

PROPOSAL 171**Georgeanna Heaverley****Public Testimony**

My name is Georgeanna Heaverley. I am a born and raised Alaskan and second generation Cook Inlet commercial fisherman. I am testifying today in opposition to Proposal 171.

For my entire life I have observed anger and animosity between fishing user groups on the Kenai. The deep-seated hatred between groups sets a terrible example for my generation and for the generations to come. I see very little being done in promoting collaboration and constructive open dialogue between groups; let's not forget that we all hold our cultural connection to salmon in common with one another. Instead I see efforts such as Proposal 171, created with the intent to exclude the historical Cook Inlet commercial fisheries by re-arranging and degrading the salmon allocation criteria.

Commercial fishing has put food on my family's table for over fifty years. Salmon are not a hobby of mine, they are not my recreation, they are my livelihood - not only that but my way of life and what defines me as an Alaskan. All I want is the opportunity to continue this way of life and to pass it on to my future children.

I am a proud member of the young generation of Alaska commercial fishermen. We have the vision and sensibility to try to work together in conservation, preservation, and celebration of our salmon resource. Re-allocation is not the direction we want or need to take.

To put this bluntly, my generation is inheriting an old man's fish war. A war that has culminated in adversarial tactics such as this proposal, that seeks to destroy the already diminished commercial fishing industry of Cook Inlet.

I urge you as members of the Board to reject this proposal. This is not the way to make progress and this is not the message we should be sending future generations of Alaskans. What future will you create? It is my sincere hope that you use your leadership and guidance to create a future that steers us away from these divisive measures, and toward a future where we can stand together to protect and celebrate salmon. Not rip it out of the hands of a younger generation, a generation that never asked for this war.