

Alaska Board of Fisheries

RC24

Public Comments

Submitted by Ralph Zimin

Mr. Chairman and fellow board members:

For the record, my name is Ralph Zimin. I'm 67 years old, a third generation Bristol Bay fisherman for over 50 years.

I support Proposal 135, which proposes windows. I believe that providing times with no fishing will allow some fish to move through the area unmolested.

I also support Proposal 144. The WASSIP study, 2006-2008, shows that Bristol Bay bound salmon contribute a very high proportion to the harvest in the SW and NW Ilnik and the Outer Port Heiden Section. The WASSIP study also shows that there is a good correlation between the contribution of Bristol Bay fish to the harvest as you move north up the Alaska Peninsula in the Northern District. For example, the contribution of Bristol Bay salmon to the Bear River fisheries is about 10%, while the contribution in the Outer Port Heiden fishery is close to 80%.

Proposal 144 provides a precautionary approach and should be an automatic safeguard for Bristol Bay stocks. During times when low runs are expected, all harvesters of the resource should share in the conservation of Bristol Bay salmon. The current regulations restrict the Northern District fisheries, as to say, when the cow has already left the barn. By the time closures occur on the Ugashik salmon, there is little to save in the Northern District fisheries. This proposal takes a precautionary approach that limits the Outer Port Heiden and Ilnik fisheries when the Bristol Bay pre-season forecast is 30M or less. This makes sense. We don't want to see a future Chignik-type disaster in Bristol Bay because of the lack of action now.

After all is said and done here, I found myself inriver in the Naknek River Special Harvest Area because the Kvichak is in trouble in 2018 and we had to sacrifice because of Kvichak River escapement. All those little numbers add up to the point where it causes us to sacrifice. This affects not only income to the fishermen, but also causes our local government budget to be strained, particularly our school district budget.

Thank you

Ralph Zimin