

To: Board of Fisheries

Through the Chair, Members of the Board

First of all, thank you for taking the time, being away from your families and jobs for periods of time to address all the issues put forth in front of you all. I'm sure it has been a busy one!

My name is Nicholas H. Kameroff Jr. I'm representing myself. I live in the Middle Kuskokwim River in the village of Aniak. My family have always been subsistence users. Our ancestors have lived off the salmon for many generations. We all have our own "ANS" for each year that has not been met. Through the past 20 years or so we all have seen less, and less salmon returns each year. Our people of the AYK region are the most severely impacted by this fishery disaster (is what I'm calling it). Through conservation efforts agreed on by our Inter-tribal Fisheries groups be it on the Yukon, Kuskokwim, and our brethren up north in Norton Sound had or continue to have fish disasters in the past.

Each area, as you may be aware of, has state and federal managers that can provide you all with more data and they also work with the Inter-Tribal groups within the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers. Being that our way of life, depending on the salmon resources have been spiraling and we all don't meet our ANS, which for the Kuskokwim River alone was 110K back before the salmon were impacted. Currently, we along the Kuskokwim River harvest anywhere depending on the projected forecast of returns 30-40K of King salmon, if that. We also harvest reds, chums; which are a fish of concern as they are returning at a minimal level also. And due to the low returns of Kings, chums, most familiar are harvesting coho, or silver salmon, as they are doing their portion of conservation.

There I am mentioning it again... conservation, the subsistence users bear the brunt of this as we would like to have the salmon resources rebound, which seem to be getting worse and worse. As past few years not only Kings or as you know them as "Chinook" and chums are not returning in the numbers they once used to.

I would hope the state of Alaska, fishermen in the state, as well as big money fisheries that come from Washington or the other areas that come to Alaskan waters for commercial fishing also take part in our effort to assist in the rebounding of future stocks of Chinook and chum salmon stocks. I know there has been controversial testimonies by the subsistence users as well as Area M fishermen.

However, a group that may have been overlooked is the trawling fleet that targets pollock. In my observation these trawlers have detrimental impact on the fisheries. They are supposedly regulated to fish in certain depths that I'm aware of. However, they do the most destruction of all.

The trawling fleet has been overlooked. They may have cap for all particular salmon species, however their nets get everything in the direction they are trawling; crabs, seals and the species of fish or mammals. My point here is they throw away everything but their targeted pollock and throw away wanton waste of not only thousands of Chinook and other salmon, but hundreds of thousands of fish that may be returning to the AYK area.

These trawlers have or used to have monitors that pay attention to salmon bycatch to which I question their effectiveness.

Trawling destroys anything in its path. So that's my testimony. Not sure if you all can do anything in helping the salmon rebound, however you may get the State of Alaska directors to do something about this, not profit from the fishing industry or possibly State of Alaska. All stakeholders need to partake in the dwindling resources that we depend on for generations.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Kameroff Jr.