

Submitted by: Senator Mike Dunleavy  
Mat-Su Valley  
February 1, 2014

Good Day,

Thank you for allowing me to address this Board regarding the important work that you are doing. My constituents have consistently placed **STRONG CONSISTENT RUNS** of all species of salmon in the Upper Cook Inlet/Susitna River drainage as one of their priorities.

As a result, this meeting is of utmost importance to our folks in the Mat-Su as well as thousands upon thousands of fishing families on the Kenai and in the Anchorage areas. What you decide here will determine for us whether we have 3 more years of the same dismal returns or, will this Board meeting chart a new course that more accurately reflects the changing demographics. **THAT** is the reason I flew in from Juneau specifically to give public testimony here today and to be available to answer any questions that you may have.

I presume you have studied my written comment (#300) which speaks in greater detail as to what I believe is the best course for my constituents' concerns. They are anxious to reinvigorate the salmon returns into the Susitna and other westside streams feeding into Cook Inlet. So today I will share with you their overall vision.

If I can successfully leave you with three major thoughts from them, it would be for you to have as **YOUR** goals to : (1st) Adopt actions designed first and foremost to **establish strong consistent runs** in the natal waters into the future **with emphasis on the fish** and the question of allocation being secondary; (2nd) Assure that the Susitna salmon runs are at the very least given equal protection as those of the Kenai and Kasilof when it comes to expanding commercial harvests in the Inlet. In other words, any corridor restrictions should not be loosened based

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solely on the Kenai sockeye count. Rather, they look for assurance that Susitna Coho and Susitna Sockeye runs are vigorously protected **before** diminishing commercial restrictions; and (3<sup>rd</sup>) Establish the policy to assign **amuch higher priority to insuring low-end escapements** over concerns about exceeding high-end escapements. After all, meeting the low-end is critical to the future existence of the fish while exceeding high-end escapements does not threaten the continued existence of those fish runs.

On behalf of my constituents, thank you for the opportunity to have their concerns heard.