

UNITED SOUTHEAST ALASKA GILLNETTERS

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May 15, 2016

Glenn Haight, Executive Director
Alaska Board of Fisheries, Boards Support Section
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
VIA Email: dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov

RE: Comments on “Draft Board of Fisheries Policy on Proposal Review Process”

Dear Mr. Haight and Board of Fisheries Members:

We appreciate the opportunities to comment on the Board of Fisheries’ (BOF) Proposal Review Process and considerations for cost savings.

Department Review: Eliminating proposals that do not meet the basic requirements of submission is a good way to streamline and save money. Please clarify and possibly expand the following in this section: *“and are non-responsive to the call”*.

Committee on Committee Review/Consent agendas: Consent agendas are growing in popularity as a way to save time (and money when applicable) to allow a Board to use its meeting time to discuss more action and future-related items. While consent agendas may have a place in Board of Fisheries (BOF) meetings, using them concerns us for the following reasons:

- The Board of Fisheries governs a very public process and bundling seemingly uncontroversial items together may compromise the public’s ability to thoroughly and rightfully voice intentions and concerns.
- When using consent agendas, it is imperative all Board Members be knowledgeable about everything in each consent agenda including every proposal’s potential scope of impact. Members need to show up to meetings fully prepared in advance with related questions answered beforehand so they can vote deliberately and/or ask to pull a specific proposal for discussion. Board members often need additional education and discussion on proposals because they represent a specific part of the state and/or a specific user group. Consent agendas make it too easy for board members to vote to pass them for many reasons such as they are not prepared and don’t want to admit it, they don’t want to slow down the meeting, and/or there is some internal

- strife. It's probably unrealistic to think each board member will show up fully prepared for meetings.
- This Policy needs more description of exactly what proposals and items could be placed onto a consent agenda.
- By design, consent agendas usually exclude discussing items amongst the Board, Staff and public. This may lead to, or at least be perceived as, a non-transparent public process.

We caution the use of consent agendas although understand they may be beneficial to move some proposals forward more quickly and thus save time and money. If the Board of Fisheries chooses to implement consent agendas, please consider keeping the bundles small. Review, and change if necessary, Board Members' responsibility policies and job descriptions to ensure Members are prepared to vote on such items and understand any new policies and procedures.

Thank you for your work to preserve our fisheries,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cynthia Wallesz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cynthia Wallesz
Executive Director

The mission of United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters is to protect, serve and enhance the gillnet fleet of southeast Alaska. We represent the interests of 473 salmon gillnet permit holders and their families.