

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE RESOURCES STANDING COMMITTEE

April 8, 2015

3:13 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senator Mia Costello, Vice Chair
Senator John Coghill
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Bert Stedman
Senator Bill Stoltze
Senator Bill Wielechowski

MEMBERS ABSENT

All members present

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

CONFIRMATION HEARINGS

Board of Fisheries

Robert Ruffner - Soldotna

Orville Huntington - Huslia

- CONFIRMATIONS ADVANCED

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

ROBERT RUFFNER, Appointee
Board of Fisheries
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as re-appointee to the Board of Fisheries.

ORVILLE HUNTINGTON, Appointee
Board of Fisheries
Huslia, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Testified as re-appointee to the Board of Fisheries.

LESLIE MORTON, President
Board of Directors
Kenai Watershed Forum
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

TOM CORR, representing himself
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

REED MORISKY, representing himself
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Huntington's appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

RICK COOK, City Manager
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Huntington's and Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

DWIGHT KRAMER, representing himself
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

SUZANNE LITTLE, representing herself
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

MARTIN LUNDE, lobbyist
Southeast Alaska Seiners Association
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Huntington's and Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

ED SCHMITT, Chairman
Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition (KAFC)
Soldotna, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

JOSEPH-RAYMAND SKRHA, representing himself
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

BRIAN GABRIELLE, Vice Mayor
Representing the Kenai Mayor and City Council
Kenai, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Said Resolution 2014 was unanimously passed supporting the appointment of Mr. Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

MIKE NAVARRE, Mayor
Kenai Peninsula Borough

POSITION STATEMENT: Supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries.

ACTION NARRATIVE

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CHAIR CATHY GIESSEL called the Senate Resources Standing Committee meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Coghill, Costello, Stedman, Stoltze, and Chair Giessel.

CONFIRMATION HEARING **Board of Fisheries**

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CHAIR GIESSEL announced the consideration of the governor's appointees to the Board of Fisheries and invited Mr. Ruffner to the table. He was appointed on March 23 and his term expires on June 30, 2015. His reappointment would be effective on July 1, 2015, for a term that expires in June 2019.

ROBERT RUFFNER, re-appointee to the Board of Fisheries, Soldotna, Alaska, said he knows how important fisheries are in the State of Alaska and he is honored to serve on it.

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SENATOR MICCICHE joined the committee.

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SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI joined the committee.

MR. RUFFNER said he is 46 years old, had lived in Alaska since 1996 and had been married for 22 years. He graduated from the University of Minnesota with a focus on geology and always had a passion for rivers. He did modeling and statistical work in grad school.

When Mr. Ruffner moved to Alaska, he came for the life style and the adventure, but he found himself looking for a job. He became a director for a non-profit that helped watersheds on the Kenai Peninsula. It has been in his job since 1997. He has also served on the Planning Commission and the Road Service Area Board for the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

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He harvests most of his fish in the Kenai and Kasilof personal use (PU) fishery and has been doing rod and reel fishing since he was a kid; he has caught all species of salmon as well as other species. He commercial fished in the mid to late 90s on a Cook Inlet drift gillnet boat.

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MR. RUFFNER said he felt that he could make a positive contribution to the board because of his commitment to public service and ongoing interest in Alaska's fisheries statewide. He believes in the Sustainable Salmon Policies that guides the board's decisions. He knew this would be a challenging job, but he knows the players. The Board of Fisheries is unique and he is committed to that process.

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SENATOR MICCICHE disclosed that he knows Mr. Ruffner having served with him on the Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership Steering Committee and having partnered with him on industrial projects and pipeline work.

SENATOR STEDMAN wondered if he owns any power boats.

MR. RUFFNER said he has access to several power boats through his employment and he owns a raft with a kicker.

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SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI commented that he didn't know why Mr. Ruffner wanted this job, but appreciated him offering to take it. His community is very reliant on sport and personal use fishing and dip netting in the Kenai River. They don't fish in the Mat-Su Valley very much, "because the fish just aren't there." The big underlying issue is the balance that has existed on the board, which some have said has existed since Governor Hickel, with three sport fish interests, three commercial fish interests and a subsistence interest. The debate is going on as to whether that is still something that should be done. Most people would agree that the person before him held a sport fish

seat. Anchorage has been represented for decades and now there is no Anchorage person. He asked Mr. Ruffner if he identified himself as a sport fish person and should the board continue that balance or is it time to change?

MR. RUFFNER reflected that the rules that govern allocation decisions are important. Each criterion is weighed differently depending on the fishery, one of them being the number of participants. For popular fisheries, urban populations will have to be weighed heavily.

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said Senator Stoltze has a bill to give personal use a fishing priority and asked what he thought about that.

MR. RUFFNER answered that he is a dip netter and appreciates the sentiment, but the Sustainable Salmon Policy says the burden of conservation should be shared by all fisheries in close proportion to each fishery's respective use consistent with state and federal law. This means when it comes time to conserve these fish that they all need to share in that.

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SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI stated that personal use should have priority.

MR. RUFFNER said subsistence is already a priority and creating another priority for king salmon would be difficult to implement, because there is some harvest of king salmon in times of low abundance in the commercial fishery now, but not for PU. Another consideration is if people feel like they need more area on the Kenai River because it is getting crowded would the board be obligated to evaluate that and allow more area for sockeye dipnetting. The immediate concern is that when Chinook runs are good, sport fishermen fish very close to the line where the personal use fishery starts, which could lead to conflicts.

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SENATOR STOLTZE asked the substantive differences between personal use and subsistence fisheries, because they are the only two Alaska resident fisheries.

MR. RUFFNER answered that subsistence has been decided by the courts, but he believes that Alaskans should come first. He would want to consider how much participation comes from Alaskans and from people outside of Alaska, and he would want to

make sure the smaller commercial boats in coastal areas have their times and areas to fish.

SENATOR STOLTZE observed that the governor wants the board to be represented by a majority of commercial interests and asked why they should view this appointment as being different than the previous one. He sees the exact same people supporting him.

MR. RUFFNER said that he hadn't heard what Senator Stoltze said and reiterated that he has zero financial interest in commercial fish, one distinction between him and the previous nominee. It is important to maintain balance on the Board of Fisheries, because they draw from the allocation criteria that the legislature has passed that include the histories of the fisheries and the number of participants, both which reflect heavily on sport fishing. He said Alaska is a big state and for a board member to readily identify himself in one camp or the other is not the way to proceed.

SENATOR STOLTZE asked what his past position on catch and release was and if it had changed.

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MR. RUFFNER answered that he has participated in catch and release fisheries, but he doesn't do it very much, because once he catches a fish he doesn't feel the need to keep catching them. But he related that in visiting other parts of the world, most recently, Costa Rica, where he fished for tarpon, a trophy fish, he had spent a fair amount of money and helped out their economy. So, he personally doesn't have any difficulty with catch and release fisheries.

SENATOR STEDMAN said commercial fishing creates jobs, employs thousands of people on the coast and is good for the economy of the State of Alaska. It has been one of the steadiest income producing sections of the economy for over 100 years and he hoped Mr. Ruffner's zero interest in commercial fishing would broaden, because of that.

On the subject of subsistence and priority use, he said it would be just as dangerous to have a commercial priority, because most of his district doesn't have the opportunity to go to Costco and some communities don't have the cash to go to the store. He wanted to know his thoughts on subsistence lifestyles in some areas in the state.

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MR. RUFFNER said that the word "financial" was not in his statement about his "zero stake in commercial fishing." He doesn't have a lot of experience living in those rural areas, but recognize what Senator Stedman was saying and would be respectful of communities that don't have much cash in their economy.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked how he feels about personal use fisheries being shut down in Kasilof without the other fisheries being restricted, too.

MR. RUFFNER replied that he really wants to share the burden as provided in the Sustainable Fisheries Policy. In that case, it wouldn't make any sense to shut down the PU fishery before shutting the commercial fishery, because they harvest a lot more fish.

SENATOR MICCICHE said he is unaware of any time the personal fishery has been shut down since it opened, although the city manager in the audience was indicating once. He asked if Mr. Ruffner was aware of any restrictions that haven't been paired where PU is shut down last.

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MR. RUFFNER replied that he'll agree with the city manager, but he didn't remember it happening. It's important to have personal use opportunities and he didn't want those to be taken away out of proportion to the total harvest of fish.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked how he felt about the addition of a new subsistence impact on the upper Kenai River that is important to every user group on the Kenai.

MR. RUFFNER answered that it's a bad idea to do it in the Kenai River, because those fisheries are in federal waters, where it is inappropriate for that gear type. Other gear types should be and have been used. Dip nets have been available in the Russian River and outside of the normal PU area along stretches of the Kenai River, but those opportunities had not been utilized very fully because of the potential to harm other fisheries, specifically Rainbow Trout and Dolly Varden, that have very strict regulations.

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SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said the Kenai and Kasilof PU fisheries have increased in recent years to the point of being out of control and asked if he supported any of the proposals to limit

boat use, cut the number of fish that can be taken or to charge fees.

MR. RUFFNER replied no, particularly to limit the catch. His family of four will eat 40-50 fish and the PU limit is 55 fish, which is an appropriate number. In places where the volume of people coming to the Kenai River have increased the board tried to protect the sensitive areas through securing funding for fencing and signage and coming up with appropriate rules for staying out of the coastal dune features that protect the City of Kenai from eroding away.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owned the property on the Kasilof River and the Division of Mining, Land and Water managed the land. People were using those areas very heavily - camping and riding vehicles in dunes and areas that were doing damage - so, they worked with the state, the Kasilof Historical Society and the legislature to get some funding to construct some fencing that would keep people out of the more sensitive areas but continue to allow them to camp on the beach and have access to the fisheries.

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SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI asked if Mr. Ruffner agreed with those windows for the drift fleet closures so that Southcentral Anchorage and MatSu/Eagle River dip netters could fish, usually Friday through Saturday or Sunday.

MR. RUFFNER said he in general agreed with the concept of limiting commercial gear in the days preceding weekends, but wanted to look at data to see how effective the windows are. The jury is still out on that.

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI quipped that he hoped if Mr. Ruffner was approved that he would make sure there was fish coming through on the weekends.

MR. RUFFNER responded that he would try and added that he has a 20-year track record of putting the fish first.

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said emergency openers are a frustration when people take the weekend off or go down during the week when it's expected to be closed and there is an emergency opener the day before. It's, at least, perceived that the fish are caught and don't get through to people who have made the trip down there.

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MR. RUFFNER said he was a believer in using firm data to manage escapement goals that have proven to be good for maximum sustained yield. So, he didn't want to constrain the department by limiting their authority for emergency openings on the Kenai River. He was more concerned about the emergency openings around the Kasilof River because of trying to get more Chinook to the Kenai and where the managers feel like they have had to exercise more emergency openings in the special harvest area at the mouth of the river. That fishery makes him nervous, because there is very little to no data on the Chinook entering there. Special harvest areas are terminal in nature and are designed to catch a lot of fish and don't discriminate between sockeye and Chinook.

SENATOR STOLTZE asked what he speculates is the reason conservation groups are interested in having him on the board.

MR. RUFFNER said he hadn't paid much attention, but he hoped they were looking at his successful record of solving environmental issues by working with environmental groups and industry.

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SENATOR COGHILL asked if he was familiar with the low returns of Chinook on the Yukon/Tanana and Koyukuk Rivers.

MR. RUFFNER answered only a "very tiny bit." When he applied for this job he tried to walk around the different areas in which the board meets and tried to learn a little bit about each area. When he got to the Kuskokwim he recognized that it was "another animal" than what he was more familiar with.

SENATOR COGHILL said that some subsistence folks can get the best of both worlds on the Yukon and can probably more easily get commercial drift nets, but a lot of Interior people have to go far and wide to get their subsistence, because the Tanana River is highly impacted by what goes on in the Yukon River.

The Gulkana area in the Copper River is highly impacted by those PU and subsistence fish rather than commercial fish. So, it probably has a highly contentious zone with regard to the fast incoming runs. Had he looked into the different dynamics there?

MR. RUFFNER promised him he would do his homework, but asked him to clarify if he was referring specifically to the Copper River subsistence and Chuitna dip net fisheries.

SENATOR COGHILL answered yes.

MR. RUFFNER said he floated on a raft by the Copper River on his way to Cordova and was encouraged that the limits were increased in the last cycle. Fairbanks friends have related their stories about getting permits and fishing down there.

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SENATOR COGHILL remarked that they are probably recipients of some benefits from commercial fishing in that the Prince William Sound has a fish hatchery north of the Copper River. He said the fact that Fairbanks and Glennallen-up-to-Delta depend upon two systems of rivers is pretty significant whereas Anchorage has the one fishery crowded around the Kasilof and the Kenai.

He asked Mr. Ruffner why he quit his previous employment.

MR. RUFFNER replied that he helped found the Kenai Watershed Forum and believes strongly in its mission, but he had planned on stepping down from being director for quite a while, but he wanted something challenging and intellectually stimulating to do next.

SENATOR STOLTZE said he wouldn't fish, because boats were trying to drown or swamp fishermen and asked what the board could do about that.

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MR. RUFFNER responded that he hadn't seen that happen, but had heard from a number of people that it does. Intentionally trying to harm another individual in any situation is criminal behavior and they should be prosecuted.

SENATOR STOLTZE related his experience with gillnetters who almost drowned some Anchorage individuals.

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CHAIR GIESSEL said 29 people were on line and clearly the committee would not make it through all of them and invited them to email their written testimony to her office. All the testimony will go online with these appointees.

SENATOR COSTELLO said she heard great things about him, but the biggest concern is changing the balance of the board and asked if that is a valid concern.

MR. RUFFNER replied that it is a valid concern for people who perceive he will not represent the sport fishing view, but the reality is that he will support the sport fishing community following the allocation criteria. He fully realizes the value of sport fishing in his community.

SENATOR WIELECHOWSKI said he had a number of questions, but would ask them in the State Affairs Committee.

SENATOR MICCICHE noted a pile of diverse support letters from every city on the Kenai and invited him to tell about how he brought folks together on the Kenai hydrocarbon problem.

MR. RUFFNER related that the problem started with maintaining water quality on the Kenai River, but no data had been collected. So, he asked for everyone to pony up some money to collect comprehensive data. The base line data led them to discover up to several hundred gallons of gasoline being dumped into the Kenai River a day. They then worked with every user group to understand the problem. It took a while, but they used science to inform their decision and that is what brought people together.

SENATOR MICCICHE said Cook Inlet is challenging, because a lot of people fish in a small area that has a good amount of fish and a couple of rivers that are pretty challenged, and asked how he was going to use data to ensure a better return when possible to the rivers of the Mat-Su Borough, which is where a lot of the friction comes from.

MR. RUFFNER said he is going to use data, but the most challenging part of his job as a scientist will be recognizing that they don't have the data they wished they had to make their decisions. They do know that the Valley has about eight stocks of concern of varying degrees of severity. He will weigh that very heavily as a guy who puts fish first. Concerns are for yield, which means excess amount of fish that are available for harvest. But if they get to the point of conservation concerns he will use that data very carefully to make sure the fish will be used to sustain the runs.

SENATOR MICCICHE asked if he is willing to restrict commercial fishing if the data proves that returns are challenged to northern district rivers.

MR. RUFFNER replied absolutely, and he doesn't care if he loses his job over it, because it's more important to maintain the state's fisheries.

SENATOR MICCICHE said he heard that Mr. Ruffner is an environmental extremist and asked him to talk about some of his partnerships with industry he has been partnered with for the last 12 years.

MR. RUFFNER replied that people can label him any way they want, but he is proud of his record of environmental work. People need to look at the facts. He raised a lot of money from the oil and gas industry receiving close to \$1 million from Chevron, Unocal, ConocoPhillips, Apache, HilCorp, Tesoro, and more. He said that right now Apache is trying to build a road to access some oil and gas and they are going to cross some salmon streams and his organization is who they called to help figure out a mitigation plan.

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CHAIR GIESSEL thanked him and invited Mr. Huntington to come forward. She said he was appointed in July 2012 and his re-appointment would be effective on July 2015 for a term that expires in June 2018.

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ORVILLE HUNTINGTON, re-appointee to the Board of Fisheries, Huslia, Alaska, said he serves as Wildlife and Parks Director for the Tanana Chiefs Conference. The key issues for him are personal use and subsistence. He grew up with it for 59 years in the cultural context of his Athabascan ways. He also understands adaptation to city life. Family and friends have moved to Anchorage and Fairbanks and they have to be taken care of, too.

He was a commercial fisherman for 20 years before his permit sunsetted. He has a lot of board experience to draw from as his Dad, Sydney Huntington served one term on the board and one term in the legislature. His uncle served two decades on the Board of Game. So, he knows a lot about politics, too.

MR. HUNTINGTON said he relies on science and has a wildlife biology degree from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF). He bases his decisions on science not guessing and has a lot of traditional history to back up the science.

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SENATOR STOLTZE thanked him for carrying on the tradition of his family embodied by his father, Sydney Huntington, who was awarded for public service.

SENATOR COGHILL said he hoped he got appointed and brings more good information from the Interior river ways to the Board of Fisheries.

SENATOR MICCICHE thanked Mr. Huntington for reapplying.

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CHAIR GIESSEL, finding no further questions, opened public testimony.

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LESLIE MORTON, President, Board of Directors, Kenai Watershed Forum, Kenai, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries saying he is their current executive director. Their mission statement is working together for a healthy watershed on the Kenai Peninsula. The forum has a three-part approach: research, restoration and education. The members established and maintain comprehensive research programs to provide quality data to expand the knowledge of watershed and fish habitat. The Kenai Watershed Forum works to restore and repair conditions that threaten the long term health of their watershed and their education programs reach thousands of students annually.

In order to meet their goal of working together and investing in their community, the Kenai Watershed Forum has always strived to have a balanced board of directors. The current board consists of two commercial fishermen, two sport fishermen, and she is a dip netter with no financial stake in commercial fishing. The board also has educators, small business owners, medical professionals and contractors. At no time has the board had a majority of commercial fishermen.

She said that Mr. Ruffner had dedicated his professional and much of his personal life to improving the quality of fish habitat. While executive director of the Watershed Forum he has personally been responsible for the restoration of miles and miles salmon habitats through culvert replacement and fish passages. He is not one-sided. He is actively involved in many aspects of their community and is well-respected on the Kenai Peninsula. For example, Mr. Ruffner was the 2008 Soldotna Chamber of Commerce person of the year.

Most important, his willingness to reserve judgement and listen carefully to all sides before reaching a decision makes him well suited to serve on the Board of Fisheries.

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TOM CORR, representing himself, Soldotna, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries. He lives on the Kenai River and is a 58-year resident of Alaska. He supports Mr. Ruffner because he will represent the fish, not a user group. But he will support all user groups fairly.

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REED MORISKY, representing himself, Fairbanks, Alaska, supported Mr. Huntington's appointment to the Board of Fisheries. He said Mr. Huntington had served on the board with distinction, showing that he has the ability and skills to make balanced decisions regarding fisheries resources. His cultural knowledge is unsurpassed and has been a great benefit to all Alaskans, in particular, to the board when decisions are being made. He consistently completes the due diligence necessary to make the decisions to fairly regulate and allocate the fisheries resources.

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RICK COOK, City Manager, Kenai, Alaska, said the City Council unanimously passed a resolution strongly supporting Mr. Ruffner's appointment to the Board of Fisheries. They also supported Mr. Huntington's appointment. His professional accomplishments as executive director of the Kenai Watershed Forum are impressive. They city has worked with him on a number of fish related issues. For example, he provided the wisdom, foresight and leadership to solve the hydrocarbon water quality issue in the Kenai River that had been listed as an impaired water body by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). In two years his leadership resulted in the Kenai River being removed from the EPA's water body listing. This required him to bring together a lot of diverse interests.

Without exception, Mr. Ruffner's goals and interests have been based in what is in the best interests of the resource. He has never been a representative of an industry or a specific user group. He is the member of the Board of Fisheries that the framers of Alaska's Constitution envisioned when creating the board process.

MR. COOK noted that the City of Kenai also supported Mr. Huntington. He is a wonderful representative who is approachable

and willing to share his unique knowledge related to fisheries issues with the city.

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DWIGHT KRAMER, representing himself, Kenai, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries. He is a private angler sport fisherman from Kenai and had been involved with the Board of Fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet issues since 2002 and had not witnessed a better qualified candidate to step forward for a seat on the Board of Fisheries than Mr. Ruffner. He has always respected him for his knowledge, openness and integrity.

Mr. Ruffner is also a very compassionate person. When he realized that his efforts to reduce hydrocarbons in the Kenai River would disenfranchise many participants that couldn't afford to switch to a four-stroke motor he took it upon himself to acquire grants and funding for a buy-back program to help with the financial burden on these users.

He has a good understanding of the relationship with respect to resources and management for all the user groups. He will be an invaluable asset to the board because of his scientific background and knowledge of Kenai River and Cook Inlet fishery issues.

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SUZANNE LITTLE, representing herself, Anchorage, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries. She is a former Alaska State Senator elected to serve people from the Kenai Peninsula and Mr. Ruffner was her neighbor for almost two decades. She knows him to be a fine man, a person of great integrity, and one who works to help opposing viewpoints find common ground and a way forward. This is a unique ability.

Using science in building common ground he has quietly and respectfully accomplished big goals for the good of the Kenai River again and again. He has a solid reputation of level-headed leadership and bringing opposing sides together. He cares about all fish, their health and the habitat that supports them.

MS. LITTLE said "assigned seating" was not intended in the originating legislation for the board nor is it the best way to manage the resource. Mr. Ruffner will prioritize science and decision making on behalf of Alaska's fisheries resources.

MARTIN LUNDE, lobbyist, Southeast Alaska Seiners Association, Juneau, Alaska, supported Mr. Huntington's and Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries, because they are committed to the protection of the resource, which provides their means of income.

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ED SCHMITT, Chairman, Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition (KAFC), Soldotna, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries. The coalition represents "Joe Fisherman," all people who fish on the Kenai Peninsula and its board is comprised mostly of retired state and federal fish biologists; its members are avid dip netters, sport fishermen and river ecologists. From a lifetime of training, he recognizes good practical scientists and Mr. Ruffner is an excellent scientist.

JOSEPH-RAYMAND SKRHA, representing himself, Kenai, Alaska, supported Mr. Ruffner. He is an extremely good negotiator and has a way of bringing adverse sides together. This is what the board needs for the best interests of the fish.

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BRIAN GABRIELLE, Vice Mayor, Kenai, Alaska, representing the Kenai Mayor and City Council, said Resolution 2014 was unanimously passed supporting the appointment of Mr. Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. He embodies the type of person who should be considered for this position. He spent the past 18 years as the Executive Director of the Kenai Watershed Forum and was instrumental in identifying issues and barriers related to successful fish propagation throughout the Kenai Peninsula. He is a good steward of the resource, has the experience necessary to make sound decisions based on scientific information and he is fair to all user groups.

[5:02:55 PM](#)

MIKE NAVARRE, Mayor, Kenai Peninsula Borough, supported Mr. Ruffner's re-appointment to the Board of Fisheries. He does his homework and is a good consensus builder.

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CHAIR GIESSEL thanked everyone for their testimony and finding no questions, said in accordance with AS 39.05.080, the Resources Committee reviewed the following and recommends the appointments be forwarded to a joint session for consideration: Board of Fisheries: Orville Huntington (Huslia) and Robert Ruffner (Soldotna). This does not reflect an intent by any of

the members to vote for or against the confirmation of the individuals during any further sessions.

ADJOURNMENT

5:05:31 PM

CHAIR GIESSEL adjourned the Senate Resources Committee meeting at 5:05 p.m.