



SHEEP MOUNTAIN LODGE

January 29, 2014

Board of Fisheries:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on current Alaska fisheries regulations. I am a lifelong Alaskan in the business of tourism. A recent economic study reported the economic impact from tourism was \$3.7 billion, benefits from this sustainable industry trickle down to the businesses that we support (State of Alaska, 2011). If oil revenues continue to decline, sustainable industries like tourism and fishing will become even more important to Alaska's economy. Sustainably fished salmon runs are important for attracting in-state, out-of-state and out of country tourists, they want to experience the Big Wild Life that this great state can offer.

I am concerned that current Board of Fisheries regulations do not allow for adequate fish passage to the Upper Cook Inlet, such that many northern Cook Inlet fisheries have been closed in recent years. I understand that there are many factors likely affecting fisheries decline in upper Cook Inlet. I think we should manage conservatively and consider all options that could improve current salmon runs.

We support efforts by the Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission to recommend revised fishery management plans to recognize the Cook Inlet as a watershed that supports a diversity of fish stock. These fisheries should have low end escapement goals met as a priority before avoiding exceeding high end escapement goals with supplemental harvest. We support providing a conservation corridor for northern Cook Inlet salmon passage by consideration of revised harvest zones to focus on the mouths of Kenai Peninsula streams and rivers.

We sell plate after plate of fresh Alaska salmon (caught in the Central District of Cook Inlet) each night during the summer season. I am proud to support Alaska's commercial fisheries but I don't want it to be because we are wiping out other south-central Alaska fish stock. I hope that I can continue to understand this fish as a sustainable resource, it is important to me and to our lodge guests. I look forward to results of genetic testing of this valuable resource.

Thank you.

Sincerely,


Anjanette Steer
owner

References:

State of Alaska. 2011. Alaska Economic Performance Report. Juneau, Alaska.