

Jimmy Coopchiak
Togiak Drift Fisherman

Thank you Mr. Chairman and respected Board Members. My name is Jimmy Coopchiak, a subsistence fisherman first, and commercial fisherman next. My family depends on me and my younger brother to get the subsistence fish. I have about 30 people we need to provide subsistence fish for. I am in support of proposal 135. Currently, there is gear in the water 24/7 from June 7th to June 30th. I support this proposal because it allows periods of time where no gear is in the water, which allows more Togiak/Western Alaska bound fish to swim by. The WASSIP report that took place between 2006 and 2008 shows that out of the total Togiak run, the exploitation rate is much higher than for Bristol Bay as a whole. For example, in 2007, Togiak had a total run of just above 1 million fish. The South AK Peninsula June fishery had an exploitation rate of 7.5%, and the N AK Peninsula fishery had an exploitation rate of 6.2%, totaling 13.7%. 13.7% is not a drop in the bucket for Togiak fishermen. Togiak is a super exclusive fishery, where local residents depend on the fish for subsistence, and to make a living.