

To: Alaska Board of Fish

From: Chris Kouremetis

Subject: Background and stance on proposals 88,89,90,91,99

To the members of the board,

My name is Chris Kouremetis. My family and I have fished in the Alitak district for 38 years. In the years that I have been actively involved I have seen many changes in our area. From the shift to and then from terminal fisheries, staggered openings and closings, to the attempts at trying to get fish into the Olga Bay area so the fisherman there have an opportunity to catch fish. Some changes have had positive effects on our business but most have been negative. We currently have, and have had for many years, a huge decline in both the escapement and escapement goals. Most fisherman in the district are barely paying their bills with some that can not afford to fish at all. This is the first time that I have seen an effort from all areas in our district to come together to try to fix the only problem, terribly low returns. Fortunately we have a lot of motivated creative minds that are willing to sit down in committee to figure out our best plan to remedy our issue. Unfortunately there are still proposals that are trying to allocate fish to specific areas with in our district. A larger percentage of nothing is nothing. Our focus needs to be on rebuilding the early Upper Station, and Frazer runs, not on who is going to get their rightful percentage of the returning fish. We are all distressed. We are willing to take on the Burden of Conservation in order to attempt to restore our fishery to what it once was.

With that being said our stance on the proposals are as follows:

Proposal 88. I strongly **OPPOSE** this 2 part proposal. Staggered openings and closures, although it may not be perfect, does create a safer environment and spreads the 2 tenders from our only processor around in a timely manner. I would discourage any more mandatory closing times and durations. To me this proposal seems allocative and has lost sight of the real problem.

Proposal 89. I **support** this proposal if it is truly believed by Fish and Game that front loading the late Upper Station run would be beneficial to the health and strength of the run. If not, I see no reason to tie Fish and Games hands in attempting to manage the run.

Proposal 90. I **oppose** this proposal. Although I believe that a pulse in the migratory path of the sockeye returning to the Olga systems may be necessary at some point I am not sure that this is the correct area.

Proposal 91. I **support** proposal 91, not because it will benefit me in the short term but for the longterm potential. It has become apparent that this change is necessary to begin to take the first steps in rehabilitating our runs.

Proposal 99. We remain **neutral** on this proposal. Being able to hold and fish 2 permit would benefit our business. However after witnessing the abuse of it, if passed would like to see stricter enforcement and penalties if caught with gear in the water after the closure. An idea could be to ticket and fine on the 1st offense, have a steeper ticket on the second offense and on the third loose the privilege to fish two permits for set amount of time.

Thank you for your consideration and your efforts.

Chris Kouremetis