

Sitka, Alaska Herring Stock 2018

To: Alaska Board of Fisheries.

From Robert A Nielsen/robertnielsen8@icloud.com

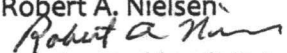
Please except my testimony for comradery of our community of Sitka that we as a whole, corroborate testimony that dwindling herring stocks are dangerously low, due to over commercial fishing! It is also my opinion that throughout the years of this fishery, that the herring have been basically herded like a cattle drive, out of traditional spawning areas. This is done by test setting, driving them into deeper waters, away from the shallow waters, typically where they spawn. It is my opinion if left alone, the herring would swim and grow to natural surroundings, thus, producing a higher rate of return.

We also corroborate testimony, that since the beginning of this commercial fishery in Sitka, that over fishing has been going on for decades, and the fishery at the beginning, was first intended for herring egg collection on kelp and trees. This was back in the 1960 era that the commercial fishery started and facts remain there was a lot of herring here in Sitka, as it only took minutes to fill the quota... and if you look at records...it should be written down. While on the subject of fishing times there should be records of amounts of herring harvested... this should also be looked at and tabulated. It is also my opinion that the board of fisheries should take a good look at the testimony on film, back in 1997, governor Tony Knowles presided. You will find my three minutes testimony, regarding the same concerns. This is a Oligarchy form of fishing!

We must remember, that herring is targeted by everything... whales, seagulls, sealions, eagles, All five species of salmon, halibut, rock fish, cod, and most of all humans. How they every made this far is amazing to say the least, but it is declining! To try to regain herring stocks, will be to leave alone, by not harvesting commercially, the mortality rate when commercially harvested is 95% wasted, when harvest female are at 10% and the other 5% lose, is the male herring incidental catch. When herring harvested by egg gathering, less then 1% mortality rate.

In closing, herring typically lead the beach, this is when they start to get closer to spawning, the fish shallow up to beaches where kelp are in abundance and after this time you will know, that herring are ready to spawn... and when they are ready... they will be at maximum percentage of roe content... and the male will follow.

Sincerely Yours

Robert A. Nielsen

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cc/delivered 01/15/2018