

Caleb Preston  
PO Box 3, Girdwood, AK 99587  
(907) 632-1286  
caleb.preston@gmail.com

On behalf of the :  
Prince William Sound Setnetters Association

RC 014

PWSSA Intro and Setnet History from Caleb Preston – Dec 2017 Valdez, AK

Thank you Mr. Chair and Board Members for the opportunity to comment today.

My name is Caleb Preston. My grandparents bought our set net permit in 1979 and our family has been fishing in Main Bay since the early 80's.

The Eshamy district is a small district, open to 29 set and 537 drift permits, yet it's Main Bay sockeye hatchery is the most successful in the world. Prior to the hatchery, the district was primarily fished by set nets with most drift effort concentrated on the Copper River. There has been recorded set gillnet harvest in Eshamy since 1924 and set nets have always had historic priority to beach sites.

On behalf of the Prince William Sound Setnetter's Association, we cohesively **oppose** Proposals 41-45. To make the best use of our time to address these proposals, the following comments from Paul Owecke, Forest Jenkins, Scott Thomas, and Mike Spaetgens are directly from the association as a whole to defend the livelihood of all PWS Setnetters.

Due to Wild Coghill Sockeye escapement concerns, below average Copper River Sockeye returns, and weak Main Bay Hatchery Sockeye returns over the 2016 and 2017 seasons, there has been a drastic increase in the concentration of both set and drift gillnet gear within the Main Bay Subdistrict. As a result, this has intensified the competition and gear conflict within this area. These factors should be looked at alongside these Proposals to have a greater understanding of the issues that triggered the submission of these profound proposals. These proposals would only increase this intensified level of conflict and suppress the set gillnet harvest dramatically.

We **oppose** Proposal 41. The suggested regulation change to allow drift gill nets to be deployed inside the shore end of a setnet is unnecessary, unenforceable, and significantly increases conflict between gear groups. Depending on the tide fluctuation and water depth, it would be very difficult to determine which set gillnets had legal waters inside their shore end. Determining this definition of a pinnacle in such a dynamic environment is an unnecessary responsibility to be placed on law enforcement. The challenges that protection officers would be presented and the high potential for escalated gear conflict are not worth the very little, if any, benefit to the drift fleet that is being requested by the author.

We **oppose** Proposal 48 and **support** Option 1 of Proposal 49.

Thank you for your time and for helping us to maintain a safe, orderly and equitable harvest for both set and drift gillnets in the years to come.