



February 16, 2015

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol Room 427
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Giessel;

Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit fishery conservation organization dedicated to the sustainability of fisheries on the Kenai and Alaska. The Governor recently appointed Roland Maw to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF). KRSA strongly opposes this appointment and urge you to reject this nomination to the BOF.

The BOF sets policy for the state's subsistence, personal use, sport and commercial fisheries. Since the Hickel administration in the early 1990s, the BOF has had a balanced representation of three commercial fishing interests, three sport / PU interests and a subsistence interest (3-3-1 approach). A balanced board allows the various fishing sectors to have a voice on the board, but not a controlling interest.

With the appointment of Mr. Maw, a staunch backer of commercial fishing interests in Cook Inlet and Alaska, the 3-3-1 balanced approach with no controlling interest by any one sector has been abandoned. The BOF has now shifted to an unbalanced situation (4-2-1) of four commercial fishing interests, two sport / PU interests, and one subsistence interest. When it takes only four votes to enact or change fishery regulations, commercial fishing interests have the ability to control the BOF process without input or potential regard for other user groups. We do not support this unbalanced approach and ask for your support in preventing this situation from becoming the new standard for BOF members.

There are also disturbing issues that question the appointee's ability to work with others towards fair and balanced solutions to the complexities of fishery conservation and the at times contentious allocations between user groups. Mr. Maw has a track record of filing state and federal lawsuits against fishery regulatory boards and management agencies, the very groups a member of the board of fisheries is supposed to work in conjunction with to set Alaska fisheries policies. Through BOF proposals, frivolous ethics complaints, and public relations efforts, he also has cast unsubstantiated dispersions against other user groups in Cook Inlet. Through legal challenges that sought to impose national standards for fishing (Magnuson-Stevens Act national standard 4 precludes resident-only fisheries) on state fishery regulations, he has fought to negate the state's ability to prosecute resident-only subsistence and personal use fisheries. Such efforts would radically displace many Alaskan residents from essential fisheries across the state.

From unbalancing the board to his track record of one-sidedness, it is difficult to see how Mr. Maw's appointment will inspire confidence that the BOF process is fair and balanced to all interested parties. KRSA urges you to support a fair and balanced approach (3-3-1) to appointments to the BOF. We respectfully ask that you vote no on the appointment of Mr. Maw to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Sincerely,

Ricky Gease, KRSA Executive Director