

To The Alaska Board of Fisheries:

The herring populations in southeast Alaska have been damaged significantly (and, possibly, irrevocably) by climate change and over fishing. Numerous fisheries throughout the region have been forced to close as herring populations have dwindled, leaving Sitka one of the last viable fisheries. Though herring still return to Sitka, repeated failures to meet ANS show that changes must be made to prevent the regional pattern of fishery devastation from continuing. I encourage the Alaska Board of Fish to support proposals 98, 99, 105, and 106. These measures leverage contemporary scientific understandings and traditional knowledge of the herring to provide the revitalization of the herring population. If changes aren't made to protect the herring now, there won't be any later, and, from what we've seen elsewhere in the region, the population likely won't be able to recover.

Stand up and protect the herring; protect the subsistence rights of the people of Southeast Alaska, and protect Native peoples from the cultural damage that would emerge from the loss of the herring.

Sincerely,
Sawyer Smith

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