

Support Proposal 282

Madam Chair and Board Members, I am George Anderson, President of the Chignik Intertribal Coalition.

Exceptionally low returns of sockeye have prompted a concerted effort by our communities and tribal members in conserving our runs. At this time, additional actions are required to ensure the Sustained Yield of this resource.

Our tribal members have been adaptive to changes in resource abundance. Our sockeye salmon remains the primary element that ties the subsistence and commercial fisheries together. It is also at the core of maintaining our cultural heritage and community well-being.

Though our lakes remain biologically productive, it is clear that we are living in a time of rapid environmental change that is affecting salmon and the other natural resources our communities rely upon.

The last four years of disastrous returns of sockeye salmon to the Chignik watershed are a clear demonstration that marine and freshwater ecosystems are under increasing stress from a changing climate. We know that climate change will continue for decades into the future, thereby further stressing the ecosystems we depend on.

We should expect that migration routes, migration timings, and abundances of salmon are all going to continue responding to changing environmental conditions.

We should not believe that our assumptions and models that have worked in the past, will continue to work in the future. In this era of dramatic environmental change, salmon will be forced to adapt to changes in the environment and we have to accept this.

We believe that if there is any hope of sustaining our fisheries, that policy makers and management must be more willing to adapt as well. It is critical that we ask the hard questions about whether there are better ways to manage our salmon when we know that they are responding to new environmental conditions.

Modern science offers new tools for monitoring our resources and holds promise for improving fisheries management. These tools should be embraced by management, not discarded as a nuisance to 'managing as we always have'.

Finally, we demand that management agencies develop the **courage** to fully engage with local communities to co-produce the knowledge needed to sustainably manage our fisheries.

If adopted, Proposal 282 will provide harvest opportunity in both the Shumagin and Dolgoi Island areas while increasing the number of sockeye salmon returning to CMA. This is reasonable. These salmon fisheries should not be exempt from sharing the burden of conservation on stocks immediately bordering their fishing areas.