

My name is Fabian Grutter.

I've been Gillnetting and longlining my own boat for 22 years out of Sitka.

I grew up in a fishing family.

I have concerns over proposals 142 and 143.

I support Proposition 141.

The subject at hand is the gillnet to seine ratio in the Deep Inlet fishery. A 2 (seine) to 1 (gillnet) ratio would be too severe. We are an established fleet of gillnetters, at least 28 local fishermen, 2 days a week is a pitiful amount, it might not even be worth staying in town for, especially if the seine fleet will be cleaning up chum on twice as many fishing days.

I do realize there is going to be a change in the rotation for the Deep Inlet area. A 1 to 1 ratio would be OK while a 2 seine to 1 gillnet ratio is not OK.

Opening the Causeway / Airport area and the East end of eastern Channel for seiners targets the same hatchery chums as the deep inlet area. I am concerned that the chum harvested in these areas outside of Deep Inlet may not be accounted for on the allocation. Trollers as well have fisheries outside of the deep inlet area. Gillnetters are the only chum fishery in the Sitka area that are completely confined to Deep Inlet.

The seiners have a lot more opportunities in surrounding areas of Sitka. We gillnetters mostly target hatchery allocation fish, whereas seiners make a big harvest of pinks, a non-hatchery fish. I feel like we get our time pinched for fishing. For example we took some of our fishing times in Deep Inlet to pay for failures in returns at Hidden Falls that had nothing to do with us since there are no gillnet fisheries at Hidden Falls.

Our fleet catch value average has stayed relatively the same. Why should we take a big hit because seiners have a bad pink season?

Add to that hatcheries like Hidden Falls that gillnetters are not allowed to fish at even though we pay the enhancement tax to help fund them. Last season Hidden Falls chum had a dismal return and now the gillnetters in Deep Inlet are being asked to give up another chunk of the Deep Inlet season to support the seine fleet. The seine fleet has many more harvest opportunities in the Sitka Sound area than the gillnetters do. Please keep the gillnetting fishery viable in Deep Inlet for Sitka families.