

Ceremonial Fishing: A Regulated Rite

Warm Springs tribal fishermen pulled their nets out of the Columbia River May 10 and scores of spring chinook rode in the back of a tribal pickup to the dark world of the Agency Longhouse freezer. The prime salmon caught during the week-long fishery will feed many mouths at tribal feasts, memorials and other ceremonial gatherings in the coming year.

With the advent of the freezer and increased demand on the fish resource, families are less likely to send out their fishermen to get whatever nature has to offer at the time of a death or celebration. Instead the Tribes "hire" fishermen to fill the freezer at an appointed time based on anticipated ceremonial needs and the condition of the fishery.

The modern-day ceremonial

fisherman sets his nets in a sea of quotas, time constraints, regulations and procedures, turning ritual into business.

Fishing for ceremonial or subsistence purposes is protected in the Columbia River Compact as a treaty right of the four river tribes. Dwindling runs have made it necessary to regulate the size of these catches according to the Compact's predetermined escapement goals.

For the spring run the treaty ceremonial and subsistence fishery has first priority but cannot exceed 2000 fish on a run size of less than 100,000 fish; 5000 on a run size of 100-120,000 fish; and 7500 on a run of 120-150,000.

Thus, even though a commercial fishery was not allowed on this year's spring run, fishermen were bringing fish back

to their tribes for ceremonial use. Tribal Natural Resources Director Gene Greene recognizes the need for more coordination with the other compact tribes to ensure fair shares of the catch without exceeding combined limits.

In order to fish ceremonially on the Columbia, a permit must be issued by the Fish and Wildlife Committee, a system that has existed since 1969. At one time the Tribes provided boats and equipment but now fishermen are on their own.

Four permits were issued to established Warm Springs fishermen this year, with a limit of 125 fish per permit holder. The total catch of 439 was well below the Tribes' quota, with some fishermen exceeding their limit and others not even close.

During the recent ceremonial season the Tribes offered \$1.50 per pound for chinook and 75 cents for steelhead, prices somewhat under the going rate for spring fish.

Greene estimated that about 7000 pounds of fish are used annually by the Tribes, depending on the number of funerals held. Arrangements are made through the Natural Resources Department to procure for feasts, memorial dinners, name-givings or funerals. But salmon

for any other function must be requested from the Tribal Council, which has a special donations fund. Such fish are usually caught at Sherar's Bridge on the Deschutes River where no permit is needed.

Of course any system has its abuses and the Fish and Wildlife Committee as well as the State Police have been on the look-out for illegally sold fish. In fact, fresh chinook and steelhead have been spotted in a couple of restaurants in the area and illegal nets have been removed from the river. Fishermen themselves have reported incidences of renegeing and the loss of expensive nets which can run as high as \$2400 apiece.

The Fish and Wildlife Committee can revoke or refuse to issue permits when abuses such as these occur.

As a sort of fish broker, the Natural Resources Department is very much involved in monitoring the catch and as law enforcers they keep an eye out for erratic catch numbers, spoiled fish and other evidences of abuse.

But Natural Resources personnel have their hands full with the daily routine of weighing and measuring fish and gathering data for various agencies.

Wildlife biologist Terry Lu-

ther has traveled to Cascade Locks and Hood River, Oregon every day of the ceremonial season to collect data on the incoming fish. Since 1972 the department has kept records on poundage for payment purposes as well as to better estimate the Tribes' annual ceremonial needs.

While weighing each fish on a hand-held scale and measuring the length on a metric rule, Luther took random scale samples. Tiny scales were sent to the State and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services where microscopic rings are counted to determine age.

Luther also made note of those fish with "adipose clips," a hatchery marking indicating that a coded wire tag has been inserted in the snout. The magnetically sensitive tags, which contain information on the origin of the fish, are removed and also sent to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Such data collected over the years helps point out trends in the size, age and dispersal of the salmon population, aiding in effective fishery management, said Luther.

With an occasional snout or scale missing, the otherwise intact salmon were transported to the Longhouse, bagged and dated, and "put on ice" for later ceremonial consumption.



Fisherman Harold Greene assisted Terry Luther of the Tribal Natural Resources Department in measuring the spring chinook he caught during the 8-day ceremonial season in early May. Greene netted 113 fish, most of which were more sizable than this one.

CDS Photo



Tribal wildlife biologist Terry Luther saw the ceremonial catch through from beginning to end by weighing and measuring the fish daily as well as bagging and stocking the Longhouse freezer (above). Most of this year's catch was spring chinook, favored for ceremonial purposes because of its high oil content.

CDS Photo

● Election (Continued from Page 5)

U.S. SENATOR

Sen. Mark Hatfield (R) is seeking re-election to the post he filled in 1966 and again in 1972. He is being challenged by fellow Republicans Bert Hawkins, an Ontario rancher; Robert Maxwell, a Trade and Contract Administrator from Portland; and Richard Schnepel, a Clackamas County insurance man.

During recent years incumbent Hatfield has championed such causes as the Siletz Restoration, funding for the Chemawa Indian School, drought assistance, the Omnibus Oregon Wilderness Bill, dams and powerhouses on the Columbia River, the national bottle bill and the cutting off of funds for the neutron bomb.

Democrats for U.S. Senator include Salem attorney Steve Anderson, saw filer Jack Alan Brown, Jr., state senator Vern Cook and Portland municipal employee John Sweeney.

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS

Rep. Al Ullman (D-2nd District) is running for re-election

to a position he has held since 1957. Ullman is presently the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. Familiar to many on the Warm Springs Reservation as a mouthpiece for the Confederated Tribes in Congress, Ullman has also sought drought assistance for ranchers and farmers, fought for traditional timber sales practices and pushed for a national energy program.

Ullman has no Democratic challengers, but two Republicans seek his position: real estate man Terry Hicks and eastern Oregon rancher Glen Stonebrink.

GOVERNOR

The old "Tom and Bob Show," featuring former governor Tom McCall (R) and incumbent governor Bob Straub (D), is being threatened by at least one aggressive Republican candidate.

Victor Atiyeh (R), a Portland businessman and state legislator, is creeping up on McCall in the polls, according to

The Oregonian. Of particular interest to Warm Springs voters is his membership in the Commission on Indian Services, a state funded advisory group to the Legislature.

Roger Martin (R), also a businessman and minority leader in the state House of Representatives, does not appear to be gaining on the two leading Republican candidates. His platform is based on pragmatism, common sense, youth and toughness. Cutting taxes, spending responsibly, and serving the people are some of his themes.

Environmentalist Tom McCall spent two colorful terms in the governor's office enhancing tourism in Oregon while preserving the quality of the environment. He was forced to retire after two terms and subsequently became a TV news analyst.

Governor Bob Straub ran against McCall twice and finally won the governorship in the 1974 race against Atiyeh. Straub, too, has been concerned with the

environment but in a quieter fashion. He has encouraged business and clean industry, helped save and reorganize the Land Conservation and Development Commission and has sought Oregon's fair share of the Northwest's cheap hydroelectric power.

BALLOT MEASURES

No. 1 - Home Rule County Initiative - Referendum Requirements

This measure would establish the same procedures for the initiative and referendum in home rule counties as are already provided for non-home rule counties. Jefferson County would not be affected since it is already non-home rule.

No. 2 - Open Meetings Rules for Legislature

This measure would require open meetings of joint legislative committees in addition to the presently required open meetings of each house and the committees of each house.

No. 3 - Housing for Low Income Elderly

If passed, a fund would be created with general obligation bonds for the financing of construction of multi-family housing for Oregon's low income elderly.

No. 4 - Domestic Water Fund Created

Would permit funds to be raised for the development of public water systems. Enabling legislation would be required.

No. 5 - Highway Repair Priority, Gas Tax Increase

Highway user revenues would be used for maintenance and rehabilitation before new highway construction. State motor vehicle fuel tax would be raised from 7 cents to 9 cents per gallon. Diesel log truck alternative fees would be increased and limits would be placed on revenues usable for parks, foot paths, bicycle trails and state police.

For further information about candidates and measures, refer to the Voters' Pamphlet distributed in all mailboxes and available at Macy's Store or the County Clerk's office.