

BRISTOL BAY NATIVE ASSOCIATION'S COMMENTS RE: PROPOSAL 250

Submitted on behalf of BBNA's President & CEO, Ralph Andersen

by Courtenay Gomez, Director of Natural Resources on February 27, 2013

Drafting of the Bristol Bay Regional Vision began in Spring 2010 when five regional organizations working for the people of our region partnered to design a process that empowered local residents to collectively envision the future of Bristol Bay. Over 50 meetings were held in 26 communities throughout our region, where residents were asked the same questions regarding their future. Five common themes emerged:

- Culture & Subsistence
- Economic Development
- Safe & Healthy Communities
- Education
- Fostering Cooperation

The final product of this process has come to be known as the Bristol Bay Vision, which reflects the common hopes and values expressed by Bristol Bay residents. Our Vision was endorsed by 89% of people who participated in the community review meetings, giving it the authority of the people of Bristol Bay. The Bristol Bay Vision includes the Shared Values of our people and Project Recommendations for ways to Implement the Vision. Please reference RCs # 55 and 56 to access the full report.

Based on the results of the Bristol Bay Vision, BBNA opposes proposal 250.

Respondents answered questions about commercial fishing in where:

- 71% of Bristol Bay residents or someone in their family work as a commercial fisherman as either a permit owner or deck hand.
- 67% agree that if our kids are going to be active in commercial fishing, the most important strategy is to increase our local access to limited entry permits.
- 32% of respondents state that increasing local access to permit ownership is the primary commercial fishing strategy that will have the biggest impact on creating jobs or increasing income.

Following the community meetings, local leaders met with representatives of organizations and agencies that conduct business and research in Bristol Bay, to develop Project Recommendations and strategize on ways to Implement the Vision, including that we must:

- Ensure effective outreach and public notice for any state or federal advisory council and other meetings affecting resource management.
- Insist that managers gather sound scientific data to guide land and water management of fish, game and habitat.
- Increase access to limited entry permits for local young people.

During the three years which permit stacking was allowed in Bristol Bay, the value of a setnet permit increased nearly doubled. This rise in permit costs and lack of permits available on the market, is making it more difficult for local residents to gain entry into the Bristol Bay fishery.