

Matt Gruening

From: richardmcgahan <boulderpoint@alaska.net>
Sent: Thursday, August 27, 2020 7:22 PM
To: House Fisheries
Subject: Board of Fish Appointments

Dear Alaska State House Joint Fisheries Committee Members:

With these appointments, the board will be dominated with members from Gov. Dunleavy's home districts.

Of these nominations, I ask you to ONLY confirm John Jensen. He is a previous board member and the only candidate from a coastal community.

I also ask for you to appoint Robert Ruffner. Mr. Ruffner is a scientist and previous director of the Kenai Watershed Forum. He DID NOT get appointed for campaigning or donating to a governor's campaign, and although he requested to continue to serve, (and is not a sports fisherman, guide or commercial fisherman) he was not re-appointed by Gov. Dunleavy. Nor, did Gov. Dunleavy even reply to him. Our B.O.F. sends all of Alaska to fish on the Kenai Peninsula, and we have no representation on the board. We need a representative from the Kenai and also one who votes for the FISH. It is a slap in the face to the people of the upper Cook Inlet to have John Woods writing proposals and voting on those proposals, and regulations for the upper Cook Inlet commercial fishermen WITHOUT ever being confirmed by the legislature. This should not happen. And it looks like it could happen again.

Thank you for your consideration,
Karen McGahan
Nikiski, Alaska

From: [Molly Zaleski](#)
To: [House Fisheries](#); [House Resources](#)
Subject: Board of Fish appointments
Date: Friday, September 04, 2020 10:34:48 AM

Dear Chairwoman Stutes, Chairman Lincoln, Chairman Tarr, House Fisheries Committee members, and House Resources Committee members,

I am writing to ask you to reject the nominations of Board of Fish appointees Abe Williams, John Wood, and McKenzie Mitchell.

Abe Williams has a massive conflict of interest as the director of regional affairs for the Pebble Partnership. It is clear that he is aligned with outside interests (Northern Dynasty) and not the values of Bristol Bay residents and Alaskans as a whole. And it is clear from yesterday's hearing that he does not respect Alaskan's wishes and he does not take seriously the public comments against his appointment and Pebble Mine. He tried to laugh off and reduce the petitions to bots and outsiders, which is condescending, offensive, and hypocritical. The loudest voices are from Alaskans from the Bristol Bay region, and people elsewhere in the country have a right to defend the public resource of the largest sockeye salmon run in the world. He is not fit for this job. He will not represent Alaskans and protect our freshwater and marine resources. He will only serve himself by lining his pockets with Pebble money.

To that end, John Wood's earlier appointment to the BOF as a former Pebble employee should be reviewed and any decisions based around Bristol Bay (and Cook Inlet) should be examined to make sure he has not had undue influence in favor of Pebble Mine. Remember, the mine plans will impact not only Bristol Bay, but Lake Iliamna and Cook Inlet.

McKenzie Mitchell is less of a concern but still does not seem fit for the job. She lied on her resume calling herself a professor even though she is not listed as a professor with UAF and has attained a Master's degree but not a PhD. It raises questions on what else she may have lied about or misled on her resume. She also lacked some fundamental fisheries knowledge that, were this a regular job interview, would likely disqualify her (example: not knowing what CDQ stands for and means). It's unclear why someone so inexperienced was tapped for a role on the BOF, but it's safe to say it's not because of her fisheries expertise.

Thank you for taking public comment on these appointments. I hope the outpouring of public comments against Pebble Mine, and Abe Williams' appointment in particular, will guide your decision making.

Sincerely,
Molly Zaleski
Juneau resident

From: [Rep. Sarah Vance](#)
To: [House Fisheries](#)
Subject: District 31 BoF Constituent Pick
Date: Thursday, September 03, 2020 10:24:12 AM

From: richardmcgahan <boulderpoint@alaska.net>
Sent: Wednesday, September 2, 2020 3:54 PM
To: afsh@akleg.gov
Cc: House Resources <House.Resources@akleg.gov>; sen.peter.micciche@ak.gov; Rep. Ben Carpenter <Rep.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov>; Rep. Sarah Vance <Rep.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov>
Subject: Board of Fish Appointments

From: richardmcgahan <boulderpoint@alaska.net>
Subject: Board of Fish appointments
Date: September 2, 2020 at 3:41:15 PM AKDT
To: afsh@akleg.gov, hres@akleg.gov
Cc: Representative.Ben.Carpenter@akleg.gov,
Representative.Sarah.Vance@akleg.gov

Dear Committee Members,

The Board of Fish appointments have been political for many years, but since Governor Dunleavy has been in office, it's blatant.

The only person on the list of recommendations that is even from a coastal community is John Jensen. I certainly have not always agreed with him, but he has, at times, been willing to stand against the pressure.

Governor Dunleavy has a record as a senator of being against commercial fishing, especially in Cook Inlet. This is not only my opinion, it is documented. Any of you who served during his tenure know this to be true.

He has continued with this agenda. His campaign manager and now his Fisheries Policy Advisor is Brett Huber. He has been hanging out in the halls of the capital for many years, in many offices and capacities.

He was at one time Executive Director of the Kenai River Sportfishing Association. Of course, the founder of that organization is Bob Penney, the largest non-family member contributor to Governor Dunleavy's campaign.

What can we expect of this BOF? Last winter, Jon Woods sat as a BOF member, although never confirmed by the legislature. He wrote and voted for his own proposals

during the Upper Cook Inlet cycle for regulations.

We lived under those regulations this season. Are we going to again have un-confirmed people on the board? If this is a constitutional problem, being taken advantage of by the governor, let's fix it.

We fished a total of five days. (Due to tides and our location, we could only fish half days on two of those fishing periods.) We have 2 leases and two permits in our joint venture with our adult kids. That entitles us to 6 nets. We fish in deep water with 45 mesh gear. So we were allowed one net per permit. Five days and 2 nets for the season. This is new. And it seems with each year, and each new restriction, it never goes back to normal.

We have what is called "paired restrictions" now. (Totally un-scientific, and punitive.) This means when the in-river commercial guides have restrictions on kings, we have much stricter restrictions on sockeyes.

When the in-river fishery goes to no retention of kings, we go to NO fishing on anything. While the in-river guides continue to fish for every other kind of salmon, drifters continue to fish (only in corridors), dip netters continue to fish, sport fishermen continue to fish, guides continue to fish. The only ones out of the water are the set netters. And then the Kenai River was over escaped, even after the board raised the escapement.

A few years back, Bob Penney and his cronies tried to ban set netting on Cook Inlet. When they didn't manage that, they have seen to it that the fishery is no longer viable.

Ask any of the Commercial Fishing Biologists currently working at the Department of Fish and Game regarding Cook Inlet how much their input is required or respected? Their orders come from headquarters, and biology isn't the criteria.

This brings me back to the current recommendations for the BOF from the Governor. Apparently re-election is his criteria. The board is already tipped heavily with folks from his primary voting block of Mat-Su and Anchorage. Also, heavily sport fishing advocates. And the Governor is pushing for Pebble Mine. Does common sense tell you that we need one previous employee of Pebble (as early as 2018), and now another appointment of Abe Williams who currently draws a paycheck from Pebble Mine? What a slap in the face to Bristol Bay Fishermen.

And NO representation from the Kenai Peninsula, when the BOF thinks it's fine to send all of Alaska to the Kenai River to fish?

What a slap in the face to Kenai Peninsula residents.

I think it's time to consider others, and not just the names forwarded by the Governor. Rober Ruffner, a scientist from the Kenai Peninsula was appointed by Governor Walker, and requested re-appointment. Governor Dunleavy didn't even have the courtesy to respond to him.

We need him on the board. He's not a commercial fisherman, or a sport fisherman, and he uses science not politics for his decision criteria.

Please re-appoint him.

And then, please, someone, bring forward legislation to change this board to a professional board. One with requirements for a scientific education, experience, and no ties to any governor's campaign or lobbying organization. We have other boards with requirements.

Thank you for considering my testimony,

Richard C. McGahan, Sr.

Nikiski, Alaska