

Statement by John Wood - BOF Gov appointee

By way of background, after fulfilling my commitment to the Louisiana Legislative Council, I moved to Alaska in 1971 and have made my home here continuously since. My wife and I have been married for 42 of those years and have raised 3 children here in Alaska. Upon my arrival, I worked for the Alaska Court System as a Court Attorney, Standing Master and Acting Probate Master before going into private practice. I am now retired but still work piecemeal on contract with the State pursuant to which I advise and report directly to the Governor on primarily labor related issues. Nothing related to fisheries is involved in that contract but regardless, I have at every BOF meeting in my disclosure statement, disclosed the existence of this contract and the Board has never questioned that it does not constitute a conflict of interest.

I believe strongly in volunteering my time and talents to my community and have served in many many positions in my 49 years here from: being elected for 3 terms for almost 10 years on the Anchorage Assembly and served as Chairman for one of those years; former active member of the Mt McKinley Lions Club which among other civic events put on the Miners & Trappers Ball in Anchorage; Board Member of Greater Anchorage Inc during the turmoil where Fur Rendezvous was on the brink of collapse and we turned it around financially in less than a year for which I was awarded the prestigious Vern Johnson award for dedication to the festival; Chair of the MatSu Animal Control Board for numerous years adjudicating animal related infractions and drafting related legislation; Member of the Mat Su Borough Fish & Wildlife Commission for several years which dealt with said issues from the perspective of the Mat Su; Chairman of the Mat Su Salary & Emoluments Committee to recommend salary adjustments for public officials; President of the Alaska Sled Dog Racing Association which puts on the annual Fur Rondy Open Sled Dog Championship in downtown Anchorage; Director on the Montana Creek Dog Mushers that sponsor the Mat Su Sled Dog Championship; Director on Board of Alaska Powerboat Racing Association when I was much younger and foolish racing and setting new world records on outboard hydroplanes.

In 2013, I accompanied Sen. Dunleavy as staff and handled the fisheries issues for his office. As such, I not only attended the pertinent BOF sessions but also took it upon myself to physically travel on my own time and nickel to actually visit the fishing sites to speak directly with several eastside setnetters as well as tour two

processing facilities to get their perspective on the BOF process. As directed by the Senator, my emphasis during this was focused almost entirely on the health of our fish stocks and ensuring the best chance for them to flourish and return to their historical levels in both size and numbers throughout all species. That remains my emphasis to this day and I approached this recent BOF cycle with that as my over-riding goal.

I continued reaching out to all stakeholders after my initial appointment to this BOF and again on my nickel and my own time, I attended the North Pacific Council Salmon Committee in Homer and while there met with several seine netters as well as a Homer processor. On my return trip home, I stayed an extra day and met with eastside setnetters Chris Every, Gary Hollier and Ken Coleman about their fishery and the legislative efforts underway to provide a buy-out system that was being moved by Sen. Micciche. Their arguments were persuasive and, at the BOF meeting, I spoke out strongly in favor and voted for their proposal that provided backfill provisions which is a key component of that buy-back program. Also met with Roland Maw and others at the UCIDA headquarters where I was given my first opportunity to read their federal 9th Circuit lawsuit as well as listen to their concerns being considered at the upcoming BOF cycle.

Not unexpectantly, this last cycle of the BOF dealt with many contentious issues with strongly held beliefs and convictions by all stakeholders involved. Nobody who has actively participated in past BOF meetings would have predicted what occurred. Stakeholders, who had been bitter rivals and barely spoke with each other, actually opened dialogue and negotiated approaches that each could live by and preserve their lifestyle. Who would have thought that KRSA, KRPB and Eastside setnetters would actually work together to create a plan for that area? They came extremely close to a total agreement but fell short on one or two of the issues. Nonetheless, the dialogue was opened and I hope that it continues into the next round. Equally amazing is that the Mat Su Fish & Wildlife Commission and the Northern Setnetters did the same and together succeeded in strengthening the paired restrictions while making them fairer. Additionally, at the Kodiak meeting, as it was winding down, their advocacy group Kodiak Salmon Workgroup, initiated their RC 131 which reached out to create a study on ALL fisheries from Unimak Island to Prince William Sound including Cook Inlet patterned on the highly successful WASSIP study conducted in Western Alaska.

This Kodiak RC131 was subsequently supported by a Assembly Resolution of the Mat Su Borough Assembly.

There are those that wish to perpetuate the "fish wars" for whatever reason whether that be political, economic or simply harboring old grudges. My approach was, and will continue to be, to: 1st listen and learn from all perspectives; 2nd act as a catalyst to bring competing parties together in a constructive setting and then step back and encourage them to work out their differences as nobody knows their issue better than them. Obviously just as each of you are, in your legislative role, prepared to make a decision, the parties will be much better served and the result will be accepted and honored if it is their own "plan" that they created.

I ask for your vote for confirmation and if you have any questions, please reach out. As always I can be reached at ~~907-354-0722~~ or at ~~timwood@matline.net~~ and would welcome an opportunity to speak with you further if you find a moment.

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