

**SUPPORT PROPOSAL 43 – Evaluate affects of overproduction**

**As Mead Treadwell stated in his testimony, hatchery issues must be deliberated by bringing an independent council for more broad best available science than the narrow council brought by ADFG to the Board of Fisheries on hatchery issues. The many Hatchery Issues affect all wild fisheries in the state of Alaska so until these are recognized and acted upon using unbiased Best Available Information, issue will continue to be brought forward to find resolution.**

**Without resolution to serious chronic straying, wanton waste, estuarine nearshore food web competition in state waters, and market fish size and price problems to wild fisheries of the state from hatchery over production ignoring these state perspectives affecting and jeopardizing wild fisheries of Alaska.**

**Chronic inter-regional straying is clearly contrary to the genetics, escapement and sustainable Salmon Policies, the hatchery statutes, regulations and the constitution. Resolution must no longer be delayed.**

**Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries first came to the Board of Fisheries in December 2017 by submitting an Emergency Petition RC 027 pertaining to inter-regional straying from the PWS region consisting of 80% hatchery into the LCI area consisting of less than 2% hatchery fish homogenizing Cook Inlets wild salmon populations. I personally paid for attending twelve Board of Fisheries Meetings as well as the Regional Planning Team meetings in Cordova, Kenai, Anchorage, Seward and Juneau with no resolution and continual delays on the issues of straying.**

**ADFG clearly states its concern of STRAYING AND WILD STOCK ISSUES genetic integrity, and skewing of escapement goals in many reports:**

**"Large-scale straying of the enhanced chum salmon also has negative implications on wild stock management. The department manages for wild chum salmon escapement goals based on aerial survey counts of fish in streams. All fish counted in streams are assumed to be wild stock fish.**

**The presence of a high proportion of stray hatchery fish in streams artificially inflates wild stock escapement estimates. Inflated wild stock escapement numbers may mislead management into believing that the escapement goals have been met.**

**The department then opens districts to harvest wild stock fish assumed to be excess to escapement goals. However, the escapement goal may not have been met because of the large number of hatchery strays in the aerial survey escapement estimates. Additionally, there are significant genetic concerns associated with hatchery strays interbreeding with wild stocks."**

**ONE OF THE DEPARTMENTS GREATEST CONCERNS...GENETIC INTEGRITY are the implications to the genetic integrity of wild populations and to fishery management. Local adaptations among wild salmon populations have been demonstrated. Hatchery salmon are believed to become genetically distinct from the originating native population(s), and concern arises from the belief that the fitness of locally-adapted wild populations is reduced upon genetic integration with domesticated hatchery salmon.**

**It is way past time we form an independent scientific research panel. Even the Commissioner agrees we have differences of opinion requiring solution. With the aid of Mead Treadwell if he is**

willing, and possibly by utilizing the Alaska Salmon Task Force for funding. This Federal Task force led by Ed Farley is destined to resolve what issues need research in Alaska by June 2024.

Thank-you for your attention, Whim and opinion by ADFG without sound science has no basis.

Nancy Hillstrand – Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries

### **Pertaining to king salmon stock of concern factors on Kenai River 2/26/24**

#### **START 1:34**

#### **JOHN WOOD**

It looks like they are recovering...

What is the prediction being based on

And I don't have a good grasp of ocean conditions?

Commissioner, can you help me out? Or staff?

#### **COMMISSIONER ADFG DOUG VINCENT LANG (DVL)**

So Maybe I'll take a shot at it

I think Based on what I said earlier

Today I don't see anything in the ocean turning around in the future to increase survival of these fish going out so, and then I look back over the last four or five years where our forecasts have been overly rosy then what we've got back largely because we've been underestimating what's been happening in the ocean so, um it's a good sign that we are putting enough fish in to meet the minimum escapement goal but what are we going to see in terms of those returning given the current ocean conditions and given our forecast of how we've been under forecast ---I mean over forecasting in the past.

I'm... I'm not optimistic for the next two or three years if we are going to see it.

#### **JOHN WOOD**

Yes, and that's what I need to understand...(ocean conditions)

#### **DVL**

We are turning it around; we're assuring we're getting escapements

It is coming at the cost of harvest

It's coming at the cost of sockeye harvest

And it's coming at the cost of opportunity for kings

But the only thing we can do to turn this thing around is to increase the number of kings we are putting in the river<sup>1</sup>

we can't control the ocean conditions<sup>2</sup>

And we can't control the survival of these fish as juveniles in the river<sup>3</sup>

## **WOOD**

And it would help me out and I suspect for other members of the board

if somehow there was data that would reflect what you are describing as far as **what is happening in the ocean.**

Are you seeing less food for the fish?

Are you seeing more predation?

What is it that's driving this in the ocean?

And I don't want to belabor this, any further than this, but it would sure be helpful to me if I had a firmer grasp on what we can expect here in the next few years.

## **DVL**

I think there is all kind of factors

Theres been hypothesis that hatchery fish are competing with wild fish... ummm

I think the science that I've read on that, is inconclusive.

There's science that says that it is.<sup>4</sup>

And there is science that says that it isn't.

It's on both sides of that argument right now,

We also know that when we looked at the law, I mean the International Year of The Salmon results that **there is not a significant overlap in the distribution of kings with**

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<sup>1</sup> Is it accurate that the only thing we can do is increase chinook?

<sup>2</sup> Is this accurate since hatchery fish are questioned would the precautionary approach be considered? How about an experiment to test this hypothesis rather than ignore it?

<sup>3</sup> How can increasing kings be an answer when "we can't control the survival of these fish as Juveniles in the river" is stated

<sup>4</sup> Let us compile and evaluate these two conclusions based on the best available information as 5AAC 39.222 directs instead of individual guess.

pinks and chums out in the river.<sup>5</sup>

Umm could it be changing diet of what these Kings are eating out there...

eating less nutritious food?

Clearly kings are cold blooded so as the ocean warms, their energy demands go up,

and at the same time their energy demands go up– their

food nutritional value may be going down so they're on a diet when energy needs are

going up you're going to lose weight which means they're going to come back younger

at age and smaller at age overall so...

Yeah so

Or it could be predation, marine mammal which is another huge factor, we know that we have ten times the marine mammals we had out in the ocean than we had ten years ago cause we are managing them for their optimal yield under federal law rather than part of an ecosystem function and so yeah and we know at the mouth of the Taku for instance seals are just knocking the crap out of the juveniles that are going out and the adults coming back in so

Its just a wide range of factors but really the oceans are not a favorable environment for chinook salmon right now

## JOHN WOOD

Appreciate that

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<sup>5</sup> What does this have to do with the river? If not significant in river? What about significance in marine estuary and nearshore and off shore when chinook smolt out-migrate. What effect does 30 -50 million milling retuning adult pinks gaining spawning weight before they enter fresh water have on chinook? We know there is overlapping diets in the ocean