

3/27/22

Madam Chair, Members of the Board,

My name is Patrick Brown and I am an Area M fisherman. I am a lifelong Sand Point resident and member of the Qagan Tayagungin Tribe. I've been fishing in the Shumagin Islands nearly all my life. I was raised on a set netter every summer since I was old enough to be on the boat. When I was 21, I bought my own set net operation, and in 2013 I purchased a seine permit. I have primarily been a set net fisherman my whole life, but after bouts with carpal tunnel, arthritis, and tendonitis, as well as some slipped discs in my back, I've looked forward to graduating out of set netting and moving towards purse seining.

As you can imagine, gaining access into a Limited Entry fishery has not been cheap, but I've saved and sacrificed over the years to claw myself ahead. It's been a slow process, but I've leveraged myself in order to get ahead. In 2021, after a poor June harvest in the set net sector, I decided to go all in and I switched over to purse seining for the remainder of the season.

I own a 47 foot fishing vessel, which is by no means a large vessel, but I've found it to be a capable vessel to seine. If I am pushed out of the Shumagins, it will be a hard fought battle to brave the elements of the South Unimak area.

RC 044 seeks to push only the seine fleet out of the Shumagins and allow set gill netters to remain in the area. It seems to be, if this is a conservation issue, the Proposal 282 wouldn't want any gear in the area at all. This amendment is obviously looking to split gear groups and promote in-fighting. This is a classic Chignik strategy to divide and conquer. Just look at the policies of SEDM and Dolgoi, which has already split gear groups.

I would like to refer to PC 409, which is my on time public comment.

There is a graphic on the final page which I pulled from a NOAA article which shows the 5 year cycle which has become known as "The Blob." There are resources in my PC which point toward environmental conditions in the Gulf of Alaska between the years of 2013 and 2017. These would have been the years leading up to the catastrophic run failure.

These articles point toward environmental conditions in the North Pacific and Gulf of Alaska which are characterized by warming waters and the presence of tropical organisms in the area. During this time, there were massive die-offs of cod stocks, sea birds, as well as evidence that marine mammals were malnourished as a result of available resources.

These would have also been the years when Sockeye smolt would have been leaving Black Lake and entering the marine environment. What do you think would happen to a stock entering the ocean with poor environmental conditions and a lack of food?

The results are clear, and it seems to be that the Chignik stocks would be prime candidates for being negatively affected by poor environmental conditions.

There are many factors at play here which are outside of our control. The Blob is one of them.

Black Lake has shrunk in capacity by 30% since the 1970s, as noted by an Army Corps of Engineer report done released in 2012. You would think a 30% reduction in lake volume would constitute a 30% reduction in escapement goals, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

It seems common sense does not apply here.

In conclusion, the passing of Proposal 282 does not seem to be a prudent solution to the problems in Chignik. I think you need to look closer to the epicenter of the problem rather broadening the scope. We are not the problem here. Please oppose Proposal 282.

Thank You,

Patrick Brown