

Sulua Stager
12014 Middle Bay Dr.
Kodiak AK 99615
10/01/2017

Chairman John Jensen
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Boards Support Section
POB 115526
Juneau AK 99811-5526

RE: UCIDA Agenda Change Request and
Genetic Stock Composition of Sockeye Salmon in the Kodiak
Management Area

Dear Sir:

I was born in Kodiak and have lived here all my life. I started salmon fishing around the island with my parents (in a small wooden boat they built) in 1976 when I was 3 years old, I set-netted with my mother, seined with my father then later with my husband on a boat we bought back in 1996. In 2004, a child and the need for healthcare forced me off the boat but my husband still fishes our boat for salmon every summer every summer, seining from early June until mid-September. My grandfather seined salmon in Kodiak. My 69 year old father still seines for salmon as do my brother and my husband. My mother and sister set-net salmon on the Westside of Kodiak island. The Kodiak salmon fishery is my family's life and by it we live or die. This is no exaggeration but pure hard fact.

It's scary to think that my entire family's livelihood could be destroyed by a hasty and unwarranted agenda change and the adoption of UCIDA's proposal. And its more frightening still to think the Board of Fisheries could grant an agenda change that could quite honestly destroy our lives without even a Kodiak representative on the Board to help explain our point-of-view. User groups from all over the state are represented, yet Kodiak, with the largest state run fishery in Alaska, has no voice at the table during a time when a significant portion of the islands salmon season could be legislated away with a single swipe of a pen. This is terribly unfair! There is no new information here, there are no endangered stocks at risk, just another allocative grab by the Cook Inlet crowd.

The whole study this move is based upon is a terribly flawed; it is a poorly timed snapshot of a fishery that was conducted while conditions were anything but typical. The years of 2015 and 2016 were anything but normal the "ocean blob" was followed by an El-Niño, with bone dry and hot late summers and winter temperatures that barely touched freezing. I truly don't feel the study represents a typical migratory conditions or patterns of fish. And if the results of this study were proven true, what of it? The heart of the matter is that the State of

Alaska manages nearly all of its salmon fisheries as mixed stock fisheries. The presence of Cook Inlet sockeye around the island is highly variable in both timing and location, and my family has a precedence of fishing salmon in Kodiak during the month of July that stretches back well beyond the implementation of limited entry.

In my lifetime I've watched the salmon seine fleet dwindle from 360 + boats to less than 160 active ones. Many support businesses which once thrived in our community have vanished in the wind. Many of our friends have long since packed up and moved away. How much more are you going to take from us? How small are you going to shrink the Kodiak seine fleet this time? How many more welding shops, restaurants, and grocery stores are you going to close in our community?

July is an important and profitable piece of the equation leading to a profitable season for the fishermen of Kodiak island, if our July fishery is significantly impacted, all our remaining business' are at risk once again.

If you reallocate our traditional harvest of salmon to Cook Inlet you continue this trend and regulate Chignik and False Pass for the taking of Kodiak Pink, Chum and Sockeye salmon as well? I think you're opening up a real can of worms here. You will definitely stir up a bunch more bad blood between the local seine and set-net fleets if you cram them all tighter into the bays, this situation is tense right now, it could get ugly in a hurry... A misstep at this time could create a barrage of unintended consequences that might play out very badly.

This is not an emergency demanding immediate action creating unintended consequences. Please be wise and thoughtful in your considerations.

Thank You,
Sulua Stager and family

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sulua L. Stager". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.