

Public Comments

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RECEIVED
AUG 27 2009
BOARDS

Mr. John Jensen, Chairman
State of Alaska / Board of Fisheries
c/o Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Dear Mr. Jensen and Members of the Board,

Attached is our Agenda Change Request regarding the start date of the Southeast Golden King Crab in 2010. The purpose of the request is simple – to take advantage of the marketing opportunity afforded by the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, while avoiding the economic loss that will be incurred if the current fishery timing is maintained and our fresh king crab arrive right after the Olympics when restaurant sales will be slumping. We are simply asking that the season opening be advanced by three weeks for 2010 only. It is important to note that it is fishermen who have the most to gain or lose in this matter. We market 50% to 60% of the Southeast Golden King Crab, and the majority of it is sold in Vancouver. That is why fishermen who sell to us have urged Alaska Glacier Seafoods to take the lead in seeking this Agenda Change Request.

We recognize that this ACR will add another item to your already busy December 1-8, 2009 meeting dealing with very important Bristol Bay issues. However, we think the matter is fairly simple and straightforward. It involves no allocation issues. We have wide and strong support from crab fishermen, and hope that we will have your support for this one-time change, which will very positively change the economics of the fishery in 2010.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,


Mike Erickson
President
Alaska Glacier Seafoods

Public Comment # 1

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT KETCHIKAN

ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN, a
Federally recognized tribe,

Plaintiff,

v.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES,

Defendant.

RECEIVED
AUG 27 2009
BOARDS

CASE NO.: 1KE-09-307 CI

AFFIDAVIT OF LARRY D. PAINTER IN SUPPORT
OF AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST

STATE OF ALASKA)
) ss:
First Judicial District)

I, **Larry D. Painter**, being first duly sworn on oath, depose and state that the following statements are based on personal knowledge, belief and experience, and are submitted to the Board of Fish for the State of Alaska in support of rescinding the Board's decision to allow the commercial harvest of Dungeness crab in the southern area of Southeast Alaska. In support thereof, please except the following in your reconsideration of the Board's decision:

1. I have been a commercial fisher for 59 years and a resident of Alaska for more than 45 years. When I first came to Southeast Alaska in the late 1960's we were allowed to fish Dungeness Crab and spot prawns year round. From my experience and the scientific studies published regarding the life cycle of Dungeness Crab, those in the industry became aware that Dungeness Crab start showing soft shells around late February. We have also learned that the soft shell cycle is most prominent during the summer months.

The soft shell cycle leaves the adult crab with little to no commercial value because of the decrease in body weight.

2. From my experience, the harvest of Dungeness Crab during the summer months yields approximately 50% with soft shells. Because the soft shell crabs have no commercial value they are discarded. Sometimes the soft shell crabs are thrown back on the grounds, and, sometimes they are discarded at the processing plant. In both instances the discarded soft shell crabs die as their soft shell does not protect the crab from handling.
3. Washington, Oregon, California and other parts of Alaska close crab harvest during the crab molt because of the lack of commercial value of soft shell crabs and because of the high mortality when handled. This Board has allowed the only summer season for the harvest of crab of which I am aware. There is no support for the harvest of Dungeness Crab during the summer other than the demands of the commercial crab fishers from Petersburg, Alaska. The science and common sense of not allowing a summer crab season anywhere for Dungeness Crab is overwhelming and continues to support the Board's past decisions since the early 1980's to keep the harvest closed at least in the southern area of Southeast Alaska.
4. The Department of Fish & Game for the State of Alaska supports the closure of a summer Dungeness Crab season. The Department's decision relies on the studies that have concluded that during the summer a large percentage of the adult and mature crabs have soft shells, and that these crabs have very little meat as the crabs starve themselves as part of the molting process to grow a new hard shell. This part of the crab's cycle is well known and well documented, but for no good reason is being ignored by the

Board. The Department has recommended a fall and winter season for the harvest of Dungeness Crab. There was nothing offered to the Board that would justify ignoring the empirical evidence against a summer harvest. To the contrary, the Board was offered nothing to support the summer season other than certain commercial interests that want to fish and harvest in the summer rather than the winter. Fall and winter fishing can be hard but avoiding senseless destruction of the crab population for convenience sake makes little sense and deserves revisit and reconsideration by the Board to close the summer season throughout all of Southeast Alaska.

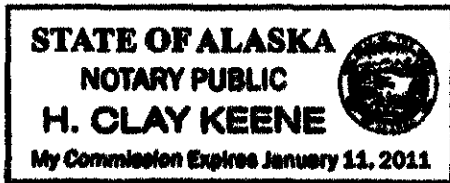
5. The commercial fishers promoting a summer Dungeness Crab season suggest only that the studies that promote and advocate against harvest during the soft shell cycle of the crabs' life are outdated and should be ignored. The studies on which the Department of Fish & Game rely are not outdated because the life cycle of the Dungeness Crab is no different today than it was when the studies were done. Nothing has changed. Everyone but the self-interest of certain commercial fishers want the summer season closed. In the name of sustained yield and common sense this Board needs to listen to the Department and other interest groups, and close the summer season.
6. I have advocated closure of the summer Dungeness Crab season in the southern region of Southeast Alaska since the early 1980's. I have attended virtually every meeting since the closure to support continued closure of a summer season. The Dungeness Crab is an amazing animal. They go through an annual transformation that is incredible and is one of nature's miracles. We are asking that this Board acknowledge this miracle of life and give to the crab a small dispensation during the summer that allows completion of this miracle under the protection of this Board's decision not to

allow summer harvest. The industry will benefit, the subsistence and recreational users will benefit, and I assure you the crab population of Southeast Alaska will benefit.

Dated: August 24, 2009

Larry D. Painter
Larry D. Painter

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 24th day of August 2009.



H. Clay Keene
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 1/11/11

**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT KETCHIKAN**

ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN, a
Federally recognized tribe,

Plaintiff,

v.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES,

Defendant.

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2009

BOARDS

CASE NO.: 1KE-09-307 CI

**AFFIDAVIT OF RICHARD PETERSON IN SUPPORT OF AGENDA CHANGE
REQUEST**

I, Richard Peterson, being first duly sworn, states as follows:

1. I am a resident of Kasaan and the President of the Organized Village of Kasaan. I am also the past Mayor of Kasaan.
2. The Organized Village of Kasaan is a federally recognized tribe on Prince of Wales Island, Alaska. The people of Kasaan are Haida people who continue to practice a customary and traditional use lifestyle and rely heavily on the harvesting of Dungeness crab in Area 2.
3. Historically, the people of Kasaan do not harvest crab until June because the crab in January through May are starved and starting to molt. The only feasible way to maintain our customary and traditional use is in the early summer. The Kasaan people harvest in small skiffs, which cannot access the iced areas in the winter months. The commercial fishers harvest all of the legally viable stock and they did so this year within days of the

opening on June 15, 2009, making it impossible for the people of Kasaan to meet the needs of the people in the community and Village.

4. The people of the Organized Village of Kasaan have no way to harvest Dungeness Crab in Kasaan Bay in their customary and traditional lifestyle with the Board's opening of the area for commercial crab fishers in these summer months. The result has been the devastation to us of our second most important resource for these families and leaving our families without any means to make up that harvest or otherwise compensate for the loss of the resource.
5. On behalf of the residents of Kasaan, and the Organized Village of Kasaan, and our traditional subsistence fishers, we request that the Board allow the Agenda Change so that the Board fairly considers the dramatic impact that the commercial fleet had this summer on our subsistence fishing and returns to its long-standing commitment to close District 2 to commercial crabbing between June 15 and August 15.

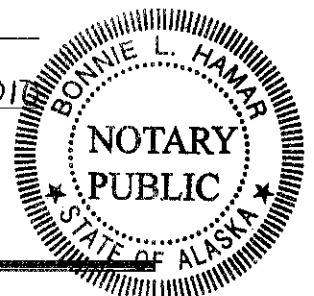
Dated: 8/26/09



Richard Peterson, President of the
Organized Village of Kasaan

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 26th day of August, 2009.

Bonnie L. Hamar
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 10-25-2010



IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT KETCHIKAN

ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN, a
Federally recognized tribe,

Plaintiff,

v.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES,

Defendant.

RECEIVED

AUG 27 2009

BOARDS

CASE NO.: 1KE-09-307 CI

**AFFIDAVIT OF RONALD LEIGHTON IN SUPPORT OF AGENDA CHANGE
REQUEST**

I, Ronald Leighton, being first duly sworn, states as follows:

1. I am a resident of Saltery Cove in Skowl Arm off of Kasaan Bay. I have been an Alaska resident for 62 years.
2. I'm the chair of The Organized Village of Kasaan Cultural, Customary and Traditional Use Committee. I'm also an elected member of the Organized Village of Kasaan Council. I am aware of the needs of our tribal members.
3. I am aware that the Alaska Department of Fish & Game conducted a study in 2002 of the subsistence harvest in our area. The Study concluded that the harvest of Dungeness crab was the second most important resource for families and persons in Kasaan.
4. I have been engaged in subsistence crab fishing for 40 years. The primary areas where I have set my crab pots are Mills Bay, Karta Bay, and Kina Cove all in Kasaan Bay. I also and lately set my crab traps in the upper end of Polk Inlet and Goose Bay.

5. In the areas of Kasaan Bay, Mills Bay, Kina Cove, and Karta Bay along with Polk inlet we have traditionally been aware of the molting season for male crab and have carefully avoided conducting our subsistence use fishing during the times when the crabs are or can be expected to be soft. For that reason, we have traditionally gathered our subsistence crab from late June to early August.
6. It is not possible to safely and productively subsistence crab in the winter months in District 2. We gather the crab in small skiffs that cannot negotiate these waterways safely during the winter with ice and other weather challenges. Additionally, the commercial crabbers who fish the winter put out so many pots it is not possible to maneuver a skiff safely, and even if we could set pots, we would not gather but a few crab.
7. We in Kasaan were distressed when we learned the Board of Fisheries opened District 2 for commercial crabbing between June 15 and August 15. The Council for the Organized Village of Kasaan authorized filing a lawsuit to preserve our opportunity for subsistence crabbing in District 2.
8. At the beginning of the commercial summer crab fishery, there were four commercial boats in the upper Polk Inlet area with about 100-150 pots each. After about 2 days, two pulled out and two remained, concentrating in the upper Polk Inlet area with about 200-250 pots in the area until the first week in July when they pulled out. I witnessed about 4 boats in the Kasaan Bay areas with in excess of 350 pots. Karta Bay was peppered with commercial pots and I was wondering how anyone could set a beach seine in there with the amount of pots.

9. Despite the presence of the commercial boats beginning June 15th, I attempted to subsistence crab fish has I have traditionally. On July 24th 2009 at about 6 p.m. near latitude 55.20.12 and longitude 132.25.28 located near Rock Creek in Polk Inlet I placed 3 baited crab traps at about 6.20 p.m. On July 25th at about 6:50 p. m. I pulled same three crab traps and inventoried the crab they caught as follows.

- 4 soft shelled Dungeness crab.
- 1 female Dungeness crab.
- 2 under sized Dungeness crab.
- 2 legal hard shelled crab.

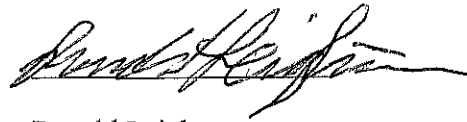
This is an example of what it was like to attempt to subsistence fish in the midst of the commercial crab fleet fishery.

10. By late July of previous years, I would have at least 80 Dungeness crab put up and frozen vacuumed packed for the year. I don't fish when the commercial fishery is going on and I don't fish in the winter months. I normally fish in July when the crab are hard shelled. As of so far this year I have no crab put up and will have none for my sustenance. I will not get my customary and traditional catch for this year.

11. Having a commercial summer fishery gives us only part of June to get our harvest because we do not fish crab until at least June when there are not as many molting crab. With the commercial summer fishery, we are not able to compete with the commercial fishery. As you can see by my example above we can't gather our needed level of customary and traditional use. Even if we try to make up our needs after the summer commercial fleet leaves, we will only have left a well picked over fishery leaving us with molting or illegal sized and female crabs.

12. On 8/19/2009 at about 6:30 p.m. I set 3 baited crab pots in Goose Bay at 55.23.15 latitude and 132.32.00 longitude. On 8/20/2009 at about 6:00 p.m. I pulled the same 3 and inventoried the catch. It was horrible there was 8 soft shelled crab, 1 female crab 2 under sized and 2 keepers of legal size and hard shelled. In all the past years I would normally catch 15-20 crab per pot and sort through and only keep the biggest 20 crab to take home. In three pots there would be 40+ keeps.
13. We believe the commercial crab fishery should remain closed during the summer months as it has since at least 1985 and remain closed until more studies are done and the Department of Fish & Game and the Board of Fisheries engages in consultation with the Organized Village of Kasaan to determine how to best preserve our subsistence crab opportunity.
14. I am aware of other persons who relayed to me experiencing much less opportunity to harvest crab during the commercial summer crab fishery this year.
15. The opening allowed by the Board for a summer commercial crab fishery has also hurt our ability and opportunity to gather our subsistence sockeye catch. Attached to this affidavit as Exhibit 1 is a letter I received from Walter Young stating that he could not set his seine on the Karta River due to the numerous commercial crab boats and their pots.
16. As residents of Kasaan, and traditional subsistence fishers, we request that the Board allow the Agenda Change so that the Board fairly considers the dramatic impact that the commercial fleet had this summer on our subsistence fishing and returns to its long-standing commitment to close District 2 to commercial crabbing between June 15 and August 15.

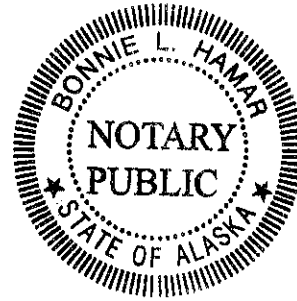
Dated: 8/26/09



Ronald Leighton

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 26th day of August, 2009.

Bonnie L. Hamar
Notary Public in and for Alaska
My Commission Expires: 10-25-2010



**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT KETCHIKAN**

ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN, a
Federally recognized tribe,

Plaintiff,

v.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES,

Defendant.

RECEIVED
AUG 27 2009
BOARDS

CASE NO.: 1KE-09-307 CI

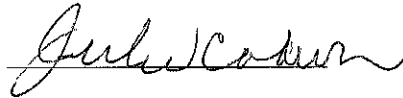
AFFIDAVIT OF JULIA COBURN IN SUPPORT OF AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST

I, Julia Coburn, being first duly sworn, states as follows:

1. I have been an Alaska resident for 88 years.
2. I'm a Kasaan Haida Elder born to and living in Kasaan, a local tribal member of our Indian Reorganization Act federally recognized tribal government, the Organized Village of Kasaan.
3. In the past, I received upwards of 40-50 crab per year from Kasaan Bay in our traditional subsistence crab fishing.
4. This year, after the commercial crab fishers began fishing Kasaan Bay and the other areas near our village, I received only 4 Dungeness crab.
5. The subsistence crab fishing is vital to our village and we do not have an opportunity to obtain our traditional catch needs with the commercial crab fleet taking all the catch in June-August.

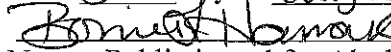
6. I request that the Board of Fisheries approve the Agenda Change Request of the Organized Village of Kasaan and allow us to present to the Board why the Board should return to its historical position of closing District 2 for commercial crab fishing during June 15 through August 15.

Dated: 8-25-09



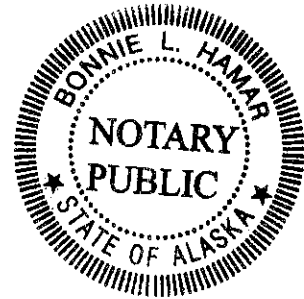
Julia Coburn

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 25th day of August, 2009.



Notary Public in and for Alaska

My Commission Expires: 10-25-2010



ATTN: Jim Marcotte

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

RECEIVED
AUG 31 2009
BOARDS

Dear Board of Fisheries:

I was wondering if you could share this with the BOARD which may show the impact of the summer commercial crab season that took place this year in Southeast Alaska.

I would like to provide you with an experience I had last weekend. Actually on 8/21/09 to be exact. I went crabbing with 9 pots in the Shoal Cove area of Carrol Inlet that is west of Ketchikan. After letting the pots soak for a few hours I ended up with 7 legal crab. That is one third the take when I normally use 5 pots in past years during the same time and in the exact same place. I also would like to say I threw only 3 back that were close but not legal.

I am sure you will hear from the commercial crabbers after this winter season whining about the lack of harvest. I hope this does not indicate a future collapse of the fishery.

I have also talked to several other that have had the same experience and I will encourage them to write you also.

Thank You:



John A. Beck

6061B South Tongass Hwy.

Ketchikan, Ak. 99901



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1011 E. Tudor Road

Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS/OSM/9134/BOF Work Session

SEP 8 2009

RECEIVED

SEP 11 2009

BOARDS

Mr. John Jensen, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 25526
Juneau, Alaska 99802-5526

Dear Chair Jensen:

The Alaska Board of Fisheries will consider nine Agenda Change Requests (ACR), among other issues, at its work session beginning October 13, 2009.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management, working with other Federal agencies, has reviewed these requests and does not believe that adoption of any of these requests will have an impact on Federal subsistence users and fisheries. We may wish to comment on other specific agenda items if issues arise during the meeting that may have an impact on Federal subsistence users and fisheries.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on these important regulatory matters and look forward to working with your Board and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on these issues.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Probasco
Assistant Regional Director

- cc: Denby S. Lloyd, ADF&G
- Michael Fleagle, Chair FSB
- John Hilsinger, ADF&G, Anchorage
- Craig Fleener, ADF&G, Juneau
- Charles Swanton, ADF&G, Juneau
- Tina Cunniff, ADF&G, Anchorage
- George Pappas, ADF&G, Anchorage
- Jim Marcotte, ADF&G, Juneau
- Interagency Staff Committee





**Kenai
Area
Fisherman's
Coalition**

PROTECTING YOUR FISHING RIGHTS & RESOURCES

P. O. Box 375 Kenai, Ak. 99611 (907) 283-1054 dwwimar@gci.net

Board of Fisheries
ADF&G/ Board Support
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Ak. 99811-5526

September 10, 2009

RECEIVED
SEP 14 2009
BOARDS

Dear Board Members,

As you begin preparation for the 2011 Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) meeting, we are once again requesting that you consider the Kenai / Soldotna location as the site for this meeting. Historically, 80 – 85 percent of the proposals under consideration are relative to the Kenai or Kasilof Rivers and adjacent offshore Cook Inlet waters, however, this meeting has not been held in our area since 1999. That includes the normal cycle meetings of 2002, 2005, 2008 and a special meeting in 2003. After the 2005 meeting the Board considered and supported a mandate to hold its meetings in locations most appropriate for the matters under consideration, but that has not occurred to date during the UCI cycle. In the past we have asked the Board to consider a method of fairness whereby the meetings would be alternated between the Anchorage / MATSU area and the Kenai / Soldotna area. This would provide fairness to users in both geographic locations that wish to participate.

In 2008 the Board denied a similar request and once again opted for Anchorage as the location for that meeting. The reason given for this decision was that the Board felt Anchorage was a central location. We would ask, central to whom? It is certainly convenient for Anchorage / MATSU folks that can easily commute from their homes on a daily basis, but not so central for folks from the Kenai Peninsula that must drive over a mountain pass in winter conditions and bare the expenses of travel, lodging and meals for the opportunity to participate in the process. This can easily cost \$500 - \$800 just to participate through the testimony and committee stages.

Despite the expenses incurred by Kenai Peninsula residents to participate we still find that roughly 75 – 80% of the participants are from the Kenai Peninsula area. Right about now you're probably saying, "so what's the problem"? The problem is that nearly all of these participants are from the well-financed special interest groups that can afford to support many participants with funding to cover their expenses. The ones left out of the process are individual private anglers, personal use and subsistence users. This is not a fair process and should not continue.

The biggest reason this continues is because of the lobbying power these influential special interest groups maintain over the process. These groups know that as long as they can continue to have the meetings in the Anchorage area they can control the process because other Peninsula users cannot afford to attend at the same level. Private anglers, commercial fishermen and other user groups have repeatedly asked for a fair resolution of this issue by alternating the meeting locations every other Board cycle, thus providing the value of fairness this idea provides. Additionally, prior to the 2005 meeting, our local legislators requested a price comparison for holding a meeting in the Kenai / Soldotna area versus Anchorage. Because of lower lodging and meeting room costs in the Kenai / Soldotna area the price was comparable. Since then additional hotels, stores and restaurants have been built and provide plenty of comfort and accessibility for Board members, participants and agency folks.

Public Comment # 8

1/2

Lastly, the process of having a three-member panel traveling to the Kenai area to take testimony is not a workable alternative and has lost confidence with folks from our area. They see their heartfelt testimony wrapped up in a few minute presentation by one of the traveling Board members and don't feel it is of any value. If the Board continues to see value in this process then it should consider it for the Anchorage / MATSU area when the meetings are to be held in the Kenai / Soldotna area.

The question of a meeting location for the 2011 meeting will probably be discussed at your upcoming October work session and we would encourage you to support an alternating UCI meeting schedule starting with the 2011 meeting being held in the Kenai / Soldotna area.

On behalf of private resource users from the Kenai Peninsula we would like to thank you for consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dwight Kramer – Chairman
Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition

cc: Sen. Tom Wagoner
Rep. Mike Chenault
Rep. Kurt Olson
Rep. Paul Seaton
Denby Lloyd, Commissioner ADF&G
Mayor Dave Carey, Kenai Pen. Borough
Mayor Pat Porter, City of Kenai
Mayor Peter Micciche, City of Soldotna



"Village with a Past, City with a Future"

210 Fidalgo Avenue, Kenai, Alaska 99611-7794
Telephone: (907) 283-7535 / Fax: (907) 283-3014
www.ci.kenai.ak.us

September 16, 2009

RECEIVED
SEP 21 2009
BOARDS

Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish & Game/Board Support
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

RE: **BOARD OF FISHERIES 2011 UPPER COOK INLET MEETING**

The City of Kenai invites the Board of Fisheries to hold its 2011 Upper Cook Inlet meeting in Kenai.

Our invitation is offered for the following reasons:

- Holding the meeting on the Kenai Peninsula would be fair and appropriate because a predominant amount of proposals before the Board for consideration are relative to the Kenai or Kasilof Rivers and adjacent offshore Cook Inlet waters.
- A very large percentage of participants who attend Board of Fisheries meetings in Anchorage are from the Kenai Peninsula area.
- Instituting a revolving meeting location, alternating between Anchorage/Mat-Su and Kenai/Soldotna (Kenai Peninsula) would be a perfect solution to avoid concerns of control of the Board's process.

Additionally, Kenai has the following amenities available:

- Hotels, restaurants, shopping, meeting facilities, medical facilities, etc., many of which are listed with the Kenai Chamber of Commerce (kenaichamber.org) and the Kenai Convention & Visitors Bureau (visitkenai.com).
- Accessibility to Kenai may be through a quick 20-minute flight into the Kenai Municipal Airport or a leisurely drive.
- Evening sporting and cultural events at local high schools, ice rinks, etc.

1/2

Public Comment #

9

- Community points of interest, including a walk in Old Towne to view the historic Russian Orthodox Church and Chapel; enjoying the spectacular view from the "bluff"; strolling along the beach; and, visiting the Kenai Bicentennial Visitors & Cultural Center.

We strongly urge the Board of Fisheries to institute an alternating meeting schedule in 2011 and again, invite you to hold the Board of Fisheries 2011 Upper Cook Inlet meeting in Kenai.

If you have questions, please contact me at the above address. We look forward to hearing from you!

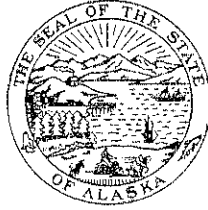
CITY OF KENAI



Pat Porter
Mayor

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol, Room 208
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Phone: 907-465-3779
Fax: 907-465-2833
Toll Free: 800-469-3779



145 Main St. Loop
Second Floor
Kenai, Alaska 99611
Phone: 907-283-7223
Fax: 907-283-7184

REPRESENTATIVE MIKE CHENAULT SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

September 22, 2009

Board of Fisheries
ADF&G/ Board Support
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Ak. 99811-5526

RECEIVED
SEP 25 2009
BOARDS

Dear Board Members:

As you begin preparation for the 2011 Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) meeting, I strongly endorse the Kenai /Soldotna area as the site for this meeting. This meeting has not been held in the Kenai/Soldotna area since 1999. This includes the normal cycle meetings of 2002, 2005, 2008 and a special meeting in 2003. After the 2005 meeting, the Board considered and supported a mandate to hold its meetings in locations most appropriate for the matters under consideration, but that has not occurred to date during the cycle involving upper Cook Inlet.

In 2008, the Board denied a similar request and once again opted for Anchorage as the location for that meeting. It is certainly convenient for Anchorage / Mat-Su residents that can easily commute from their homes on a daily basis, but Anchorage is not central for Kenai Peninsula residents that must drive over 150 miles during the winter and bare the expenses of travel, lodging and meals for the opportunity to participate in this public process.

I am advocating a Kenai/Soldotna location for all the users on the Peninsula: subsistence, personal use, commercial, sports and commercial sport.

I also feel compelled to comment that the process of having a three-member panel traveling to the Kenai area to take testimony is not a workable alternative and has lost confidence with folks from our area. They see their heartfelt testimony wrapped up in a few minute presentation by one of the traveling Board members and don't feel it is of any value.

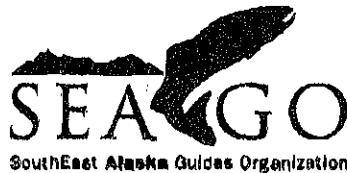
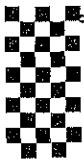
The question of a meeting location for the 2011 meeting will probably be discussed at your upcoming October work session and I again would encourage you to support an alternating UCI meeting schedule starting with the 2011 meeting being held in the Kenai / Soldotna area.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mike Chenault in black ink.

Representative Mike Chenault
Speaker, Alaska State House

Public Comment # 10



28 September 2009

Boards Support Section
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Delivered via Fax: 907-465-6094

RECEIVED
SEP 25 2009
BOARD

RE: 2009/2010 ACR Submission Comments

Dear Chairman Jensen & Board Members,
SEAGO represents a comprehensive group of charter fishing operators, lodge owners, and our clients. Our mission is to promote the tradition of sport fishing in Southeast Alaska through reasonable regulations that ensure the long-term sustainability of our businesses and fisheries. Sportfishing in Southeast hosts 100,000 anglers and creates \$300M income and 3,000+ jobs annually.

We are commenting on proposals (see below) that either directly affect our industry or the overall health of the resource. We urge the Board of Fisheries to continue its longstanding practice of considering proposals based on sound science and data collection and analysis. This includes work done by ADF&G, NMFS, and the Alaska State Troopers Wildlife Enforcement Division, among others.

We would sincerely appreciate your help in giving fair and balanced guidance to the ADF&G mission by ensuring our fisheries continue to be available to the thousands of sport and guided sport anglers who are good stewards of the resource and contribute billions of dollars to our economy. It is important to fully understand the economic values and the business models that distinguish each user group and to craft policies that optimize the value of Alaska's resources for the greater good. The Board of Fisheries has SEAGO's pledge to work constructively to that end.

Thank you for taking our comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

John A. Blair
Executive Director
925-366-6638
john@seagoalaska.org

//attach

1/2



Attachment - 2009/2010 ACR Submission Comments

SEAGO offers the following summary comments below. In addition we may wish to provide additional information via public testimony and Recorded Comments during the BOF meeting in Anchorage in October, 2009.

Proposal
ACR #4

Recommendation
OPPOSE.

Synchronize sport bag limit and commercial quota changes for sablefish in Northern Southeast District. (5 AAC 47.020)

Sablefish quotas have been already addressed twice in 2009, first at the February BOF meeting in Sitka, and then again at the March BOF meeting and follow-up conference call in April. Through this process, the BOF established extremely conservative sport fish harvest regulations for the first time.

This ACR request should be not allowed for two primary reasons:

1. The ACR request is specifically contrary to BOF policy for submission in that it is allocative in nature and provides no new information on sport catch of sablefish, (see Item # 2 in ACR POLICY FOR CHANGING BOARD OF FISHERIES AGENDA - 5 AAC 39.999. POLICY FOR CHANGING BOARD AGENDA).
2. 2009 is the first year that sablefish data is being collected for sport fish sector. To-date no data have been published by ADF&G. Further, sportfishing representatives have previously testified that the our catch of sablefish are less than 1% of the total catch and has a de minimus impact on this fishery.

The type of management proposed by the commercial fishing authors is usually only appropriate when there is a hard allocation on the user group affected by the proposed regulation. There is no such hard cap at this time and no data to establish one.

We recommend that no further action be taken on sport allocation of sablefish until adequate data on catch rates are accumulated.

ACR #8

OPPOSE.

Close specific areas to guided sport fishing for rockfish in Juneau-Douglas area. (5 AAC 47.021)

SEAGO opposes this proposal as being selectively punitive towards sportfishers. If a closure is warranted, it must be for all user groups.

The ACR doesn't meet the criteria for an out of cycle regulation change. This request is based on anecdotal speculation and no hard data are provided to demonstrate that the charter fleet is either targeting rockfish outside of its allocation or having a significant impact on the rockfish population. Finally, for all practical purposes, the group cited in the ACR request (ie, cruise related charters), have ended for this the year so time is available to collect actual logbook data on catch rates. Decisions can then be made based on actual data.

SEAGO • P.O. Box 422 • Sitka, Alaska 99835

www.seagoalaska.org

Public Comment # 11



Sitka Charter Boat Operators Association

PO Box 2422 Sitka Alaska 99835

September 28, 2009

Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Fax: 907-465-6094

Dear Chairman Jensen & Board Members,

The Sitka Charter Boat Operators Association (SCBOA) wishes to submit the following comments pertaining to the 2009/2010 Agenda Change Request.

SCBOA is opposed to ACR 4 (*Synchronize sport bag limit and commercial quota changes for sablefish in Northern Southeast District*) and ACR 8 (*Close specific areas to guided sport fishing for rockfish in Juneau-Douglas area*) because both fail to meet the criteria for an Agenda Change Request.

ACR 4 is allocative and offers no new information on the sport harvest of sablefish. At the February 2009 Board meeting in Sitka, the Sport Fish Division had no data on the sport harvest of sablefish. This information was collected this past summer, and must be considered prior to making a management regulation.

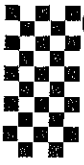
ACR 8 offers anecdotal speculation on the guided sport impact on rockfish in the Juneau area. The Board should again, first examine the logbook data collected this past summer, to determine whether any action is warranted. It would seem that the development of a LAMP might be the appropriate next step for management of local resources for this area.

With so much at stake, the Board has a tremendous responsibility to critically analyze as much information as possible before making decisions, which will affect our fishery resources, as well as the economic well being of coastal communities in our State.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments,
Sincerely,

Theresa Weiser
President
Sitka Charterboat Operators Association (SCBOA)

Public Comment # 12



Joel Hanson
417 Arrowhead Street
Sitka, AK 99835
Phone / Fax (907) 747-0834

September 28, 2009

Attn: BoF Comments
Boards Support Section
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
PO Box 115526
Juneau AK 99811-5526

By FAX: 907-465-6094

RE: Support out-of-cycle consideration of ACR 4 – Synchronize sport bag limit and commercial quota changes for sablefish in Northern Southeast District.

Dear Chairman Jensen and members of the Board of Fisheries,

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on ACR 4, pertaining to sport harvest of sablefish, or black cod, in the Chatham Strait area of Southeast Alaska.

I am a thirty-year resident of Southeast Alaska with a history of participation in commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fisheries, plus I have worked for more than twelve years in the charter industry as captain and guide on board small cruise vessels offering multiple activities including whale-watching, sport fishing, hiking and glacier viewing. I have no personal or professional stake in how the Board chooses to resolve Chatham sablefish sport fishing issues since I do not target this species either personally or professionally. I am, however, a member of the Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee representing guides. I respectfully offer these comments in this capacity.

ACR 4 was submitted to you by three representatives of commercial fishing groups who allege that the Chatham sablefish stock is at imminent risk of overharvest due to the influence of sport fish charter removals. Their proposed remedy is to synchronize sport bag limits for Chatham sablefish with changes to commercial quota, presumably on an equal percentage basis so that if a commercial fisherman's quota were reduced by 25%, the sport bag limit would be reduced from the current 4 daily to 3 daily.

While I do not agree with the authors' allegation that charter removals over the next couple years will prove to be a significant contributor (much less a prime contributor) to the problem of sablefish overharvest, I do concede that this stock appears to be in serious decline and that sport anglers should, to some extent, play a role in helping to stabilize and improve the situation. Thus I urge the Board to support consideration of some kind of an abundance-based management regime for sport harvest of Chatham sablefish, though not necessarily one which is joined at the hip to changes in commercial quota.

In order to achieve any meaningful stabilization and recovery of the stock, I believe the Department will need to adopt much more conservative annual harvest objectives (AHOs) for the directed fishery in coming years. Restrictions on sport harvests alone, even to the point of totally eliminating sport harvests, will only serve to provide a small

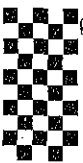
measure of relief. I find it extremely discouraging, to say the least, that the authors of ARC 4 have chosen to characterize sport charter operators as the single most significant threat to the viability of the Chatham sablefish resource, when the real problem has been (and will likely continue to be) issues related to the accuracy of the Department's biomass estimates and the development of sustainable AHOs for the directed fishery. Also, the directed halibut longline fishery results in a large number of sablefish mortalities. In fact, the influence of halibut longlining on the Chatham sablefish stock is probably more than three times greater than the influence of sport fishing...yet the authors of ARC 4 fail to acknowledge in any way the threat posed by that activity.

It is extremely important to direct the Board's attention to the following: The authors of ARC 4 have interjected a secondary issue into this proposal which I feel the Board needs first to acknowledge...and then firmly and unequivocally reject. The last line of the problem statement declares that the charter fleet poses a looming threat to the Chatham sablefish resource in part because the fleet, "...relies on self-reported catch data to inform management." Further along in the proposal the authors declare, "Self-reported charter catch data will not increase the accuracy of information available to the Department with which to effectively manage the fishery."

The Board will probably recall extensive debate on the verifiability of charter logbook data at this spring's meeting here in Sitka, and will also remember discussing the challenges of trying to force some kind of fish ticket regime (comparable somehow to the system used by commercial fishermen) on charter operators and clients. In the end, the Board recognized that the current charter logbook data collection program works adequately in combination with routine enforcement and monitoring efforts. Plus, the data from logbooks can later be compared to annual mail-out sport fish harvest surveys for further confirmation of accuracy.

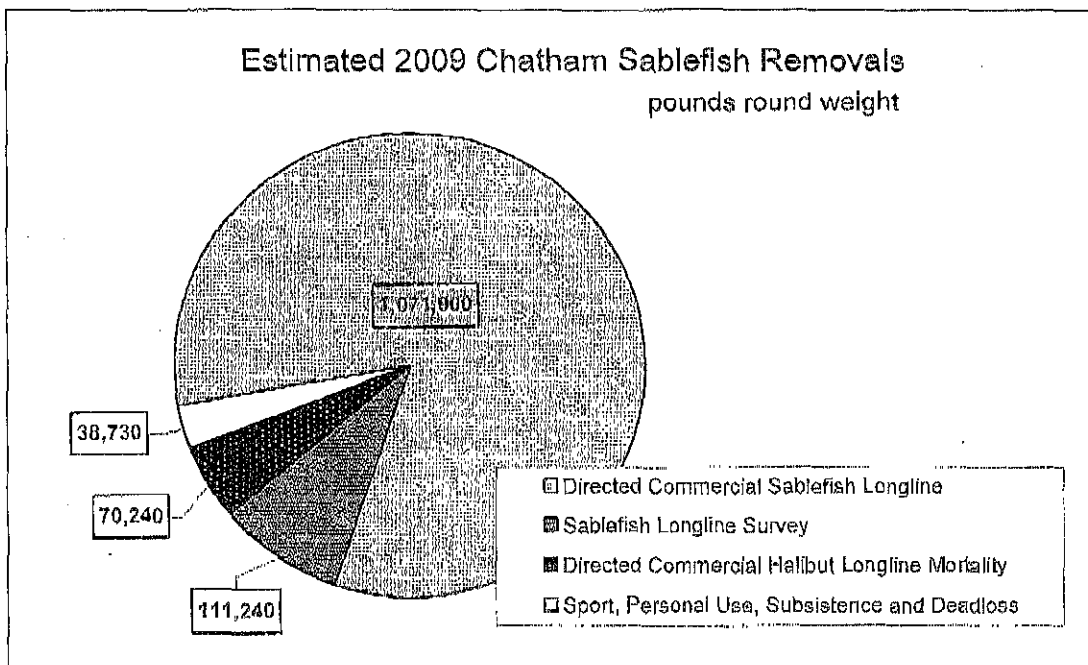
I think it's unfortunate that the authors of ACR 4 have chosen to cloud and confuse the Chatham sablefish issue by mixing it up with the logbook verifiability issue. I hope the Board will see fit to consider the former and explicitly refuse to consider the latter. There should be no doubt as to the inappropriateness of reopening debate at this time on the question of logbooks vs. other methods of data collection for charter operators and clients.

The 2009 charter logbook data has not yet been made available to the public, but it is my understanding that the Department has been diligent in processing this information on an ongoing basis during the season. Hopefully by the time the Board meets in October, the Department will have it available for your inspection. But in the meantime, I have developed my own best estimate of charter removal numbers up to this point in time (virtually the end of the season). I informally polled the managers of the largest sport fishing lodges with the largest fleets of charter boats in the Chatham Strait area. These were Anchor Point Lodge and Shelter Lodge in the Juneau area, and Whaler's Cove Lodge in Angoon.



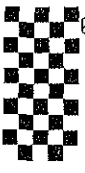
Jim Klark at Whalers Cove indicated that sablefish is not a target species for his clients. He said he doubted whether his lodge's guides (or even the guides of other lodges in his immediate area including Pybus Point Lodge, Baranof Wilderness Lodge and Dove Island Lodge) have submitted logbook sheets this season showing more than just a few sablefish landings scattered throughout the operating season. My efforts to contact people at these three lodges have not been successful to date, so I cannot confirm all of Jim's claims. But I spoke at length with Richard Yamada who is the owner of both Anchor Point Lodge and Shelter Lodge. He indicated that his clients are the only anglers in the Juneau area that regularly fish deep (using electric reels) for sablefish. He estimated that his clients' total harvest of this species over the current season may have amounted to approximately 20,000 lbs.

I fully understand that such a poll can only yield, at best, a very rough estimate of the total sport-charter harvest of Chatham sablefish. But my findings appear to be in line with the Department's pre-season estimates. The following graphic was constructed using Department figures.



I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this matter. Follow-up inquiry may be directed to captainjoel@alaska.com.

Joel Hanson
Joel Hanson



Inter-Cooperative Exchange Policy Advocacy Committee (ICEPAC)

September 28th, 2009

Mr. John Jensen, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Boards Support Section
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Fax: 907 465 6094

ATTN: BOF COMMENTS-----ACR #9

On behalf of the Inter-Cooperative Exchange Policy Advocacy Committee ("ICEPAC"), a recently formed group of non-affiliated BSAI crab harvesters representing approximately 80% of the harvest sector, I wish to provide support for ACR #9, a proposal to reduce the minimum size limit for Tanner crab in the Bering Sea fishery.

The proposal to reduce the size limit for Tanner crab in the Bering Sea is supported by scientific information (Zheng 2008) that illustrates the mean size of maturity for males and females has declined steadily in Bristol Bay and the Pribilof Islands and historically has been much lower than the legal size limit. Because of terminal molt, this decline in maturity size has unintended consequences: (1) the few large-growing males experience higher fishing mortality rates and many are removed before they have an opportunity to reproduce, (2) handling mortality of sublegal males increased with the increasing proportion of sublegal to legal-sized crabs, (3) at-sea discards comprise a greater proportion of the total catch, thus increasing catch sorting time and costs, and (4) legal male catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) declined. The combination of reduced legal male CPUE and increased proportion of sublegals have combined to compromise fishery profitability. Decreased profitability leads the fleet to abandon fishing prematurely, resulting in foregone catch as the fishery no longer attains guideline harvest limits (catch quotas) designed to achieve optimum sustainable yield.

NMFS/RAM reports show foregone harvests of the TAC in 2006-07, 2007-08 and 2008-09 due to low CPUE and lack of profitability were respectively: 771,000 pounds; 3.1 million pounds; and 2.2 million pounds.

Public Comment # 14

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At the time the size limit was established at 1-2 molts above maturity size, it was unforeseen that mean size would decline by 20 mm CW or more. A reduction in minimum size limit (and commensurate adjustment in harvest rate) is necessary to continue to achieve original optimum yield objectives for this fishery.

Sincerely,



Edward Poulsen
Executive Director, ICEPAC
206-992-3260

2/2

Public Comment #

14

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board,

My name is Yancey Nilsen I have been fishing Golden King Crab in S.E. Alaska since 1986 and running the F/V Aleutian Dream in that fishery since 1998. I am writing to ask you to deny ACR#6 pertaining to the change to the start of the golden crab fishery here in southeast Alaska. In this ACR Mr. Erickson is asking you to change the start of the GKC fishery on an assumption that harvesting these crab earlier would better position them on the market for sales because of the winter Olympics. In talking to the other two major processors in southeast they both told me they felt that it was not an issue. I myself sell all my crab to a single small buyer who deals exclusively in live crab and he has informed me that he sees no advantage to moving the starting date.

In considering this you also have to realize that when you change the start of the GKC fishery you have to change the start of the Biardi Tanner fishery also. I myself have no experience fishing Tanners in January but in talking with those that have I am told that the crab our softer and not as full of meat and that was a major reason for that fishery to start in February in the first place.

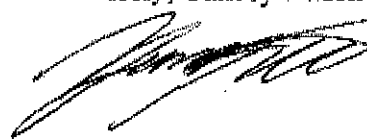
Mr. Erickson also states that this is not an allocative issue. On the surface it appears not, as it does not redistribute between different user groups but it does redistribute within the fleet in the way that fishery is executed. As is it now a large number of participants choose to go either herring fishing in Sitka and/or longlining when those fisheries open, easing the pressure on the GKC fishery and leaving more opportunity for those that remain. Those that do remain usually do not have an option of an other fishery. If you change thing so harvesting starts nearly a month earlier quota will be caught sooner. I feel in essence this is a restructuring proposal even if only for one year.

I have also heard from other people how this will disrupt other prior plans they may already have be it business or pleasure. Some in our industry are already involved in other fisheries at the proposed start date. And for still others this is the only time that they have time to spend with family. Nobody wants to chose between family and supporting family.

There is also the issue of weather . Moving the season up by a month would just put this already dangerous fishery even more into the winter months. The majority of the participants in this fishery use 58ft or smaller boats. That might seem like a good size boat until faced with a January storm.

I am also very disturbed at the way MR. Erickson has brought this to the Board. Prior to the 2009 GKC season I was selling all my crab to Alaska Glacier Seafood I think I was his biggest producer. Prior to the 2008 season I talked with Mr. Erickson in his office and he brought up the Olympics and how he thought there may be a chance to market crab towards it. I expressed that I was not interested in moving the start date, but that if he was he needed to get a proposal in. I remember this because I was working on a proposal of my own concerning management. Mr. Erickson chose not submit a proposal and is coming back now and asking for an ACR. I very much believe in the Board Process and appreciate how open and public it is. I do not feel that this ACR meets the criteria to justify taking it out of cycle as there was plenty of time to submit it during the regular cycle. The Olympics didn't just sneak up on us.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely, Yancey Nilsen



Petersburg Vessel Owners Association

PO Box 232

Petersburg, AK 99833

Phone & Fax: 907.772.9323

pvoa@gci.net • www.pvoaonline.org

September 29th, 2009

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Via Fax: (907) 465-6094

RE: AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST COMMENTS

Dear Chairman Jensen and members of Board of Fisheries,

Petersburg Vessel Owners Association (PVOA) is a diverse group of 70 commercial fishermen and 30 businesses operating primarily in Southeast Alaska. Our members provide millions of meals to the public annually by participating in a variety of fisheries statewide including cod, salmon, herring, crab, and shrimp. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the ACRs up for consideration at the October 2009 worksession.

ACRs 2 & 5 CLOSE DISTRICT 1 AND DISTRICT 2 TO COMMERCIAL DUNGENESS FISHING IN THE SUMMER SEASON. PVOA is OPPOSED to these two proposals. These proposals do not address the criteria for ACRs, except that when the Board re-addressed this issue at the 2009 shellfish meeting subsistence was not addressed. Anecdotal reports from fishermen in the area indicate that the crab population in districts 1 & 2 is healthy, there is a high instance of hard shell crab, and any conflicts with subsistence pots were quickly remedied by fishermen moving their gear to allow local access to traditional grounds. Leaving districts 1 and 2 open for the summer season helped spread the distribution of the crab fleet and created less crowding and competition on the grounds.

ACR 4 ESTABLISH ABUNDANCE-BASED SABLEFISH BAG LIMIT. PVOA co-sponsored and SUPPORTS this proposal. This action meets the criteria because the Board did not consider adjustable abundance-based bag limits at any time and it was not anticipated that the commercial quota would be reduced 30% in 2009. Establishing abundance based bag limits is extremely important to help ensure that reasonable expectations are created in regards to harvest levels and abundance, and commercial opportunity is maintained to continue to feed the Alaskan and American public. Sustaining the commercial black cod fishery is extremely important to preserving public access to this species, as commercial harvesters supply millions of meals to the public

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Public Comment #

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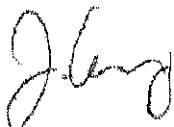
each year that otherwise do not have the means or resources to come to Alaska to sport fish. Many PVOA members and fishermen around the State are extremely dependant on black cod and are facing hard times due to reduced abundance, severe quota cuts, and growing charter harvest. The commercial longline fleet has existed for 100 years and has taken great strides in becoming stewards for the resource and stabilizing their industry.

ACR 6 MOVE THE START DATE OF THE TANNER AND BROWN CRAB SEASON FOR 2010. PVOA is OPPOSED to this proposal, although they support the concept and appreciate the authors' effort to open the season early to facilitate brown crab to the Vancouver Olympics. This proposal has the potential to be allocative as the Tanner crab season would be moved earlier as well, and given the severity of the past three winters in Southeast, many Tanner crab permit holders are concerned that an early season opening date will cause their most productive fishing grounds (inner bays) to be iced over. Concern has been expressed regarding the earlier opening date due to adverse weather conditions in January and the safety issues associated. Although facilitating brown crab to the Vancouver Olympics is a good concept, many permit holders are reluctant to expose themselves and their crew to additional adverse weather.

ACR 8 CLOSE WATERS IN JUNEAU TO GUIDED ROCKFISH SPORT FISHING. PVOA is OPPOSED to this proposal due to its allocative impacts, as we are opposed to closing a fishery to just one user group. PVOA is however, fully supportive of establishing reasonable bag limits on all species that do not currently have a bag limit. The Board was made aware of the potential for increased pressure on rockfish stocks due to the one halibut per day per charter client rule being implemented. Public testimony at the 2009 finfish meeting cautioned that charter effort would put additional stress on rockfish harvest as charter guides would seek alternative species to halibut to satisfy charter clients. Again, we are fully supportive of establishing reasonable bag limits for all species as a mechanism to establish reasonable expectations regarding sport harvest, and we fully support accountability, management, enforcement and monitoring of bag limits.

Thank you for your time and attention to these issues. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



Julianne Curry
Director

2/2

Public Comment # 16²



2009 Board of Directors
President – Todd Wicks
Vice President - Peter Wright
Secretary – Jackie Yamada
Treasurer – Ole Bartness



2009 Members at Large
Edwin Haney
Kevin Burchfield
Rick Bierman
Chris White
Chris Conder

September 28, 2009

Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
Fax: 907-465-6094

Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Fish:

The Juneau Charter Boat Operators Association (JCBOA) wishes to submit the following comments pertaining to the 2009/2010 Agenda Change Requests being considered at the upcoming Board of Fish meeting October 13 – 14, 2009.

ACR 4 – Synchronize sport bag limit and commercial quota changes for sablefish in Northern Southeast District (5 AAC 47.020). Opposed.

1. This ACR is allocative in nature, as it attempts to allocate sablefish to the sportfishing sector *automatically* based on commercial harvest levels. There is no new information regarding sportfishing harvest levels for sablefish. Consideration of this agenda change request would go against the Board’s policy which states that, *5 AAC 39.999 (2) the board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominately allocative in nature in the absence of new information found by the board to be compelling.*
2. Sport, subsistence, and personal use catch projections for sablefish are done by area fishery managers prior to setting commercial quotas. The 3% figure currently used by fisheries managers may, and will be, adjusted up or down based on data they collect each year from these user groups. Fishery managers are responsible in insuring that the Biological Allowable Catch for sablefish will not be exceeded and commercial quotas will be adjusted as needed to maintain a sustainable fishery for all user groups. There are no reasons to make any changes to this policy out of Board cycle.

ACR 8 – Close specific areas to guided sport fishing for rockfish in Juneau-Douglas area. (5 AAC 47.021). Opposed.

1. There is no evidence that there is an increase in the charter sector harvest of rockfish in the Juneau-Douglas area, or that the rockfish in this area are being severely overharvested due to cruise ship demand. Therefore, policy *5 AAC 39.999 (1) the board will accept an agenda change request only (A) for a fishery conservation purpose or reason,* this criteria has not been met and thus this ACR should not be considered. Only a small percentage of charter boats in this area are chartered for bottom fishing and of those chartered, the number that is hired to target rockfish are insignificant. One only needs to check charter log books to verify how limited impact the cruise charter fleet has



- on the bottom fishing in the Juneau-Douglas area. Just because an activity flyer is seen on a cruise ship doesn't mean that there are takers rushing to participate in that activity. Management decisions should be based on real evidence and facts and not speculation.
2. Policy 5 AAC 39.999 (1)(C) to correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted. Halibut is regulated by the federal government and not by the Alaska Board of Fish. Thus, this ACR would not address a correction to a regulation made by the State of Alaska and should not be considered by the Board. The premise that more rockfish are being caught due to the reduction in halibut limits is faulty to begin with. Most rockfish are caught as a bycatch while halibut fishing. If there is less halibut fishing one would reasonably expect a reduction of rockfish bycatch.
 3. Policy 5 AAC 39.999 (2) the board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominantly allocative in nature in the absence of new information found by the board to be compelling. This ACR attempts to allocate rockfish and halibut to non-charter user groups with no new information to substantiate their accusations. This ACR has not met this policy and should not be considered at your board meeting.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the comments above.

Sincerely,

p.p. Todd Wicks
President

RY/JY

Public Comment # 17



Alaska Longline

FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 1229 / Sitka, Alaska 99835 907.747.3400 / FAX 907.747.3462

Boards Support Section
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
PO Box 115526, Juneau, AK 99811

September 29, 2009

Comments on 2009 ACR: Synchronize sablefish bag limits with abundance and commercial catch limits

Dear Members of the Board,

The Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association has a long history of supporting conservation management of marine fish stocks. Our membership has advocated for reduced catch limits in longline fisheries whenever stock declines indicate the need to conserve. The reductions have imposed economic hardship on members and their families, but the hardships have been born willingly to ensure the long-term health and productivity of the marine ecosystem.

This year the Department managers reduced the Chatham Strait Sablefish quota by 29%, bringing the total quota reduction in this fishery to 78% since 1998. The Department has clearly signaled the need to reduce harvest in order to protect the rebuilding potential of the stock. Again, our Association accepted the reduction without protest, despite the substantial investments many members have made in Chatham Strait sablefish permits, and the dependence of fishing families on this valuable resource. Abundance-based management has always been the cornerstone of fisheries management in Alaska—as it must be to conserve stocks.

ALFA members recognize that resources are only protected from over-exploitation if ALL sectors share in conserving the resource. The growing charter fishery for sablefish in Chatham Strait poses a significant threat to this fully allocated and declining resource. The Board set very liberal bag and annual limits for the charter sablefish fishery earlier this year, limits which are clearly out of synch with sablefish abundance trends. The ACR submitted to the Board by ALFA, Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance and Petersburg Vessel Owners Association asks the Board to take immediate action to rectify this resource issue. Our Associations request that sablefish bag limits be linked to abundance, as are longline catch limits, to ensure stocks are preserved for the long-term. If both sectors share in conserving the resource, then both sectors will share in higher quotas in the future as stocks rebuild.

With respect, we request that you accept this ACR and agenda this issue for this winter. Thank you for your consideration of this important resource issue.

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Public Comment #

18

Sincerely,



Linda Behnken

(Director, ALFA)

2/2

Public Comment # 18