

My name is Matt Kinney, and I strongly support proposal 157.

I am a career commercial fisherman currently living in Sitka, Alaska, but have taken part in many fisheries across the state over the past 17 years and currently own and operate two vessels that take part in their own respective fisheries, which include the Sitka sac roe herring fishery, both federal and state southeast Alaska hook and line and long line pot sablefish fisheries, Bristol Bay drift gillnet fishery, and southeast Alaska salmon seine fishery.

As written, Alaska state statute doesn't allow an enterprising fisherman the right to hold and exercise non-conflicting permits such as southeast salmon seine fishery, and Bristol bay drift gillnet fishery, in the same calendar year, even if fished on a separate and fundamentally different equipped vessel; although that same fisherman may hold and use a permit as a seiner, as a gillnetter, and as a salmon troller to target the same stock of fish in a single area and take advantage of multiple gear group openers on the same platform. (IE: Southeast Alaska seine, Southeast Alaska drift gillnet, and southeast Alaska power troll all fishing southeast Alaska salmon under one single permit holder carrying three permits.)

Over the years, our family fishing operation as adapted and added the necessary diversification it takes to spread risk in an industry that can be volatile in both ecology and economics, in order to build a stable business plan. However, there is a vague nature in the term net fishery in this statute, which stands as a roadblock to a simple solution. A fisherman should be able to hold and operate two permits of different gear "subgroups" across different areas of Alaska. One example being a southeast Alaska seine fisherman purchasing and operating a Bristol bay drift permit on a separate 32' drift gillnet boat.

Proposal 157 has many positive impacts, one of these being positive escapement for lack of effort, as well as a positive impact on the money making potential for single registration fishermen in both previously described areas. In the case that the boat operator is also the permit holder, it is logical to assume that he or she cannot be in two places at the same time, and so only one of the two permits would actively be in use at any given time, allowing for additional fish passage in the area not immediately being fished, and the same concept can be applied for opportunity of additional catch for single registration fishermen when the transient multi-area registered fisherman is not in their area. A win for both parties, the biologist and the fishermen.

Another positive impact that can be considered is the increased money making potential to crewmembers of these operations, which ultimately finds its way back into our local economies.

I am aware that this is a proposal that requires multi-level clearance that starts with the board of fisheries whom have the authority to change regulations involving designation of salmon permits by area and registration under AS 16.05.251 (a).14 and then is evaluated at Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry commission where it is implemented through its licensing process. I am asking for the board of fish members vote to go to the next level in this process to help eliminate unnecessary regulation and help individualize our umbrella net fishery definition into the subgroups of seine and gillnet, Two very different fisheries.

The Proposed changes that would need to be made by the board of fisheries in order to effectively make this change a legal reality are as follows:

Add the following to 5AAC39.115:

[A person who owns more than one salmon net gear permit cannot fish more than one permit unless it is on a separate vessel registered in a single area of registration as specified in 5 AAC39.115, and those vessels must be for a separate net group, either gill net or seine.]

5AAC39.115 (d) [eliminate the word “single” and change the word “area” to “area(s)”]