

Dear Sen. Giessell,

My name is Joe Ray Skrha and I am an attorney in Kenai where I have lived and practiced law for the past 32 years. I was a Kenai River Drift Boat Guide from 1985 through 1994. Now I sport fish as much as my time allows.

I wish to encourage you to confirm Mr. Robert Ruffner to the Board Of Fish. Robert's background in science and commitment to sound management of Alaska's fisheries make him an excellent candidate for the Alaska Board for Fisheries. His demonstrated respect for Alaska's constitutional principal of sustained yield and his ability to rise above the political fray, will serve him well while working to implement the Board of Fisheries core functions of conservation and development of Alaska's fisheries resources.

The Kenai Watershed Forum has supported sport fishing interests of guides and private fishermen alike while encouraging children to learn the principals of conservation even before they learn how to cast. Robert has served at the Kenai Watershed Forum's executive director for the past 18 years.

Many years ago, Gov. Steven Cowper wanted to nominate me to the BOF but since I was a fishing guide (and lawyer) my nomination was dead in the water.

During the past 25 years, all I hear is we need non-biased people on the BOF that do not have a preordained agenda. Now with Roberts nomination, you have that person who comes with clean hands. Don't look this gift horse in the mouth. His is a quality individual that has my full support.

Thank you for your support securing the appointment of Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Joe Ray Skrha

Dear Governor Walker,

I am writing to urge you to appoint Robert Ruffner to the Alaska board of fisheries.

As a lifelong Kenai resident and fisherman, I am aware of the polarizing nature of fish politics here. I thank you for your attention and for engaging over the last months, and I regret that your previous appointment went south. Rest assured you that an appointment of Mr. Ruffner will endure no such hardships, and that Robert will be universally supported by decent people in all user groups throughout the state. He is smart, fair, and able to talk with anyone. Robert has navigated our fish politics with honor while making great strides in sensibly protecting our watersheds and our fish. He will bring an important scientific perspective to our Fish Board, and much needed representation for the Kenai Peninsula.

I wholeheartedly supported your campaign and the campaigns of my local representatives. I appreciate both the need and your desire for change, and the hard work and effective leadership of my local delegation. While it pains me to see disagreement, I understand why it must happen and am hopeful that through the fray will emerge a stronger and more united Alaska. Fish fight shenanigans should not distract from work and collaboration in so many other areas important to our future.

Robert is strongly supported by my local delegation, and for good reason. Others who may oppose him will likely do so quietly as he is a hard guy not to like, and even harder to say anything bad about. I have no doubt that if you appoint Robert he will breeze through the vetting and confirmation process to be one of the strongest, fairest, and most informed members on the Board of Fish, helping to bring all users together for positive results.

Thank you for your commitment to our state. Please appoint Robert Ruffner to the Board of Fish.

Respectfully,

Todd Smith

Kenai, Alaska

Gentlemen and Genteladies

I would like express my support of Robert Ruffner's appointment to the Alaska State Board of Fish.

*There are many reasons why Robert should be chosen over the other names, but his role with the Kenai Watershed Forum should be example enough. His background will be beneficial when it comes to his ability to deal with the everyday issues he will face once on the board. It is also critical that an **unbiased representative from the Kenai Peninsula** be placed on the board, one that is well versed in the local politics of the region and the state, Robert is such a candidate.*

Mr. Ruffner has proven time and time again the ability to cope with the Kenai Peninsula's unique social, biological, and economic concerns that we face in the area. Not only will Mr. Ruffner be a true unbiased asset to the Board for his knowledge of the local area, he also brings with him a unique skill set that can best serve other areas of the state. His past experiences and role with the Kenai Watershed Forum shall prove very useful when deliberating on state wide issues and finding the best way to cope with area specific problems.

It is now up Governor Walker to carry Robert's name forward for congressional review. At this point I feel that your voice will carry the most weight in expressing the feelings of your local constituents to the Governor in regards to whom he shall appoint to the Board, I would appreciate if you brought Mr. Ruffner's name to the Governor and your colleague's attention.

I appreciate your time in regards to this vitally important matter, and for your continued hard work making our local area and state a better place to live and raise our families.

Laurence John

I'm writing today in support of Robert Ruffner's appointment to the Alaska State Board of Fish.

Robert's expertise and knowledge of fisheries ecosystems and his role with the Kenai Watershed forum make him uniquely qualified for this position on the Board.

I have worked with Robert in many different aspects within the Soldotna area and can attest to his professionalism and understanding of the need to foster and maintain a balance between healthy fisheries and the economic impacts on user groups.

Adding to this, Robert is a longtime Soldotna resident with vast knowledge of the area. His unique skillsets honed by his years with the Kenai Watershed Forum will be a great asset for the Board when finding the best solution to specific area problems.

Governor Walker is making these appointments very soon. It is my hope you will voice your support and express the feelings of your local constituents to Governor Walker, that Robert be appointed to the Alaska State Board of Fish.

Thank you for your time and continued hard work making our local area a great place to live and work.

Sincerely,

Mary Hart

Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Sen. Giessel,

Please see the e-mail below that I have sent to Karen Gillis and Gov. Walker regarding my support for Robert Ruffner for the BOF. I know it is unusual for another candidate for a position they themselves are vying for to support someone else, but I truly believe Mr. Ruffner is the best person who has applied for a position on the BOF in a long time and the Governor and the State would be remiss if they let this unique opportunity slip by. I hope you will also indicate your support for Mr. Ruffner to Governor Walker.

I would urge you to spread the word about the concerns I have outlined below. It is important that other legislators understand some of the political maneuvering that is going on currently in the capital, by some special interest groups, that depend on continuing their control over the BOF process at the expense of the Board's ethical character.

Thanks Much,

Dwight Kramer

Kenai

Co-Chairs Geissel and Costello and Resources Committee members:

I would like to strongly support the appointment of Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. I am a property owner on the Kenai River, and was a board member and President for the Kenai River Special Management Area Advisory Board for many years. I have participated in Board of Fisheries meetings for the past 30 years. I am also a fisheries economist, with experience at the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (staff economist); Sea Grant at UAF (research faculty), and have managed and operated an economic consulting firm focusing on resource issues (ResourceEcon) for the past 25 years in Anchorage.

In my opinion, there is no more difficult job in Alaska than to be a member of the Board of Fisheries. Robert Ruffner brings many years of experience in evaluating use-related issues in Alaska's waterways, on the Kenai Peninsula and elsewhere. His expertise would be a welcome addition to the Board of Fisheries. It was largely Robert's work that helped the Kenai River overcome its water quality impaired designation from oil contamination caused by outboard engines by assisting the switch to 4-stroke engines.

As you know, we have been experiencing a collapse in the Chinook salmon resource in almost all waters of Alaska in the past several years. Rather than just having the perspective of user groups fighting over the remaining 'scraps' of the resource, Robert Ruffner brings the welcome perspective to help bring changes needed to assist resource recovery, something that no other (current) member brings to the Board. He is also a reasonable and thoughtful person, and will not make decisions just to appease one or another user group if that decision will result in damages to our waterways.

I believe Robert Ruffner's perspective and expertise will greatly assist the Board of Fisheries in their difficult job to first protect our fisheries resources, and I urge you to support his confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely

Jim Richardson

Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Hello Senator Giessel,

I am a constituent of District N and am writing to encourage you to support Governor Walker's nomination of Robert Ruffner to the Board of Fish. I have known Mr Ruffner in his capacity as director of the Kenai Watershed Forum for more than twelve years. I have seen him work closely and effectively with all fishing interests - commercial, sport, subsistence, and personal use. I know of no one who is better able to bring conflicting fishing interests together in support of healthy runs of wild fish. Through his work with the Kenai Watershed Forum, he has brought together individuals with conflicting interests to work in support of Alaska fish and fish habitat.

While Robert obtains fish for his family through dip netting, he will advocate for all fishing interests, not just his own. It matters little where he happens to live and work, Robert will make his decisions based on the best available science. He will make a fine addition to the Board of Fish.

I hope he can count on your support.

Sincerely,
John A DeLapp
Anchorage, AK 99504

Hello Senators!

This is Mary Jackson, former Senate Staff to Senator Wagoner, Senator Torgerson and Senator Fischer. All elected from the Kenai Peninsula.

I wanted to reach out to each of you about Robert's appointment to the Board of Fish.

Simply put - he would be an asset.

I've known Robert for many years and worked with him on many projects on the Kenai. All of them enhanced fish habitat. Not one time have I seen him act in an unprofessional manner. Not once. Not an easy thing to do on the Peninsula when "fish" could be affected.

Robert's interest is in science - protecting the habitat; especially the Kenai River.

As a scientist, he will review issues logically, not politically.

There may (or may not) be some angst that he was appointed by Gov. Walker. I personally don't care - but then I'm not involved with party politics anymore.

I just wanted you to hear from me, someone you know, who is also a long time Kenai Peninsula resident.

There are very few people I would go to bat for - he's one of them.

Please act favorably on his appointment.

Mary Jackson

PS: retirement is GREAT!!!

Kenny Bingaman
Soldotna, Ak. 99669

Esteemed Legislators,

I am sending this email to you today to ask you not to confirm Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fish. Mr. Ruffner is not what he seems. I have lived in Alaska and on the Kenai Peninsula for over 40yrs. He and others are giving the impression that he is an “environmentalist”, “habitat specialist”, “resource protectionist” and nothing could be farther from the truth. Of course he has sport fished, of course he has dip netted, but so has most of the commercial fishermen on the Kenai Peninsula.

The Kenai Watershed Forum that he is a co-founder of is inundated with commercial fishing interest. it’s board is made up of 54% commercial fishers or people connected to commercial fishing. He has gotten wide support of commercial fishing people from the Kenai Peninsula;

Ken Tarbox, 16yrs Soldotna ADF&G Commercial fishing head biologist, who while he was there declared that his department at ADF&G would manage the Kenai River and Cook Inlet for a Commercial fishing priority, John McCombs, East Side Set Netter, Robert Correia, East Side Set Netter, Rep. Sen. Peter Micciche-Soldotna, Cook Inlet Drift Commercial Fisherman, Dwight Kramer, founder of Joe Fisherman Coalition, Soldotna, who’s board of directors is inundated with commercial fishermen. Yesterday Brent Johnson a Kenai Peninsula Borough assembly member got a resolution pushed thru that recommended Robert Ruffner as Chairman of the Board of Fish. Brent Johnson is an East Side Set Net commercial fisherman, who was rejected by the legislature in 2012 as a nominee by then Gov. Parnell because it would have slanted the BOF with a commercial fish majority. The City of Kenai today also sent forth a resolution recommending Robert Ruffner, there are 3 sitting Kenai City Council members that are commercial fishermen.

When was the last time you saw commercial fishermen support anyone who is labeled “an environmentalist”, “a habitat specialist”, “a resource protectionist”? My friends, the answer is never. Such people are commercial fishing's worst enemies. In fact Roland Maw was connected to this entity by the past president of KWF, Jim Butler aka Commercial fisherman.

There has been 3 studies by the Kenai Watershed Forum to date that have been done to illuminate Kenai River Guides and sport fishing power boats from the Kenai River. All of these studies, (attempts), failed. it all began with;

a “Hydrocarbon study” financed and performed by this entity. It directly targeted/blamed the Kenai River Guides 2 stroke outboards for high levels of hydrocarbons and stated that continued guide boat impact would devastate the aqua structure of the river and all of its inhabitants, especially the salmon. They called for an outright ban on all power boats. Fortunately,

technology beat them to the punch by the major outboard manufacturers developing and producing 4 stroke outboards that reduced hydrocarbon levels to a non-issue in the Kenai River.

Within 2yrs, there was another study conducted. This time it was called a water clarity study in association with a “boat wake” study that involved damage to the Kenai River’s banks by power boat traffic. Immediately guide boats were targeted/blamed as the problem with bank erosion due to the weight of guide boats filled with clients. Not only was a ban on guide boats suggested, but Kenai River State Parks actually limited the number of clients in a guide boat during the month of July to 4 people. Again, guides and the industry corrected the problem quickly by proving that raising the horsepower, which had been set at 35 since 1985 to 50hp, thereby enabling full boats to get on step faster and produce much smaller waves. Raising the horsepower limit made total sense as no manufacture made 35hp outboards for almost 20yrs at that time. Again, technology thwarted the Kenai Watershed Forums accusations. However, Kenai River Guides never again got back to full boat loads of clients that they had had before, the law remains, only 4 clients allowed in a Guide boat during the month of July. A loss in revenue that for them was never regained. The water clarity study did not go away until common sense information to the Kenai Watershed Forum forced its demise. It was noted that on the dates they said the water was at its worst, that large tidal activity which back flowed as far up the Kenai River as mile 16 brought with it the bottom of the river’s mud and churned up waters from commercial fishing boats, from the mouth of the river. The test study area was at river mile 12. Also they were enlightened to the fact that the Kenai River was a glacial fed river with frequent flooding due to rainfall and the Snowy Glacier ice dam which releases large amounts of water on a bi-yearly schedule. It took a while for them to finally understand how flawed their study was and actually fought with us and continued it until rational common sense ended the study.

And a look at the list of donors to the Kenai Watershed Forum shows another truth;

Ken Tarbox has donated money to the Kenai Watershed Forum. Peter & Erin Micciche, Cook Inlet Drift Commercial fisherman, have donated money to this entity. Robert and Tara Ruffner have donated \$5,000 to the KWF. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife have donated \$25,000. Sheldon and Debbie Ruffner donated a \$1,000. Robert Correia, East Side Set Netter, donated a \$1,000. Paul Dale, Snug Harbor Seafood’s, donated \$1,000. United Cook Inlet Drifters Association, the largest commercial fishing association on the Kenai Peninsula donated \$500. Cook Inlet Keeper donated \$500. Even the State of Alaska donated \$20,000 under the Capital Projects Budget, wonder who in Juneau got that put through,(Chenault whose chief of staff is Tom Wright, who held the same job at United Cook Inlet Drift Association as Roland Maw)? And who is Cook Inlet Keeper?

Cook Inlet Keepers Board

Benjamin Jackinsky, President Commercial Fisherman

Mako Haggerty , vice Pres Commercial Fisherman

Mike O Meara Commercial Fisherman

Nancy Waiinwright Commercial Fisherman

Rob Ernst Commercial Fisherman

Tom Evans Commercial Fisherman

Willow Kiing Commercial Fisherman

Peter Mos Commercial Fisherman

Shannyn Moore Commercial Fisherman

<http://inletkeeper.org/about/board>

In closing I would like to say again, please do not confirm Robert Ruffner to the Board of Fish. This seat has always been a sport fishing seat and it should be again to return an equal balance in interest numbers to the Board. 3 Commercial Fishing Seats, 3 Sport Fishing Seats and 1 Subsistence Seat.

Thank you for your time,

Kenny Bingaman, Kenai Peninsula Resident.

Dear Senator Giessel,

As a sport fisherman in Alaska, I am writing in support of Robert Ruffner for the Alaska Board of Fisheries. Robert's background in science and commitment to sound management of Alaska's fisheries make him an excellent candidate for the Alaska Board for Fisheries. His demonstrated respect for Alaska's constitutional principal of sustained yield and his ability to rise above the political fray, will serve him well while working to implement the Board of Fisheries core functions of conservation and development of Alaska's fisheries resources.

Thank you for your support securing the appointment of Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Sincerely,

Andrew P. Feild

Anchorage, AK 99516
