

Todd Bailey
511 Kennedy Street
Juneau AK
99801

RC 257

RE: RC 153

Dear Chairman Jensen and Members of the Alaska Board of Fish:

I am a drift gillnet fisherman and I'm writing to oppose RC 153; the agreement between USAG and SEAS, specifically concerning the Deep Inlet rotation schedule. A significant portion of my income comes from prosecuting the Deep Inlet fishery and this proposal will result in greatly reduced fishing opportunity and negative economic impacts for many gillnetters. While I appreciate the intent of the negotiations amongst the gear groups, the process was not representative of the interests of many fishermen, particularly those who are not members of USAG. In addition, the various negotiation points have a disproportionate impact on participants from different regions and it's unclear to those not involved in the process, how the trade-offs were determined and who benefited from them.

The effect of the rotational change will essentially result in a non-existent gillnet fishery in Deep Inlet, which will over correct and significantly exacerbate any proportional historic allocation issue. Under the existing rotation, during the 2017 season, the seine fleet harvested 56% of the total pounds in Deep Inlet, which indicates that the existing rotation can work to meet allocation objectives. While the seine fleet often has fishing opportunities in close proximity to Sitka, and at times directly outside of the terminal harvest area, the run from the nearest gillnet grounds to Deep Inlet is over 20 hours. The fleet will not make this run if the proposed rotation is adopted and the fishery will turn into primarily a seine opportunity.

Due to stocks of concern in the Chilkat and Chilkoot river systems, over 50% of the entire gillnet fleet is largely concentrated in small postage stamp areas in Lynn Canal until Deep Inlet opens up and the fleet disperses. If RC 153 is adopted, the fleet will remain concentrated and the likelihood for reduced time and area in the Canal will increase which could result in even greater economic impacts on the fleet.

I also support proposal 146, particularly if time is reduced for gillnetters in Deep Inlet. The majority of my catch is from DIPAC, and the enhanced fish tax from these fish is filtered to NSRAA. Next year, if RC 153 is adopted in its entirety, there will be very little opportunity to recover any returns from my tax contributions.

Deep Inlet is clearly an important fishery for all gear groups. Adjusting time and area to meet a target allocation goal is a challenging exercise and I appreciate the attempt from some stakeholders at a compromise, but I believe that the proposal being forwarded under RC 153 will result in such a reduced opportunity that there will be essentially no gillnet fishery in Deep Inlet and we will be facing a much worse situation than status quo in the future. I respectfully encourage the Board of Fish to reject any changes to the rotational schedule in Deep Inlet.

Sincerely

Todd Bailey