April 9, 2015

Representative Louise Stutes
Chair, House Special Committee on Fisheries
State Capitol Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Endorsement of Robert Ruffner for appointment to the Alaska Board of Fisheries

Dear Representative Stutes:
     I am writing today on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Alaska Salmon Alliance to express our support for the appointment of Robert Ruffner to the Board of Fisheries. Several ASA Board Members have known Robert since he moved to Soldotna in 1996, almost twenty years ago and began the formation of the Kenai Watershed Forum
     Robert is well-known for his leadership in the development of the Kenai Watershed Forum, a diverse group of residents that represent all user groups, businesses and "stakeholders" dedicated to working together for the health of our rivers and streams in Southcentral Alaska.   As a tireless advocate, Robert developed and refined conflict resolution techniques while working on contentious issues related to water quality and land use on the Kenai Peninsula over the past several years. During that time, Robert a man of patient demeanor, repeatedly demonstrated his ability to defuse conflict and emotion on complex issues, and to distill out solutions that cut across competing interests. Robert focuses on his understanding of science while weighing economic and personal interests. Robert also treats all parties he works with in complex conversations with respect, regardless of their point of view. Robert has a keen intellect and his past successes demonstrate he does his research on complicated technical issues. He knows this is requisite to contribute to a fair and respectable two-way exchange important in any public regulatory process.
     The ASA is confident that Robert will contribute well in the Board process, not just with the complex Cook Inlet issues, but with issues in regions throughout the State.
     Sincerely,

Arni Thomson
Executive Director