

SOUTH K BEACH INDEPENDENT

FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1632 Kenai, Alaska 99611-1632 (907) 283-5098

Protecting and Preserving the Kasilof River Aquarian System

March 24, 2016

Alaska State Legislature

House Special Committee for Fisheries

Chairman Representative Louise Stutes

Chairman and Committee Members,

The South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Association (SOKI) is a community group consisting of those individual commercial setnet fishermen who seek to harvest salmon primarily migrating to the Kasilof River in Cook Inlet.

The selection and confirmation of Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) members is of vital concern to our interests. The BOF directs managers to conserve; which has been defined in the courts as "the controlled utilization of a resource to prevent its exploitation, destruction or neglect." Equally as important is the other directive which is to develop: "connotes management of a resource to make it available for use". Both to be considered in a 'balance'.

In AS 16.05.221 Boards of fisheries and game, the Governor and the Legislature have direction in that each member shall be selected on ... "the basis of interest in public affairs, good judgment, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the board, and with a view to providing diversity of interest and points of view in membership."

In the Governor's press release on 02.02.2016, he states, "the board will ensure the resource is managed for the maximum benefit of Alaskans." While we support the concept of managing for Maximum Sustained Yield (MSY) we would add that by establishing this as the 'mission' of the BOF that this cannot happen without the full support of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

Commercial fishing is a base line economy of Alaska and by and large offers an economy to 71% of Alaska that they normally they would not have access to if they lived within our largest community. Salmon fishermen in Alaska are overwhelming made up of residents. The benefits of the salmon industry does not stop with the 730 thousand residents of our State. We supply a healthy sustainable protein source for all those Americans who are not so lucky to live on our Alaska land.

We are pleased with the Governors attempt to balance the talent of ideas, values and expertise. Having said this we are concerned that by losing the knowledge and history of having a Bristol Bay commercial fishing experienced person on the Board will damage their collective abilities to make vital decisions based on the 'best available information'.

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However, we do not hold our support for any of these appointees. Rather we support moving forward with possibly new ways to re-construct the board process, to better align it with the complex issues that were not possible to address 60 yrs. ago by our State's constitutional conveners. It is our belief that it is time that we take a serious look on ways to improve the process, to take the contentiousness away from the individual board member appointments, to give them the "tools" and the assistance to make **clear, open, transparent and well informed decisions.**

With that, the collective voice of SOKI fully support the appointment to the AKBOF of; Alan Cain, Israel Payton and Robert Ruffner.

Thank you,


Paul A. Shadura II

Spokesperson

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