

Submitted by: Paul Carlson

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My name is Paul Carlson. I have no financial motive in the fishing industry. I'm just an average guy that works an average job that loves to fish. Thankfully I have a great wife that likes to eat salmon and doesn't mind the time I spend between Montana Creek to Anchor River.

As a resident sport fisherman, I found it difficult to sit and listen to testimony after testimony from commercial fishermen on Saturday, calling for more hours, more access to the inlet and more fish. I heard a lot of talk about "over escapement" and "lost revenue", as if commercial fishermen were entitled to those fish. It is important to remember that a commercial fishing permit/license does not mean the holder is "owed" fishing time...or fish.

Alaska's constitutional language states "Wherever occurring in their natural state, fish, wildlife, and waters are reserved to the people FOR COMMON USE". That includes the average Joe like me.

I would consider the 2013 fishing season a bad year, and I am not alone. The personal use dipnet fishery also had a terrible year, where approximately 180,000 or 33% less fish were caught than in the previous few years. Conversely, the commercial industry enjoyed a banner year: the estimated exvessel value of the 2013 UCI commercial fishery was \$40.2 million dollars. That is approximately 57% more than the average annual exvessel value of \$25.6 million dollars from the previous 10 years (2003–2012), and approximately 56% more than the 1966–2012 average annual exvessel value of \$25.8 million dollars. (Facts taken from The Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fisheries Annual Management Report, 2013).

This discrepancy is a prime example of how individual sport fishermen get handed the scraps of commercial nets despite being the largest user group in the fishery. Seeing and catching less fish this past year despite a successful commercial season demonstrates the mismanagement of the fishery. I'm sure it is a complex and difficult equation. I sincerely ask that the average Alaskan fishing from the bank gets factored in.

Thank you for your time.