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My name is Brenda Wilson; I was born and raised in Sand Point. I've married and lived in King Cove for the past 33 years. I'm an Aleutians East Borough Assembly member, a past Aleutians East Borough School Board member of 15 years, and a CAMF member. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work and am an adjunct professor for UAA and UAF.

I come from multigenerational fisher families, with great-grandfathers from Norway and Denmark who married Aleut fisher women. I've fished and lived in the region for 52 years and have salmon fished since I was 7 years old. I grew up fishing with my grandfather, my father, my husband and children. I was taught young; to hang and repair nets, to run the boat, and general navigation, skills I have passed on to my children.

I am well versed in the socio-economic impacts of the past Board decisions that were made regarding Area M due to my political involvement and past social work experience. We are seeing increased drug and alcohol use, increased suicides, and depression. I believe as a social worker this is due to a way of life that has changed so dramatically that our people are not adjusting well to a way of life that is not based wholly on salmon fishing.

The raw fish tax which supports the communities and schools has slowly dwindled due to the salmon restrictions that have occurred. We've had to close one school, out of six, and are looking to close two more this year. When schools close, communities die as we all know. The communities my parents and grandparents come from no longer exist.

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One of the clear impacts that have come out of the decisions made in the past, in our region, with restricted fishing time, areas, and net depths is the reduction of the raw fish taxes that support our communities and schools.

I will not say that I am well versed in the scientific data that has been made available by the now famous WASSIP study; but remember science is the one thing that we can always count on. It is clear the Area M salmon fishery is having a very little impact on other areas salmon fisheries. We have fished as Aleut people for hundreds of years in the Area M region and want to continue to do so.

I grew up with the vision of fishing, my children who have fished since they were born and in diapers, would also have that way of life, but this is not so today. We see a dramatically different fishery today than we saw years ago. With more restrictions we will be seeing the death of not only our communities and but also our way of life.

You as a Board need to look closely at what impacts your decisions will have on the people of my region. Please study closely the information presented, listen to the people and make sound decisions; as you will be affecting us as a region tremendously. We are just starting to adjust and see a brighter future for our young people as educational opportunities are becoming available.

The positives from the Board of Fisheries past decisions has been a well-managed June salmon fishery and we are thankful for the scientific and data driven salmon decisions that have helped Area M maintain a healthy salmon fishery.

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My son and his children now fish during the salmon season and I want my great-grandchildren fishing in the future, so once again I plead with you to make no further restrictions on the Area M fishery. Please protect the way of life my grandchildren and great-grandchildren may be able to achieve some day.

Thank you for your time and attention in this matter.