

Confirm ations 2015

<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>Confirmations
2015</SUBJECT><COMM>HFSH29</COMM></TARGET>

HOUSE
FISHERIES
COMMITTEE
PACKET

April 9th, 2015

1 **Appointment**
Robert Ruffner – Board of Fisheries

2 **Appointment**
Orville Huntington – Board of Fisheries

3 **Appointment**
Don Stiles – Fisherman's Fund Advisory and Appeals Council

4

5

6

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February 20, 2015

Office of Boards and Commissions
550 West 7th Ave. Suite 1700
Anchorage AK 99501
Attn: Karen Gillis

Governor Bill Walker,

I am writing to apply for a seat on the Alaska Board of Fish. Please see my attached resume.

My wife and I moved to Alaska in 1996, after having the opportunity to spend a summer in Sitka a few years earlier while still in college. However, my first exposure to Alaska fish was early in grade school when my Uncle Bob sent a couple unlabeled gold cans of homepack for me to share with my young classmates. It was a few years later that I was able to visit him and first experience salmon fishing from his troller. Later as a young adult I was fortunate to have a summer in Sitka where, like most of us who first experience spawning salmon in small streams, I watched in awe of what these creatures do at the end of their life cycle. Something that I now share with my own two daughters.

When the opportunity arose for us to move to Soldotna in 1996, we came here without any hesitation. I found myself a job as the first employee for a newly forming organization that wanted to work with all user groups, businesses and "stakeholders" to work together for the health of our rivers and streams. I helped found and grow the Kenai Watershed Forum from an idea into a multi-million dollar organization, maintaining support from all branches of local government and achieving results in unexpected ways with all user groups coming together for the betterment of the waters on the Kenai Peninsula. This collaborative approach to conservation work is a skill that I've honed and one that I will bring to the Board of Fish. I hold no illusions that my participation will reduce the user group conflicts, but having worked with many stakeholders for years, I do believe I am in a unique position to make a positive contribution to Alaska. I know how to work in this environment and reach solutions.

While the past few years my job has become increasingly managerial in nature, I am trained as a scientist with a good core mathematical and statistical background. When questions arise around data collection and confidence in datasets, I expect I will know what questions to ask and will seek to get the best scientific information on the table to help inform my decisions. To the extent possible I will always draw on the best science to make those tough votes.

Board members have a tremendous responsibility to the public and make decisions that can have serious economic, social and cultural implications. I understand this responsibility and can assure everyone considering my application that I will take this job seriously and above all else I will be fair and transparent in deliberations and in my role as a decision maker.

My promise to the governor and legislature is that I will listen to the public and I will work my tail off to make sure that I am making decisions in the best interest of Alaskans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'R' followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Ruffner

Robert Ruffner

Current Employer - Kenai Watershed Forum

Professional Work Experience

- 1996 – Present: Kenai Watershed Forum, Executive Director
 - Managed up to \$3M budget and supervised 14 employees
- 1994 – 1996: University of Minnesota, Research and Teaching Assistant
- 1990 – 1994: University of Minnesota, Limnology Lab technician

Education

- B.S. University of MN Geology 1994
- Post graduate course work, 2 years University of MN Geology/ Civil Engineering
- Specific course work in Geomorphology, Engineering, Numerical Modeling including finite element, finite difference, cellular automata methods
- Developed methods for modeling complex sediment transport for Hibbing Taconite Inc. and the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park

Board/ Commission Experience

- Soldotna Chamber of Commerce 2010 – present
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission 2010 – present
- Kenai Peninsula Borough Road Commission 2012 – present
- North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission Advisory panel 2014 - present

Relevant Experience

- Kenai Peninsula Fish Habitat Partnership Coordinator 2009 – Present
 - Nationally recognized partnership, sets habitat priorities and recommends funding to the USFWS
- Fish Habitat Restoration
 - Designed and directly supervised dozens of fish passage projects totaling several millions of dollars
 - Co-designed and directly supervised a major Anchor River restoration of a captured gravel pit
- Stream Buffer Evaluation – Tongass National Forest 1993
- Scientific Studies
 - Identified hydrocarbon pollution levels in the Kenai River; developed predictive models for a solution and provided education leading to those solutions being implemented for the Kenai River - 2000 through 2008
 - Supervised fish passage evaluations of anadromous stream crossings on the Kenai Peninsula
 - Identified and documented juvenile salmonids for inclusion in the Anadromous Waters Catalog

Alaska Fishing Experience

- Sport fishing every year present in the State, wide range of experience from kayak fishing in Southeast Alaska to North Slope streams, including fin fish and shell fish
- Personal Use dipnetting – Kenai River every year since 1998
- Personal Use Gillnet – Kasilof River 1 season
- 2-days as a crew member on Cook Inlet Drift boat

Awards

- 2004 Coastal America Partnership Award (Silver Salmon Creek Restoration)
- 2007 National Wetlands Conservation Award To the Private Sector (award to Kenai Watershed Forum)
- 2008 National River Hero Award – River Network
- 2008 Person of the Year – Soldotna Chamber of Commerce

Fisheries

Robert Austin Ruffner

General Information

Board/Commission and seat you are seeking:
Fisheries, Public Seat

Additional Boards/Commissions of interest:
None

State Boards/Commissions on which you have served:
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission - Advisory Panel

First Name Robert	Middle Name Austin	Last Name Ruffner
Mailing Address	City Soldotna	State & Zip AK 99669
Home/Message Phone	Business Phone	Cell Phone

Conflict of Interest

Certain boards and commissions require full disclosure of personal financial data under AS39.50.010. If required for the board or commission for which you are applying, are you willing to do so?
Yes

Could you or any member of you family be affected financially by decisions to be made by the board or commission for which you are applying?
Yes

Please explain the potential financial benefit
No

Employment History

Employment work history including paid, unpaid, or voluntary.
Please see attached cover letter and resume

Education, Training, Experience & Qualifications

List both formal and informal education and training experiences:
Please see attached cover letter and resume

List any professional licenses, certifications, or registrations and dates obtained that may be used as qualifying criteria:
Please see attached cover letter and resume

List any community service, municipal government, and state positions held, and any awards received.
Please see attached cover letter and resume

Conviction Record

Have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor within the past five years or a felony within the past ten years?
No

Conviction Circumstances

Certification of Accuracy & Completeness

By submitting this online application, I swear the information I have entered on this form is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that if I deliberately conceal or enter false information on the form my application may be rejected, I may be removed from the list of eligible candidates, or I may be removed from the position. I agree that the Office of the Governor may contact present or former employees or other persons who know me to obtain an additional information about my skills and abilities. I understand that the information on this application is public information and may be released through a legal request for such information.

Type "I certify"
"I certify"

Resume Addendum:

Press Release Wording

Robert Ruffner, 46 of Soldotna is the Executive Director of the Kenai Watershed Forum. Ruffner holds a degree in Geology from the University of Minnesota and has been working with all fishery user groups in Cook Inlet for since 1996.

Submitted: 2/20/2015 12:00:00 AM

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 Representative,

I would like to address Governor Walker's recent appointment of Robert Ruffner to our Alaska Board of Fisheries, thus replacing Judge Karl Johnstone who resigned from the board. Ruffner has been the Executive Director and heart of the Kenai Watershed Forum, KWF for many years but has just recently resigned from this position. Ruffner's KWF organization claims to represent our local economic, environmental and fisheries interests with "balanced representation". I disagree with the KWF's balanced representation claim and would like to explain why I disagree.

What if I created an organization which contains board members as follows; 45% sport fishing interests, 33% environmental interests and 22% commercial fishing interests? What if I claim this organization contains "balanced representation" even as it contains twice as much sport representation as commercial representation? Would you believe my balanced representation claim? I predict that most would not and would question how I get "balance" when I obviously have twice as much sport interests as commercial interests? In the above illustration I am claiming "balanced representation" when reality shows something completely different.

I have researched the reality backgrounds of Robert Ruffner's KWF's board members, there are nine of them. Leslie Morton, Matt Pyhala, David Wartinbee, Denise Newbould, Benjamin Jackinsky, Jim Butler, Howard Ferren, Ken Marlow and Jim Stogskill. Morton is an environmental scientist, Pyhala is a chiropractor, Wartinbee is a biology professor, Newbould is a commercial fisher, Jackinsky is a commercial fisher, Butler is a commercial fisher, Ferren is a commercial fisher, Marlow is a sport fisher and Stogskill is a sport fisher. These nine board members actually represent (4 commercial fishers, 2 sport fishers and 3 environmental scientists). This comes down to

45% commercial fish interests, 22% sport fish interests, 33% science interests. The KWF website clearly claims that their KWF goal is to have "balanced representation" and then both Ruffner and the KWF either deliberately or accidentally manipulate their board seats into "unbalanced representation".

This representation conflict forces me to see the KWF like that beautiful Christmas Tree in the corner of the room. You walk up to smell it but there isn't a pine smell. Looking closer the disappointment sinks in as you touch it and discover it to be a fake tree, with really fantastic decorations. With the largest interests within the KWF being commercial fishing, I find the KWF to actually be a "commercial fisheries tree" with many environmental and sport fish decorations hanging within its branches. If the KWF can logically be defined as a "commercial fisheries organization", then Robert Ruffner can also be defined as "a leader of a commercial fisheries organization".

I would like to know how Governor Walker can expect the Alaskan Sport Fish Community to accept a commercial fisheries leader like Robert Ruffner, to fill Johnstone's empty sport fish seat? The Alaskan Sport Fish Community deserves an

ACTUAL Sport Fish Leader to replace Karl Johnstone, not someone MASQUERADING as a Sport Fish Leader.

Please vote to NOT confirm Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Thank you,

Donald Johnson
Soldotna, Alaska

AS&T

Alaska Science & Technology LLC
P.O. Box 100400
Anchorage, AK U.S.A. 99510-0400

Established 1980
907.562.2482
fax 907.561.2482
akscitec@alaska.net

April 7, 2015

House Fisheries Committee
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Juneau, AK 99801

(via member email addresses)

Subject: Robert A. Ruffner Confirmation -- Alaska Board of Fisheries

Dear Fisheries Committee Chair and Members:

I highly recommend Robert Ruffner to serve on the Alaska Board of Fisheries. His education and ongoing experience is outstanding and directly applicable. As executive director, he developed the Kenai Watershed Forum (KWF) into a successful public service organization.

Additionally, Mr. Ruffner has represented Alaska on the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) Advisory Panel. Also, he has gained valuable experience with complex public issues, while serving on the Kenai Peninsula Borough Planning Commission and the Road Commission. He is a lifelong sport fisher.

I am a longtime resident and divide my time between Anchorage and Cooper Landing. I am familiar with Mr. Ruffner's good work at the KWF since its founding in 1997. As one of the founders, I am very pleased to say that he has exceeded all expectations. He is a capable, well-reasoned individual, who demonstrates a temperate demeanor and good judgement. He will be impartial when dealing with special interests, and strive for productive, science-based fisheries in the best interests of the public.

Please confirm Robert Ruffner to serve on the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Sincerely,

/s/ Robert L. (Bob) Baldwin, CEO
c) 907.250.3913
<kenailake@arctic.net>



April 7, 2015

Dear Alaska Legislators:

My name is Brad Elfers and I own Alaska Fly Fishing Goods, which is a full service fly fishing equipment shop and internet retailer, based in Juneau since 1998. I'm writing to express my support for Board of Fisheries nominee, Robert Ruffner.

As a sport angler and someone who's livelihood depends on sport fishing, I believe Robert will do an excellent job of representing my interests on the Board of Fisheries, however just as importantly, I believe Robert will be a strong advocate for the long-term health of fish and their habitat.

I urge you to confirm Mr. Ruffner and give him the opportunity to put his experience and expertise to work on the Board of Fisheries.

Thank you,

Brad Elfers

Owner

Alaska Fly Fishing Goods

8465 Old Dairy Road, Ste. 101

Juneau, AK. 99801

(907) 586-1550

8465 Old Dairy Road | Suite. 101 | Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: 907-586-1550 | Fax: 907-586-3734 | Email: brad@alaskaflyfishinggoods.com | Website: www.alaskaflyfishinggoods.com



ICICLE

March 31, 2015

Representative Louise Stutes, Chair
House Special Committee on Fisheries
Alaska State Legislature
120 4th Street, State Capitol, Room 3
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Stutes and Committee Members,

I would like to express our strong support for the nomination of Mr. Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board).

Icicle Seafoods is a major seafood processing company with land plants and floating operations in and around Petersburg, Seward, Homer, Larsen Bay, Egegik, Wood River, and Unalaska/Dutch Harbor. We process crab, cod, halibut, herring, pollock, sablefish, and salmon.

We believe Mr. Ruffner will be an excellent Board member given his education, professional work, and public service experience. He resides in an area of the state with high demands and contentious issues surrounding fisheries resources and habitat. As executive Director of the Kenai Watershed Forum he has proven to be a strong advocate for the health of the waterways of the Kenai Peninsula and works diligently for habitat protection and restoration. He has demonstrated a keen ability to forge together workable solutions to complex problems while taking into consideration the science, economics, and views of competing stakeholders involved in the issues. Such skills will serve him well as a member of the Board.

We believe Mr. Ruffner has the skills, intellect, experience, and fortitude required to be a good board member. We respectfully urge you to confirm his appointment to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Sincerely,
ICICLE SEAFOODS, INC.

Kris Norosz
Director, Government Affairs

PETERSBURG FISHERIES

A DIVISION OF ICICLE SEAFOODS, INC.

P.O. Box 1147 • Petersburg, AK 99833 • Tel: 907-772-4294 • Fax: 907-772-4472

I am Ed Schmitt a retired surgeon living in Soldotna. I am also Chairman of KAFC. We represent Joe Fisherman, all people who fish on the Kenai peninsula wherever they may live. Our members are avid dipnetters, sportfishermen, and river ecologists. Our board is composed mainly of retired state or federal fisheries biologists.

I personally am an avid fly fisher. I first visited the Kenai River in 1988 and got a fly rod world record Salmon. I long for the day when the Kenai returns to producing world records of all species of salmon.

I get my reds from the personal use fishery and frequently have friends from Anchorage stay with me when they are down dip netting. I understand how important the Personal Use fishery is to Joe Fisherman. We need the best possible science to manage this river for all user groups.

A scientist is someone who uses the impeccable logic to analyze the best available data. As a surgeon I had to strive to maintain that standard. When new data became available or if my results were not perfect, I had to modify my procedures accordingly. From a lifetime of training, I recognize and celebrate good practical scientists.

Robert Ruffner is an excellent scientist. His thorough, inclusive, and community centered work at the Kenai Watershed Forum demonstrates both his knowledge and understanding of all fishing issues on the Kenai Peninsula. Because of this, he is very well qualified to examine fish issues anywhere in the state. I don't think there could possibly be a better candidate for the board of Fish. If we want the best possible decisions made in an open and inclusive process Robert is the best possible choice.

My Name is Lisa Gabriel.

I am a resident of the City of Kenai.

I have lived in the Kenai area for over 52 years. During that time, I have been a sportfisherman-personal use fisherman-and commercial fisherman. (All of which I still participate in today.)

I would like to express my support for Robert Ruffner's confirmation to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Based on my personal experience in both the board process and with board members- I feel that Mr. Ruffner will bring a needed balance to the process-not based on his home address-but on his knowledge of fish and their habitat. I believe that Mr. Ruffner will be an asset to the Alaska Board of Fisheries for ALL areas of the State of Alaska and ask the members of this committee to support his confirmation.

Lisa Gabriel
2305 Watergate Way
Kenai AK 99611

(907) 252-9524

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

John McCombs - Nimitchik

REPRESENTING:

Self

BILL # or SUBJECT:

Ruffner BOF confirmation

COMMITTEE:

House + Senate

DATE:

04-03-2015

in chair + committee

I read that Robert Ruffner is a dipnetter. I did not know that before last week/month.

What I did know prior to his appointment,

his accomplishments as boss at the Kenai Watershed Forum. He worked on culverts and water quality and made the case for banning outboard stroke outboards on the Kenai River. He is the leading steward of Kenai River habitat. There is a need for a skilled habitationician on the board of fish.

Therefore I have no reservations in my endorsement of Robert Ruffner for the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Dear Representative,

My name is Joe Ray Skrha and I am a 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 Robert's 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
Attorney at Law

Law Office of Joe Ray Skrha
Kenai, AK 99611 USA

Orville Huntington

Orville Huntington was born in Huslia, Alaska and received a B.S. in Wildlife Biology from University of Alaska, Fairbanks. Mr. Huntington is dedicated to working closely with young people to promote the values of traditional Native elders combined with contemporary western knowledge. He is committed to protecting the aboriginal rights of Native people to continue to live a subsistence way of life and preserve the cultural beliefs associated with that way of life as it is consistent with State and Federal law. His primary responsibilities continue to be the preservation of Native subsistence hunting, fishing, gathering and trapping opportunities and the cultural events that surround those beliefs, and as a public servant for the village of Huslia and the 43 villages of the Tanana Chiefs Conference region.

Mr. Huntington currently works as the Wildlife and Parks Director for the Tanana Chiefs Conference. Prior to that, he served for 14 years as a Refuge Information Technician at the Koyukuk/Nowitna NWR Complex and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. As a scientist he worked closely with local village people in the villages of Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Ruby, Huslia and Hughes on subsistence surveys.

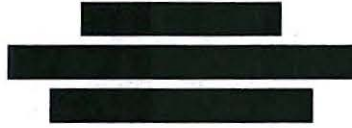
Previous employment:

- Seasonal labor, Bureau of Land Management (Emergency Fire Fighter)
- Fisherman
- Laborer's and Carpenter's Union
- Huslia Tribal Council (Tribal Operations Specialist)
- Tribal and City Council member

Affiliations:

- Alaska Federation of Natives board of directors (interior village representative)
- K'oyitl'ots'ina Ltd. Board of Directors (Treasurer) for the villages of Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket and Alatna
- Brooks Range Contracting Board of Directors
- Koyukuk Moose Hunter's Working Group
- Interior Regional Housing Authority Board of Commissioners
- Interior Athabascan Tribal College Board of Trustees
- Alaska Native Science Commission Board of Commissioners

Donald L. Stiles



Experience

The United States Marine Corps, 1980-1984, honorably discharged

Kawarek Incorporated Fisheries Department, Fisheries Specialist

Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation, Board of Directors, 1996-present

Siu Alaska Corporation, Chairman,

Education

Covenant High School, Unalakleet, Alaska 1980

Interests

- *Mining*
- *Big Game Guiding*
- *Coaching High School Basketball*
- *Built and welded aluminum boats*

Alaska Dispatch News

Published on *Alaska Dispatch News* (<http://www.adn.com>)

Bruce Weyhrauch

April 8, 2015

Main Image:

[AnchorageSkyline.jpg-1422397872](#) [1]

Former Alaska Board of Fisheries chairman Karl Johnstone wrote [an opinion published by Alaska Dispatch News March 31](#) [2] that Anchorage was going to be disenfranchised from representation on the BOF. With due respect to the former chair, and acknowledgment that he and members of the BOF give time and hard work to their duties, Johnstone's commentary misunderstands the Legislature's policy basis for BOF membership.

Article 8 of Alaska's Constitution provides that our state's fish are reserved to the people for common use, and that they are to be used, developed and maintained on a sustained yield basis, subject to preferences among beneficial uses.

To meet these ideals, the Legislature defines the requirements for BOF membership in Title 16 of Alaska's statutes, which are the opposite of Johnstone's views: "The governor shall appoint each member on the basis of interest in public affairs, good judgment, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the BOF, and with a view to providing diversity of interest and points of view in the membership." Members are to be "appointed without regard to political affiliation or geographical location of residence."

Johnstone wrote that not appointing a person to the BOF from Anchorage deprived it of needed representation. But that would mean if a BOF member is not from a specific community, then that community is not represented on the BOF.

The BOF should not have an "Anchorage" seat, any more than it should have a "Sitka" or "Kotzebue" seat. The Legislature has "seats" representing our state's geographic diversity; legislators represent communities. While geographic diversity is a factor, BOF members must represent all the state's fisheries and do what is right for those fisheries based on the constitutional guidelines, not a specific community's or group's interests, which can provide valuable input to the BOF process.

Johnstone's commentary reflects exactly the opposite of what the Legislature requires of BOF membership. Members are not to be appointed based on where they are from and who they represent. They should not be on the BOF because they "represent" an interest or specific community.

Legislators must confirm BOF members to do what is right for long-term, sustained yields of fish based on constitutional principles. That framework provides security for Alaska's residents who are not from communities where board members live. The Legislature's criteria for BOF membership insures residents can rely on a BOF that makes decisions benefiting fish, not communities where BOF members live or interest groups.

The BOF sometimes seems to have become too politicized by groups who influence BOF membership and give to legislators who must confirm members. The result is the BOF could fail to adopt policies that put our fish first and place long-term conservation and development of our valuable fisheries above political interests.

Those who want to be on the BOF must first seek out fishery interests to help get an appointment by the governor, and then must rely on lobbying help to make it through legislative confirmation. A BOF member who survives that gantlet could tend to make decisions benefiting interests that supported their seat on the BOF, not fishery conservation and development interests.

Let BOF members do what they must: ignore representational politics and decide fishery conservation and development issues based on what will sustain Alaska's fisheries as the best managed in the world.

***Bruce Weyhrauch** lives in Auke Bay. A former member of the Alaska House of Representatives, he has practiced law in the area of fisheries and on legal and policy matters associated with the board of fisheries since 1988 in regions of the state ranging from St. Paul to Ketchikan.*

The views expressed here are the writer's own and are not necessarily endorsed by Alaska Dispatch News, which welcomes a broad range of viewpoints. To submit a piece for consideration, email commentary@alaskadispatch.com [3].

Source URL: <http://www.adn.com/article/20150408/johnstones-idea-anchorage-seat-alaska-fish-board-completely-wrong>

Links:

[1] <http://www.adn.com/image/anchorageskylinejpg-1422397872>

[2] <http://www.adn.com/article/20150331/anchorage-needs-voice-alaska-board-fisheries>

[3] <mailto:commentary@alaskadispatch.com>



March 18, 2015

Dear Governor Walker,

I am writing on behalf of Trout Unlimited's thousands of Alaska based members and supporters to recommend that you appoint Robert Ruffner to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. The Alaska Program of Trout Unlimited works to protect, reconnect, restore and sustain Alaska's salmon and trout resources through scientific investigation, grassroots engagement and by engaging in partnerships with fishing organizations, NGO's, agencies, municipalities, tribes, business owners and anglers.

As a practice, Trout Unlimited does not work on fish allocation issues but we do seek to engage on issues that unify fisheries stakeholders and fulfill our organizational mission. We feel Mr. Ruffner's science background and longtime leadership with the Kenai Watershed Forum and Kenai Peninsula's Fish Habitat Partnership, as well as his love of angling, aligns well with the interests and values of our members.

We feel Mr. Ruffner is exactly the type of board member Alaska needs at this time. It's time for the Board of Fish to focus on fisheries conservation and development and reel back the amount of politicking that goes on within and around the BOF process. Mr. Ruffner will bring a much needed, non-allocative, big picture approach to the board, which in turn will be of tremendous service to the people of Alaska.

Thank you very much for your careful consideration of this extremely important appointment and please let me know if it would be of any help to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Tim Bristol, Alaska Program Manager
907-321-3291
Tbristol@tu.org

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Karen & Richard McGahan
REPRESENTING: Self
BILL # or SUBJECT: Board of Fisheries Confirmation
COMMITTEE: House Fisheries **DATE:** 4-9-15

Dear House Fisheries Committee Members,

We ask your support for Robert Ruffner for the Board of Fish.
It is way past time to have a board member from the Kenai Peninsula,
especially when due to the decisions of the Department of Fish and Game,
3/4 of the state come to the Kenai Peninsula to fish.

Thank you for considering our comments,

Karen S. McGahan (51 year resident of Nikiski)
Richard C. McGahan, Sr. (60 year resident of Nikiski)

Ruffner Support

Good evening House Fisheries Committee. My name is Eric Booton and as an Anchorage sport fisherman, I am excited to hear that Robert Ruffner is a nominee for the Alaska Board of Fisheries. Ruffner has demonstrated his dedication to Alaska's fisheries through his extensive work to improve fish habitat and advocating for salmon, trout and the anglers who dedicate their lives pursuing them. Ruffner will provide the BOF with the fresh and big picture approach it desperately needs. Please join me in confirming him to the Board. Thank you for your time and hearing my testimony.

Sincerely,
Eric Booton

Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation

P.O. Box 1464 • Dillingham, Alaska 99576 • (907) 842-4370 • Fax (907) 842-4338 • 1-800-478-4370



28 March 2015

Dear Governor Walker, et al.

The Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation adds its voice to those in support of Robert Ruffner's confirmation to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

As you know, the Bristol Bay region is highly dependent on the careful management of Alaska's fisheries resources. While commercial fishing is generally seen as the cornerstone of our cash economy, the sustainability of subsistence and sport fish resources are equally important to the health and welfare of the people of Southwest Alaska. Subsistence harvesting is of course a centuries old tradition in the region, and for several years now our organization has sponsored a fly fishing academy to train young people for careers as sport fishing guides.

Mr. Ruffner's professional experience, education and his track record on resource issues speak well of his credentials for wise stewardship of fisheries resources on which all Alaskans depend, and to the balance his confirmation will bring to the Board. We appreciate his nomination and urge his early confirmation by the Alaska Legislature.

Thank you,

Norman Van Vactor
CEO / President



120 N. Willow St. PO Box 586 Kenai, AK 99611
907.929.0388
accrabak@earthlink.net
www.aksalmonalliance.com

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

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Kaitlin Vadla
REPRESENTING: Self
BILL # or SUBJECT: Ruffner - Board of Fish
COMMITTEE: S. Resources/House Fisheries **DATE:** _____

I'm a sport fisher. I catch all my salmon, trout, halibut, ling, rock fish, etc. on a ~~sp~~ reel or in a dip net. Many of my friends from Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla, Girdwood, Chugiak, Eagle River, and beyond all come to fish on the Kenai River. All of us who enjoy fishing on this river and use the Kenai River fishery to help feed our families have benefitted from Mr. Ruffner's 20+ years of work on the Kenai. For the benefit of all user groups, he's helped make sure the fish come back year after year. That's why I'm supportive of appointing Mr. Ruffner to the Board of Fish. Thank you

I am Ed Schmitt a retired surgeon living in Soldotna. I am also Chairman of KAFC. We are an inclusive group representing "Joe Fisherman", all people who fish on the Kenai peninsula wherever they may live. Our board is composed mainly of retired state or federal fisheries biologists. Our members are avid dipnetters, sportfishermen, and river ecologists. One of our members **Spencer DeVito who was the 'original' Professional Sportfishing Kenai River Fishing Guide, retired in 1980 and recipient of the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce Kenai River Pioneer Award;** just wrote to me:

Dear Mr. Schmitt, I was very happy to learn that we finally have an exceptional candidate for the B of F in Robert Ruffner, As I highly support Robert's nomination.

I personally am an avid fly fisher. I first visited the Kenai River in 1988 and got a fly rod world record salmon. I long for the day when the Kenai returns to producing world records of all species of salmon.

I get my reds from the personal use fishery and frequently have friends from Anchorage stay with me when they are down dip netting. I understand how important the Personal Use fishery is to Joe Fisherman. We need the best possible science to manage this river for all user groups.

A scientist is someone who uses impeccable logic to analyze the best available data. As a surgeon I had to strive to maintain that standard. When new data became available or if my results were not perfect, I had to modify my procedures accordingly. From a lifetime of training, I recognize and celebrate good practical scientists.

Robert Ruffner is an excellent scientist. His thorough, inclusive, and community centered work at the Kenai Watershed Forum demonstrates both his knowledge and understanding of all fishing issues on the Kenai Peninsula. Because of this, he is very well qualified to examine fish issues anywhere in the state. I don't think there could possibly be a better candidate for the board of Fish. If we want the best possible decisions made in an open and inclusive process, Robert is the best possible choice.

Governor Walker, I would like to encourage the inclusion of Robert Ruffner on the Board of Fish. He has an excellent reputation at the Watershed Forum for being knowledgeable about fishing issues, fairness in weighing options and working well with others.

Thank you.
Marge Hays

Box 2876
Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Governor Walker,

I'm writing in support of Mr. Dwight Kramer and Mr. Robert Riffner for a position on the Board of Fisheries (BOF). Both of these superb individuals will return an ethical reform and a science-based philosophy back to the BOF. In addition, they both have distinguished themselves locally, statewide and nationally with their unparalleled involvement with habitat restoration and resource protection across this great State.

There have never been more knowledgeable and acceptable candidates for this key BOF position. I cannot foresee how any legislator could object to either of their confirmations onto this valuable State Board. I sincerely believe these two fine professionals would serve your administration, the great people of this State and ultimately the resources itself in a very responsible and accountable manner. It is extremely crucial that the BOF have diverse, knowledgeable and ethical representatives from the South Central region on the BOF.

I personally endorse both these individuals for a seat on the BOF.

v/r,

Shaun Churilla-Eagle River

726-0308

I urge you to appoint Robert Ruffner to the Board of Fisheries. Mr. Ruffner will represent no special interest group, instead he will consistently represent Alaska's fisheries resources. He can be counted upon to apply the best science available to the decision making process. In my opinion, he is the best candidate to apply in many years. As a longtime angler (which is my I live in Alaska) and a retired fisheries biologist, I am encouraged to see people of his calibre volunteer to serve on the Board.

Richard Marshall
37186 Cannery Road
Keni, Alaska 99611

Dear Mr. Schmitt, I was very happy to learn that we finally have an exceptional candidate for the B of F in Robert Ruffner. As the 'original' Professional Sportfishing Kenai River Fishing Guide, retired in 1980 and recipient of the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce Kenai River Pioneer Award; I highly support Robert's nomination. Spencer DeVito

Dear Legislator:

I am writing to support Robert Ruffner for the Board of Fish. Mr. Ruffner has the experience, knowledge, expertise, and interpersonal skills to be an excellent member of the Board of Fish. His knowledge and background concerning the Kenai River is especially important in light of the declining king salmon.

Please vote for Robert Ruffner to be on the Board of Fish.

Thank you for taking the time to read my email.

Sincerely,
Bob McCard
PO Box 591, Kasilof, AK, 99610
Email: bmccard@alaska.net

Dear Governor Walker,

We are writing in reference to your upcoming appointment of two Board of Fisheries positions and would like to recommend Mr. Robert Ruffner for one of those positions.

It is extremely important to us that members of this board are well-qualified in order to make good decisions. The very future of our salmon and other aquatic life that coexist in the Kenai River and the entire Kenai Peninsula area are at stake.

Tough decisions will need to be made and that requires board members that are well-versed and have been actively involved in an effort to conserve their existence. As the founder and past executive director of the Soldotna-based Kenai Watershed Forum, Mr. Ruffner would meet those qualifications. He has supervised many projects that have benefitted habitat and conservation issues and it has been obvious that his primary interest is in habitat and conservation issues and not personal gain. His efforts have not favored sport, commercial, or personal-use fishing and that would give him a more unbiased approach to decision making.

We are sports fishermen on the Kenai Peninsula and we would like to encourage you to seriously consider Mr. Robert Ruffner for one of the two positions that are open on the Board of Fisheries. He lives on the Kenai Peninsula and his many years of experience have been on the Kenai Peninsula which would be invaluable in his decision making.

Regards,

Clifford and Sondra Hugg
37091 Tiny Rd.
Soldotna, AK 99669
907-260-5871

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME: Dan Pasucci

REPRESENTING: KWF/Self

BILL # or SUBJECT: _____

COMMITTEE: _____ DATE: _____

I'm here about the Nomination of the Governor
 Conservation with a backhoe

The man that goes by Robert Ruffner
 he puts in his work

Who used to work for the Watershed
 always level headed

about which lots of stuffs been said
 he's never a jerk

I'm not here to defend the Watershed forum
 Some people ^{fear} claim he's a radical upsetter

I was told "They're busy, please don't bore 'em"
 but I think he's a cool dipnutter

So I'll just say there's no one better
 to work to bring all folks together

I think he's the man that should join Board of Fish
 even if his nomination is not quite trash

whether fixing the culverts or cleaning the river

Roberts a guy that can clearly deliver
 if you think he's one-sided, it just isn't true

he does the work that needs to get done
 for example, did not sit down and talk
 and gathers input from everyone directly to you

So if you think he's special interest

I'd say it's true
 Thanks for your time and the work that you do

If by special interest
 please remember this rhyme and please push Robert
 Through

you mean he's got interest in you

Oh and one more thing
 Orville's good too

My Name is Lisa Gabriel.

I am a resident of the City of Kenai.

I have lived in the Kenai area for over 52 years. During that time, I have been a sportfisherman-personal use fisherman-and commercial fisherman. (All of which I still participate in today.)

I would like to express my support for Robert Ruffner's confirmation to the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

Based on my personal experience in both the board process and with board members- I feel that Mr. Ruffner will bring a needed balance to the process-not based on his home address-but on his knowledge of fish and their habitat. I believe that Mr. Ruffner will be an asset to the Alaska Board of Fisheries for ALL areas of the State of Alaska and ask the members of this committee to support his confirmation.

LISA GABRIEL
KENAI AK
252-9524

KENAI LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE

Email: Kenai_LIO@akleg.gov

Phone: 907-283-2030 / Fax: 907-283-3075

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

NAME:

Penny Vadla

REPRESENTING:

BILL # or SUBJECT:

Robert Ruffner

COMMITTEE:

DATE:

4/8/15

I am a 38 year resident of Alaska. My husband and two children were born and raised in Alaska. We are an "outdoor" family who love the activities this great state has to offer.

I am a fisherwoman who has fished many areas in Alaska - currently boast a trophy dolly varden.

Robert Ruffner works with youth, works ^{on} conservation, ^{e.F.Foi} and he cares and works hard for all Alaskans.

He is conscientious, dedicated, hardworking and unbiased.

He is collaborative as well as creative and shows great understanding in the area of sound, scientific knowledge pertaining to fish and water habitat protection.

His efforts to create a healthy, sustainable habitat for our waters in the State of Alaska is remarkable.

He does not show biases so he would be a more collaborative, cooperative, forward thinker on the Board.

He will be a strong advocate not only for fish management but also for sustainable habitat and continued conservation work!

Robert Ruffner will advocate for the sustainability of the waters in ALL areas of this great state of Alaska.

Robert Ruffner has always "put fish first" through his conscientious demeanor!

Thank you,
Penny Vadla



March 31, 2015

Ms. Karen Gillis, Director
Office of Boards and Commissions
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1700
Anchorage, AK 99501

Via E-mail to boards@alaska.gov and First Class Mail

Re: Board of Fish Appointee Orville Huntington

Dear Ms. Gillis:

Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association strongly supports the appointment of Mr. Orville Huntington to the Alaska Board of Fish. YDFDA is one of the six Western Alaska Community Development Quota groups, which are economic development non-profit organizations. We represent the Western Alaska communities of Emmonak, Alakanuk, Mountain Village, Nunam Iqua, Kotlik and Grayling, with a population of over 3,400.

YDFDA is involved with the commercial harvest of Yukon River salmon, eels and whitefish, and also, as a CDQ group, involved with the commercial fisheries of the Bering Sea.

Mr. Huntington has been a pleasure to work with during his recent term on the Board of Fish. He is extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of Alaska fisheries, from fresh to saltwater, and can also bring a rural perspective to the issues, which is very valuable to our organization. We think he will continue to be a successful member of the Board of Fish and will excel at making the Board of Fish work for the people of the State of Alaska.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association

Representing the Alaskan Communities of: ALAKANUK • EMMONAK • GRAYLING • KOTLIK • MOUNTAIN VILLAGE • NUNAM IQUA

T 907.644.0326 • F 907.644.0327 • 2909 Arctic Blvd. • Anchorage, AK 99503

Benjamin Brown

Employment

Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission Juneau, Alaska	commissioner March 2011 – present
Baxter Bruce & Sullivan P.C. Juneau, Alaska	associate attorney April 2007 – February 2011
Choate Law Firm LLC Juneau, Alaska	associate attorney September 2006 – March 2007
<i>The Juneau Empire</i> Juneau, Alaska	columnist October 2003 – present
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Juneau & Anchorage, Alaska	legislative liaison January – November 2005
Lisa Murkowski for US Senate Juneau & Anchorage, Alaska	research director/regional co-ordinator November 2003 – November 2004
Alaska State Chamber of Commerce Juneau, Alaska	legislative lobbyist legislative session 2003
Alaska Department of Revenue Juneau, Alaska	administrative hearing officer September – December 2002
The Hon. Larry Weeks, Presiding Judge 1 st Judicial District, Alaska Court System Juneau, Alaska	law clerk August 2001 – August 2002
The Hon. Mark Green Public Advocate for the City of New York New York, N.Y.	legal intern March – May 2001
Gilmore & Doherty Anchorage, Alaska	legal intern September – November 2000
Alaska Office of Public Advocacy, Defense Section Anchorage, Alaska	legal intern March – May 2000
The Hon. Ted Stevens US Senator for Alaska Washington, D.C.	legal intern/legislative assistant September – November 1999
The Alaska Legislature Juneau & Anchorage, Alaska	legislative aide 1991 – 1998
Alaska Public Radio Network Anchorage, Alaska	administrative assistant 1991 & 1992

Education

Northeastern University School of Law Boston, Massachusetts	J.D. 2001
Georgetown University School of Foreign Service Washington, D.C.	B.S.F.S. 1992
Palmer High School Palmer, Alaska	Diploma 1985

Professional associations

The Alaska Bar Association	April 2002 – present CLE Committee, Admin Law Section co-chairman
The Juneau Bar Association	April 2002 – present president, vice-president/treasurer, secretary
The New York State Bar	passed July 2002 examination

Other activities

Alaska Humanities Forum	treasurer, board of directors
Alaska Moving Image Preservation Association	board of directors
*Alaska Public Media, Inc.	board of directors, government affairs committee
Alaska Republican Party	district co-chairman, communications director state central committee, state executive committee
*Alaska State Council on the Arts	chairman, grant panelist
American Red Cross, Southeast Alaska	development committee
Anchorage Sister Cities Commission	public relations, commissioner
CoastAlaska	vice-chairman, secretary, board of directors board improvement, finance & corporate documents committees
Friends of the Alaska State Museum	1st vice-president, board of directors
Juneau Arts & Humanities Council	board of trustees, concert committee
*National Assembly of State Arts Agencies	board of directors, secretary
KTOO-FM&TV	chairman, board of directors, finance committee DJ, theatre critic, auctioneer
the theatre	theatrical résumé available as requested

(* denotes current service)

Executive Profile

Chief Executive Officer and Manager of the City of Wasilla with complete oversight, committed to cost-effective management of resources and quality performance. Visionary Operations Executive with solid experience managing all levels of multiple projects, including budgeting and administration. Accomplished Executive with demonstrated ability to deliver mission-critical results. Hands-on approach to management, with high motivation, performance innovation, mature, multi-task-orientated and hardworking. Directly responsible for developing programs and overseeing the City Directors of Public Works, Finance, Public Safety, Cultural and Recreation Services. Additionally supervised and directed the Deputy Administrator. As Mayor was director of Human Resources Director per Wasilla City Code. Responsible for overall supervision of 142 personnel. As a licensed and practiced attorney, utilized this knowledge and experience in risk management on behalf of the city. Prior to being CEO of Wasilla, engaged in the private practice of law, owning and operating a law office business.

Skill Highlight

- Project planning and management
- Leadership/communication skills
- Business operations organization
- Budgeting expertise
- Negotiations
- Employee relations
- Risk Management
- Strategic planning
- Team Building/Leadership
- Interpersonal Skills
- Organizational Restructure and change
- Organizational Skills
- Critical thinking and research skills
- Developed regulatory needs for city management
- Human Resources Management
- Fast learner

Core Accomplishments

Operations Management: Managed and balanced the city enterprise on a base two cent sales tax on the first 500 dollars of sales and charging no city property tax. Innovatively increased the sales tax one cent to forward fund a new library complex for the city without bonded debt. Cut 19% of the overall operations costs to the city without layoffs or diminishment of services.

Projects Management: Added 91 acres of new parks to the city, developed a connecting roadway with water service to the city airport and brought GPS navigation to the enterprise to enhance safety and commercialization. Planned and developed a 24,000 sq. ft., library complex. Reconfigured downtown Wasilla, removing a junk yard, acquiring key property for the couplet roadway development with completion of a Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan going forward. Lobbied for and added new roadways and resurfacing projects on existing roads. Expanded the city by annexation of additional area.

Staff Development: Instituted weekly staff meetings to ensure communication to all personnel. Provided sufficient time and funding for staff development. Instituted policy of inner departmental accountability in order to avoid a need for crisis of management intervention.

Human Resources: As Director and CEO, achieved successful negotiation twice in a six year period with three unions within the city and ensured parity for non-represented personnel. I reviewed all hiring and discharges in the city government and performed the task of hearing officer in disciplinary actions. Analyzed and advised Human Resources personnel on legal accountability and procedure in employment law principles.

Professional Experience

2008-2014 CEO of the City of Wasilla Initiated a new way of doing the public's business by instituting open communication and sharing of ideas between key and subordinate staff and public input. Reduced the operations budget without sacrifice to negotiated contracts with personnel or loss of service. Introduced the concept of forward funding the cities projects without debt service. Paid off debt of the city and managed to accumulate approximately 20 million in overall reserves. Developed plans and projects to move the city and the greater area forward.

1992-2008 Law Practice full-time, servicing client base in the areas of personal injury, criminal defense, contract and employment matters. Began working in the legal profession in 1992 and remained engaged in aspects of the practice throughout the 6 years as full-time CEO of the City of Wasilla. Legal experience with the law firm of Stepovich, Kennelly and Stepovich, LLC. in Anchorage, having been a partner culminating with the opening of personal offices in Wasilla, Alaska. Appeared before every level of court within the State of Alaska system. In addition the U.S. District Court, 9th Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.

1982-1988 Alaska Department of Adult Corrections Institutional Probation/Parole Officer and Corrections Officer Corrections experience was post education at University of Alaska, Glennwood Halfway House in Anchorage, as a program officer, supervising Federal and State pre-released offenders.

Military

1995-2004 Alaska State Defense Force as a Military Police Officer and Trainer at the rank of Major for 9 years and was awarded the Alaska Homeland Defense Medal for active security service at Valdez, AK.

1977-1980 Employed on a full-time basis with the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs in Operations, Training and Readiness as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army National Guard and Reserve.

1970-1992 Served 4 years in the U.S Air Force with one year service in the Vietnam War and U.S. Army Reserve obtaining status as a Army Reserve Commissioned Officer in this period, leaving service as a Captain.

Education

Negotiations, 2013

Harvard University - Cambridge, Massachusetts

Thirty hour in classroom training seminar on negotiations with over 200 national and international attendees. Conducted by the Harvard Law Center on National and International Negotiations.

J.D. : Law, 1992

Creighton University School of Law Omaha, Nebraska

US Army Armor Officer Advanced Course 1989 Ft Knox Kentucky

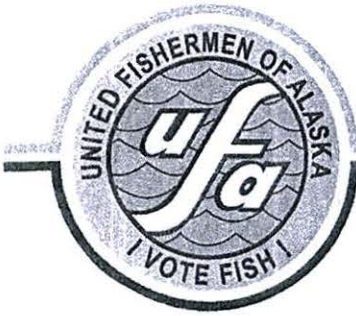
Bachelor of Arts : Justice, 1981 **University of Alaska-Anchorage** - Anchorage, Alaska

US Army, Amor Officer Basic Courses 1978 Ft Knox Kentucky

US Army Officer Candidate School 1978 Ft Richardson Alaska

US Army, Commissioned 1977

Verne E. Rupright, Esq.



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

Mailing Address: PO Box 20229, Juneau AK 99802-0229
Physical Address: 410 Calhoun Ave Ste 101, Juneau AK 99801
Phone: (907)586-2820 **Fax:** (907) 463-2545
Email: ufa@ufa-fish.org **Website:** www.ufa-fish.org

March 6th, 2015

Honorable Bill Walker
Governor, State of Alaska
PO Box 110001
Juneau AK 99811-0001
Attn: Karen Gillis, Boards and Commissions

RE: Support Ben Brown for reappointment to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Dear Governor Walker,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 36 Alaska commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state and its offshore federal waters. UFA is pleased to offer continued support for Ben Brown as a commissioner for the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, CFEC. Mr. Brown has proven himself to be a capable commissioner with a comprehensive understanding of Alaska's complex limited entry program. Mr. Brown has established a solid working relationship with industry representatives and groups which is an imperative component of trust within CFEC. Mr. Brown is also easily accessible and interacts regularly with the Alaska State Legislature.

Due to the current fiscal situation and due to the ability of two commissioners to conduct CFEC business, a third CFEC commissioner is not needed at this time. If a quorum is not available, the Governor has the ability to appoint a temporary commissioner in order to adjudicate a particular case. Sec. 16.43.030. states: "A vacancy on the commission does not impair the authority of a quorum of commissioners to exercise all the powers and perform all the duties of the commission."

Thank you for your time and attention to this important appointment. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Julianne Curry
Executive Director



Representative Stutes
Capitol Building, Room 416
Juneau, AK 99801

April 2015

CONFIRM BEN BROWN & VERNE RUPRIGHT, CFEC COMMISSIONERS

Dear Representative Louise Stutes,

The Southeast Alaska Seiners Association (SEAS) is a commercial fishing gear group with headquarters right here in Juneau. With over 150 paying skipper and crew members and over 75 paying business members, SEAS represents and works for the interests of roughly 1,500 purse seine fishermen throughout Southeast Alaska and beyond.

It is our privilege to urge you to support and confirm Governor Walker's re-appointment of Commissioner Ben Brown and appointment of Commissioner Verne Rupright to the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission. Both Brown and Rupright possess the knowledge, skills, and expertise to continue CFEC's great work in preserving our precious fishery resource and serving the hardworking men and women who earn their keep harvesting Alaska's fisheries. As a group which has worked with CFEC on a number of important issues over the years and rely on this important agency for crucial data and service for our small businesses, we can confidently say this State agency has performed exceptionally well and we want that to continue under their leadership.

Commissioner Brown has been with CFEC for a number of years now and has been a youthful and personable addition to the Commission. With not simply a background in scholastic law, but time on the ground and in the trenches of maritime and fisheries law, Commissioner Brown's experience enables him to address both the realities of the decisions he

Southeast Alaska Seiners Association
PO Box 23081 – Juneau, AK 99802
907-463-5080



helps make for *people*, not just businesses or corporations, as well as the intricate workings of our State's special limited entry system. Our positive interaction with Commissioner Brown and observation of his work with and for others in our common industry has led us to enthusiastically support his re-appointment.

Likewise, the Southeast Alaska Seiners Association wholeheartedly supports the Governor's appointment of Commissioner Rupright. Though obviously newer to the position, Commissioner Rupright has wasted no time in jumping in to tackle head on the issues and important matters concerning the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission. With on-the-job leadership experience and years of managing personnel, Commissioner Rupright is just the person to help lead the very capable public servants within the agency. Yet, in addition to his strengths with organizational management and project planning, his years of practicing law provide the backdrop for competent and deliberate decisions; decisions which impact jobs, livelihoods, and, indeed, whole communities. We need outstanding individuals protecting the \$1.5 billion value of the limited entry permits and the system itself; for their sound and well-reasoned decisions reflect the pre-eminent aspect of the quasi-judicial function of the 3 CFEC Commissioners.

CFEC was set up to help conserve and stabilize the resource and SEAS is committed to helping conserve and strengthen the great work of CFEC. And in so doing, we are happy to endorse the appointment of Commissioner Rupright and re-appointment of Commissioner Brown and hope you will do all you can to support them both as well.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Thorstenson, Jr.
Executive Director, SEAS

Southeast Alaska Seiners Association
PO Box 23081 – Juneau, AK 99802
907-463-5080

Members of the Alaska Boards of Fish and Game;

Please consider this letter and packet to be my application for the position of Commissioner of Fish and Game. I am currently serving as Acting commissioner and would appreciate your consideration for nomination as permanent commissioner.

Alaska has a proud tradition and well deserved reputation for excellence in fish and game management. I believe my background in government, resource management and hands on experience gives me the ability to help carry on that tradition.

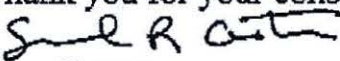
Alaska and the Department of Fish and game face many challenges to our ability to carry out our constitutional and statutory responsibilities regarding the management of the fish, game and aquatic plant resources of the state. Fortunately we have an outstanding professional staff and a board system that works well. I believe one of my strengths is my ability to work with people toward a consensus on sometimes difficult issues. I look forward to working with staff, the boards, the legislature and the public as we address the challenges.

Alaska's fish and game resources are extremely important to all Alaskans and we should constantly strive to involve the public in decisions we make. It will be my intention to reach out and encourage participation at all levels.

The sustained yield principle in Alaska's constitution requires us to insure fish and game resources are managed in strict compliance with this mandate. If we err, it must be on the side of the resource rather than the users.

Alaska's leadership on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council must be maintained in order to properly meet our mandate of sustained yield as well as meeting our responsibility to insure healthy, sustainable fishing communities and fair opportunities for harvesters and processors. My experience in this arena will help maintain that leadership.

Thank you for your consideration,


Sam Cotten

Objective: Appointment as permanent Commissioner, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game.

Professional qualifications:

Acting Commissioner, ADF&G Dec. 1, 2014-present

North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, voting member Sept. 2007-June 2013. The council prepares and amends fisheries management plans for the fisheries occurring in federal waters (3-200 nm). The council works with the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game and the Board of Fish to coordinate management programs in federal and state waters.

Resource analyst/ fisheries consultant for Aleutians East Borough 2001-2014. Attended Board of Fish and North Pacific Council meetings, analyzed regulatory changes, advocated for sustainable fishing communities and opportunities for Alaska based fishermen.

Boards and Committees:

Previous service on a variety of boards and committees 2001-2014
Commercial Fishing and Agriculture Bank (CFAB) board of directors,
Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute; committees on food service and retail.
State legislative task force on salmon industry restructuring.
Southwest Alaska Municipal conference, fisheries committee.
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Assn. Board of Directors, representing Municipality of Anchorage.
WASSIP work group, (salmon genetic study)

Advisory committee member, International Pacific Fisheries Commission
1987-88

Advisor, U.S.-USSR fisheries negotiations 1989-90

Alaska State Legislature 1975-83, 1985-93, Served in both houses.
Speaker of the House, 1989-90.

Personal

Born 7/16/1947 Juneau, Ak.

Southeast Ak., Juneau, Douglas, Tenakee Springs 1947-51

Palmer, 1951-63

Eagle River, 1963-present

Married: Martha Tillion Cotten, M.D., two sons; Sammy (27) Gus (24)

Education, Chugiak H.S. 1965, University of Alaska A.A degree 1978
Military Service; U.S. Navy 1965-69. Electronics School 1966, USS
Talladega (APA-208) 1966-68, Vietnam 1967. USS Schofield (DEG-3)
1968-69, Vietnam 1969. ETN-2 (E-5).

Community service:

Anchorage Planning and Zoning Commission 1983-84

Anchorage Ski Club board of directors 1982-87

Fire Lake Recreation Center board of directors 1984-present

Chugiak - Eagle River Chamber of Commerce, board of directors 1984-85

Anchorage Airport citizens advisory committee, Chairman 1994-96

Employment: worked as electrician, fire fighter, printer, water well driller,
public information officer, Senior technical representative Xerox Corp.,
commercial fisherman.

Awards:

Alaska's Outstanding Vietnam Veteran by National No Greater Love
Foundation. 1975

Wildlife Federation of Alaska, Legislative Conservation award 1988

Alaska Outdoor Council, Special recognition award 1988

Hobbies, interests:

Fishing, boating, skiing, bowling, Alaska history

Management experience

Speaker of the House, Alaska State Legislature 1989-1990.

As the leader, along with the President of the Senate, of the Legislative branch of government my job involved overall management responsibilities for the legislative agencies including administration, finance, legal affairs and research.

Chairman House Rules committee, 1977-1980. Management responsibilities included staffing for individual legislators, assignment of office space, preparation of the daily calendar (insuring legislation was ready for action by the full House of Representatives).

Chairman, house finance committee 1981. State budget preparation, fiscal analysis of legislation.

Chairman: house resources 1987-88, house community and regional affairs 1975-76, Senate oil and gas 1991-92, Senate resources 1992. As committee chairman, management duties included preparation of legislation, public testimony, staff management, working with other legislators, bill sponsors and administration representatives.

Chairman, Alaska Public Utilities Commission 1996-1999 (member 1995) Worked with executive director in management of the several sections within the commission staff. Professionals in the fields of communications, energy, water and wastewater, refuse services were employed by the commission and provided analysis and technical expertise to the commissioners.

Business manager, local investment group 1982-84. Owned and operated a variety of businesses including gas stations, grocery store, commercial and residential rentals.

Owner operator purse seine fishing operation 1987-2007, managed crew and business operations.

Experience in Fish and Game activities:

Sport fishing in lakes and streams in Mat-Su Valley, interior, arctic, Western Alaska, Southeast, Kenai as well as ocean fishing in Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound and Southeast Alaska. 1953-present. Took Alaska Railroad to fish Montana Creek and Sheep Creek before Parks Hwy. was constructed. Fly in fish with friends occasionally.

Trapping for muskrat and mink in the Palmer area 1959-63. Koslosky's, the local fur buyer paid \$.50 for muskrat, decided against trapping as a career.

Hunted in Mat-Su Valley, Prince William Sound, Kenai Peninsula, Wrangell Mountains and Southeast over the years.

Personal use fisheries have included dip netting in China Poot Bay; silver salmon personal use set net; tanner crab, Dungeness crab and shrimp pot fishing, Kachamek Bay and Prince William Sound; as well as clams and mussels in various locations.

Commercial fishing:

Lower Cook Inlet purse seine, permit holder 1987-2007

Sitka and Cook Inlet herring, crew 1993

Sand Point/King Cove beach seine and purse seine, crew 1978-79

Southeast gill net, crew 1977 (one trip)

Halibut longline, crew 2014 (two trips)

Pot Cod, Sand Point, ride along, 2012, (one trip)

Professional references:

Charles Cole

Former Attorney General, State of Alaska



Eric Olson

Former Chairman, North Pacific Fisheries Management Council

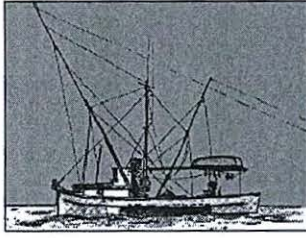


Denby Lloyd

Executive director, North Pacific Research Board

Former Commissioner, Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game





Alaska Trollers Association

130 Seward St., No. 205
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 586-9400
(907) 586-4473 Fax

March 16, 2015

Alaska Legislators
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: SUPPORT Sam Cotten for ADFG Commissioner

Dear Legislator:

The Alaska Trollers Association (ATA) is pleased to support Sam Cotten for Commissioner of Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Sam Cotten brings to the table an impressive resume and skill set that we believe makes him uniquely qualified to head the largest, most dynamic fisheries agency in the world. Informing his perspectives is an array of personal experiences that range from sitting at the helm of his fishing vessel, to the Speaker's chair in the House of Representatives. The spaces between have been filled with a sampling of key fisheries management and policy boards, each of which involves studious attention to the host of issues impacting Alaska's fish and fisheries. His curiosity about the biology of fishes, as well as the circumstances surrounding each issue, allows him to work with others to formulate practical solutions to complex problems. He is a known defender of Alaska's right to manage its resources and has worked tirelessly to ensure that the state and its fishermen are treated fairly in any arena.

Sam has spent many years exploring our state, in addition to observing and harvesting fish and game resources. He has a personal appreciation and respect for the connection that exists between Alaskans and the fish and game upon which we depend.

In addition to his wealth of fish and wildlife knowledge, Sam has developed a long list of friends in all walks of life. He is easily approachable and seems to flow effortlessly between technical discussions with academics to checking in with his fishing friends. He is humble enough to recognize, and lean upon, the strength and expertise of his team at ADFG. His solid people and managerial skills will serve him well.

Great challenges lie ahead for managers of Alaska's fish and wildlife. I believe it will take people like Sam Cotten, with his unique blend of experiences, to lead the Department as it works to unravel complex problems. Having had the good fortune to work with him on a variety of issues over the years, we can attest to Sam's intelligence, good judgment, and strong commitment to Alaska's resources and user groups.

Sam Cotten is an asset to the state and we hope you will work to see him confirm as Commissioner of ADF&G.

Best regards,

Dale Kelley
Executive Director