

Introduction

Since the 1970s important changes have occurred along the west coast of North America with respect to the Native people's increased control of natural resources. The Coast Salish of the Northwest Coast developed a traditional fishery that not only met their needs for subsistence but had the potential to develop into an integral part of the resource-based economy of the Pacific Northwest. Native people played important roles in

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the development of the salmon fishery in British Columbia and Washington State (Kobayashi 1993). In subsequent years as treaty negotiations proceeded, Native people were also subject to the assimilationist policies of Canada and the United States, which served to further limit Native access to the salmon fishery.

This paper examines the post-contact salmon fishery of the Coast Salish of British Columbia and Washington State especially focusing on recent court cases which have upheld the aboriginal right of access to the resource. Particular attention will be given to the comparative analysis of adjudicated resource rights in Puget Sound and the Fraser River. While there have been several recent studies of the role of Native people in the commercial fisheries of the Northwest (for British Columbia see Pinkerton (1987) and Newell (1993), for Washington State see Cohen (1986) and Boxberger (1989), for southeast Alaska see Price (1990), there have not been any attempts to compare the

differing experiences in Canada and the United States. The purpose of providing insight into resource rights and policy is to provide a basis for future research.

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