

Dear Board of Fisheries

I am writing in support of herring conservation. Herring is critically important to many aspects of life here in Southeast Alaska, including Native ways of life, subsistence fishing, and maintaining the balance of the aquatic ecosystem. Tlingit people have fished herring for thousands of years, and rapidly depleting the natural source poses a threat to this tradition. Additionally, herring play an essential role in the life cycles of whales and other marine life, and must remain abundant in order to adequately feed such creatures.

Another cause for concern includes the acceptance of a shifted baseline in regards to herring population. Local and traditional knowledge shows us that herring populations and spawning regions were historically much larger than what exists today. Though it may appear that populations have remained stable due to an adjusted baseline, we learn that this is not truth when incorporating historical data. Herring play an essential role in the lives of humans and other animals alike, as well as the environment as a whole. I support the conservation of herring for future generations and the sustainability of our aquatic environments in Southeast Alaska.

Kelsie Barbour

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