

Van Gwinzii, (Good morning,) I am Hope Roberts, the Secretary of the Board of Directors at the Valdez Native Tribe. With permission from the full board, I am submitting written comments in support of Proposals 26, 27, 28 & 29. As a neighbor to the Native Villages of Eyak and Chenega, we are in full support of their timeless traditional needs, the following are reasons of support for either Proposal already mentioned.

The VNT supports Proposal 26, We agree that BOF should create a village subsistence salmon permit authorizing tribal members to harvest salmon for subsistence throughout portions of Prince William Sound. The permit should authorize the Village of Chenega to harvest 1000 sockeye and 50 King salmon per year using drift or set gillnets. The permit should further specify that fishing may be conducted by any tribal member who is authorized by a designated representative of the Native Village of Chenega. Finally, the permit should authorize the Village to take a limited number of sockeye salmon from traditional locations using set gillnets or dipnets. The current regulations do not meet the tribes needs to harvest salmon at traditional fishing sites.

The VNT supports Proposal 27, to ask the BOF amend the subsistence fishing season to remove linkage between subsistence salmon fishing opportunity and commercial salmon fishing periods. We understand the Board has been working on the proposed issue, the community of Chenega's restriction to the limited 16-hour opener over the single weekend makes successful fishing hard to accomplish. Especially in the Eshamy District. The current opening regulations does not allow for sufficient time to travel from Chenega to Eshamy to fish and then travel back home safely.

The VNT supports NVE's modified version of Proposal 28, to have the BOF allow for a consistent harvest between the Prince William Sound/Copper River District and the Upper Copper River District. Both management areas consist of communities harvesting from the same salmon stocks, and their annual limits should reflect that. The VNT also supports inclusion to allow for an additional supplementary limit of pink and chum salmon equal to the household limit for salmon. This proposal closes the gap on annual limits between these two districts, will help with food security, and promote community sharing for those who are unable to participate in subsistence/traditional harvesting.

The VNT supports NVE's modified version of Proposal 29, to have the BOF allow for the use of gillnets to harvest salmon species in all of Prince William Sound, and to allow a subsistence fishing area for pink and chum salmon in Orca Inlet using drift gill net gear. Currently, subsistence users cannot gillnet for pink and chum salmon, this proposal would open the sound for subsistence users to harvest all salmon species. In addition, this proposal will provide economic relief to subsistence users by allowing them to use gear that many of them already have access to as well as provide increased opportunity for harvesting subsistence species in Prince William Sound.