



KENAITZE
INDIAN
TRIBE

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March 29, 2013

The Honorable Senator Peter Micciche
State Capitol Room 125
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator:

The Kenaitze Indian Tribe supports and endorses Senate Resolution No. 5 requesting that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council take action to reduce the quantity of Chinook salmon bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea trawl fisheries by setting new limits in the Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries and lowering the existing limits in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea Pollock fisheries to at least half of the current limits.

Chinook salmon are a vital part of our lives as Kahtnuht'ana, people of the Kenai. We eagerly await the call of the golden crowned sparrow each spring heralding the arrival of £uq'aka'a, the king salmon, for we know that our bodies and souls will soon be fed. We share our first king with our Elders, celebrating custom and tradition that further define our connection to our lands, waters, past and future.

Unfortunately the low 2012 Chinook salmon runs and subsequent closure drastically reduced our access to this most valued and revered resource. We do not support the present bycatch cap for Pollock fisheries or the fact that other trawl fisheries operate without bycatch limits. They are unacceptable when we and our fellow Alaska Native people are denied our fundamental food rights.

We also question estimates of bycatch and strongly support 100 percent observer coverage in all Gulf of Alaska trawl fisheries.

On behalf of our 1,430 Tribal members and those that came before us and those that will follow, we thank you for introducing this resolution. The present management and protection of Chinook salmon is flawed and lacking accurate data. The measures presented in Senate Resolution No. 5 are a step forward in protecting a resource interwoven in the lives of all who call the Kenai home.

Please do not hesitate to seek further assistance and support from the Kenaitze Indian Tribe as you work to address this important issue.

Again, chiqinik, thank you.

Sincerely,

Rosalie A. Tepp
Chairperson
Kenaitze Indian Tribe