Session 4A: Marine Protected Areas

Questions & Answers

Wayne Palsson
Q: One of the problems that the tribes face is not strictly cultural. We are only allowed to fish in the usual and accustomed areas which are pie-shaped or amoeba-shaped wedges, depending on whether you are talking about the Pacific coast or Puget Sound. Where they have traditionally fished, they were restricted to those areas under the Boldt decision. So it's kind of a reverse not in my backyard situation if you create a marine protected area in a certain spot, it may be that you have totally eliminated that particular tribe's fishing totally, they do not have anywhere else to go. So that's one of the things that is worrisome to them.

A: I completely agree with that and understand that, and it's going to be an interesting process as we go through and talk about it, the tribes' U & A areas, and these concepts of marine protection and it's not going to be easy, but we hope to get agreements and negotiations and co-management.

Phil Bloch
Q: There's uncertainty in all the data involved, and are we unnecessarily propagating this data in your efforts and how can you adaptatively manage so you can take the lessons?

A: We're really at a nascent stage, this is very early on, we have a lot to learn. This is not like the park system. We can't herd the species in a specific direction, so it's going to take some experimentation. There are going to be some marine protected areas that are failures. That's going to happen, and we need to take the lessons from those to identify where they're going to be. In Orca Pass, we're dealing with a situation because we have that entire area that we are looking at for protection; we're not planning to zone the whole thing in one way. We're planning to create zones within it for different strata of protection. And we are hoping to be able to have those somewhat pliable depending on what the future inventories show for the effectiveness of the reserve.

Kirby Johnson
Q: Are you taking observation of other fish that are out there besides the lingcod? What kind of information are you getting there?

A: Nothing formal or planned but if we see something interesting, we note it. When we started, we were going to do cabezon and lingcod but that was more than we were capable of doing.

Q: Do the recreational divers dislodge the eggs?

A: That's an interesting question, because this is a multiple use area? There's heavy use of the area by recreational divers and there was a day I actually saw somebody poking one of the egg masses, wondering what it was. I don't [know] if they actually knocked them loose or not, but the eggs do become…they seem to shrink in volume over the season…so if they are not firmly embedded, they could come loose in just the turbulence of a diver swimming by could conceivably knock them out of place. The perfect nest site would have rough surface to help contain the eggs and that isn't necessarily the situation when we have manmade structures, a lot of concrete rubble is smooth faced.

Question not recorded.

A: That's a really good point. You could also make the argument that maybe this is a multiple-use situation that is working because this was a popular dive site before it was a preserve, so all of this improvement is happening in conjunction with the diving pressure, whether that's good or bad, it's probably bad, but it did happen.

Q: Did you see any evidence that the older fish were cannibalistic or antagonistic to young recruits?

A: No, they seemed to get along well through most of the season. Things start to get a little tense along about November where people are squaring off for territory but it seems to be more antagonistic between fish of equal size and for some reason, the lingcod don't like cabezon around at that time of the year. It would be hard for us to observe because we genuinely don't see any feeding activity. Now and then you'll see a fish with a tail sticking out of it's mouth, but that's rare.