

## Representative Lynn Gattis

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Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Boards Support Section  
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Chairman Johnstone,  
Board Members Kluberton, Jensen, Johnson, Huntington, Jeffrey,  
and Morisky,

The Upper Cook Inlet salmon fishery is an important resource for the people of the Mat-Su Valley; it promotes recreation and instills outdoor awareness for users of all ages. My constituents depend on UCI salmon to stock their freezers and feed their families throughout the winter. There is growing concern that the fishery is quickly depleting and that, in the near future, this valuable resource may no longer exist.

I find it unacceptable that due to a combination of poor management and low salmon returns we have been facing limited fish. Steps must be taken to preserve our way of life and those steps will involve uncomfortable sacrifices on the part of many salmon harvesters.

It is the charge of the Board of Fisheries and the Dept. of Fish and Game to create protections to ensure these salmon runs survive for future generations to enjoy while also providing fair access to current users. The UCI salmon run feeds a number of subsistence and commercial fisheries – driftnet, set net, dip net and sport fishermen are all competing for the same limited resource and all users are passionate about their right to go fishing.


The fishery at the Kenai River's mouth has ample harvesting opportunities, and yet, the Susitna subsistence fisheries are struggling. Problems arise when making policy decisions that delineate who gets to harvest fish and how much is allocated per

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fishery. My feeling is that the Susitna must be factored in at least equally with the Kenai.

The obvious solution to depleted fish stocks is to ensure that more fish reach the breeding grounds. The Department and the Board need to work in unison to create a plan that provides for adequate levels of escapement and guarantees healthy salmon runs for generations to come.

  
Representative Lynn Gattis