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ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND FINFISH  
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**Letter in Opposition to Proposal 5 - "Close a portion of Main Bay to sport fishing."**

I have sport fished the head of Main Bay for nearly 20 years. It has become a tradition for my family, and several other families to meet there every single year to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday, and catch our yearly Sockeye salmon.

Sockeye obviously congregate at the head of the bay, and provide an opportunity for people of all ages to successfully snag fish. This is not the case just a short distance from the head, as the fish are dispersed and the bay is thick with drift and set nets. This regulation will not "Close a portion of Main Bay to sport fishing." This proposal would effectively END the sport fishery in Main Bay, and anyone that has participated in this fishery for multiple years would agree. You simply cannot catch much outside of the head of the bay, and after the barrier net is installed (fish go in, but they can't get out), the only place a child (and sometimes anyone else) can actually get any fish is on the hatchery side of the net. Note, we have consulted ADF&G annually to confirm we are in compliance with the law before fishing behind the net.

The Eshamy district harvested 1.02 million sockeye this year. In addition, tens of thousands more fish die and rot behind the MBH barrier net. In contrast to these numbers, sport fishermen likely take less than a season total of 6 or 7 thousand fish (the number if 500 fishermen each harvested 2 daily limits, or 12 fish). Six tenths of one percent hardly seems a strain on the resource.

It is argued the 'integrity of the barrier net has often been compromised'. How, how often, and when, was this net ever compromised, much less breached? Are a few snagging hooks really a big problem? The only time I know of an anchor getting caught in the net, the boat owner cut his anchor line, informed MBH of the incident, and was told, "No worries, we'll pull the anchor when we pull the net at the end of the season". Which they did, and the anchor was later retrieved from their dock. No big deal. No damage (or compromise) to the barrier net.

It is pointed out "injured fish must be culled from broodstock...which results in a waste of the salmon resource". An overwhelming majority of the fish we sport catch are all injured by gill nets. We keep them. We eat them. They are not wasted. What does MBH do with the net damaged fish they cull? Also, how many snag injured fish could there even be, and if this is a valid concern, why do MBH employees and/or guests snag from their own docks (witnessed every year)?

It is apparent this proposal is introduced simply to put a stop to the sport fisherman nuisance in MBH, while providing zero enhancement of the fishery itself. It seems it might be a better proposal to instead remove the net, and let more fish become available for public consumption, vs. dying in and behind the barrier net (which is always choked with dead and dying fish).

Thank you for your consideration of this point of view. Please don't kill this sport fishery without just cause.



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