

RC 058

Testimony of Kevin Fisher

I would like to call your attention to PC 20 and RC 36

My name is Kevin Fisher I have set net for salmon in the Alitak District for 25 years. I started as crew and worked my way into the fishery. I have served as President of the Alitak District Setnet Association for the last 19 years. I have participated in many different fisheries in Alaska, including Dungeness crab, Halibut, King Crab, Pot Cod, Jig Cod, and the Trawl fishery for Cod, Pollock, and Flat Fish. I am speaking today on behalf of my Family's setnet operation.

I think by now you get the picture that we are dealing with a Salmon Crises in the Alitak District. The time to act is now if we are to recover from this and have a fishery that our kids can inherit. Up to this point we have primarily talked about the two main runs of red salmon. There are several other smaller streams that at one time also produced alot of fish. Akalura, Silver Salmon, Horse marine to name a few.

We have to stop counting Jacks as viable escapement. The escapement goals for Frazier are only being met by using the jack numbers. I realize that this is an anomaly that this system is not normal, 70% jacks one year is unheard of in any other system.

It seems to me that the OEG, may have accomplished its goal at the time. Allowing us to fish on a strong Frasier run while simply sustaining a minimum escapement to Upper Station,. I believe this has in the long run contributed to the decline of the fishery in the Alitak District. At the same time, the escapement goals were lowered, include in these minimum escapements achieved extreme numbers of jack salmon. I think the Salmon Crises picture is painted. We need to raise the OEG for the early run Upper station so that management can delay the June 9th test fishery and preload the Upper Station system before the Frazier run really comes on line. I feel that if we set the OEG to at least the min BEG (43,000) set by the department this board cycle then on the next cycle revisit this and hopefully raise it to the mid range around 60,000.

I would also urge the board to establish an OEG for Frazier. I think we need this OEG closer to the top end of the BEG.

We need to establish the early upper station run as a stock of concern so that we can get some rehabilitation started.

I'm not a biologist but it seems obvious to me that you can't get fish back if you don't put them into the system in the first place.

I am an advocate for continuing the genetic testing around the state. I think that we need to have a better understanding of these fish and their migratory pathways.

The best data we have for Kodiak at this time is the outdated tagging study from the 80's. Some might suggest that this is a ploy to allocate fish or take fish from others. I see it different. I think that we need to know what the fish are doing so that people can fish on good stocks and save the poor runs. Intercept fishing is what all fisher's do, we all intercept fish bound for somewhere. I think that it only makes sense to protect the runs you fish on. At the same time why should fisher's not be allowed to fish on stocks that are doing fine?

I would like to speak to Proposal 100. This change if enacted as written would put commercial fishing as a priority over subsistence fishing. Where would residence of the area be allowed to subsistence fish?

I urge the Board that many of these suggestions and proposals you are deciding on today may have results that does not accomplish our goals. I think using the Sunset clause is a great tool for the board to test a plan without locking in forever until it is shown it works.

Recap of my opinion on Proposals:

88 I am **opposed** to same time stop and start of openings for the Alitak District

89 and **90** can be dropped if we can work with **91**

91 Needs to be used to remove or raise the OEG for Upper Station to get more fish into the system.

92,93, 94 another good reason to do genetic testing on all fish stocks in Alaska.

97 **Opposed** as written, if it's too ruff to fish what will happen to the fish in the net, can there be a way to help increase safety without causing ~~wast?~~ ^{waste?}

98 **Opposed** as written I don't think increasing the efficiency is needed however if there was a way to reduce the number of permits for the seine fishery it might be good. My fear is that it would have adverse affects on the fishers that can not take advantage of this new rule.

99 **Support** as I think it worked well last time. And would help a struggling fishery survive this tuff time.

100 **Oppose** as written because it totally displaces the local subsistence users. And gives priority to a possible future commercial fishery.

Thank you for you time and consideration on these proposals and suggestions.

Kevin Fisher