

Victoria Briggs
Ugashik Village
King Salmon, AK 99613
November 29, 2012

Alaska Board of Fish
Juneau, Alaska

RE: Proposal 18
Bristol Bay Meeting

Dear Board:

Please be aware of the following facts about the 3 PROPOSERS:

Ms Burnetti is NOT a permit holder, nor a site lessee, nor a boat owner, or even a land owner in Ugashik, just a drift crew member on a local boat.

Mrs. Albecker did not participate in the 2012 BB fishing season, even as just a permit holder, as she transferred her permit to her daughter, and has been very vocal of her plans to leave the fishery and Ugashik once she turns 65 y/o, in ~ 18-24 months. Her husband's entire fishing operation has been up for sale for a few years and they have already purchased a home in AZ.

The Ugashik Tribal Council has: 3 of 5 members who do not participate in the fishery IN ANY CAPACITY and 4 of 5 are not permanent Alaska residents.

I am writing to *strongly disagree* with proposal #18, to reduce the length a running line may be used in the village of Ugashik from the current 1000' to 600'.

This proposal has *absolutely nothing to do with safety or the ability of fishermen to navigate the river to or away from tenders at all times, despite a few well angled pictures of a river that has already changed.* It grows out of continued pettiness by a few people, pettiness which will hurt those fishermen who work harder and update their equipment so they can catch fish more efficiently.

With management of openings having shifted to more, shorter openings, **fishermen in this area of the Ugashik District need to make full use of the 1000' running line rule (in place since the 1970s) to have a decent chance of catching an economically reasonable amount of fish.** This past year alone the ability to go out farther into the river, where the fish were actually running, made for up to 40% larger catches for those who did than those who ran shorter running lines.

The claim by those submitting the proposal that the channel is characterized by faster running waters and runs farther from shore, is false and other claims are skewed or false.

The river is close to 2000 feet wide though navigable portions and changes from year to year with sand bar movement. **The assertion that the river is but a 1000 feet wide and that gear "will nearly touch shore to shore blocking the entire river" are demonstrably false.**

As the 1000 foot running lines have been utilized for at least 10 years, what are the proposers saying has changed now?

If this proposal is passed it is my firm belief the fishermen of Ugashik will be unable to effectively fish the river. The case, more than not, in the past 10 years is that the fish do not run close to shore. **I also feel you will see another proposal within a short time**, since the river sand bars and such change every few years, **asking for the limit to be extended back to 1000' because they are not able to catch fish.**

The referenced gravel beach is not the only place available for launch/haul out activities and is currently used under a loose "gentleman's agreement" the adjacent set net leaseholders could revoke at any time.

The unsubstantiated remarks about 2011 skiff groundings and lack of access to tenders by fishermen are not evidence that there is a problem with continuing to allow the 1000 foot rule to stand. Without evidence which directly confirms such problems not only exist but can be attributed to the 1000 foot rule, this is mere fluff.

This proposal comes on the heels of years of a bombardment of calls to multiple state and federal agencies trying to find some way to get Mr. Briggs in trouble. Despite continuous calls to the Coast Guard, the Corp of Engineers, OSHSA, Alaska State Troopers, DNR and others, to the best of my knowledge, Mr. Briggs has never been cited for endangering others or breaking any laws. This fact alone incenses both Mrs. Albecker and Ms Burnetti.

The Ugashik village fishermen, by vast majority, are decades behind the rest of the Bay, evidenced by the continued use of wooden boats, sandbags and lack of rollers. The village tribal council is made up of people who do not live in the village, 60% of whom do not own land nor come up to fish. As such, any agreement the council may have with this proposal is suspect and perhaps not relevant to this issue. (Mr. Briggs is also currently involved in litigation with the tribe due some questionable management of resources and another reason to look on their endorsement of the proposal with question)

The F&G department houses their test fishery workers with a member of the village who has an extreme bias against fishermen who *do not* partake of his mentality that Alaska is a state to party and fishing is a 'vacation'. He voices his dislike for both Mr. Briggs and any other fishermen who fish in a similarly aggressive fishing style. **That viewpoint is often parroted by those department workers after exposure to this fisherman.** **It worries me that the politics of a small community may be affecting what should be a non-political set of rules.**

If this proposal is passed I believe you will see a barrage of proposals by the next cycle claiming 'safety issues' from every drifter and other set net fisherman who wants to impose his desires on another fisherman.

Respectfully submitted (via email),

Victoria Briggs

Permit Holder