

**From:** [Emme Williamson](#)  
**To:** [House Fisheries](#)  
**Subject:** Appointees Comment - Department of Fisheries  
**Date:** Monday, August 31, 2020 7:30:12 AM

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Dear Committee Members and Chairperson,

I wanted to provide a comment based on my attendance of the virtual meeting on Friday, August 28, 2020. Listening to the testimony of the appointees brought forth concerns that I was unable to address in the two minute time allotted.

McKenzie Mitchell simply does not have the necessary background to serve. Mitchell kept saying how honored she was to serve and that she admittedly needed to study up for this 'experience of a lifetime.' Her background in the economics side of things, while important, does not convince me that she is ready to step forward in this roll. This is in part because she herself acknowledged that she needs to work hard to make herself ready. I'm glad she's willing to do that work but she is taking the place of other well-qualified candidates who reapplied. What does the Governor benefit from appointing someone with less experience and from Fairbanks, a non-coastal region?

Many public comments expressed concern at the lack of coastal representation. This needs to be addressed. I approve of John Jensen in part because of his coastal representation and his service.

Some community members mentioned Robert Ruffner at the meeting and I would like to amplify those comments. He has served two terms before, comes from a coastal region, applied for the position, but was not put forward by the Governor. Why should we have non-coastal, industry under-experienced members join the Board of Fish and not re-hire someone with direct experience? It is a question worth considering.

I already gave a comment about my deep concern over Abe Williams' appointment (his being on the Payroll for Pebble Mine, having to remove himself from votes due to his voluntary conflict) but think it is important to note that we also have someone on the board already with ties to Pebble Mine [Märit Carlson-Van Dort].

Thank you for including the public in this process. I found the meeting informative and appreciated the senators questions of the appointees.

- Emme Williamson  
Sugpiaq and Dena'ina Athabaskan

## Matt Gruening

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**From:** Rep. Louise Stutes  
**Sent:** Monday, July 27, 2020 1:02 PM  
**To:** House Fisheries  
**Subject:** FW: Board of Fisheries

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**From:** Colleen Stansbury <codlips@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 23, 2020 9:24 AM  
**To:** Rep. Louise Stutes <Rep.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Board of Fisheries

Hello, my husband Bruce Smith and I are commercial salmon trollers, we both fish our halibut IFQ. We also fish personal use sockeye salmon, subsistence crab shrimp and sablefish, and are sport fishermen. We live in the coastal community of Gustavus and rely heavily on our fishing income, as well as seafood for a fundamental part of our life and livelihood in a rural coastal community off the road system.

I am in opposition to Governor Dunleavy's nomination of Abe Williams for a seat on the Board of Fisheries. Abe Williams is a paid lobbyist for the Pebble Mine project. Sitting Abe Williams on the Board of Fish would be a blatant move by the Governor to advance the Pebble Mine. This is not acceptable. Pebble Mine is a threat to the entire Bristol Bay fishery, the most prolific salmon fishery in the world. Appointing Abe Williams will affect every coastal resident and jeopardize every commercial fisher in this state.

For similar reasons we also oppose the appointment of McKenzie Mitchell. Mitchell is from Fairbanks, and has little history of involvement in coastal Alaskan fisheries issues. These people could potentially make decisions that can catastrophically affect our lives. they do not have the necessary political history or experience.

Please support nominees who live and work in coastal communities, please support people who have experience in the fisheries they will be shaping.

Please oppose the appointment of Abe Williams and McKenzie Williams.

Thank You,  
Bruce Smith and Colleen Stansbury  
F/V Noseum

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Colleen Stansbury  
P O Box 145  
Gustavus, Ak 99826  
907-723-8875

**From:** [lynch1@gci.net](mailto:lynch1@gci.net)  
**To:** [House Fisheries](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Brian Lynch comments Re: September 3 Board of Fisheries confirmation hearing  
**Date:** Thursday, September 03, 2020 7:49:49 AM

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Dear House Fisheries Committee,

I sent this email on August 13 but I don't see it in the Documents. I wish to submit this email as testimony at today's House Fisheries Committee Board of Fisheries confirmation hearing.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Brian Lynch

Petersburg

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**From:** lynch1@gci.net <lynch1@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 6:06 PM  
**To:** 'Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov' <Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov>  
**Subject:** Brian Lynch comments Re: September 3 Board of Fisheries confirmation hearing

August 13, 2020

Dear Representative Stutes and House Fisheries Committee Members:

During your scheduled September 3 Board of Fisheries confirmation hearing I urge you to seriously consider rejecting the appointments of Abe Williams of Anchorage and McKenzie Mitchell of Fairbanks to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. While I do not personally know either of these two individuals, my comments are not personal but are provided as a concern that the Alaska Board of Fisheries members need to represent a truly balanced and knowledgeable blend of Alaska's fisheries resource users. It is also important that the members represent a reasonable cross section of Alaska geography as well. However, what we are now witnessing, via Governor Dunleavy's board appointments, is a concerted effort to "stack" the board with people who have particularly strong sport fishery connections or, are residents of interior Alaska or, both. Observers of the Board of Fisheries process know that the Kenai and Cook Inlet sport versus commercial fisheries issues are the continuously controversial focal points responsible for this "stacking". This situation, if not corrected, will continue to result in the erosion of inherent knowledge of the more complicated and complex commercial fisheries necessary to render equitable and judicious regulatory decisions.

It is important to note that during many Board cycle years, there are very few, if any, sport fishery proposals submitted for Board deliberation that have anything to do with Kenai or Cook Inlet. In fact, in some years, very few if any sport fishery proposals are submitted at all. Although the proposal book for the 2021/22 Board cycle does not yet exist, that cycle will likely be a prime example of the lack of sport fishery proposals of which I am referring to. For that reason, it is vitally important that a majority of Board of Fisheries members have a background in or a reasonable knowledge of commercial fisheries and the environments and habitats in which they occur.

Given that most of Alaska's commercial fisheries occur near and dominate the economies of coastal communities, it is paramount that those communities are well represented on the Board. Admittedly, just because someone lives in a coastal community, or that they fish commercially, does not automatically make them a good or knowledgeable Board member. However, as a former ADF&G commercial fisheries management biologist, who participated in many Board of Fisheries meetings, I found that, in general, Board members who resided in coastal communities and had a commercial fisheries background not only had a much greater understanding of the commercial fisheries that I managed, regardless of which of those communities they resided in, but also had

significant knowledge of sport fisheries as well.

In conclusion, I encourage you to work towards ensuring that the Alaska Board of Fisheries returns to a board that represents a true balance of Alaska's fishing interests and issues rather than a biased board selected to represent only a very narrow range of interests, knowledge and geographical areas.

Sincerely,  
Brian Lynch  
PO Box 1247  
Petersburg, AK 99833

**From:** [msfish@alaskan.com](mailto:msfish@alaskan.com)  
**To:** [House Fisheries](#)  
**Subject:** Board of Fish appointees  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 02, 2020 7:28:18 PM

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To: House Fisheries and Resources Committees  
Fr: Elaine O'Brien, Kodiak, Alaska  
Email: [msfish@alaskan.com](mailto:msfish@alaskan.com)

Regarding: Board of Fisheries appointees

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the confirmation of Abe Williams of Anchorage to the Board of Fisheries. Mr. Williams' longtime employment with the Pebble Partnership makes it impossible for him to make unbiased decisions regarding the subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use fisheries in the Bristol Bay region. It is clear from the outpouring of written statements and testimony already taken in other legislative hearings that Williams' appointment is strongly opposed across the state. His appointment also would mean two fish board seats were held by Pebble advocates.

I also express strong opposition to the confirmation of McKenzie Mitchell of Fairbanks to the Board of Fisheries. Simply put, Ms. Mitchell - a sport fish guide with limited experience in one region (Kodiak) - does not have the experience, skills or knowledge to serve on one the state's most demanding regulatory boards. Her statements that she is "eager and ready to learn" show her naivete.

It also is troubling that Ms. Mitchell has not responded to media queries over several months and has done nothing to introduce herself to fishery stakeholders, or answer questions about her ability to make well-informed decisions about Alaska's diverse state water fisheries. Her nomination is irresponsible and demonstrates a lack of understanding and consideration for the complexities of Alaska's subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use fisheries.

I strongly support the reappointment of John Jensen of Petersburg to the Board of Fisheries - **the only coastal representative** on the slate of seven BOF seats. That lack of inclusion is folly and shows disregard to Alaska's coastal regions.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Elaine O'Brien  
Kodiak, Alaska