

Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, I am Chuck McCallum, fishery advisor for the Lake and Peninsula Borough. I fished in Chignik starting with my father in 1968 up until 97. I speak in support of Proposal 61.

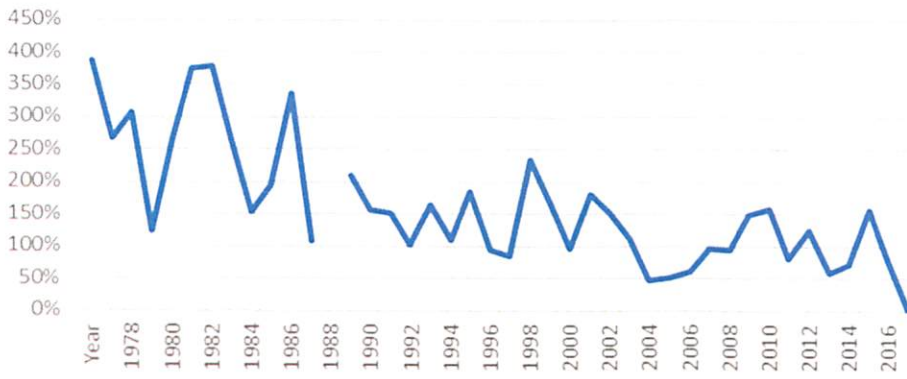
The statutory allocation factors support your adopting Proposal 61. The Chignik commercial salmon fishery began in the 1880's and is one of the State's oldest. The fishery is critically important to the local communities of Chignik (i.e. Chignik Bay); Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Lake, Perryville, and Ivanof Bay. Unlike Kodiak communities, Chignik has few alternative fisheries resources available to them. Typically, salmon resources make up 85% to 90% of total fishery resources while for Kodiak it is almost the opposite with 75% alternative resources available. The disastrous season of 2018 followed by the poor season of 2019 means that most fishermen have seen no profit for two years in a row. If there is no change to how the Igvak interception fishery is managed, Chignik community survival is at risk.

In your policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries the goal is "the sustained economic health of Alaska's fishing communities" and you are to apply "a precautionary approach, involving the application of prudent foresight that takes into account the uncertainties in salmon fisheries and the ... biological, social, cultural, and economic risks, and the need to take action with incomplete knowledge..." The sustainable salmon fishery policy also calls you to consider the needs of future generations including forthcoming generations of Chignik fishermen and Chignik residents. You can do this by adopting Proposal 61.

Simple economics require that you amend the Igvak SMP by adopting Proposal 61. When the Igvak plan was developed by the Board in '77 and adopted in '78, the plan was largely driven by the fact that the Chignik salmon fishery was more prosperous than Kodiak at the time. From 1977 through 1989 the average Chignik seine fisherman made over 250% of their Kodiak counterparts. But, since about 2004 Chignik Seiners are now averaging less than Kodiak seiners. According to a study conducted by the McDowell Group and submitted as RC ##, "a harvest of 1.1 million Chignik sockeye would be required today to generate the same value for fishermen as the harvest of 300,000 sockeye did in 1978." A simple fix to this problem is to adjust the minimum harvest the current Igvak SMP allocates for Chignik from 300,000 to 600,000, and from 600,000 to 1,000,000. Another fix to this problem is redefining what constitutes Chignik harvest so that it only includes actual harvest by fishermen in the Chignik Management Area. Proposal 61 does both of these things.

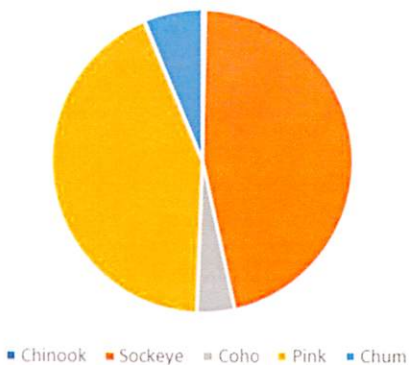
submitted by Chuck McCallum

Percentage of Chignik average Salmon Seine earnings compared to Kodiak Seine (Source: CFEC Basic Information Tables)

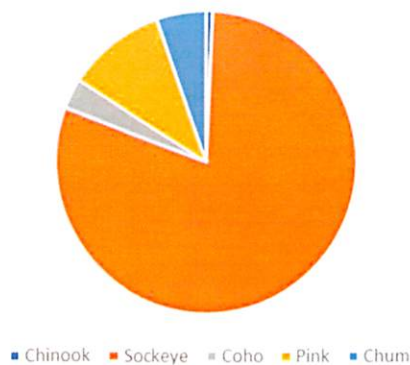


Chignik is much more reliant on sockeye than Kodiak which has robust pink runs to augment their fishery while Chignik doesn't. When Chignik's sockeye are weak as they have been for two consecutive years, and as they are forecasted to be again in 2020, Chignik has scant other marine resources to fall back on.

Kodiak Average Seine Value by Species



Chignik Average Seine Value by Species



Chignik's fishermen and communities are suffering great economic hardship. The Board can help by reallocating resources and amending an obsolete interception plan whose original justification is now void, allowing Chignik fishermen to harvest more of the fish that are returning to Chignik - not just on poor years when Kodiak can't fish Igvak but on all years. Chignik's communities and permit holders need every fish they can get on every year, if there is to be a return to economic health.

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