

BOARD OF FISHERIES RESOLUTION #84-104-FB

WHEREAS, Alaska's fisheries provide major commercial, recreational, personal use, and subsistence benefits to citizens of the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's fisheries are a fully utilized renewable resource which will continue to provide benefits to all Alaskans as long as essential habitat is protected and basic management practices are followed; and

WHEREAS, the rapid expansion of the placer mining industry in interior and western Alaska may result in a loss of vital and essential spawning and rearing habitat and the deterioration of water quality necessary for continued fish production; and

WHEREAS, the threat to fish populations can be alleviated by regulation of dredging and placer mining activities, and enforcement of state water quality standards; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Legislature, in recognition of this problem, has set up a fund for innovative technology grants to the mining industry;

WHEREAS, the Board of Fisheries is concerned about the effects of placer mining activities in Alaska on fish populations and habitat, and is committed to maintaining high water quality standards in all streams and rivers in the state;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Fisheries requests the Alaska Legislature to maintain water quality standards to ensure the long term and continuing production of viable fish populations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Fisheries fully supports the efforts and retention of the Habitat Division within the Department of Fish and Game; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Fisheries asks the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Department of Public Safety, Protection Division, to increase enforcement and monitoring of placer mining activities and state water quality standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Fisheries requests the Alaska Legislature to appropriate the additional funds necessary for the regulation and monitoring of placer mining activities, and the enforcement of state water quality standards; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Fisheries supports the continuance of the efforts of the Alaska Legislature to appropriate funds for innovative technology within the placer mining industry.

Date: 2/23/85

Ron Jolin
Ron Jolin, Chairman
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Distribution: Commissioner Collinsworth
Governor Sheffield
Alaska Legislature
Bering Sea Fisherman's Association
Tanana Chiefs Conference
Interior and Western Advisory Committees

Enclosures

FRANK H. MURKOWSKI

ALASKA

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COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN
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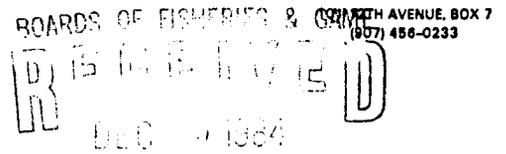
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November 29, 1984



DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

Mr. Ron Jolin, Chairman
AK Board of Fisheries
P. O. Box 3-2000
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Dear Ron:

Thank you for the copy of your letter to the Commissioners of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission regarding the Japanese high seas chinook salmon interception. I appreciate your input on this matter.

Like you, I believe the foreign interception of our salmon should stop. Chinook salmon are fully utilized in the domestic industry. Some of the salmon stocks are already depressed and Alaskan subsistence, sport, and commercial fishermen have been forced to reduce their catches to help protect the species. High seas interception is an indiscriminate and unacceptable method of harvesting this anadromous fish.

Bilateral negotiations with Japan might be appropriate to facilitate an end to this fishery. I will continue to pursue this matter and do whatever is possible to see that high seas interceptions of our salmon is stopped.

If you have any further comments or questions on this problem, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senator

FO. 40.150

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

Division of Boards
Box 3/2000
Juneau, Alaska 99802

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

March 8, 1984

Commissioner Don W. Collinsworth
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 3-2000
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Dear Commissioner Collinsworth:

This letter is to clarify the intent of the Board of Fisheries in establishing the new gill net fishing area in portions of lower District 1 and District 2 in Southern Southeastern Alaska.

After receiving extensive data and public testimony concerning the allocation of salmon between gill net and seine fishermen, the board could not conclude that either group currently had a significant economic advantage over the other. However, data and testimony presented clearly indicated that the current and future losses of salmon due to Canadian actions in the Taku and Stikine rivers since 1979 are primarily impacting the gill net fleet. Harvest data by gear type also showed that gill netters have not substantially benefited from the recent large pink runs in Southeast. Due to these factors, the board determined that drift gill net fishermen should be given some additional opportunity to harvest pink salmon during years of high abundance. In modifying a proposal presented by United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters, the board provided additional pink salmon fishing opportunities in Lower Clarence Strait for the 1984 season.

In developing the new gill net fishing area, the board clearly intended that:

1. the area be fished in a manner that would reallocate pink salmon from the seine fleet to the gill net fleet;
2. the overall catches of other salmon species not be increased as these fish are already being harvested in a complex mix of fisheries, and some of these stocks, specifically summer chums, are severely depressed;
3. its action should not result in increased interceptions of salmon of Canadian origin; and
4. gear conflicts in the new gill net fishing area be avoided.

In order to insure that their intent and goals have the greatest chance of being met during the conduct of the Lower Clarence Strait gill net fishery in 1984, the following set of regulations and guidelines were established by the board:

1. Fishing Area: The fishing area for drift gill netters in Lower Clarence Strait was defined as that portion of Districts 1 and 2 south of a line from the easternmost tip of Adams Point to Point McCartney Light, north of the latitude of the easternmost tip of Island Point, east of a line one nautical mile east of a baseline that runs from the easternmost tip of Island Point to the easternmost tip of Scott Point to the easternmost tip of Adams Point, and west of the longitude of Point McCartney Light. Purse seine fishermen are still allowed to utilize this area. The board intended that the opening of any portion of the described area to drift gill netting would be dependent on the same portion of the area in District 2 being open to seining.
2. Fishing Time: The utilization of the Lower Clarence Strait drift gill net area will be limited to the month of August. During the month of August, when purse seine gear is utilizing all or a portion of the Prince of Wales Island shoreline between the latitudes of Adams Point and Island Point, drift gill net gear may be used during the identical time period, hour for hour, in that portion of the gill net area adjacent to that portion of District 2 that is open to purse seining.
3. Drift Gill net Gear: Drift gill net gear utilized in the lower Clarence Strait drift gill net fishing area may not be more than 4-7/8 inches in mesh size, 60 meshes deep, and 200 fathoms in length.
4. Incidental Harvest of Salmon Species Other Than Pink Salmon: The success of utilizing the Lower Clarence Strait gill net area to increase pink salmon fishing opportunities will depend on the ability of drift gill net fishermen to construct and operate their gear in a manner that will maximize their harvest of pinks and prevent unacceptable catch levels of other salmon species from occurring. Because the gill net fleet is being allocated salmon from a harvest that would be taken by seine gear and in order to avoid impacts on salmon species other than the pink salmon target species, the gill net fleet should harvest salmon of all species in the area in the same proportional mix that is harvested by the seine fleet during each concurrent opening of the two gear types. The board directs the staff to terminate gill net fishing in Lower Clarence Strait if the gill net fleet is

March 8, 1984

harvesting species of salmon other than pinks at a substantially higher proportion than they are being harvested by the seine fleet.

When establishing the Lower Clarence Strait gill net area, the board viewed their action as an experimental attempt to provide the gill net fleet an expanded opportunity to harvest abundant pink salmon. The board intends to carefully review the results of this fishery at their winter 1984 meeting to determine if the goal was accomplished without unduly increasing the harvest of other salmon species and creating direct gear conflicts. The continuation of the fishery beyond 1984 will depend on the results of this review and any new information or circumstances that may develop.

Sincerely,

Beth Stewart for

Ron Jolin, Chairman
Alaska Board of Fisheries

cc: Steve Pennoyer
Beth Stewart
Ken Parker
David Cantillon
United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters
Southeast Seine Boat Owners and Operators
Alaska Trollers Association
Southeast Gillnet Federation
Petersburg Vessel Owners Association