

From Gary Lawrence <glawrence@catg.org>

Sent Monday, February 23, 2009 4:10 pm

To salmonbycatcheis@noaa.gov

Subject fish comments

The people of the Yukon Flats rely on king (chinook) salmon every day of their lives. For most of us it is the major subsistence food available every year from time before memory.

In recent years our people have found it more and more difficult to meet our needs for king salmon. Some people just can't. Food prices are rising, and fuel even more so. In a place like this, every single fish is essential to our peoples welfare. And, it is not just us. Our relatives in Canada tell us they are also having a very bad time with their salmon, and ADF&G says there has not been enough escapement for years now.

So, you can understand that our people are very unhappy knowing so many fish are caught in the pollack fishery that we need to feed our families, and for spawning to be sure there are enough salmon in the future.

We believe the bycatch must be limited to 30,000 fish, and that the number must go down over time to protect our communities and our future.

We also want to incorporate the comments of Tanana Chiefs Conference and Trustees for Alaska that support our position.

Thank you for considering our views.

Gary Lawrence

Gwichyaa Zhee Gwich'in Tribal Government Council Member (Fort Yukon)

Vice-President Gwichyaa Zhee Corporation

Council of Athabascan Tribal Government, Acting Natural Resource Director