

Andrew Wilder
503 A Street
Seward, Alaska 99664

RC0019

December 10, 2019

Chairman Reed Morisky
Alaska Board of Fish

Dear Chairman Morisky and Alaska Board of Fish Members,

I am asking you to oppose proposal 278 to designate Aleutian Islands subdistrict as an exclusive registration area for pacific cod. I am an Alaska resident and own and operate a 58' vessel that has considerable history in Adak state water cod fisheries. After the last plant operator stopped operating, I left 120 pots in Adak planning on fishing there if the plant opened again. Although I have history delivering to the prior two plant operators in Adak, I was denied a market by the current operator in the 2018 and 2019 seasons.

The current proposal will do nothing for conservation or to bring more fish into Adak for processing. It only allocates fish away from small pot boats that have depended on this fishery to larger pot boats and trawlers that do not participate in other state fisheries. With only one market in Adak the processor allocates the fish and who can harvest, not the state. This proposal doesn't do what the proposers think it does.

As you all know the Gulf of Alaska may not be having a cod fishery for 2020. With declining stocks in the Bering Sea and the Gulf, the only place for cod boats to go is Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. While the stocks in the Gulf are in serious trouble and may not have a fishery in 2020 Bering Sea is taking a 15% cut in 2020 and predicted 35% cut in 2021. The Aleutian Islands cod stock seems to be stable and predictions show no quota cuts in the next 2 years. It is inevitable the Adak district is going to see an influx in effort.

Over→

Since the 5000 Metric Tons set aside will not be in effect this winter, the Bering Sea and the Aleutian Islands will likely close at the same time. Based on 2019 BSAI CV trawl fishing, it seems likely that the entire trawl fishery would close sometime in early February and would thus likely be the trigger to open the entire AI state water fishery. This means the over 60 trawl and pot boats will be allowed to fish. Making the fishery exclusive will probably only be a boon to these fleets. Meanwhile, small pot boats would be denied the opportunity to continue fishing.

Providing exclusivity in this case only affects the under sixty pot fishermen, which is contrary to the objectives of the Board in the past. Please oppose proposal 278.

Sincerely,

Andrew Wilder



907-362-1438

Over→