



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Fish and Game

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

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March 3, 2015

Bruce Twomley
Chairman, Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission
P.O. Box 110302,
Juneau, AK 99811-0302

Subject: Board of Fisheries Action on Southeast and Yakutat Finfish Meeting Proposal 126

Chairman Twomley:

During the 2015 Southeast and Yakutat Finfish meeting in Sitka this past week, the Board of Fisheries considered Proposal 126, which would allow Sitka Sound herring seine permit holders to utilize open pounds to harvest roe on kelp in lieu of their customary sac-roe herring seine gear.

You may be aware the Sitka Sound herring fishery value has declined somewhat over the past few years with the market price falling below \$200/ton.

Also, the Sitka Tribe has encouraged the Board to reduce open fishing area and diminish harvest levels.

In considering Proposal 126, the Board was intrigued that the open pound fishery might provide a potentially higher price-point product to the market.

The Board was advised by the Department of Law that the Board likely does not have authority to allow new entrants to limited entry herring pound fisheries without approval by the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC).

A majority of the Board voted to again consider Proposal 126 next year if CFEC were to re-define the current administrative area for the Southern Southeast herring pound limited entry fishery to exclude Sitka Sound, where it appears no herring pound operations are currently authorized or have occurred there. The Board could then consider authorization of open pound gear as an alternative for sac roe seine permit holders. The CFEC could then ratify that alternative gear for seine permits.

The Board was offered a variety of options by the Department of Law for action on Proposal 126 in light of the inability of the Board to pass the proposal as written, including passing the proposal contingent on eventual approval by CFEC. Not knowing whether or when CFEC might act, the Board found it difficult to craft appropriate language. The Board decided it was more appropriate for the proposer to approach CFEC for approval of this concept before the Board would take subsequent action and allow current seine permit holders the option of utilizing open pound alternative gear.

Accordingly, I am writing to inform you that the Board is open to further consideration of the proposal, and encourages the CFEC to assess the feasibility of acting to allow this fishery when approached by the proposer, Mr. Ryan Kapp.

You may already be aware of this concept as it has been before both the Board of Fisheries and CFEC over the years. We understand that CFEC may need a fair amount of time to make its determination.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Kluberton", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Tom Kluberton, Chairman
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Attached: Proposal 126

CC: The Honorable Sam Cotten, Commissioner ADF&G