The health of Chinook salmon in particular is dependent on location. According to the National Wildlife Foundation, stocks of Alaskan Chinook are very healthy while those in the Columbia River tributaries are considered in danger, and they are listed as threatened in a range of rivers and streams throughout Oregon, Idaho, and Washington.

What’s threatening Chinook in particular? A myriad of issues, including overfishing, overuse of water resources, development, and habitat loss. The National Wildlife Foundation also states: “Dams also pose a threat if the speed of water flow is altered or access to natal streams is blocked.”

We encourage everyone to make sustainable seafood choices! Seafood Watch is a great reference point for salmon, as well as many other seafood choices (like tuna and shellfish).
If asked to choose between fresh or frozen, my guess is that most folks would answer fresh. Which is why I was surprised to hear a story on the radio reviewing a study concluding that frozen seafood is as good or better than “fresh.”

According to blind taste tests conducted by researchers at Oregon State University, lead sensory researcher Ann Colonna says, “What we found is that the frozen product was actually liked as much as — or significantly, statistically better than — the fresh.” Not only is this report exciting information for people like my seafood-loving parents in landlocked Montana, delicious frozen seafood is also great news for sustainability efforts in the seafood industry!

Now you might be thinking, “Hold your fishes! (Actually, I’ll be really impressed if you’ve ever thought that). There is no way a frozen fish will taste as tasty as a fish I reeled in that). There is no way a frozen fish will taste as tasty as a fish I reeled in that). There is no way a frozen fish will taste as tasty as a fish I reeled in that).”

Depending on where you are in the world and where the seafood you are buying came from, that delivery may take many days. For a faster delivery, transporting your ‘fresh’ seafood takes many resources such as shipping by airlift. Flying fish from harvest sites to market has the drawback of a larger carbon footprint compared to other delivery methods. The logistics of getting fresh seafood, from remote places, in a “fresh” amount of time, at a reasonable price doesn’t compute. By flash-freezing products at sea, harvesters can increase the efficiency of their operation by reducing the number of trips they make to port to deliver fresh catch. Reducing the carbon footprint of transporting seafood is one great reason to surpass the stigma against a frozen seafood feast.

Another reason to buy-in to buying frozen seafood, is the reduction of waste. In the interview, Colonna said, “One-third of all seafood is actually thrown away at the counter because people are not buying quickly enough. I don’t think we have time to continue to waste seafood in that manner. To have more acceptability around frozen product is just going to help everyone.”

With freezing technology improving, fisherfolk can flash-freeze seafood either at sea or shortly after docking, maintaining a quality product that you can buy year-round! And with the research to back up that frozen seafood is just as tasty, choosing frozen seafood is a positive action to add to the list of ways you can support the global movement of ensuring sustainably managed fisheries.

We thank both Ocean5 and everyone who has enjoyed Harbor Happy Hour for this significant, incredible donation! We encourage you to support local restaurants and catch a movie at The WildSide on their opening night. Hurry! This promotion will end on December 31, 2019.

Table 47

From June-November, Ocean5 and Table 47 have contributed $23,794 to Harbor WildWatch through Harbor Happy Hour.