

My name is James Honkola a 3rd generation subsistence and commercial fishermen from Cordova Alaska. I am writing in support of proposal 19

In 2017 this burden of conservation regulation was removed because it was determined to not be necessary for management to be effective. Since it's removal we have seen three years where it would have helped management have a more flexible way to manage. This proposal would allow for a more equal opportunity between sport, personal use, and commercial participants during years of well below average returns when more extensive restrictions must be put in place.

In 2018 and 2020 the commercial harvest was 97% and 92% below the 10 year average harvest. 2018 represented to 2nd lowest commercial harvest In the last 100 years. The personal use harvest saw a decline of 43% and 42% over the 10 year average. These numbers were drawn from the department of ADF&G season harvest summaries. The ADF&G Sportfish/Personal Use presentation had a bar chart illustrating these numbers.

When asking area managers about the large discrepancy in harvest decline between these equal priority fisheries. The response is simply that they have no option to manage differently under current regulation and/or calculation of the in river number.

This proposal if adopted would give the area manager slightly more flexibility during the years of low abundance of sockeye but on what scale. What does 50k fish represent for a commercial fishery. During a well below average sockeye return a typical 12hr opening will result in 10-35k salmon harvested. So in the event of a small run it would give one maybe two possible 12hr openings in early June when the market demand is at its highest. Fetching as much as 3-400% higher prices per pound then in the end of June and beginning of July when additional sockeye runs around the state start becoming harvested.

The importance of one more opening during this critical time in the market cannot be understated during years where extra restrictions on the fishery are required to satisfy a sustainable fishery and the commercial fishery must stand down for extensive extended closures.