

RC for herring after listening to numerous testimonies on March 11.

First of all, thank you for all your kind comments about our Sitka AC and Heather Bausher who is a superstar young chair. And know how much our whole committee supports her shout out to Annie and Glenn and all the BOF support staff.

I am a fisheries conservationist with a long record of both forest and marine conversation action. I was a board member of the Sitka Conservation Society for 20 years. I was a founding member of and worked for the Alaska Marine Conservation Council 6 years in the winters. I have written numerous proposals to protect everything from trout and herring to rockfish and salmon. I grew up in a family trolling business where we did not know about the effect of electrical fields on salmon biting so we were poor and lived on harvesting seafoods, berries, and venison. On herring, I have been a voice for conservative management since 1976. I have written proposals for the Sitka AC as secretary or a member to set a minimum threshold before sac roe harvest, and worked on the AC to help propose a spawning sanctuary for herring in Sitka which the BOF used to adopt the first such sanctuary in Alaska. Years ago I also proposed, with my native friend, Ralph Guthrie, to eliminate the Salisbury Sound area from the Sitka Sound Sac Roe seine fishery. I know how tough it is to forge consensus, to find win-win solutions. But, I also know that when the BOF supports the AC process and their recommendations then it empowers them, encourages local participation, and enriches your decision making processes.

Whether it is the Sitka Local Area Management Plan for subsistence halibut, that was approved by the BOF 7-0, the AP to the NPFMC 22-0, and the NPFMC 11-0, or the award winning Redoubt Lake Sockeye management plan, both of which came out of task forces appointed by our AC, or subsistence shellfish protection areas near Sitka which our Sitka AC pioneered for the region, our Sitka AC has been an advocate for subsistence, conservation, and inclusion for decades. The failure to recognize and celebrate the success of the collaboration between fishermen, guides, native leaders, conservationists, and ADF&G personnel and BOF decision makers to conserve and share our fisheries resources in Sitka, particularly herring, literally breaks my heart. I don't have history going back thousands of years but I do know our ADF&G AC system in Sitka, which I have been involved in since 1976, has worked tirelessly to rebuild, conserve, and sustain our herring and all fish and game resources.

BOF members, from my view of 46 years, the rebuilding of the Sitka Sound herring resource from the mid 70's to 2021-22 is one of the greatest success stories in Alaska fisheries management history. Rivaling rebuilding the Sockeye runs in Bristol Bay. And it wouldn't have happened without a lot of cooperation between native leaders, the fishing industry, conservationists, ADF&G personnel, and the BOF. I think if you look carefully at our Sitka AC positions on the herring proposals you will see a path of respect recognizing traditional knowledge, industry experience, good ADF&G work, and possible routes to continue that collaborative work going forward.

Sincerely,

Eric Jordan