



September 3, 2024

Second DRAFT Spend Plan for funds appropriated to address the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) East Side Set Gillnet (ESSN) salmon fishery disaster determination. NOAA Fisheries has allocated \$11,484,675 for these fishery disasters. The spend plan informs the federal grant application submitted by Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) to NOAA Fisheries and is subject to change based on approval of the final grant.

Written comments are requested on all elements of the proposed spend plan and should be as specific as possible. Comments will be posted as received online and therefore, ADF&G requests that no business proprietary information, copyrighted information, or personally identifiable information be included in written comments. Comments can be submitted by email to:

dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov or by mail to: ADF&G, Attn: Darion Jones
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Comments must be sent by September 17, 2024, for consideration in the final draft spend plan.

Process to develop the spend plan: ADF&G posted an initial draft spend plan in July 2024 and received 61 written comments (Appendix 1). In response to public comment, ADF&G provides the following rationale and revisions to the second draft spend plan:

Request for Comment

- ADF&G removed the request for comments regarding inclusion of the sport fishing businesses. No comments were received from sport fishing guides or business regarding incurred losses and there is no proposed sport fishing allocation in this fishery disaster spend plan.

Crew payments

- ADF&G acknowledges the recommendation in public comment on the initial draft spend plan that permit holders should be delegated responsibility for making crew payments. However, a verification process to ensure every permit holder distributes crew funds would be administratively burdensome and would delay full disbursement of permit holder funds. To ensure that affected crew members are equitably included in relief payments, ADF&G proposes that PSMFC will distribute crew payments in a manner similar to the process established for permit holders.

Processor Allocation

- ADF&G received multiple, mixed public comments requesting an increase, no change, or decrease in the processor allocation. Increased costs and losses realized by processors due to

COVID safety measures were considered in the CARES Act funding program and relief for these operating challenges is not the intended purpose for these fishery disaster funds. ADF&G recommends maintaining the 25% allocation to processors to bring the processing sector up to ~15.8% of its recent historical value. The 25% allocation is consistent with the proportion of funds allocated to the processing sector in the 2018/2020 ESSN and UCI fishery disaster spend plan and also mitigates a higher proportion of the sector's losses relative to the benefits provided in the 2018/2020 disaster allocation.

- Estimated exvessel processor losses in the initial draft spend plan were reported for 2022 only (~\$8.65 million) and did not include the combined losses for both 2021 and 2022 (~\$14 million). Estimated first wholesale losses of ~\$18 million are based on the proportion of ESSN sockeye salmon processed by eligible processors relative to all UCI sockeye salmon processed.

Research

- ADF&G proposes a competitive bid proposal process to fund research projects based on public comments opposing a non-competitive process where projects would be identified and directly funded in the spend plan.

Guiding principles for disaster fund distribution: Disbursement of funds is intended to 1) assist fishery participants harmed by the 2021 and 2022 ESSN salmon fishery disasters and 2) improve fishery information used to assess and forecast future fishery performance and to develop management approaches that avoid and/or mitigate the impacts of future fishery disasters that cannot be prevented.

The proposed categories and allocations reflect comments received on the initial draft of this spend plan and the 2018 and 2020 Upper Cook Inlet salmon fishery disaster spend plan.

Category	Allocation	Estimated funds ^a
Research	10%	\$1,125,000
Communities	3%	\$343,000
Harvesters	62%	\$7,036,764
Processors	25%	\$2,840,000
Program support	<0.1%	\$11,000
Total		\$11,355,764

^a Additional funds will be allocated to Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to administer the federal grant

The impact of the fishery disaster created significant loss of income to those involved in the harvesting and processing sectors and to the communities in which the cultural and basic economic structure is the marine economy. A portion of these funds will be allocated to research activities that promote restoration of the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future, but they will also be used to help assist the fishing communities that were affected by this fishery resource disaster by recognizing the loss of incomes. These direct payments will compensate participants consistent with fishery investments and/or historical fishery performance. Historically one of the purposes of disaster funding was to get funds to communities and fishermen as fast as possible. Direct payments provide that method.

Research – 10% (\$1,125,000): Research funds are intended to support projects that improve available fishery information and help prevent and/or mitigate future fishery disasters. Based on public comment, ADF&G proposes a competitive process to distribute research funds through an open competitive bid

process administered by PSMFC. The review panel for proposed projects may include both agency and non-agency experts. Federal agencies, such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service, are not eligible to receive federal fishery disaster grant funds.

The following research themes were suggested by ADF&G staff and initial draft public comments and are informed by the previous spend plan as priorities for funding:

- Research that improves understanding of the relative importance of specific mechanisms that drive productivity of Kenai late-run Chinook salmon, which could include:
 - how ocean/climate conditions impact future runs;
 - freshwater and early marine survival bottlenecks, habitat use, and movement patterns; and
 - the role of diet, health, and disease on the survival and spawning success of Kenai late-run Chinook salmon.
- Research to inform non-adult abundance estimates of Kenai Chinook salmon that can be used in developing or improving forecasting tools.
- Improved methods for estimating adult salmon harvest and abundance including genetic analysis for stock composition and further assessment and review of the Kenai late-run Chinook salmon estimates of abundance for all age classes.
- Research to investigate how large sockeye salmon escapements to the Kenai and Kasilof rivers may influence productivity and future returns.
- Investigations of Chinook salmon habitat, including intertidal, nearshore, riverine rearing areas, and spawning areas. Research on smolt outmigration and survival.
- Continued evaluation of alternative gear types aimed at reducing harvest of weak stocks in marine fisheries.

Communities – 3% (\$343,000): ADF&G is proposing direct payments to municipalities and boroughs that rely on revenue generated from ESSN salmon landings and other economic activities related to the salmon fisheries. These local government entities were negatively impacted by the fishery disaster because fishery revenues comprise a significant portion of local operating budgets and are used to support education, public works, ports and harbors, and other services. The state’s Fishery Business tax rate is 3% for shore-based landings and is shared 50/50 with the state and municipalities/ boroughs where the landings occur. If landings occur in the bounds of a municipality and borough, landing tax revenues are shared 50/50 between each entity.

Proposed eligibility criteria for communities:

1. Fish ticket port of landing data must show that salmon from the 2021 or 2022 ESSN salmon fishery were landed in the community.
2. Estimated loss in gross revenue value for salmon landed in the community from 2021 and 2022 ESSN fisheries combined must be at least \$10,000. The estimated loss in gross revenue is calculated by subtracting the value of the fishery in the disaster year from the previous five-year average, excluding the disaster years of 2018 and 2020.

Disaster funds for communities are proposed to be distributed **pro rata** to each community’s demonstrated loss relative to the total loss of all eligible communities. Based on the criteria, three municipalities and one borough may be eligible for community-designated funds: City of Homer, City

of Kenai, City of Soldotna, and the Kenai Peninsula Borough based on landings in Kasilof and Ninilchik.

Harvesters – 62% (\$7,036,764): This category includes permit holders and crew. The total estimated loss in gross revenue for the 2021 and 2022 ESSN fishery disasters is ~\$14 million dollars. Funds allocated to the harvesting sector are intended to mitigate this loss by providing funds to bring the harvesting sector up to 49.4% of the sector’s recent historical value.

ADF&G proposes direct payments to commercial fishery permit holders and crew who meet all eligibility criteria. Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit information, fish ticket data from commercial salmon landings, buoy sticker registration, and CFEC gross earnings data are proposed to be used to determine eligibility for permit holders. Permit holders can apply for each year in which they meet eligibility criteria but cannot apply as both a permit holder and crew member in the same year. Eligibility for crew will be verified using ADF&G commercial crew license or CFEC permit data and an affidavit from the permit holder or vessel owner. An affidavit form will be provided by PSMFC in the application materials.

ADF&G proposes to divide the harvester allocation into two pools, one for S04H permit holders (90%) and one for crew members (10%). Direct payments to minors are not authorized by the terms of the Federal grant but may be authorized to guardians in the same household on behalf of an eligible minor.

ESSN Permit Holders – 90%

Proposed eligibility criterion for permit holders:

- Individual must have registered a valid S04H CFEC permit and purchased a buoy sticker for the Upper Subdistrict in 2021 and/or 2022 as demonstrated by ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries records. A permit is considered valid if fees were paid to renew the permit.

Funds are proposed to be paid to the person listed as the 2021 and/or 2022 ‘Permit holder’ and temporary emergency transfer permit holders (transferees) in the CFEC database. Permit holders who certified they were unable to participate to qualify for an emergency transfer and permit holders who permanently transferred a permit away before registering and purchasing a buoy sticker in 2021 and/or 2022 will not receive payments.

Each permit holder who meets the eligibility criterion is proposed to receive an equal payment for each eligible permit in each year for which they purchased an Upper Subdistrict buoy sticker. A total of 422 permits in 2021 and 402 permits in 2022 were registered to fish with an Upper Subdistrict buoy sticker.

ADF&G is requesting public comment on the proposed criterion and whether fishery participation during the disaster year should be required for CFEC permit holders in addition to the purchase of a buoy sticker.

ESSN crew – 10% East Side set gillnet crew must meet the following criteria to be eligible for a proposed **equal payment** of the ESSN crew funds for each year in which they participated as fishing crew.

Proposed ESSN crew eligibility criteria:

1. Crew member must have held a 2021 and/or 2022 commercial crew license or a 2021 and/or 2022 CFEC permit for any fishery. This information will be verified using the ADF&G Licensing database and the CFEC permit database.

2. Crew member must provide information to show they participated as fishing crew in the 2021 and/or 2022 ESSN salmon fishery for a qualified S04H permit holder, based on an affidavit from the permit holder.

Anyone qualified for disaster funds as an ESSN permit holder or transferee cannot qualify as crew in the same year.

Processors – 25% (\$2,840,000): ADF&G proposes direct payments to processing companies. ADF&G estimated total loss in first wholesale revenue for sockeye salmon for all eligible processors at ~\$18 million dollars. This estimate was calculated by first determining the proportion of ESSN sockeye salmon delivered to each eligible processor as a function of all UCI sockeye salmon delivered in each year using fish ticket data. Those proportions were applied to the first wholesale value for sockeye salmon reported in the COAR production data for each eligible processor in each year. Funds allocated to the processing sector are intended to mitigate this loss by providing funds to bring the processing sector up to 15.8% of the sector's recent historical value.

COAR buying data are proposed to be used to determine eligibility and payment for processors because those data are linked to where the salmon were harvested, and the scope of this fishery disaster includes the 2021 and 2022 ESSN salmon fisheries. ADF&G proposes disaster payments to processing companies be proportional to each company's demonstrated loss relative to the total loss of all eligible processing companies.

Proposed eligibility for processors:

1. Processing company must have purchased ESSN salmon in 2021 and/or 2022.
2. Processing company must have a demonstrated loss in final exvessel value for salmon purchased by the company from the 2021 and 2022 ESSN fisheries. The estimated loss in value is calculated by subtracting the final exvessel value of the fishery in 2021 and 2022 from the previous five-year average, 2014 through 2017 and 2019.

Disaster payments are proposed to be **pro rata** to each company's demonstrated loss relative to the total loss of all eligible processing companies. Based on the criteria, a total of seven processing companies may be eligible for processor funds.

Program Support – <0.1% (\$11,000): ADF&G proposes allocating funds for staff working on fishery disaster plan development and implementation in coordination with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

ADF&G, Attn.: Darion Jones
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: Request for comments on initial Draft spend plan 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Gillnet salmon fishery disaster determination

Date July 24, 2024

Darion Jones,

Under Guiding principles for disaster fund distribution 2) ADF&G states “to improve fishery information used to assess and forecast future fishery performance:

- The Department should undergo a complete review on historical harvest allocation and economic analysis - cause and affect consequences over the last 5, 10, and 20 years by regulatory changes and Management of salmon resources. Comparative analysis by salmon stock allocation changes by Area, Stat Areas, and Sub Districts, and South of Kasilof River vs. North of Kasilof River stock composition changes over historical timeframes; there is no longer a traditional Set Gillnet fishery operating and unfortunately fishery disasters do not fully encompass the aforementioned changes and historical losses appropriately. The reallocation analysis and harvest estimates yearly changes to all other fisheries on salmon bound for the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers; i.e. reallocation to UCI drift gillnet, personal use dip net and gillnet fisheries. Unfortunately, this straight forward analysis wasn't performed in the disaster declaration.
- I oppose any “inclusion of sport fishery businesses” in the spend plan. This group has overall benefited from ESSN closures annually with the vast amounts and gross amounts of harvest numbers from the reallocation of sockeye salmon and increased daily bag limits, expanded dip net fisheries, trips, drop offs, and these business have alternative salmon resources to operate nearly year round on Coho, enhanced king salmon fisheries, halibut and rockfish, etc. When and if the sport fisheries are closed to the taking of sockeye salmon similar to ESSN closures is the only time this subject should be brought up period.

Under Research:

- I would support a complete independent scientific “review of the Kenai late-run Chinook salmon estimates for all age classes. A complete review of the stock assessment programs estimates on all age classes in annual returns.
- Habitat studies and spawning area studies; i.e. successful spawning and intertidal zone studies over smolt out migration and survival. U.S. Fish and Wildlife should do research programs.
- “Management Strategy Evaluation analysis” on mixed stock management approach taken by ADF&G and the Board of Fisheries has been a disaster compared to all other Areas/Districts/ or Sub districts in fisheries in Cook Inlet and all Areas within Region 2, including the management

of Upper Cook “salmon stocks” as defined, compared to any commercial management over stocks of concern. Gear and time and Area opening have not been similarly affected or caused fishery disasters. Note: All age classes (except 1.1) are part of escapements except on the Kenai River; 15,000 “large kings” is equivalent to 28,000 king salmon returns based on all classes which puts recent escapement at the upper end of the escapement goal. The Deshka River, Anchor River, Susitna River, Nushagak River, Chignik River, and Karluk River Chinook goals are all based on 1.2 age classes and larger – including stock of concern stocks. To be clear, ADF&G created large fish goal and thereby ESSN fishery disaster declarations over the last 6 years,

- I oppose the concept of “alternative gear” – a bridge to nowhere to benefit a few and completely counter to legislature’s passage and intent under The Limited Entry Act and White Act of 1924 by Congress for the Set Gillnet fishery in Upper Cook Inlet. What’s next dip net fisheries for the Nushagak District and Bristol Bay commercial fisheries, Chignik and Kodiak Seiners?
- I oppose non-competitive bid process. ADF&G Commissioner’s office history has already awarded a non-competitive research project to a Canadian firm in the amount of \$250,000 dollars in 2023 under the premise of net depth study which resulted in failure over results and suppositions. This was done under political pressure. Meanwhile, by comparison. ADF&G couldn’t fund the decade’s long O.T.F. boat in 2024.

Processors 25% amount.

- This amount should be reduced to 20 – 22.5% as a reallocation of commercial salmon to the Drift fleet with extra time and Area openings and occurred in 2021 and 2022 and processor’s processed this reallocation sockeye salmon harvest levels and benefitted and should be taken into account. Numerous smaller processor’s benefitted from the reallocation from ESSN sockeye salmon fisheries to the personal use and sport fisheries.
- The processor’s with established buying stations and receiving station along the ESSN should be recognized and therefore recognize those buying stations and receiving stations affected in 2021 and 2022 and should be included in the direct payments to processors scenario.

It’s been 6 years since the 2018 fishery disaster declaration and not one dime has distributed to ESSN fishermen and crew. Based on accountability and performance should affected fishermen expect some kind of relief from 2021 and 2022 by 2027 timeframe?

Sincerely,

Jeff Beaudoin
SO4H permit holder/owner/operator
Kasilof, Alaska 99610

July 23, 2024

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Attn: Darion Jones

PO Box 115526

Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Submitted via email to: dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov

Re: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster Relief Initial Spend Plan

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the initial Draft Spend Plan for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet Eastside Setnet salmon fisheries disaster. My family and I operate a setnet fishing operation in Upper Cook Inlet, and the past ten-plus years have presented significant challenges, preventing a predictable business environment. I would like to briefly comment on various aspects of the initial spend plan.

Allocation

Harvesters

I understand that disaster funding is not intended to fully compensate for business losses and that in the past, it aimed to cover around 49% of recent values for the harvesting sector. I am comfortable with the proposed 62% allocation for permit holders and crew.

Processors

I also support the 25% allocation for processors. They have undoubtedly faced drastic reductions in production and profitability due to severe restrictions placed on the ESSN fishery. The unpredictable business environment complicates decisions on crew, packing supplies, and shipping. There have been discussions suggesting that a fairer calculation of their losses would be based on first wholesale values rather than just the COAR report.

Research

In the past, I have fully supported science and research to provide managers and policymakers with the best available data, particularly regarding forecasting, accurate stock assessments, and real-time in-season data. This helps manage the fishery and ensure its sustainability both biologically and economically. I remain supportive of research that aims for these goals. However, I am concerned that we are moving towards political narratives rather than sound scientific management.

I do not support funding for alternative gear types, especially since the ESSN has already significantly reduced its gear under the guise of king salmon conservation, resulting in fewer harvest opportunities. We do not yet know the current exploitation rate on king salmon with this reduced level of gear. We should continue using the current gear before considering alternatives. Zero exploitation of king salmon is not realistic. It is generally accepted that the current king salmon situation results more from unfavorable ocean conditions than from incidental harvest by the ESSN fleet.

Sportfishing Businesses

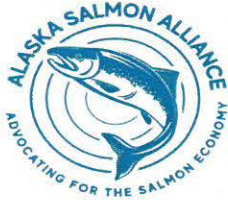
The ADF&G requested comments on including sportfishing businesses as a separate category within this spending plan. Reviewing the Governor's disaster request and the Secretary of Commerce's approval of the federal disaster under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, both were based on losses incurred by the ESSN fishery and the processing sector. Including sportfishing businesses at this stage would not be appropriate.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this initial spend plan and hope it does not get bogged down in bureaucratic red tape. I also hope that any research activities lead to the return of a healthy resource and a robust fishing economy.

Sincerely,



Norm Darch



ALASKA SALMON ALLIANCE
110 N. Willow St. #108
PO Box 586 Kenai, AK 99611
www.aksalmonalliance.org
Email: info@aksalmonalliance.org

Via email to: dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov

July 24, 2024

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Attn: Darion Jones
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: Initial Draft Spend Plan for 2021 and 2022 UCI ESSN Salmon

Dear Mr. Jones:

The Alaska Salmon Alliance (ASA) would like to share our concerns and suggestions about the Federal Fishery Disasters Draft Spend Plan for 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet Eastside Setnet salmon fisheries disaster.

By way of background ASA, an Alaska based nonprofit entity, advocates for and promotes science-based salmon policies that will result in long term economic opportunities and benefits for Alaska's coastal communities for future generations. To this end, ASA endeavors to develop positive working relationships with policy makers. Founded and supported by regional salmon processors and harvesters, ASA also collaborates with other organizations to protect and enhance the salmon resources of the region, sustain a year-round fishery economy and to insure the future of the Alaska salmon industry.

Our main concerns and suggestions are as follows:

- Allocation Formula: We concur with others in the salmon processing industry that the allocation share to the UCI salmon processing sector should be raised from 25% to 35%. We think this is appropriate since the harvest sector share is based on ex-vessel revenue losses. However, the most appropriate measure of losses in the processing sector should be the first wholesale value. The approach would use the price each sector is paid for fish: ex-vessel for harvesters and wholesale for the processing sector. The use of only ex-vessel prices for both sectors results in a negative bias against processors so adjustment to the percentage of allocation to processors would be a reasonable and efficient remedy to such bias. We also believe this would also be more in line with federal disaster funding's goal to mitigate harm to those who experienced adverse economic impacts as a result of a fishery disaster.
- Inclusion of Sportfishing Businesses: It is our understanding that the U.S. Secretary of Commerce approved the fishery disaster for the 2021-2022 Upper Cook Inlet Eastside setnet fishery and related businesses, such as processors, that experienced significant revenue losses. It is also our understanding that Governor Dunleavy, in his request for fishery disaster funding under the Magnuson-Stevens Act use loss of revenue to the eastside setnet fishery as the basis for the request, and ultimate approval, of the disaster request. It appears that inclusion of a large

segment of the fishing community that was not considered or factored into the funding request would result in prejudice to those who the disaster funds target. This perspective is reinforced in that the drift fishery was also not included in either the funding request or grant of funding. Accordingly, we believe the sportfish business sector of the fishery should be excluded from the disaster funding plan.

- Research: Although we support further research in the UCI salmon fishery, we have significant reservations that disaster funded research projects be directed solely by ADF&G. We believe history demonstrates the Cook Inlet salmon fishery is driven by allocative and political priorities rather than sound science. It appears research into stock composition and passage estimates for late-run Kenai Chinook salmon of all age classes and implications of continuous large over escapements of sockeye into the Kenai and Kasilof rivers to often take a back seat to continuous gear and opportunity restrictions on one harvest sector – ESSN. In our view, any research funds should, at a minimum, be overseen by industry representatives that have unfortunately borne the brunt of many fishery disasters over the past years. This critical oversight would mitigate “solutions” that do little to investigate root causes of the fishery disasters such as how escapement goals are set and measures, unreasonable burdens on certain sectors of the industry and impacts of unbridled growth in the habitat areas salmon rely on to reproduce. Oversight should include representatives from processors and harvesters from throughout Cook Inlet. In our view, those most impacted by research decisions should be at the table along every step of the research process.
- Other allocations: Allocations for administrative costs and losses incurred by municipal entities seem reasonable.

We appreciate the opportunity to comments on this important program. The negative and long-term impacts of fishery disasters in Cook Inlet across many sectors of the industry can’t be understated. We think with an equitable allocation formula that focuses disaster funds on those they were intended for along with proper oversight of disaster funded research will result in a plan that meets the intent of the fishery disaster funding program.

Respectfully,



Mike Simpson, President
Alaska Salmon Alliance

cc: Alaska Congressional Delegation
Kenai Peninsula Legislative Delegation
Alaska Governor’s Office

July 15, 2024

Attn: Darion Jones
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov

Re: Initial Draft Spend Plan for 2021 and 2022 UCI ESSN Salmon

Dear Mr. Jones:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Federal Fishery Disasters Draft Spend Plan for 2021 and 2022 UCI ESSN Salmon. OBI Seafoods has been actively involved in processing salmon in the Cook Inlet region since 1973, contributing significantly to the local community and economy. Our processing operation generates job opportunities, providing stable income and supporting local families. The economic ripple effect stimulates ancillary industries, fostering stability and growth.

Upon review of the proposed allocations, OBI has some concerns regarding the distribution.

OBI supports and appreciates the allocation of funds in the draft spend plan, particularly the earmarked 10% for research. We believe this allocation is fair and crucial for mitigating future fishery disasters. However, we would also like to see an emphasis of how over escapement will affect the Kenai and Kasilof river systems carrying capacity for future Sockeye runs.

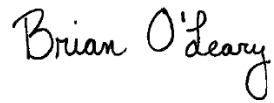
We also do not consider the proposed 62% Harvester / 25% Processor split a fair division. We respectfully request it be revised to a 52% Harvester / 35% Processor split. In 2021/22, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to hit processors financially. Where we recognize the impacts COVID had on harvesters, processors had to incur much greater expenses to ensure safe processing could take place.

To help mitigate COVID-19, OBI allocated funds to have a nurse practitioner on site, along with medical supplies, for a small in-plant clinic. To comply with state regulations during the pandemic, OBI continued to purchase protective supplies for our workforce, including nitrile gloves, COVID-19 test kits, and masks. Additionally, we organized our workforce's breaks and meals efficiently to reduce the risk of COVID-19. The Seward facility also added a security guard to ensure our employees stayed on site, keeping the community safe.

Processors like OBI Seafoods typically provide fishermen with advance funds before the season starts to cover expenses such as gear, insurance, repairs, and airfare. These advances, usually repaid through salmon harvests, were not reimbursed in the 2021/22 season due to the minimal returns. OBI faced significant economic losses due to this shortfall, which was exacerbated by having tenders and capacity in place for the anticipated volumes.

In conclusion, we express gratitude for the dedicated efforts in developing the spend plan and addressing the salmon disasters. We commend the inclusion of public comment solicitation and appreciate the opportunity to contribute our input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian O'Leary". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Brian" and last name "O'Leary" clearly distinguishable.

Brian O'Leary
COO OBI Seafoods



July 17, 2024

To: Darion Jones, ADFG

Submitted via email to: dfg.com.fisheriesdisasters@alaska.gov

Re: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Net Salmon Fisheries Disaster Relief Initial Spend Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the initial draft spend plan for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet east side set net salmon fisheries disasters. The Pacific Seafood Processors Association represents shoreside processing plants operating across Alaska, including one on the Kenai Peninsula which is historically dependent on commercial Cook Inlet salmon fisheries. Shoreside processing in Alaska is extremely capital intensive, with significant fixed costs just to open the door and take the first delivery, regardless of the strength of the fishery. Fishermen depend on viable shoreside markets across Alaska to deliver their catch, and communities depend on the jobs, fish tax and property tax revenue, and support service businesses resulting from local processing. The level of reductions in the years at issue represented a significant loss to processors dependent on these fisheries, and fewer and fewer processors are operating on the Kenai Peninsula, making the distribution of funds to retain local processing through these difficult times even more important.

Allocations

Overall, we support the State's intent that the vast majority of disaster funding be used for direct payments to affected fishery participants and communities, while also accommodating relevant research to improve fishery information used to assess and forecast future fishery performance. We also support the spend plan proposal to provide disaster payments to processing companies proportional to each company's demonstrated loss relative to the total losses of all eligible companies. This is consistent with the law and guidance governing federal disaster funding, which enables the federal government to help persons engaged in commercial fisheries by initiating projects, payments, or other measures to alleviate harm incurred as a direct result of a fishery resource disaster.

We continue to recommend that the state consider that processors and harvesters jointly share in the effort and risk in commercial fisheries, and to support an approach that attempts to evenly mitigate losses from the disaster to both sectors. In the initial spend plan, funds allocated to the harvesting sector are intended to mitigate losses by bringing the harvesting sector to 49.4% of the sector's recent historical value, and funds allocated to processors bring the sector up to 32.8% of its recent historical value. PSPA supports increasing the proposed processor allocation from 25% to 35% such that it is more aligned with the harvesting sector's compensated losses. Please also consider an increase in the processing percentage in light of the fact that the state is using ex-vessel revenue losses for both the

www.pspafish.net

ANCHORAGE

721 W. 1st Avenue
Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501
907 223 1648

JUNEAU

222 Seward Street
Suite 200
Juneau, AK 99801
907 586 6366

SEATTLE

1900 W. Emerson Place
Suite 205
Seattle, WA 98119
206 281 1667

WASHINGTON DC

20 F Street NW
Floor 7
Washington, DC 20001
202 431 7220

harvesting and processing sectors, even though the appropriate metric for losses in the processing sector would be first wholesale value. Ex-vessel value is appropriate for the harvesting sector given it reflects what they were paid for fish. To be comparable, first wholesale value is appropriate for the processing sector given it reflects what they were paid for fish. Ex-vessel value, by contrast, is a cost to the processing sector. We understand the limitations in linking first wholesale data from COAR to where the fish were caught, but had this more appropriate metric been used, we believe the identified losses to the processing sector would have been greater.

Research

We support using some of the funds for research but believe they should be focused on projects to improve fishery information used to assess and forecast future fishery performance and help prevent and/or mitigate future fishery disasters. We note these types of projects will support all salmon sectors in the region, whether subsistence, personal use, sport, or commercial. We don't support using research funds for the evaluation of new gear types or management strategy evaluations examining tradeoffs of different management approaches for the Upper Cook Inlet District. This seems insufficiently connected to the disaster itself, or the ability to avoid or mitigate disasters in the future, especially when this disaster (unexpected biomass decline and loss of access) was determined by the Secretary of Commerce to be due to "several factors such as unfavorable ocean conditions and prolonged marine heatwaves."¹

Including Sportfish Businesses

The initial spend plan also requested comment on whether to include sport fishing businesses as a separate category for funding in this spend plan. While sportfish businesses are also affected by salmon declines, this federal disaster under the Magnuson-Stevens Act is specifically based on and approved by the Secretary of Commerce for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side set net commercial salmon fisheries. The disaster request from Governor Dunleavy, in which fisheries must meet revenue loss criteria to qualify for a disaster was only based on the commercial set net fisheries,² and the Secretary approved the disaster based on the 63% (2021) and 91% (2022) revenue losses only for the commercial fisheries. Including sport fishing businesses at this time would be inappropriate given the process and detracts from the fishing businesses whose losses were the entire basis for the determination.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and we appreciate ADFG's significant work toward developing the recent disaster spend plans, many of which we note are still awaiting funds to be released from OMB. The delays on the Federal agency end are extremely frustrating to fishery participants who have been waiting years to receive funds allocated quickly from Congress to respond to fishery disasters.

Sincerely,



Julie Decker
President, PSPA

¹Disaster approval letter from Secretary Raimondo to Governor Dunleavy, April 8, 2024.

²Disaster request from Governor Dunleavy to Secretary Raimondo, September 28, 2023.

From: John Mills
Sent: Friday, July 12, 2024 10:03 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Gillnet fishery disaster

Good morning, I have but one concern related to the disbursement of disaster funds for East Side Setnetters. It is my opinion that all Setnetters should receive the same amount of relief funding, whether they fish in Nikiski or Ninilchik or somewhere in between. All fishermen were shut down and all fishermen faced the same hardship. We all shop at the same stores. A bowl of soup costs just as much for a Nikiski fisherman as it does for a Ninilchik fisherman. There is no reason that any setnetter should receive a larger check than any other setnetter. Thank you for your consideration.

John Mills
East Side Setnetter

From: Cheryn Clark
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 5:52 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021,2022 Cook Inlet ESSN disaster relief spend plan

The first item that I would like to address is why is the sports fishing sector even being considered to participate in this disaster relief that was specifically targeted for the ESSN commercial fishery?? The ESSN fishery has been targeted for fishing restrictions and closures while the sports fishing sector remained open to fish Sockeye!! This disaster relief was declared because of closures the ESSN fishery experienced and the restrictions placed upon us that kept us from harvesting sockeye salmon! Again I say that the sports fishing sector were not closed down from fishing sockeye and were in fact liberalized in the taking of sockeye!! To even suggest the sports fishing sector to take disaster funds away from commercial fishing families that have had our businesses stripped from us reeks of political corruption! Please do not even consider dividing relief funds and take funding away from a group that has truly experienced a disaster and give those funds to a sector that actually benefitted from that disaster!

The distribution of funds should be equally distributed per permit as the initial spend plan suggests.
Respectfully,
Russell Clark

From: GCI
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 7:19 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is Susan Hermansen-Jent. I am one of four family East Side Setnetter permit holders and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters.

My family have been commercial fishing in Cook Inlet since the 1940's. Generations of parents, grandparents, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, son-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces and nephews.. aunts and uncles cousins, and lifelong friends, all working together.

Needless to say, our memories are long and our heritage runs deep. My dad fished and fought for this beloved industry up to age 89, and my mom 96 was still actively involved until her death January 2024.

I have seen the Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery industry from the beginning through the eyes of my parents and grandparents and hopefully it will not end on my watch.... and if the salmon fishery is managed right it won't. I've been through good years and bad year and like my father before me, I believe there is fish enough for all users... if managed right.

We have been high and dry since 2021 ...with the only probable income coming from disaster funds not a net full of fish. Nets in or out of water still incurs expensive. Every season has opening camp and closing camp expenses. Disaster funds, whatever the amount, although deserved and appreciated is always late and never enough... now you want to share these funds with the sports guides Salt on a very open wound. I'd LOVE to hear the justification of such a decision. How does that equate... closure for us is zero income or a negative income and these guides have not suffered economic harm; in fact, their businesses are thriving due to the over-escapement of sockeye into the Kenai and Kasilof rivers.

This will always be my happy place ... however mighty sad season indeed.

Susan Hermansen-Jent

From: Matthew Person
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 6:58 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster Relief Plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Matthew Person and I've been commercially setnetting on the east side of Cook Inlet for the entire 36 years of my life. Succinctly stated I generally support the current allocation plan for the funds with these exceptions.

Specify to the ADFG where the funds must be spent to actually work toward keeping these "disasters" from happening again.

Unequivocally nothing should be sent or parceled out to the commercial in river guides who have largely funded the political and allocative issues that have caused these disasters in the first place, and have massively benefited financially from the set net industries suffering.

While I have no issue with processors receiving aid as they have certainly experienced loss, they already have an allotment plus a multitude of post-Covid funding that have set them up well to weather these storms that individual fisherman and the smaller business have not received. In this light they should be awarded their allotment without increase from the harvesters portion. Thank you. -Matt Person

From: Philip Sheridan
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 8:33 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Fisheries Disaster Relief

To whom it may concern,

My name is Philip Sheridan and I am an East Side Setnetter. I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector for payout when the East Side Setnetters are the only group suffering 100% shut out of their fishery is preposterous and a slap in the face to east side set net families.

Sincerely,
Philip Sheridan

From: Joseph Person
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 3:58 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: ESSN Disaster Relief Spending Plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joseph Person and I am a third generation lifelong setnetter in the Ninilchik stat area on the east side of Upper Cook Inlet. (ESSN) In general I would much prefer to fish over receiving disaster relief, particularly since there is nothing 'natural' about these economic disasters. They are a result entirely of allocative and politically motivated actions taken by the department based on narratives and not sound science based management. In general, I find this proposed spending plan acceptable and reasonably equitable. The following concerns remain.

If the department (who caused these economic disasters) is going to receive substantial funding in this spending plan, there should be fairly strict guidelines as to where this research money will be utilized. Since it's presumed purpose should be to try to break this years long cycle of 'disasters' and mitigate future economic losses. Specifically I would like to see funding for the Offshore Testfish Index program, and smolt out programs for the kenai and Kasilof rivers for both chinook and sockeye. I am extremely concerned that millions of dollars will instead be funneled into exactly the narrative based agendas that caused these disasters in the first place.

There is no evidence to show losses within the commercial guide industry, they were not included in the disaster declaration, and consequently I fail to see how they could even be considered for distribution of these funds. I'm general they have benefited greatly from the politicized reallocation away from the ESSN fishery.

The processing sector, while they quite certainly sustained losses and are legitimate recipients of funds also have access to many other sources of substantial federal support that are not available to individual fishermen. They received significant Covid era support from the government in these years and continue to receive 100s of millions of dollars of federal contracts for the purchase of seafood that have already assisted them through these difficult years. Consequently I think the current spending plan allocations are appropriate and increasing the processing sectors share is unnecessary.

In conclusion I essentially support the current spending plan as is.

Joseph Person

From: Dersu Seater
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 12:43 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Salmon fisheries disaster plan for ESSN 2021 and 2022

To whom it may concern,

My name is Dersu Seater. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sport fishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

From: Kim Seater
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 12:23 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster funding 2021 and 2022 for ESSN salmon fishery

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kimberly Seater. I am an East Side Setnet permit holder, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Seater

Talia Lawrence (crew member)

From: Kristi Seater-Buerger
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 12:16 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster Funding: 2021/2022 Upper Cook Inlet (ESSN) East Side Set Net Disaster Fund

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Kristi Buerger. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Kristi Buerger

From: Lee
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 12:11 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster funding

To whom it may concern,

My name is Lee Seater. I am an East Side Setnet permit holder and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Lee Seater

From: katrina seater
Sent: Wednesday, July 24, 2024 11:55 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster funding comments

To whom it may concern,

My name is Katrina Seater. I am an East Side Setnet permit holder and I strongly oppose including the sport fishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Katrina Seater

From: Lillian Person
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 6:13 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: ESSN 2021 & 2022 Disaster Relief

To Whom It May Concern:

As a current Upper Cook Inlet East Side Setnetter (ESSN) fisherman, my family and I have all been affected by the ESSN closures and disasters. Our 4 generations of family members have been involved in the commercial fishing industry in the Inlet since the mid-1950s.

I understand that ADF&G now wants to share the 2021 and 2022 disaster funds with sportfishing businesses in the area when they did not go through the process for the disaster funds. They did not apply for relief. They did not suffer any losses and they have no right to these funds. KPFA (which we have been members of since the 1980's) submitted the claim and the decision to grant relief was based solely on Setnet fleet losses. The sportfishing industry was not closed down, their businesses were not brought to a halt and they continued to operate while the ESSNs were closed early, completely shut down, and made to bear the burden of the Chinook/King Salmon escapement as every other fishery has been able to continue fishing -- with bag limit increases, extended hours AND days while the ESSNs were left to flounder with their business commitments (investments, expenses, operation costs, etc.) while still trying to "fish for the people".

Please note for the record: *I am not in support of ADF&G funneling funds from the disaster relief money to any of the sportfishing businesses in the area -- especially since none of their numbers were used in the original claim or process.*

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Lillian Person

From: Richard Person
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 4:33 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 essn disaster relief.

My name is Richard Person , I am a lifelong Eastside, setnet fisherman . concerning the disaster Relief applied for by the east side, setnet fleet in the mentioned years I see absolutely no reason why the sport guide sector should be included. They continued to fish, they profited from us, not fishing by guiding in the rivers. It is ridiculous to think they need compensation of any type for disaster Relief ,most of them probably had banner years.

Additionally, I don't believe the processors should be given 10% of the Fishermans settlement. They already have received millions of dollars from the federal government. They also were still able to conduct business and buy fish from other areas and other gear types. the east side senators had no recourse, except to find another job.

Please take these comments into consideration when deciding how to disperse the funds.

Thank you.

Richard Person

From: Dane Markham
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 3:59 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster Relief

To whom it may concern,

As an Eastside setnetter, I strongly oppose the allocation of disaster funds to the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster declaration was based solely on the significant losses endured by the setnet fleet, not the sportfishing guides. The sportfishing association did not request relief because they did not face the same economic challenges that commercial setnetters have. We have been unable to fish and generate income, while they have continued their operations. It would be unfair and improper for them to receive any portion of these funds. All disaster relief should be exclusively reserved for the ESSN, the group that has been most impacted during this time.

Sincerely,

Dane Markham

From: Zachary Markham
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 1:40 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Salmon Fishery Disaster

To whom it may concern,

I am an Eastside settnetter. I oppose any disaster funds going to the sportsfishing sector of the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses solely suffered by the setnet fleet, not by the sportsfishing guides. The sportsfishing association did not submit an application for such relief because they did not suffer the economic losses like commercial settnetters have. We have been kept out of the water while they have been able to continue fishing and earning an income. For them to share in any such funds is dishonest and corrupt. All such funds should go exclusively to the ESSN who have suffered the most of any user group during this time.

Sincerely,

--

Zachary Markham

From: Michele Markham
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 1:35 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: disaster aid relief allocation

To whom it may concern,

I am an Eastside settnetter. I oppose any disaster funds going to the sportsfishing sector of the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses solely suffered by the setnet fleet, not by the sportsfishing guides. The sportsfishing association did not submit an application for such relief because they did not suffer the economic losses like commercial settnetters have. We have been kept out of the water while they have been able to continue fishing and earning an income. For them to share in any such funds is dishonest and corrupt. All such funds should go exclusively to the ESSN who have suffered the most of any user group during this time.

Sincerely,

Michele Markham

From: Mike Markham
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 1:33 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster funds allocation 2021 & 2022

To whom it may concern,

I am an Eastside settnetter. I oppose any disaster funds going to the sportsfishing sector of the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses solely suffered by the setnet fleet, not by the sportsfishing guides. The sportsfishing association did not submit an application for such relief because they did not suffer the economic losses like commercial setnetters have. We have been kept out of the water while they have been able to continue fishing and earning an income. For them to share in any such funds is dishonest and corrupt. All such funds should go exclusively to the ESSN who have suffered the most of any user group during this time.

Sincerely,

Mike Markham

From: JoAnn Wichers
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 7:44 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is JoAnnWichers. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. As a Setnetter, our season's in 2021 & 2022 season were truly a disaster. We are north K-Beach fisherman and were only able to fish 3 days total with our full gear in 2021 & 2022. Even though the sport fishing was closed to kings they were still allowed to continue fishing for Reds & Silvers. They were still able to make a season. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

JoAnn Wichers

From: JoAnn Wichers
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 7:32 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is David Wichers. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
David Wichers

From: JoAnn Wichers
Sent: Tuesday, July 23, 2024 7:19 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is Daniel Wichers. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Daniel Wichers
K-Beach Setnetter

From: Christopher Monfor
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 4:00 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Draft spend plan for Cook Inlet Setnet

RE: Upper Cook Inlet East Side Set Net Salmon Fisheries Initial Spend Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for publication of the draft spend plan for Cook Inlet Set Net. The lack of opening for this fishery has resulted in extreme hardship and consequences for all parties, including permit holders and crew. I encourage rapid adoption and prompt payout of available funds to help ease the burden to these parties.

As a permit holder myself, I am intimately familiar with these issues. Many permit holders are carrying debt and the burden of the cost of this debt for multiple years due to lack of revenue from the fishery, while still maintaining the equipment and other investment that the fishing requires. Please establish a streamlined payout system that will reduce the burden for those affected and eliminate any additional delay; these issues have been persisting now for over four years. An overly bureaucratic or burdensome process will further compound these issues.

In addition, please consider economic relief for the communities involves. The spend plan may consider the cities and unincorporated communities that receive indirect economic benefit from the Set Net fishery.

Respectfully,

Christopher Monfor

From: Danielle
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 12:29 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster spend plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Danielle Garten. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Danielle Garten

From: Matt Tikka
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 9:46 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Hello. My name is Matt Tikka. Lifelong east side setnetter The harm done to our industry is not changing any time soon! Disaster relief for 2021&2022 should be directed at those who suffered the most. We have been totally closed for two seasons after ...

From: Cohoe Beach
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 5:43 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rob Grannum. My family and I have been East Side Setnetters for nearly 50 years. Our family strongly opposes including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is unjust and contrary to the spirit of the disaster relief as the sportfishing guides have not suffered economic harm; in fact, their businesses are thriving due to the over-escapement of sockeye into the Kenai and Kasilof rivers.

Sincerely,

Rob Grannum

From: Dan Ducker
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 10:32 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Fisheries Disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is Samantha Ducker. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Samantha Ducker.

Sent from my iPhone

From: Butch Leman
Sent: Sunday, July 21, 2024 10:38 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: ESSN Fishery diaster funds.

To whom it does concern...I'm a life long east side setnetter who's been blamed& scapegoated by the BOF... aghast at screwing we've gotten in past few years...severely limited by regulation... and to top it off...totally shut down the past two years...then...add insult to injury you invent a cockamamie rule...well you can 'dip net'... but NOT in the river ...where nearly 200,000 reds slammed up the river in one day...but out in the inlet, where if your lucky , you might get 20 in a day and we have to hire 4 crew, each holding one dipnet...stupid. Kasilof target...(130,000-330,000)...is being forecast at 1,000,000+...and Kenai scenario, the same...and furthermore I hear rumors thst the KRSA is angling to get a share of the diaster relief \$\$ meant for setnetters...the very group that determinedly has been working to put us east side fisherman out of business...demonizing us for decades !!

I hope that's not true. It's skin to pushing someone in a deep hole...then when they hear that the guy in the hole will get some money for his pain and suffering, puts his hand out to help the guy he pushed in to help him out...then tries to get a share of the \$\$.
We. did. not. cause. the . collapse. of. the. early. and. late. runs. of. Kings.

Yet we're the only fishing group shut down...the fact that the in river guides and sporties can't fish for Kings doesn't mean any thing when they just shift to targeting Sockeye 'n Silvers.

Sheesh !! It's insanity !!

cuts in

From:
Sent: Sunday, July 21, 2024 9:00 PM
To: Jones, Darion B (DFG); DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Comments for Upper Cook Inlet Setnet Fisheries Disasters

Dear Darion Jones,

We are the Executive Board of the Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (KPFA), a non-profit 501(c) (6) commercial fisheries advocacy trade group representing Cook Inlet (CI) fishing families since 1954. KPFA's mission is "Ensuring the Sustainability of Our Fishery Resources." Our goal is to continue to strengthen our fishing community and to promote the economic stability of the Cook Inlet Setnet Fishery.

KPFA primarily represents salmon set net permit holders on the East Side of Cook Inlet. The geographical area of the fishery reaches from Ninilchik in the south to Boulder Point to the north, spanning more than 60 miles along Cook Inlet's Eastside. The salmon harvested by the East Side Setnet Fishery originate almost exclusively in the Kasilof and Kenai River systems.

Some 440 limited entry permit holders, each small businesspersons, fish for salmon in this area and are primarily Alaska residents (86% Alaska, 80% Central Peninsula residents).

We are writing today to express the Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association's position on the distribution of 2021 and 2022 NOAA Fisheries allocated Disaster Relief Funds in the amount of \$11,484,675.

Our consensus is that the disaster funds available for the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet Eastside Setnet fishery disasters should be split evenly among the affected fisheries harvesters that requested the disaster declarations. The Eastside Setnetters. Permit holders at 90% and Crew members at 10%. Specifically, the only affected parties to the disaster were the East Side Setnet Fishery in 2021 and in 2022. We agree that in 2021 and 2022 that the purchase of buoy stickers should be the qualifier for eligibility to receive disaster funds.

It is our consensus that in 2021 and 2022, permit holders paid their crews accordingly, and permit holders should handle any payout related to the 2021 and 2022 disaster funds. We are amenable to providing proof of payout to satisfy the intent of the disaster relief program. If funds are set aside for distribution to crewmembers, we want to have a say in how they're distributed. We expect any unclaimed funds to be returned to the East Side Setnet fishers equally. I.E. some crewmembers are paid on a flat rate, some on a daily rate, and others are paid on a percentage basis.

Lastly, our consensus is that if ADF&G is to receive any disaster funds for research, KPFA expects the funds to be spent on our impacted fishery and that KPFA has input on where and how all ADF&G research funds derived from the 2021 and 2022 disasters would be expended.

We believe that the investment in new or past alternative gear should be considered as a reimbursable expense to fishermen from the ADF&G research funds. As stated in the draft plan, "A portion of these funds will be allocated to research activities that promote **restoration** of the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future, but they will also be used to help assist the fishing communities that were affected by this fishery resource

disaster by recognizing the loss of incomes.” We propose gear reimbursement as a non-competitive process project if new alternative gear types become available for King Conservation.

Thank you,

Lisa Gabriel, Secretary, Project Lead

Andy Hall, President

Eric Nyce, Vice-President

From: Dan Ducker
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 10:32 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Fisheries Disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is Jeannette Ducker. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Ducker.

From: Dan Ducker
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 10:30 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored); Dan Ducker
Subject: Fisheries Disaster.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Danell S. Ducker. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Danell S.Ducker

From: Johnny Hampton
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 9:19 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2033 ESSN Disaster Funds

To Whom it May Concern, My name is Joye Deakins-Hampton. I am an East Side Setnetter. I was raised on the East Side beach and have fished this beach for over 60 years. Our family has been massively effected by the events of the last several years. I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible. The sports fishing industry did not even apply for these funds. They are clearly for those of us who have actually suffered loss due to our fishery closures!!! Please don't do this to us! We've been through enough!

Sincerely,

Joye Hampton (lifelong ESSNer)

From: Randy Meier
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 9:18 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Vote NO

To whom it may concern,

My name is Ethan Berga. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Ethan Berga

Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 9:17 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Oppose

To whom it may concern,

My name is Amy Berga. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Amy Berga

Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 9:16 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Oppose

To whom it may concern,

My name is Mindy Halverson. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Mindy Halverson

From: Randy Meier
Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 9:14 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Vote NO

To whom it may concern,

My name is Randy Meier. I am an East Side Setnetter fishing just north of the Kasilof River and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Randy Meier

Sent: Saturday, July 20, 2024 8:04 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster 2021-22

To Whom it May Concern, My name is Lynn (Honea) Deakins

My family and I came to Alaska in the summer of 1961 and have been East Side Setnetters on Salamatof Beach up until this summer due to mandated closure of our fishery. Our setnet site has supported 4 generations of family members, including many college tuitions for over 60 years, until 2021 when closures caused drastic income deficits for our business. We have always paid Alaska and property taxes in addition to contributing to the economy of the State and Borough. I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the **setnet fleet**, and the funds should go to setnetters. Have the sportfishing businesses even applied for disaster relief for their businesses? From all appearances it looks like their businesses have thrived because of the closures we have suffered.

Respectfully,
Lynn Deakins

From: Alan Crookston
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2024 9:26 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster spending allocation

To whom it may concern,

My name is Alan Crookston. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Alan Crookston

From: Gary Hollier
Sent: Friday, July 19, 2024 7:24 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Opposition to Sport community disaster declaration.

To whom it may concern,

My name is Gary Hollier. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,

Gary Hollier

From: Erin Doner
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:47 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster spend plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Erin Doner. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Erin Doner

From: Jan Kornstad
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 2:56 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster

To Whom it May Concern,

I am an East Side Setnetter. I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible. Not only did the sportfishing sector NOT suffer any economic harm during those years, they actually PROFITED from the greater number of fish in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers due to the arbitrary shutdown of the commercial setnet fleet. To add more to their already realized reward of an increased harvest in those years would be completely inequitable and bordering on unethical.

Sincerely,
Jan Kornstad
ESSN since 1961

From: Pauline Mills
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 1:33 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an eastside setnet fisherman. I have been setnetting on the eastside for many years. I am opposed to the Department of Fish and Game wanting to share the 2021 and 2022 disaster funds with sportfishing businesses that are thriving as we sit on the beach unable to fish and make a living. We have been shut down while record runs overscape the river.

Sportfishing businesses did not have any economic hardship. They haven't lost money and continue to fish the rivers for red salmon, pink salmon, and silver salmon. They even fish for hatchery king salmon or catch and release. The sportfishing group did not go through the process nor did they apply for relief, they did not suffer any losses, and they have no right to these funds. The decision to grant relief was based solely on Setnet fleet losses so sportfishing should have to go through the process and make their own claim and show their losses. They shouldn't just merely be added to our claim because our claim is solely based on the significant losses suffered by the East Side Setnet Fleet.

The proposal by fish and game is unjust, and unethical. I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Pauline Mills
Eastside Setnetter

From: John Mills
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 4:02 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster Relief

I am so angry right now, I can barely speak. I have been told that ADFG wants to include sportsmen in the Disaster Plan that East Side Setnetters applied for for the years 2021 and 2022. The idea seems so ridiculous to me. Sportsmen have not suffered like setnetters have. In fact, I would argue that they have benefitted from the fact that Setnetters have been out of business. The river is filled with more fish than ever and guides and sportsmen have taken advantage and adjusted to the changes in King numbers. They have simply changed their focus to reds and humpies and silvers and rainbows and even guided dipnetting. All while eastside Setnetters remain high and dry. Sportsmen and guides are catching more fish than ever. There is no way that they should be included in the disaster relief that "We" applied for. Please take that into consideration while drafting the final disaster relief plan, both now and in the future. Thank you very much.

John Mills
Eastside Setnetter

From: Robert & Krystina Williams
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 11:10 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 Upper CI ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Robert Williams, I am an east side setnetter (ESSN) & I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 & 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, & the funds should go to the setnetters. Including the sport fish sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible & dishonest. Besides being unjust, unethical & it is a clear attempt to take away from us & delay the money being dispersed to the setnetters.

Additionally, the sport fish sector has had years to apply for these funds & never did. They actually prospered from our closure, giving them more opportunity to fish the surplus.

Again I strongly oppose including the sport fish sector in the 2021-2022 disaster funds & trying to do this now? It's outlandish and preposterous.

Respectfully,
Robert Williams

From: Robert & Krystina Williams
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 11:08 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 Upper CI ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Krystina Williams, I am an east side setnetter (ESSN) & I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 & 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, & the funds should go to the setnetters. Including the sport fish sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible & dishonest. Besides being unjust, unethical & it is a clear attempt to take away from us & delay the money being dispersed to the setnetters.

Additionally, the sport fish sector has had years to apply for these funds & never did. They actually prospered from our closure, giving them more opportunity to fish the surplus.

Again I strongly oppose including the sport fish sector in the 2021-2022 disaster funds & trying to do this now? It's outlandish and preposterous.

Respectfully,
Krystina Williams

From: Chris little
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 10:54 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: SETNET RELIEF

SPORT GUIDES SHOULD BE PAYING INTO FUND AS A COURTESY TO AN INDUSTRY PUT OUT OF BUSINESS FOR THEIR BENEFIT. DO THE RIGHT THING AND LEAVE THE DISASTER FUND AS WAS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED TO ASSIST EAST SIDE SETNETTERS.

CHRIS LITTLE
EAST SIDE SETNETTER

Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 9:20 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Karen S. McGahan and I'm an East Side Set Netter on Cook Inlet.

The disasters of 2021 and 2022 have been declared based on the significant losses suffered by the East Side Set Net fleet.

I highly object to including sport fishing businesses in the relief plan. These funds were intended for the East Side Set Net fleet. These sport fishing guides have not suffered Economic harm. In fact, their businesses have thrived due to the set netters being shut down, and the over-escapement of sockeye salmon into both the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

This is an unethical effort to divert disaster funds away from the East Side Set Netters to the prospering Kenai River sport fishing guides.

Sincerely,

Karen S. McGahan

From: Marti McGahan
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 10:07 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster Funds allocations for Eastside Setnetters

June 18, 2024

To Whom It May Concern.

I am a SUPPORTER of the East Side Setnetters. My family have fished the East Side since the 1970's and this has been a very large part of our income. We have raised our family here and fished every year and have helped others with jobs and a learning experience for many young people in the area. This has been a disaster, not fishing full seasons, and then being closed entirely for seasons while the sportsfishing guides RAPE THE RIVER!! The numbers of fish up the rivers have been horrendous and while the Setnetters have to sit and watch, you have to put extraordinary catch numbers on the Kenai river for sportsfishers just to keep over escapement from KILLING our river!!!

Now I understand that you plan to "share" the disaster relief that our Setnetters have waited long for and SUFFERED from lack of income with the NONDESERVING SPORTS fishery. They have not been thru what the Setnetters have and they have NOT gone thru the legal hoops that they have. They did NOT go thru the documentation for the relief funds that the Setnetters had to. They did NOT apply for these funds in any way. They did NOT suffer any losses, did NOT APPLY for any relief funds (which the Setnetters have been waiting for for several years.) Now, in your infinite wisdom, you want the Setnetters to give relief funds that

they deserve and have worked and WAITED for to the Sportsfishery....Their (Sportsfishery) businesses have THRIVED due to the over escapement that you have caused on the Kenai river. They continue to work while the Setnetters sit on their on the side and watch THEM catch, or try to catch enough to keep the river from dying in the future years from over escapement, while taking clients out and making a living, on what SHOULD HAVE been the Setnetters income for their families. The SPORTSFISHERY BUSINESSES DO NOT DESERVE this relief money. I suggest you have them apply for, with all documentation, to the powers that be for ANY relief that they think they deserve.....Reminds me of a story about the little red hen. She did all the work to grow grain, harvest it, put it away for winter WHEN SUDDENLY the underserving decided they needed to have an interest in her hard work...Have the JUST and DESERVING conclusion to this and DO NOT give any of the SETNETTERS deserving relief monies away to the undeserving.

Thank you,
Carmen McGahan

From: Leah Jackson
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:44 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster

To whom it may concern,

My name is Leah Jackson. I am an East Side Setnet permit holder. I am writing to voice my strong opposition to including the sport fishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN Salmon Fisheries Disaster Spend Plan. As the name of the disaster plan indicates, the disaster was declared based on losses suffered by the East Side Setnetters and any funds allocated therein should go solely to the setnetters affected. Any attempt by the sport fishermen to be included is absurd and indefensible.

Sincerely,
Leah Jackson

From: Mary Alldrin
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:36 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Luke Alldrin. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. The sportfishing businesses did not go through this process; they didn't apply for relief, they did not suffer any losses, and they have no right to these funds. To include the sportfishing sector is unethical and a blatant money grab by the sport fishery to profit at our expense. The guides have not suffered economic harm, in fact, their businesses are thriving due to the over escapement of sockeye into the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. Please do what is morally right. Give the ESSN disaster funds to those who were affected- the setnetters.

Thank you,
Luke Alldrin

From: Mr. Jackson
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:31 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 20⁰21/22 UCI ESSN disaster relief

To whom it may concern,

My name is Tony Jackson. I am an East Side Setnetter that continues to feel the financial devastation caused by years of mismanagement of the Upper Cook Inlet salmon run by ADF&G, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go solely to those who have felt the financial pinch due to closures. By including the sportfishing sector, which continued to operate and be successful, it is a blatant money grab and is indefensible. Sincerely,

Tony Jackson
Nikiski, Alaska

From: Mary Alldrin
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:22 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 /2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN

My name is Mary Alldrin. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I very much oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to the setnetters. To give the sportfishing sector any of these funds is an act of blatant stealing and is indefensible!!

Sincerely,
Mary Alldrin

From: Lance Alldrin
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:17 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021/22 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN

To Whom it may Concern,

My name is Lance Alldrin. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spending plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant grab for money and is indefensible!

Sincerely,

Lance Alldrin

Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:15 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 spend plan

I strongly oppose including the sportfish sector in this disaster plan. They did not participate in the initial request and only now trying to sneak in. When we get closed down entirely, they still get to fish. They have an option to continue their business but we do not. The ESSN have suffered more than any other user group and to try and sneak them in at this after the disaster declaration and funding has been granted is WRONG!!!

Tanya Doner
ESSN

From: Audra Doner
Sent: Thursday, July 18, 2024 8:03 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Salmon Disaster Spend Plan

To whom it may concern,

My name is Audra Doner. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Thank you,
Audra Doner

From: Joel Doner
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 10:40 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 and 2022 SETNET disaster relief

To whom it may concern,

My name is Joel Doner. I am an East Side Setnetter, and I strongly oppose including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet ESSN salmon fisheries disaster spend plan. The disaster was declared based on the losses suffered by the setnet fleet, and the funds should go to setnetters. Including the sportfishing sector is a blatant money grab and is indefensible.

Sincerely,
Joel Doner

From: Pauline Mills
Sent: Monday, July 15, 2024 7:34 AM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: Disaster funds Eastside setnetters

I would like to comment on the disaster funds for the eastside setnetters. I am all in favor of the money for the harvesters to be an equal amount for each fisherman no matter which area of Cook Inlet they fish in. No area should get more or less than any other area in Cook Inlet. I would hope that is what will occur because that is fair and just for disaster funding for all fisherman.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment.

Pauline Mills
Eastside Setnetter

From: Ryan Stassel
Sent: Wednesday, July 17, 2024 11:41 PM
To: DFG, ComFisheriesDisasters (DFG sponsored)
Subject: 2021 & 2022 ESSN Disaster Relief Comments

Hello,

My name is Ryan Stassel. I'm a third generation East Side setnetter and I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal of including the sportfishing sector in the 2021 and 2022 Upper Cook Inlet East Side Setnet (ESSN) salmon fisheries disaster relief spend plan.

The disaster relief funds for 2021 and 2022 were secured by the Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (KPFA) after a rigorous application process, supported by extensive documentation proving the catastrophic losses suffered by the East Side Setnet fleet. These funds were rightfully allocated based on the significant financial harm experienced by setnetters.

However, it has come to our attention that ADF&G is considering sharing the 2021 and 2022 disaster funds with sportfishing businesses. This is a grossly unjust and unethical proposal, as sportfishing businesses did not go through the application process, did not suffer the same losses, and are currently thriving. Their inclusion in the relief plan diverts essential funds away from the East Side Setnet Fishery, which needs these resources to recover from the documented disasters.

The setnet fleet's economic hardships were the basis for declaring the disaster, and as such, the relief funds should be allocated exclusively to the setnetters who have borne the brunt of these losses. Redirecting these funds to the sportfishing sector, which has not experienced similar economic harm, undermines the very purpose of the disaster relief program and unjustly enriches those who are already prospering.

I urge you to reconsider this proposal and ensure that the disaster relief funds are used to support the East Side Setnet Fishery as intended. Including the sportfishing sector is not only unfair but also diminishes the impact of the relief efforts on those truly in need.

Thank you for your time on this matter.
Sincerely, Ryan