

RC 28

ACR 1

Aaron Bean
115 New Archangel St
Sitka Alaska 99835

October 9, 2012

Board of Fish through Chairmen Johnstone:

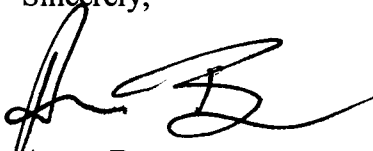
I just read the State of Alaska's assessment of the agenda change request that I have submitted and nearly had a heart attack! The idea that a Herring isn't a forage fish because the State says so, is simply unacceptable and inexcusable. Dismissing the merits of my request based on the fact commercialization of pacific herring existed before the State of Alaska ever cared to regulate the retention of forage fish is irrelevant and undermines the entire existing forage fish management plan.

I'd like to point out the staff assessment states, "Because of the presence of historical commercial fisheries, herring are not considered forage fish in the federal management plan." I see this as misleading, and this statement needs to be cited. I spoke on the phone at length with Josh Keaton with National Marine Fisheries Service - Sustainable Fisheries Division- (907) 586- 7519 and he is under the impression the herring saving areas were established in order to reduce the amount of pacific herring that are caught in the Bering Sea because of their crucial role in the marine food web. Josh further stated that pacific herring are a "prohibited species" and directed fishing is prohibited in federal waters. When asked, Josh was unable to not find the final rule that established the herring measures taken.

The Board of Fisheries' main role is to conserve and develop the fishery resources of the state. Recognizing this I believe this is a straight forward change that needs to take place in order for the ecosystem and other commercial fisheries to thrive. I understand the necessity for commercial fishing, but to not acknowledge herring as a forage fish?

I hope that the board works to fix this error, and recognizes the departments assessment of my request hasn't done anything but state the obvious and doesn't address the issue with the current management plan.

Sincerely,



Aaron Bean