

RC063

**F/V Nocona**  
David Thynes  
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January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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

Dear Alaska Board of Fisheries members,

I am a 50 year old, life long Alaska fisherman that has participated in Southeast Alaska Driftnet fisheries since my childhood. My parents were driftnetters based in Petersburg with whom I secured my first "crew" position at the age of 5. My wife and both sons have also enjoyed the opportunity to participate in our family business, Southeast driftnetting.

I have noticed many changes in our driftnet fishery since I started operating my own driftnetter in 1991. One of the most striking changes has been the shift of our fleet's effort from targeting and relying on wild salmon returns, to focusing on hatchery enhanced salmon, especially opportunities in hatchery THA's/SHA's. This shift has been magnified by both the increase in chum value (\$0.17/lb in 1996 to \$0.94/lb in 2011)<sup>1</sup>, and the continued decline or low abundance of certain historic natural returns such as Stikine River King & Sockeye stocks, the Lynn Canal Fall Chum stocks & the Portland Canal Chum stocks.

The opportunities our hatchery chums present us are absolutely crucial to our businesses as Southeast driftnetters and I would approximate that over 75% of my commercial salmon income is now directly generated from hatchery enhanced chum salmon. I fish from District 1 to District 15 and rely on the THA/SHA opportunities at Nakat Inlet, Neets Bay, Anita Bay, Deep Inlet, & Boat Harbor and there are many other driftnetters that follow this same nomadic fishing template. Some of the ideas being proposed at this meeting to mitigate allocation imbalances are unfair and would severely curtail much of the available driftnet opportunities throughout Southeast Alaska and would likely adversely impact areas experiencing low natural salmon returns by increased pressure from the displaced chum fishers.

I urge the board to carefully consider my testimony as well as the comments offered by U.S.A.G when making your decisions regarding the proposals before you. Our hatchery chums are a resource we all depend on and help fund. The prosecution of our THS/SHA fishing opportunities must be adjudicated fairly for all our gear groups, with care not to injure any one group unnecessarily.

Our families, our communities, and our fleets thank you for keeping our salmon resources secure and our businesses healthy and viable.

Sincerely,

  
David Thynes

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyfisherysalmon.salmoncatch\\_exvessel](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyfisherysalmon.salmoncatch_exvessel)