

To the Alaska Board of Fish,

I am a third-generation commercial set netter. I have fished commercially on Salamatof Beach my entire life, and my children all of whom work with me are the fourth-generation fishers. Since 2012 the King Salmon numbers have been drastically dwindling. As a result, the King Salmon management place in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) has severely restricted the East Side Set Net (ESSN) fishery. The conservation burden of the ESSN burden is not sustainable or fair.

I have had to reduce the size of my nets, which has cost me thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours. I had the number of nets I can fish reduced from three per permit to one per permit. Just in my gear alone I have had a 66% reduction in potential earning power. Worse of all, I have been unable to harvest sockeye when they are in abundance on the beach, which is where I fish – *meanwhile every other fishery has been able to harvest sockeye!* The data clearly shows that restricting the ESSN has not helped the king number rebound. The conservation burden on the ESSN has not been equitable.

I am to the point that I can no longer hire crew to help me fish, and I am literally selling my equipment to pay my bills. My slush fund is gone, and I am on the verge of bankruptcy, and I am willing to bet this is the situation of the entire ESSN fishery! If we are not allowed to harvest sockeye this year, there is a real risk of this fishery being lost; the consequences of which would be catastrophic on a community level.

It is for this reason that I am supporting RC3, RC4 and RC33. Letting the ESSN harvest some sockeye this season, which may result in the harvest of a few hundred Kings will not impact the overall King Salmon return. This will however save this fishery until we can adjust the UCI King Salmon Management plan during next year BOF cycle.

Respectfully,

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