

SOUTH K BEACH INDEPENDENT

RC242

FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

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Protecting and Preserving the Kasilof River Aquarian System

February 10, 2014

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Board Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

RE: Cook Inlet Regulatory Meeting 01.31- 02.13/14

Proposals 131,132

Chairman Karl Johnstone,

SOKI has read the ADF&G recommendations for the set backs for setnet fishing in the Little Su areas of northern Cook Inlet. We agree with the Department that these areas do not warrant any further restrictions then what is in place statewide. It would be difficult at best to determine the exact boundaries as this is a dynamic area that has many shoals, sand bars and other alluvial formations that change frequently. This area is a very dangerous area due to the flats and weather is a daily concern. Thus this region is not a highly sought after fishing grounds as indicated by the current setnet leases (one) active in this "zone".

The family operation has been operating in this area for over 50 years and holds a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) shore fishery lease for within the proposed restricted area. These are 10 year leases that afford an exclusive opportunity to harvest fish from the leased location. The leases are approved after verification process and are agreements between the State and the lease holder. While not a guarantee that fish will be available in the area it does present the leaseholder assurances from the State that they will have access to that area for lawful and legal rights to pursue harvests at this location. We would highly recommend that the BOF use caution in placing at jeopardy the access to this lease, there is a question of a "takings" and setnet access that the State of Alaska courts have already ruled on that might be of interest to the BOF. It may give guidance and should be considered in any area restrictions adopted by the Board.

The historical harvest activities in this area from setnet operations would not seem to be significant to fluctuations in observed spawning numbers within the regional waterways. In river users may be increasing and habitat issues may be effecting changes in the Little Su. These causes as well as the management for sustainability are best controlled by the Emergency Order (EO) authority already vested to the Department and would be a more realistic set of tools to control human activity related to maintaining long term stability of the various users.

Thank you,

Paul A. Shadura II
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Spokesperson