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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 was scheduled to testify during the public comments section but USAG and the Seiners were working out an agreement during my time. I withdrew from testifying because I thought the deal would be fair to those of us from Sitka who gillnet primarily in Deep Inlet. It turns out that the agreement that USAG made with the seine fleet is horrible for those of us who fish out of Sitka. I suggest that the Deep Inlet rotation for gillnet and seine be 1 to 1. 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. If we had fishing grounds closer to Sitka I could agree to a one to two day rotation. We cannot run the nearest gillnet area 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. If you think about that I think you will agree.

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 support the 1 to 1 allocation of fishing time in Deep Inlet. It seems like an acceptable compromise. 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. In the past they have stayed very close to their allocation range with the gillnet fleet fishing 65 days and the seine fleet having 45 days. (For the ease of calculations these numbers do not take into account cost recovery closures) If we increase the seine opportunities by 10 days and reduce the gillnet days by 10 the seine fleet is bound to increase it's allocation. Last summer large numbers of 3 year old fish returned to

our fishery. This probably indicates that there will be a large component of 4 year old fish returning this summer. It is unfair that the seine fleet gets to take virtually all of those fish. Remember that two days a week really means zero days for the gillnet fleet. We need at least three days a week in Deep Inlet because if we only get two days a week it is the same as deciding that the local fleet gets zero days a week. 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.