

F/V Poiken J.
Martin Johnson
1807 Sawmill Creek Road
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Email: mehsjohnson@yahoo.com

January 14, 2018
Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Chairman Jensen and Board of Fisheries Members,

My name is Martin Johnson and I am an active gillnet fisherman in Southeast Alaska. I have been gillnetting for 47 years. My father was a gillnetter in Alaska for 55 years and my son is a Southeast Alaska gillnet permit holder. I am an Alaska native and have lived in Alaska all of my life. My father was born in Alaska as was my grandmother and her parents. I live in Sitka and do most of my gillnetting in Deep Inlet. I suggest that the Deep Inlet rotation for the three gear groups be kept the same for 2018 as it was in 2017. The seine fleet has opportunities outside of the THA to catch the chum returning to Deep inlet whereas the gillnet fleet does not. On years of large pink salmon abundance the seine fleet abandons Deep Inlet in search of pinks. This lowers their Deep Inlet enhanced fish allocation but it is their own choice. The gillnet fleet in Sitka does not have that option. We either fish here or must travel long distances to fish. We cannot run that far and back for two days a week in Deep Inlet. Two days a week in Deep inlet for gillnetters realistically means zero days a week. That is not fair.

Making such a radical change in the rotation so that the seine fleet gets to fish twice as often as the gillnet fleet will also put the gillnet fleet in grave danger of not making enough money to pay our loans and other expenses.

I do not support the 1 to 1 allocation of fishing time in Deep Inlet but I can live with it for the coming year. It seems like an acceptable compromise offered by proposal 141 from the United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters. Due to the efficiency of the seine fleet I believe that it will take only slight tweaks to the number of fishing days to get them up into their allocation range. They can catch large numbers of fish in short times. I urge you as board members to seek a fair compromise that will benefit Alaskan fishermen. Please do not lower our fishing time to such a point that we cannot survive in Deep Inlet.