



Nez Perce Tribe: Regional Coordination To Benefit Snake River Salmon & Steelhead

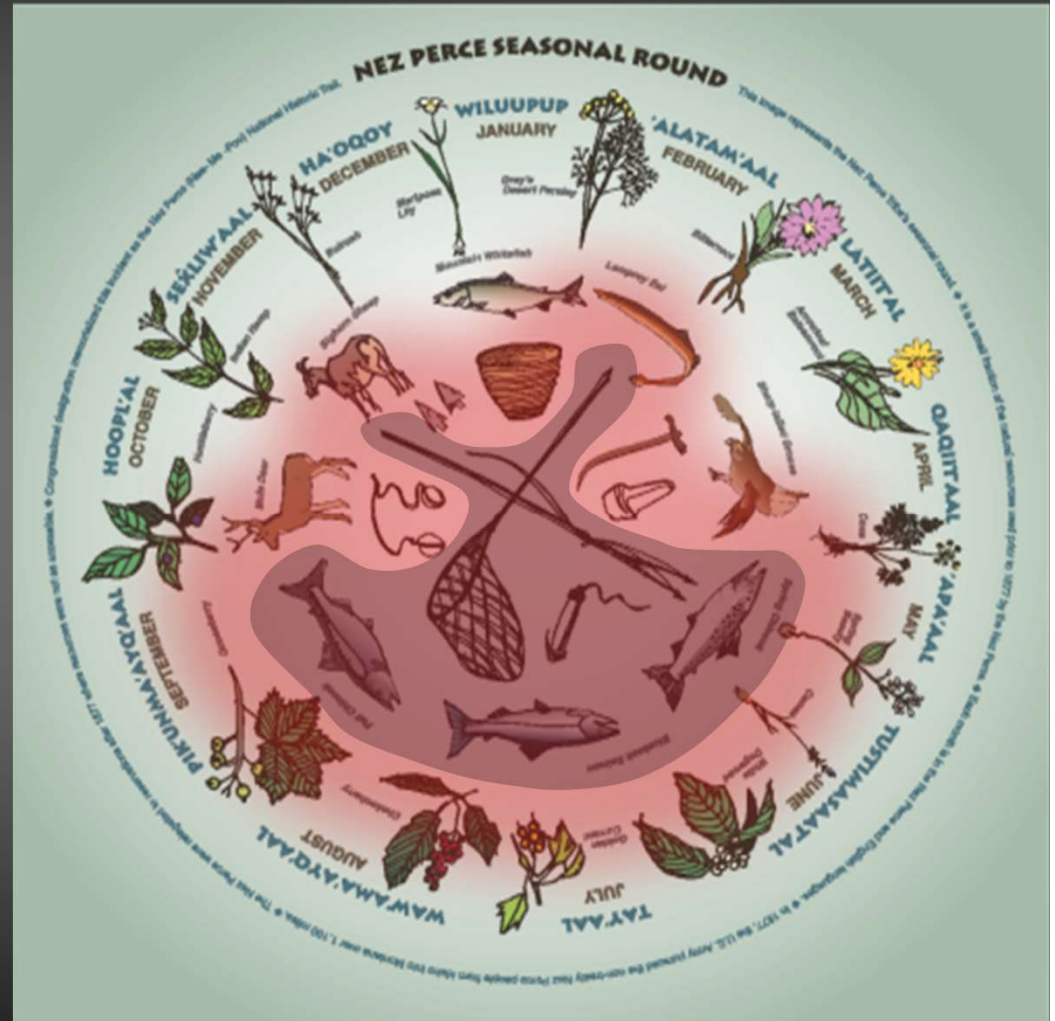


"Our fate and the fate of the fish are linked."

Nez Perce Seasonal Round

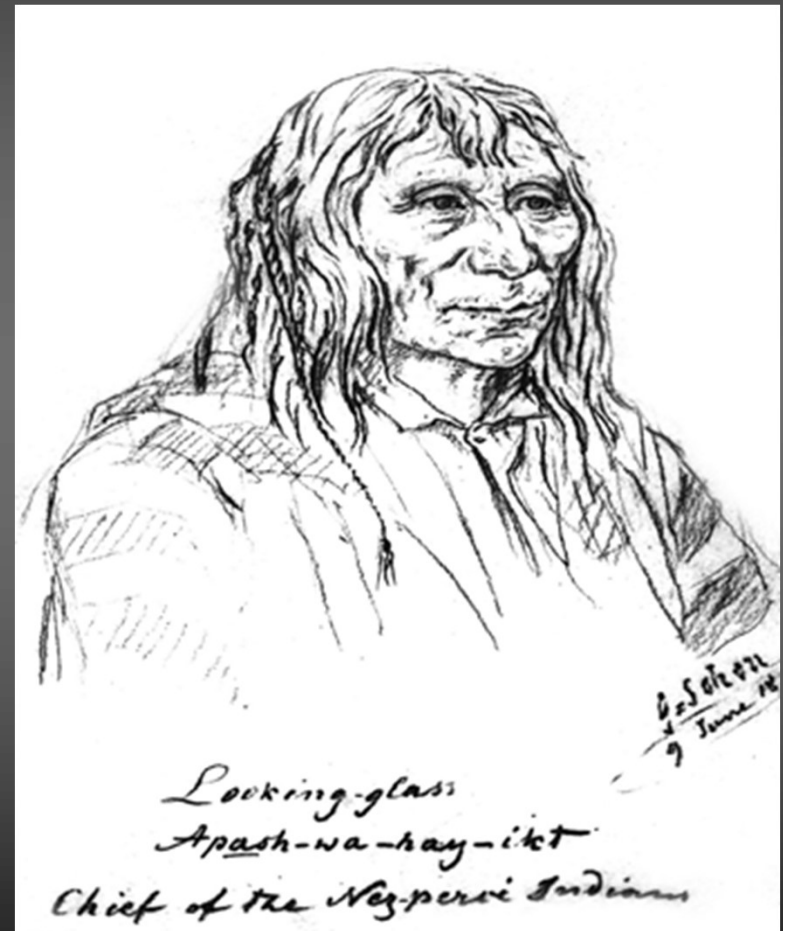
- Economic cycle “consists of specific times of the year for fishing for salmon, digging camas and other roots, hunting the game.”
- “that salmon fishing was one of the major sources of subsistence since the main rivers through the area, which include the Snake, the Clearwater, the Salmon, and their branches, were well supplied with this fish in aboriginal times”

Nez Perce Tribe v. United States, 1967 (Indian Claims Commission)



Words of Chief Looking Glass

“Our children’s children and those yet unborn, the future generation even though they can be confined on a reservation, ... the ancestral lands had provided our needs and will continue to do so, only if our rights to hunt, fish, gather roots and berries were intact.”



1855 Treaty Negotiations

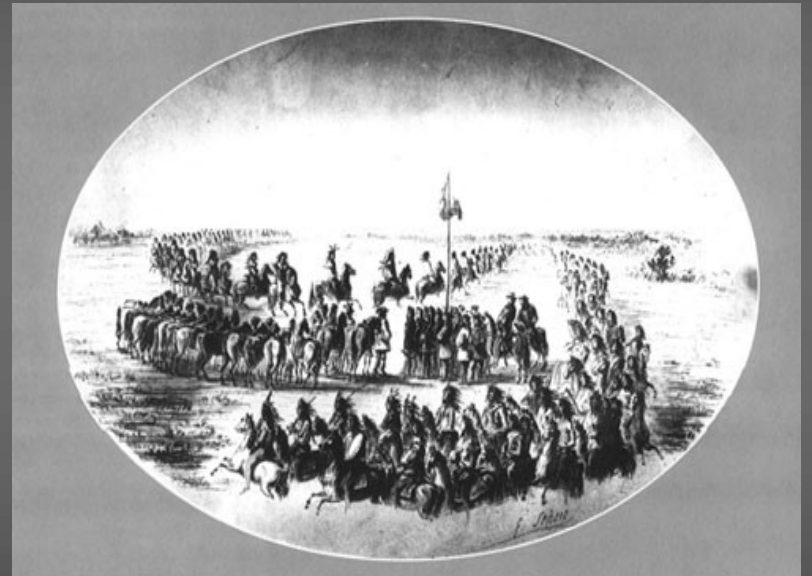
- Governor Stevens assures Chief Looking Glass: “Looking Glass knows that he can catch fish at any of the fishing stations.”
- Rivers within Nez Perce Country contained the “best fisheries on the Snake River.”



Nez Perce Treaty of 1855

The exclusive right of taking fish in all the streams where running through or bordering said reservation is further secured to said Indians: as also the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places in common with citizens of the territory...”.

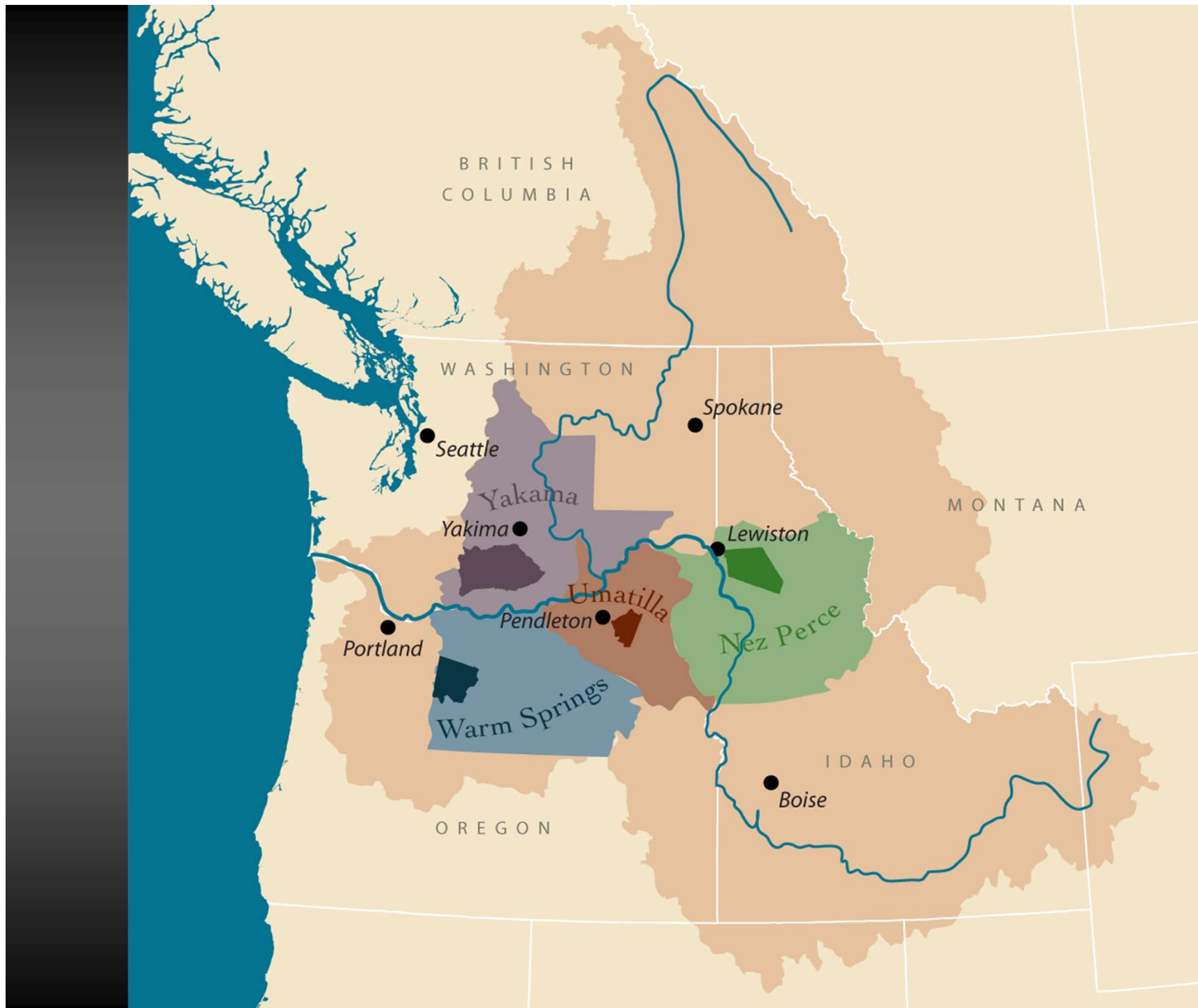
(12 Stat. 957, Article 3)



Nez Perce Treaty Fisheries - Location

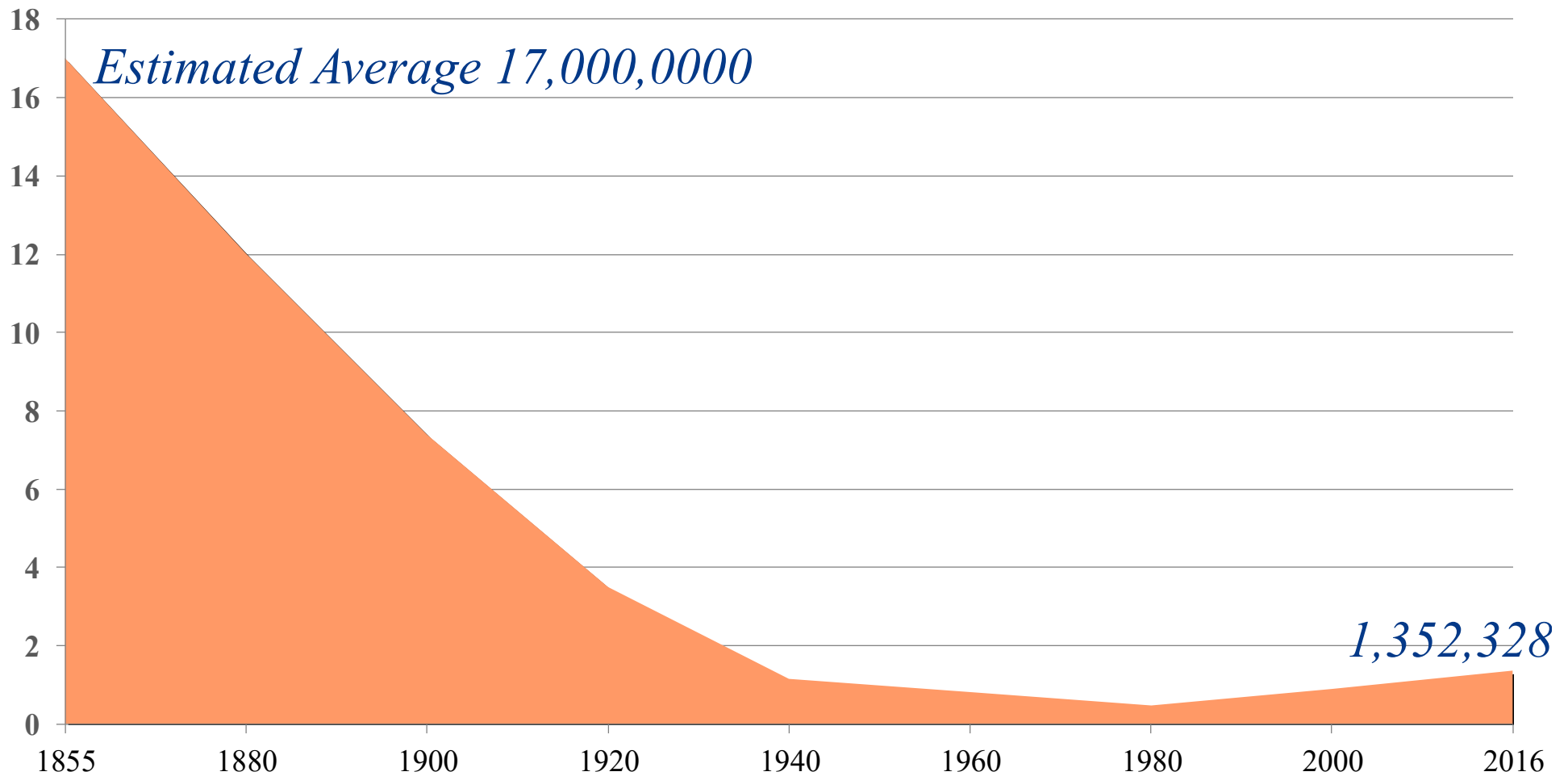
- Tributary fisheries in Snake River Basin.
- Mainstem Columbia River and tributaries.





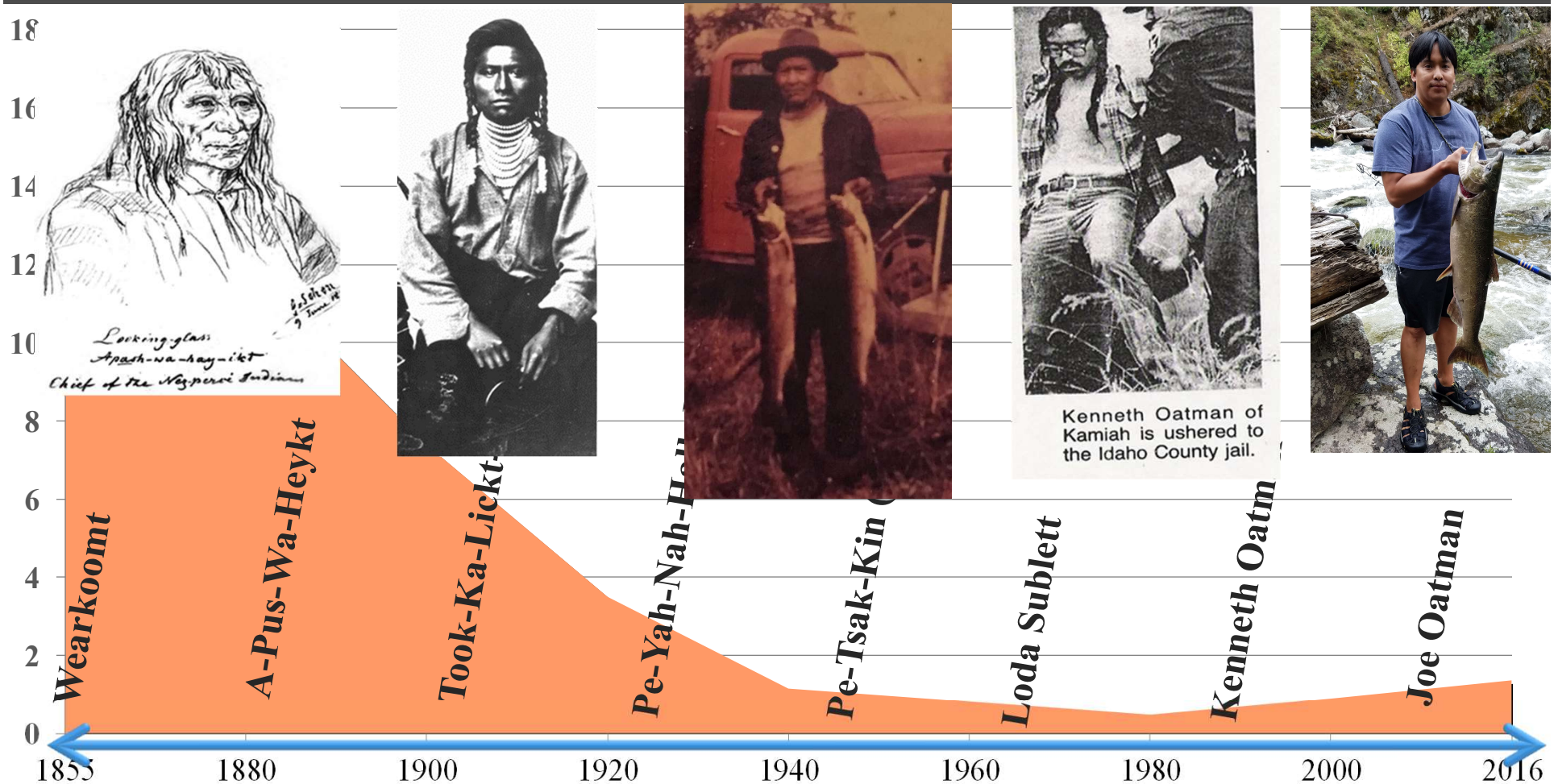
Salmon Decline

Returning Columbia River salmon (chinook, steelhead, sockeye, coho)



Salmon Decline

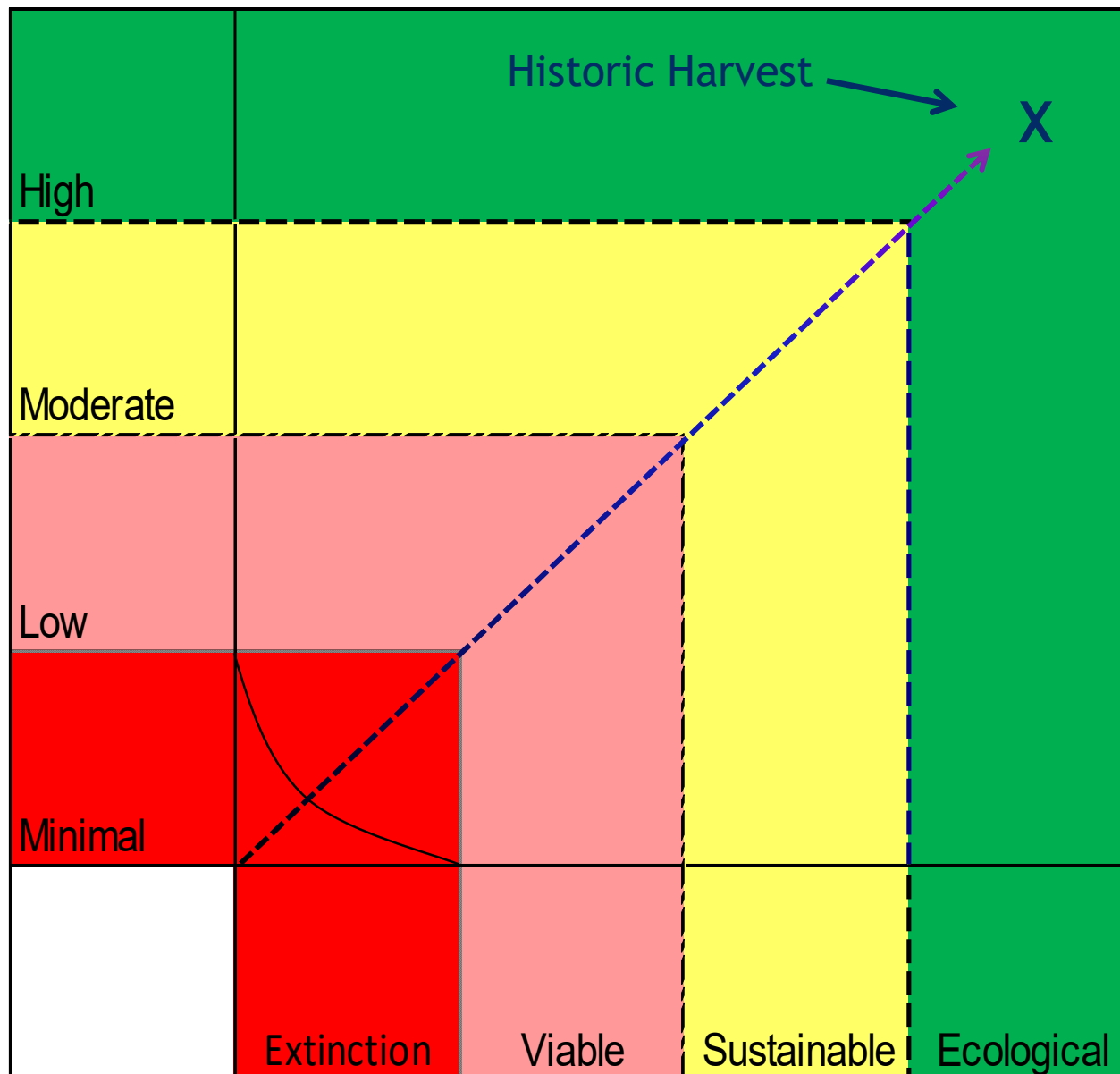
Returning Columbia River salmon (chinook, steelhead, sockeye, coho)



NPCC Appendix D – Losses

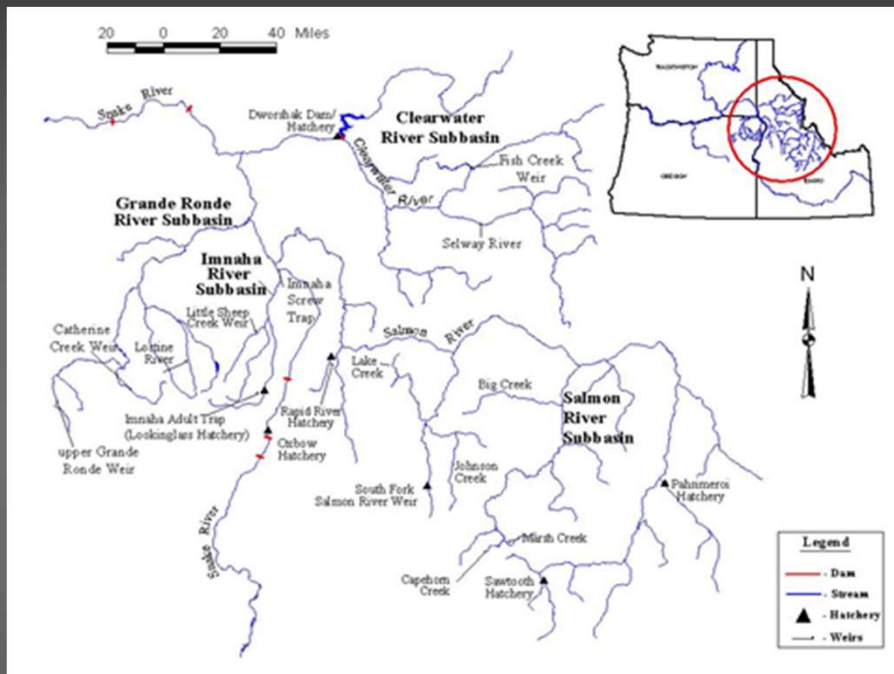
- NPCC provided some information concerning aboriginal use of fish for Nez Perce
 - Fish constituted “a considerable part of the food supply”
 - 300-646 lbs. per capita (June to October)
 - Fish species: sockeye, chinook, steelhead, cutthroat trout
- Updated Analysis in 2016

Magnitude of Tribal Harvest



Adult Escapement Threshold

Fish Populations



- 32 spring/summer Chinook populations (Clearwater extirpated/reintroduced)
- 1 fall Chinook population
- 24 steelhead populations
- 1 sockeye population
- Coho - extirpated/reintroduced
- Lamprey - life support

All Snake River Salmon and Steelhead populations
ESA Listed ... or extirpated

Health Benefits of Salmon

- A good source of high-quality protein
- A good source of omega-3 fatty acids
- Low in saturated fat
- Rich in vitamins and minerals
- Promotes strong bones, brain development, and healthy immune and cardiovascular systems



As Go the Salmon Runs, So Go the Salmon People

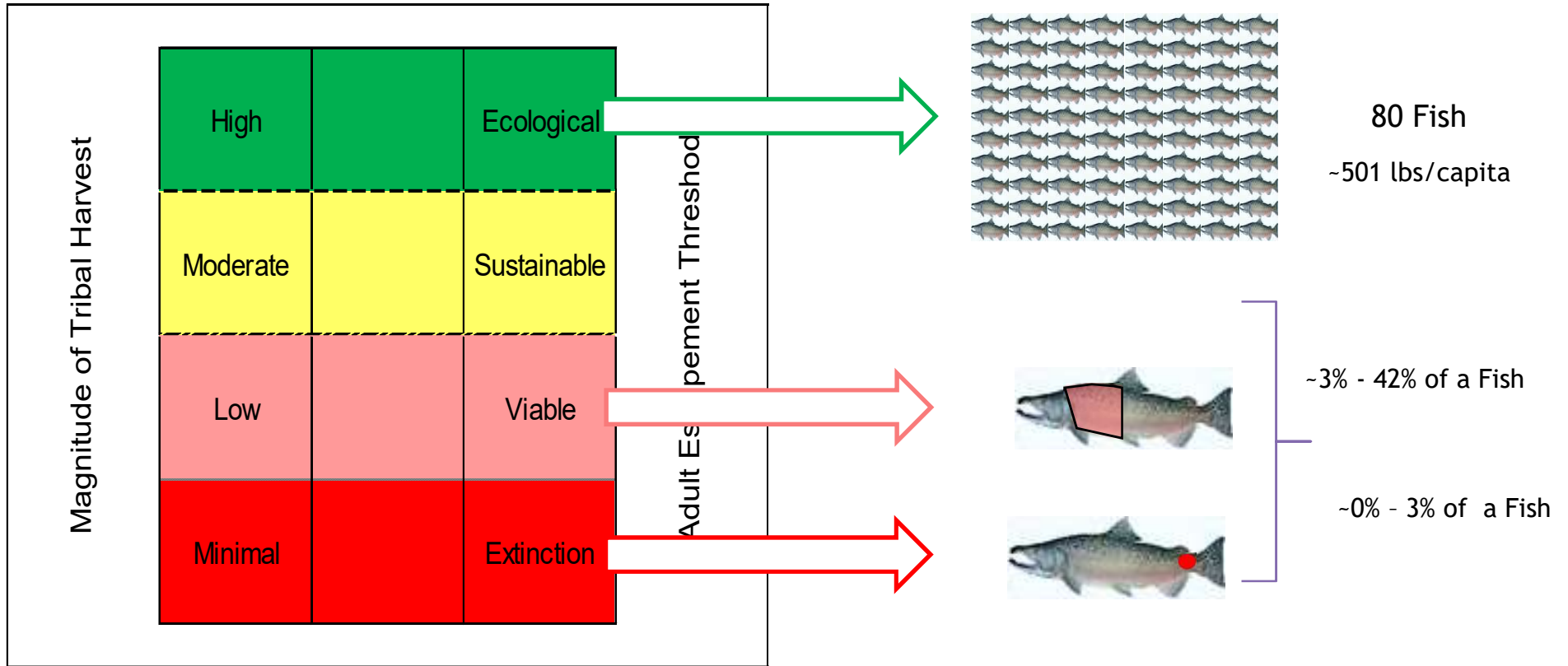
Higher rates of unemployment and poverty

Higher rates of diabetes, inflammatory and cardiovascular disease

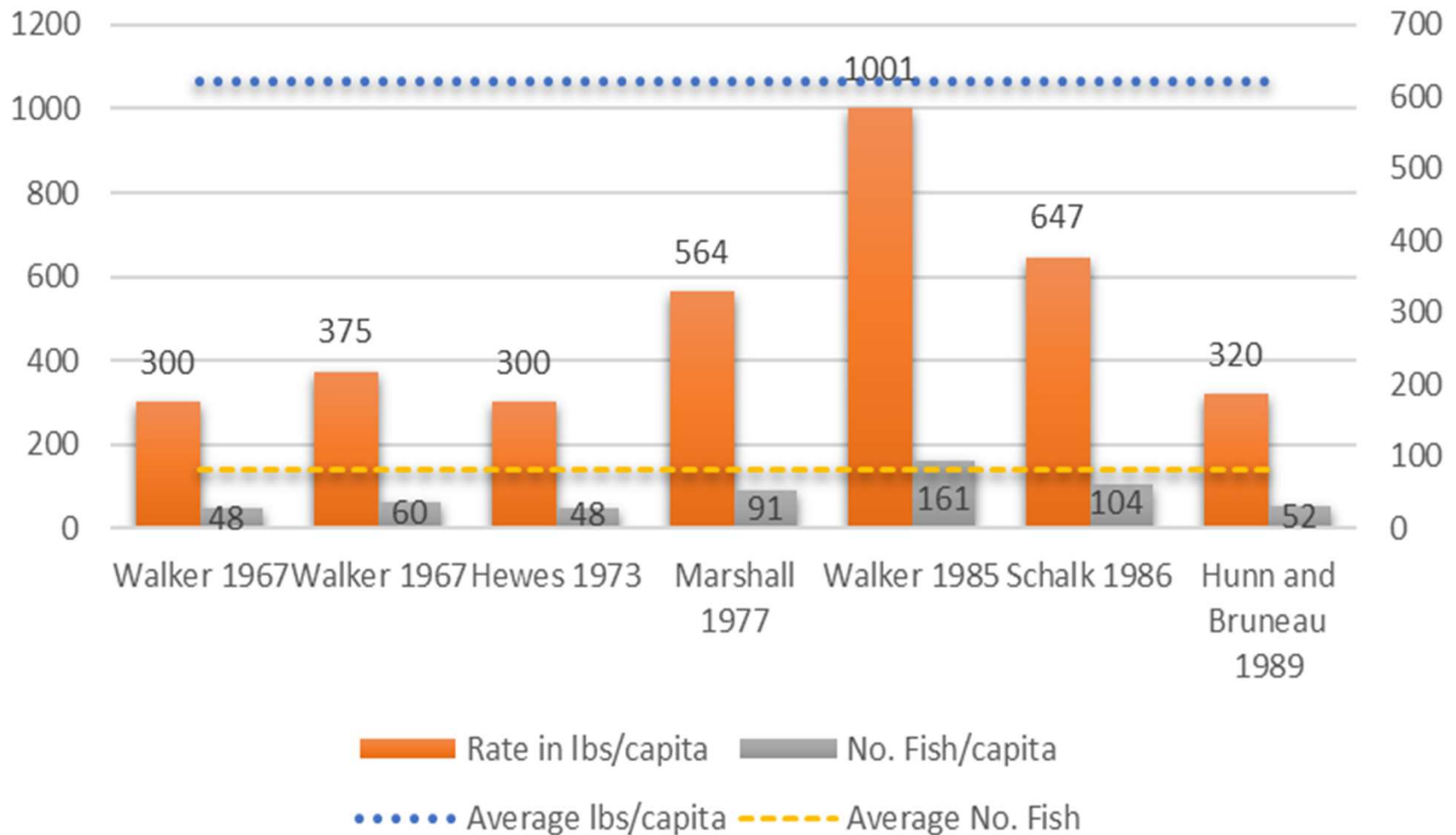
High rate of alcoholism and suicides

Fish and Fishing are a Necessary Part of
Restoring Balance

How Much Salmon Are We Talking About?

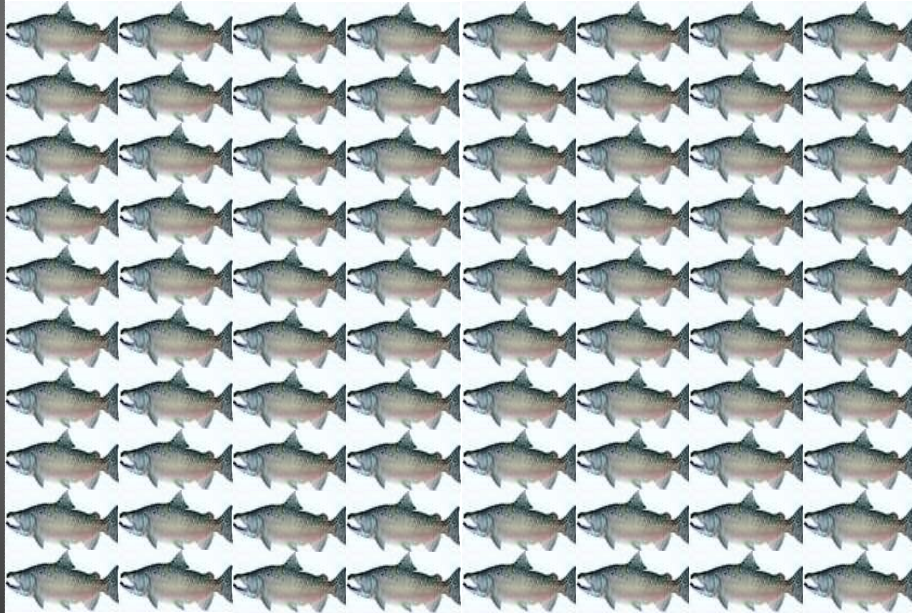


Tribal Heritage Per Capita Consumption & Number of Salmon



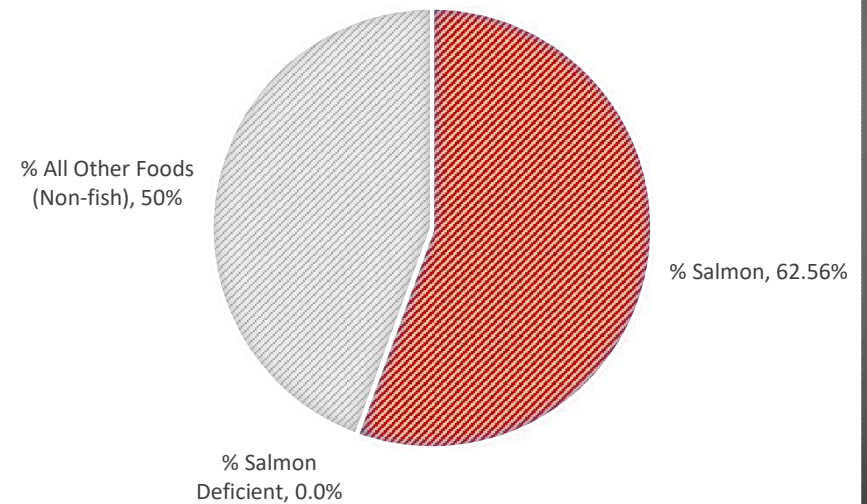
How Many Adult Salmon is Provided by the Average Heritage FCR?

80 Fish

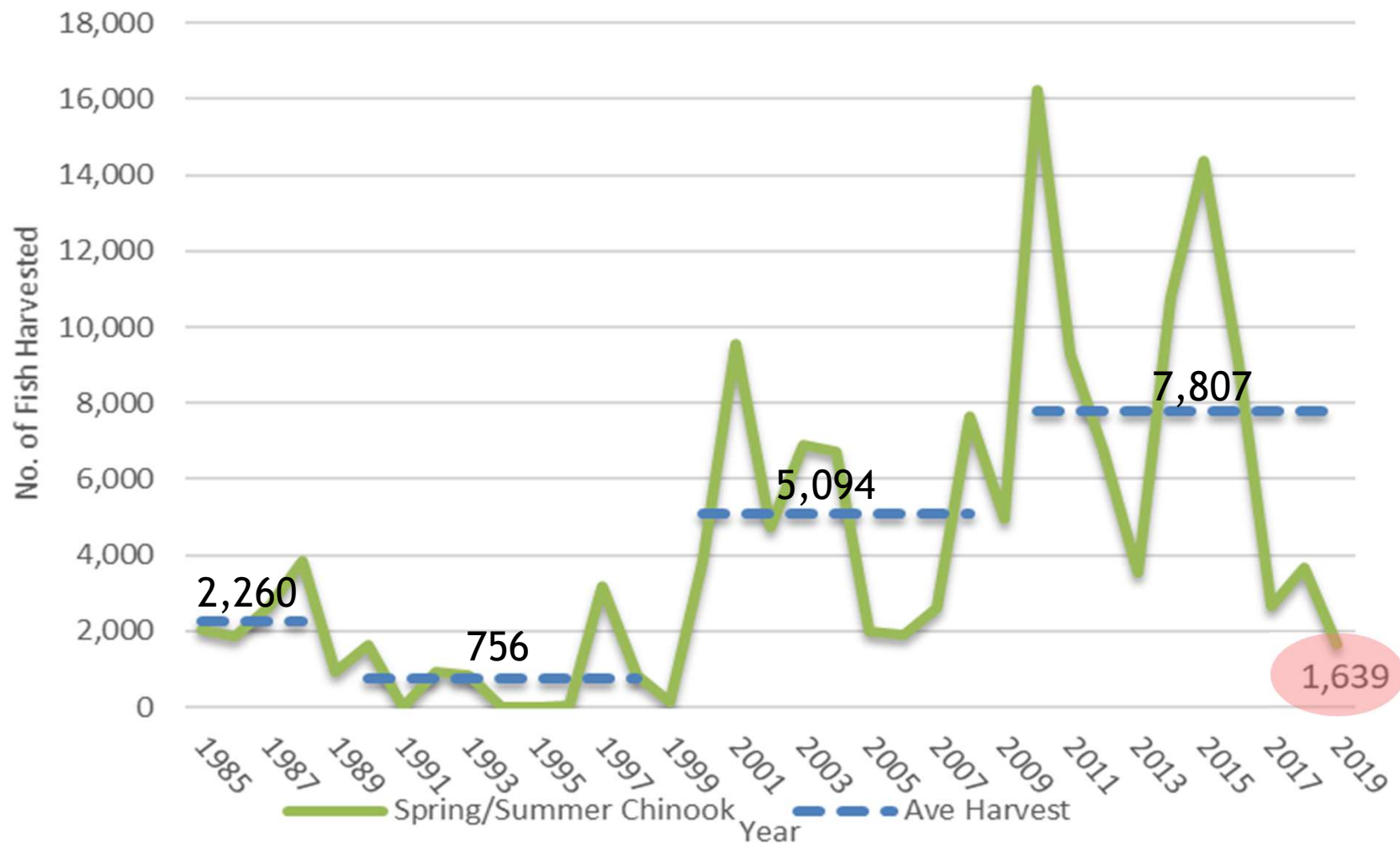


623 grams/d

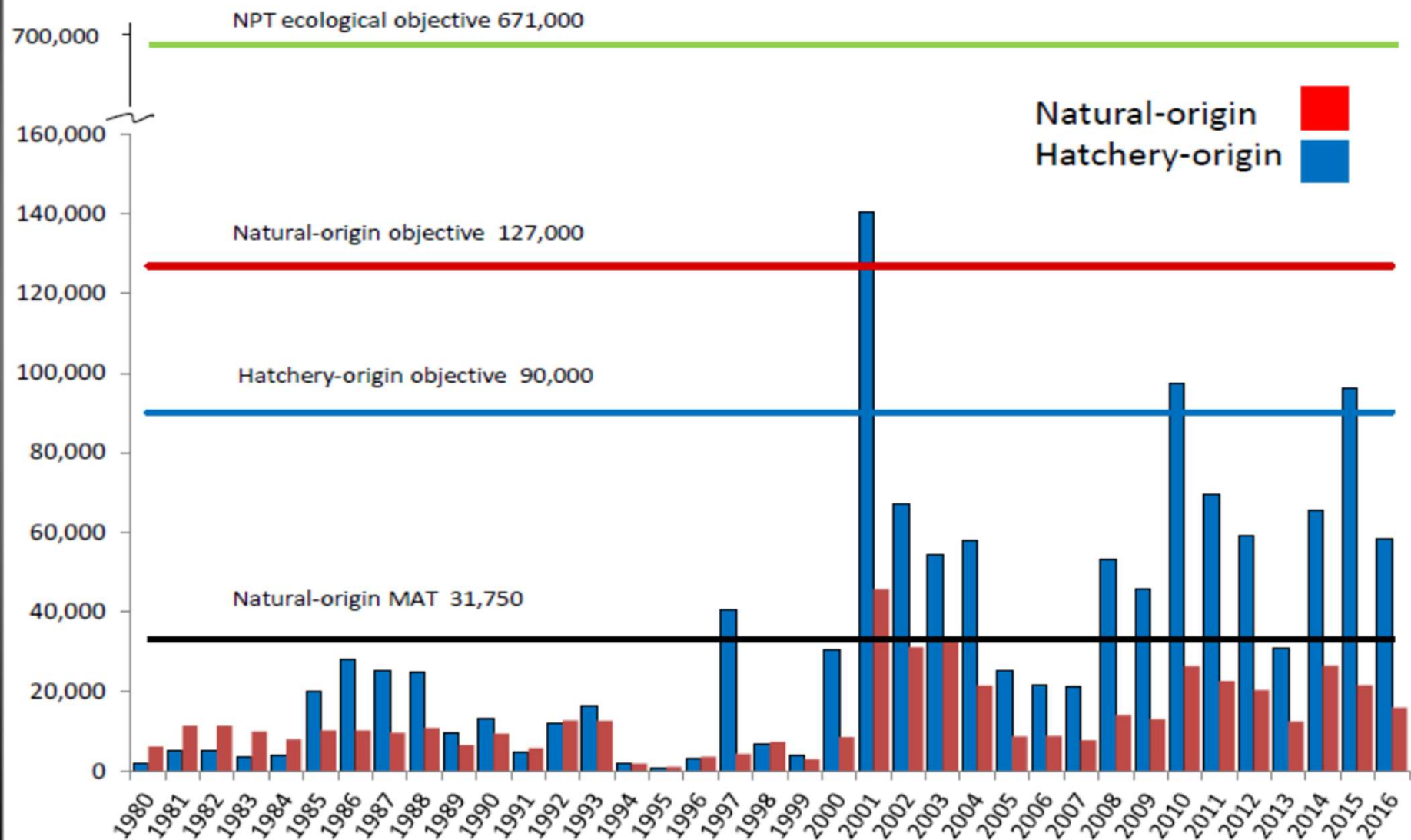
623 GRAMS/DAY AS % TOTAL
DAILY CALORIC NEED



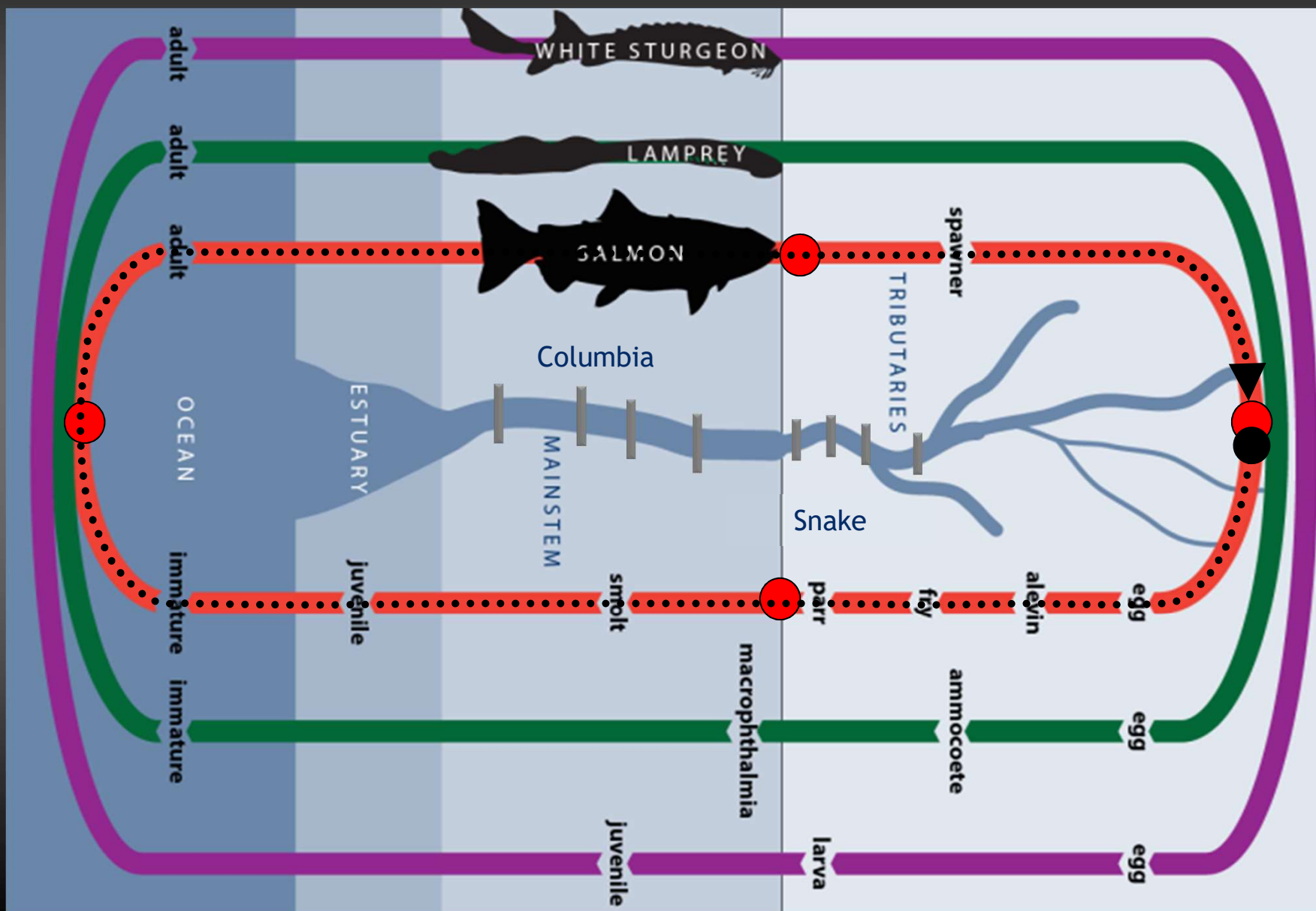
NPT Spring/Summer Chinook Recent Year Harvest



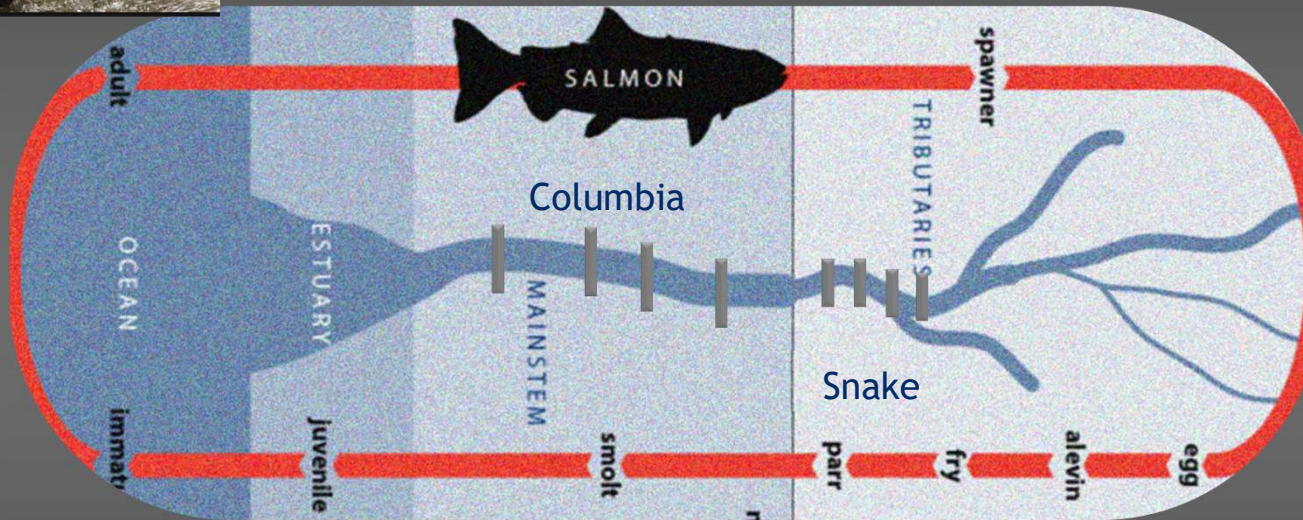
Provisional Goals of Columbia Basin Partnership



Gravel-to-Gravel Management



Regional Coordination



HARVEST



HATCHERY



HABITAT



HYDRO



Abundance-
Based Mgt.

Harvest
Shares

ESA Impacts

Mitigation
Goals

Conservation/
Recovery

Supplementation

Identify
Limiting
Factors

Fix Priority
Habitat

Collaborative
Partnerships

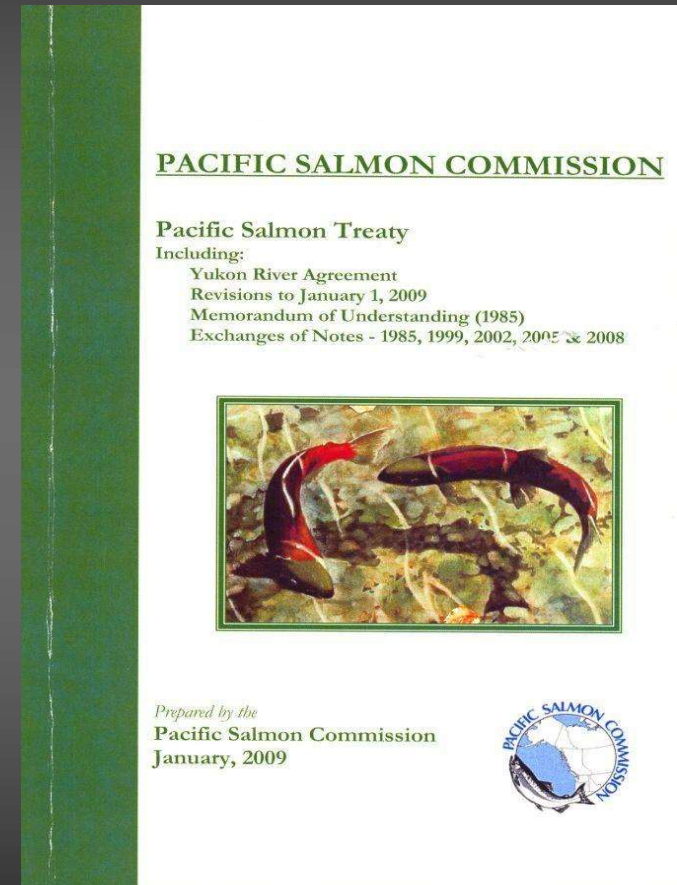
FCRPS
Impacts to
Fish

Flex Spill

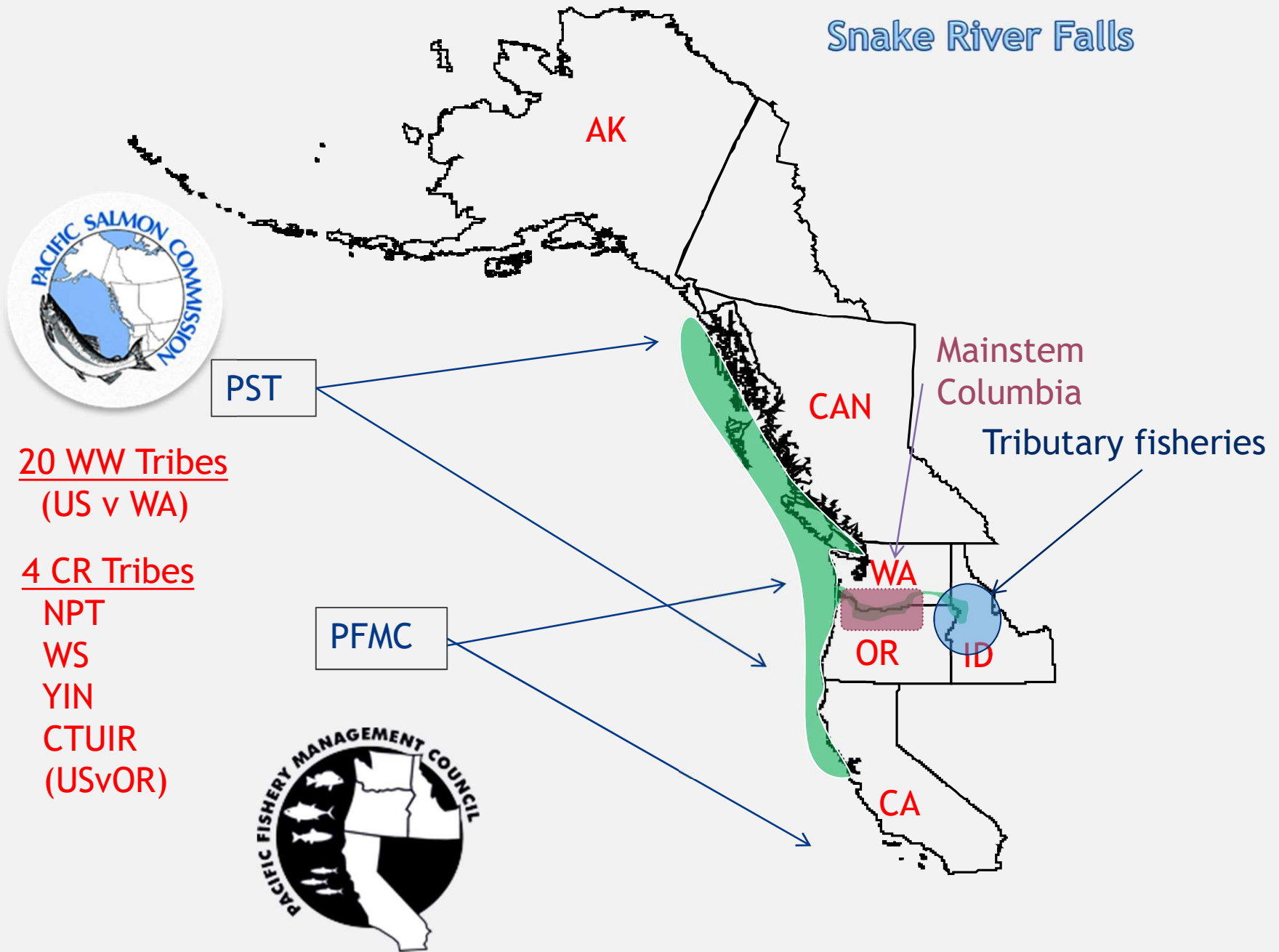
Dam Removal

Harvest

- 4 Col. R. Tribes are involved in fishery management in all areas where upriver salmon are harvested
- Ocean Fishery Management
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty
 - PFMC fishery management in west coast fisheries
- In-river fishery management
 - U.S. v. Oregon mainstem fisheries & subbasin areas



Snake River Falls



Keep Our Kids Home



Fishing-Based Economy



Restore a tribal economy based on trading, bartering and selling fish

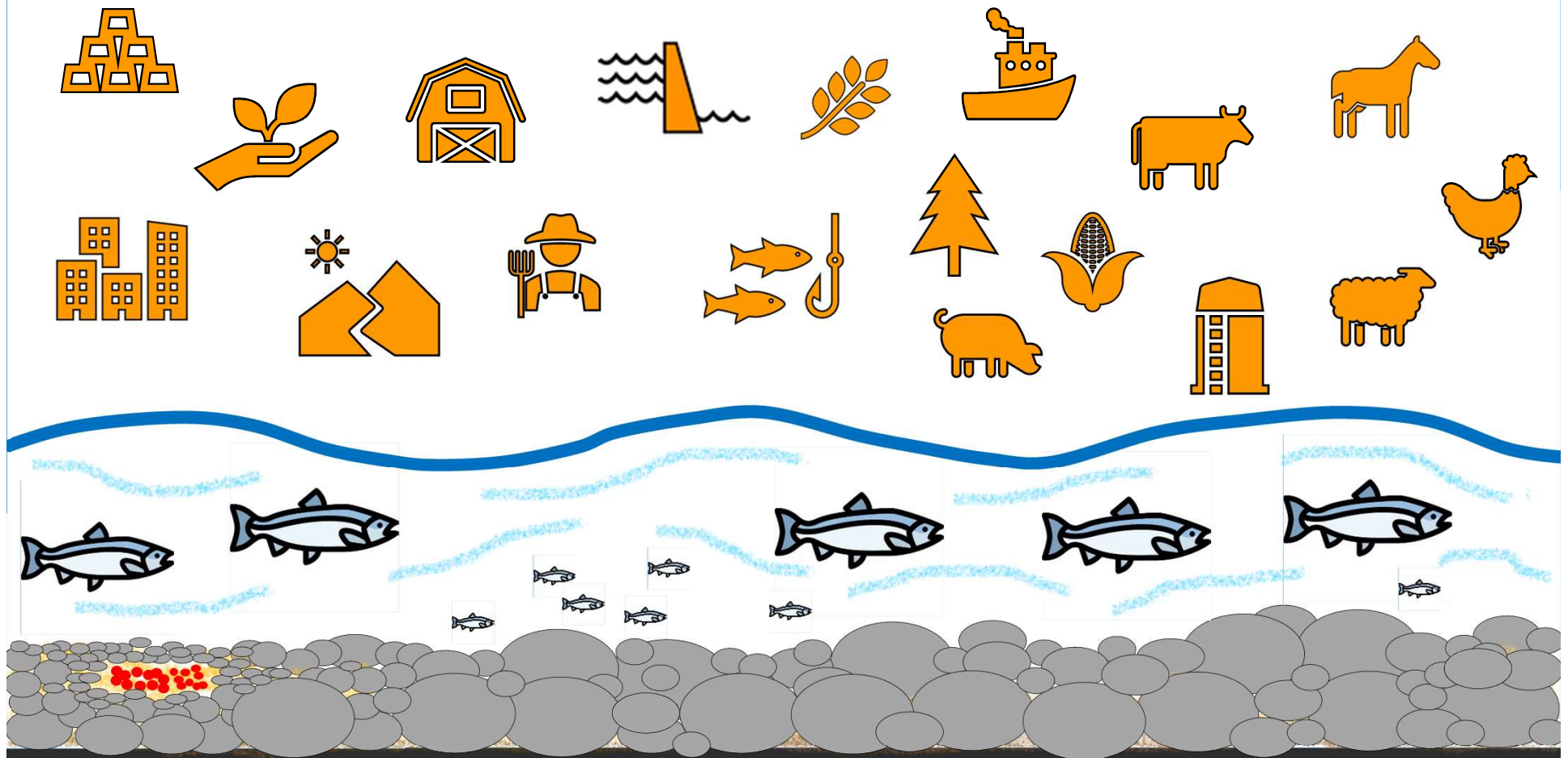
Re-Develop Traditional Fishing Gears & Practices

Develop the Infrastructure
(processing, storage, ice, etc.)

Develop a Market
(story, branding, specialty products, marketing strategy, etc.)



Common Interests - Different Uses of Fish



Nez Perce Perspective

- Want abundant and sustainable populations now and for future generations
- We know the factors responsible for decline of salmon and steelhead
- Most salmon work in the Columbia Basin is to mitigate for the effects of hydro system and other human activities that affect the land, rivers and fish.
- Status Quo is not acceptable - include additional innovative approaches

Tribal Commitment

- Tribal restoration programs and regional coordination contributes to salmon recovery
- The Nez Perce will continue to work to maintain and advance our way of life and culture for future generations
- We will continue to look for common ground where we can
- We look forward to developing partnerships and new alliances as we work towards achieving outcomes that work for salmon, steelhead, and lamprey and for communities



Nez Perce Tribe



DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES RESOURCES MANAGEMENT



Salmon recharge a tribal tradition

■ The plentiful salmon run at Rapid River is giving Nez Perce fishermen the opportunity to pass on the age-old tradition to younger tribal members

STORY AND PHOTOS
BY ERIC BARKER / OF THE TRIBUNE

RAPID RIVER — Rapid River is well named. Though it is small, its lower section runs fast and is peppered with rapids that cause it to flow white in many spots. It is the destination of tens of thousands of spring chinook and a favored fishing site of the Nez Perce Tribe.

On a hot spring day, Nez Perce fishers wade into the swift and cold water to work their dip nets and spears as they have for countless generations.

Joseph Outman, a young tribal member and descendant of Chief Looking Glass, links the past and present. He is the fisheries biologist who oversees the tribe's harvest program. It's

his goal to manage this fishery and others so the cultural identity of fishing, which is so intertwined with Nez Perce people and their history, lives on.

"It's our belief that if we take care of the salmon they will take care of us."

The tribe reserved the right to fish and hunt at usual and accustomed places when it signed a treaty with the United States government in 1855. It has since tenaciously guarded that right.

But in the past 40 years, the tribe has watched as salmon runs dropped off. In response, it has become a vocal proponent of salmon recovery and has been a player in the public and private efforts of the recovery effort.

As the harvest biologist for the tribe's fishery program, Outman prepares biological assessments

for fisheries at Rapid River and other "usual and accustomed places." The assessments are submitted to a committee of state, federal, and tribal representatives and eventually are passed on to the National Marine Fisheries Service.

At Rapid River, Outman visits with the fishermen to see how they are doing. The water level is down some and clearing after a spike in the runoff.

The fishermen are using dip nets, gaffs and spears.

The majority of people down here that fish, use dip nets but it has been open to all traditional gear," he says.

The fishery may soon be restricted to dip net techniques only, to lessen the impact on wild chinook listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

It is a fine line that the tribe is reluctant to draw, explains Outman. He says the tribe is committed to protecting and recovering wild populations of chinook that also are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

But the listing of chinook as a threatened species has complicated the exercise of the tribe's reserved fishing rights.

"We don't acknowledge the fact that ESA applies to the tribe based on the treaty of 1855, but we do take actions to preserve and perpetuate our wild chinook," he says.

Traditionally the tribe has never practiced catch-and-release fishing techniques and finds it difficult to do so now. Some of the fishermen believe catch and release is disrespectful to the salmon.

Fishermen like Adrian Moody say setting fish just to release them is akin to hunting and harvesting a sacred provider of food.

"I dislike people disrespecting the fish. It really upsets me," he said. "Some of these people here that fish, catch and release. That is playing with your food. It's showing disrespect and disrespect for the fish."



Tracey Jackson and his sons, Josh and Isaiah, are camped at Rapid River, where they hope to catch many salmon. Jackson is passing the tradition of fishing to his boys.

But in some years, when the returns are particularly poor, it's required by the National Marine Fisheries Service and voluntarily adheres to by the tribe.

"It's something we have to comply with, otherwise they may blame problems with the wild run on our fishery," says Outman.

This year he says the federal agency agrees the tribe's fishery can be conducted without irreparably harming the wild component of the run.

Ira Ellenwood, one of the harvest members who works with Outman, points across the narrow river to a calm spot under a shaded bank. There, several salmon can be seen when their dorsal fins and backs pop out of the swirling water.

Ellenwood says they are resting before they make a final run for the hatchery.

"I can't believe how strong a swimmer they are," he says.

Next, the young man points to a spot right at his feet where the tail of a large chinook can be seen in the frothing water.

Tribal fishermen use dip nets to fling the fish out of the holes like the one Ellenwood points to. They wade into the cold, swirling water and reach upstream with the long handles.

They work them downstream, hoping to find salmon resting in calm spots or swimming to stream.

If they do, the fish should swim right into the belly of the net and a thin piece of leather will trip the mesh so it slips off the loop and closes around the fish.

See Salmon, Page 2

<http://www.nptfisheries.org/>