 102
Lacey, WA 98503

RE: 2018 Reported Loss of Salmon Fishing Gear

Dear Messrs. Tonnes and Corum,

Pursuant to the terms and conditions of both NOAA's 2018 Biological Opinion (F/WCR-2018-9134) which authorizes Puget Sound salmon fisheries through April 30, 2019 and the USFWS's 2017-2036 Puget Sound Treaty and Non-Treaty Salmon Fisheries Biological Opinion (01EWF00-2016-F-1181), this letter summarizes incidents of commercial salmon fishing gear lost in marine waters during the 2018 fishing season which were reported by commercial fishers to fisheries management and enforcement agencies, as well as a summary of reports provided to the Northwest Straits Derelict Gear Hotline (NWSDG) for the 2018 calendar year.

Jason Morgan, Northwest Straits Foundation (NWSF), provided a summary of all (Treaty and Non-treaty) gear loss incidents reported during calendar year 2018 as described in the Northwest Straits database. The NWSDG received 9 reports of lost nets or, more commonly, pieces of nets in marine/estuarine waters potentially associated with Puget Sound co-managers salmon net fisheries during 2018 (Table 1). After investigation, one of the reports was determined to not be lost or derelict salmon fishing gear (Table 1). For purposes of this reporting, we have accounted for this incident in the data for Table 1 (Non-Derelict) as it pertains to a report provided to NWSDG.

Table 1. Summary of 2018 reports in NWSF Derelict Gear Reporting Database.

Reporting Entity	Lost/Derelict	Non-Derelict ¹	Total
Public	8	1	9
Fisher Reported	0	0	0
Tribal/State Resource	0	0	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>9</i>

¹ Non-derelict reports were reported to NWSF but subsequently determined to not be derelict fishing gear and were fishing legally.

Of the eight lost/derelict reports in Table 1, six nets were confirmed removed either by NWSF removal crews, private citizens, or Tribal enforcement while one net, reported in the Salmon Banks (San Juan Islands) area, was not found.

The one net considered possibly still remaining in the action area, reported in Pickering Passage (Marine Catch Area 13D) by a private citizen, is not confirmed to be a net associated with the Chinook Salmon Harvest. The reporting party indicated it was a Purse Seine. However, Purse Seines have not operated in that area for salmon fisheries. The nearest Purse Seine fisheries occurs in Marine Catch Area 11, near Des Moines/Tacoma area and could have drifted, assuming the floats remained intact, until it became submerged in its current location. Beach seines, however have operated within 13D, but according to the reporting party they haven't seen any such activity in that location for nearly 10 years. Regardless, the likelihood of losing a beach seine net given size and deployment from the beach is quite low. Aquaculture netting can be seen in aerial photographs south of the reported derelict gear. Additionally, seine fisheries (using lampara nets) for herring have occurred sporadically since 2005, with commercial landings in six of the last 14 years in marine fish area 28D; a catch area just south of the reported derelict gear. Without additional data, it is difficult to determine whether this reported gear is truly associated with the Co-managers salmon harvest action or some other action within the general vicinity.

Sincerely,



Chris James
Conservation Planning Biologist, NWIFC



David Low
Puget Sound Commercial Salmon
Fishery Manager, WDFW

Rudy Peone, BIA
Anna Schmidt, BIA
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Kelly Cunningham, WDFW
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