

What I Learned From Fishing in Area M and Hunting on the Yukon
By Liam Hoblet, Age 12

Good afternoon Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Members of the Board of Fisheries,

My name is Liam Hoblet. I am 12 years old and from both False Pass in Area M and Holy Cross on the Yukon River. I am Athabascan, Yupik and Aleut and a tribal citizen with the Native Village of False Pass. Thank you for hearing my testimony.

This year, I learned something important about who I am and where I come from. My mom was born and raised in the AYK region and my dad is a fourth-generation commercial fisherman from False Pass in Area M, making me a 5th generation fisherman. That means I grew up with two different worlds that some people treat like they can't fit together. But for me, they always have.

In the summer of 2025, I went on my first commercial fishing trip working on the deck. When I was younger, I started going out with my dad, as young as 4 but this was the first trip I went and contributed manual labor. I wanted to see with my own eyes what my dad, my uncles, and my grandpa have done their whole lives. I woke up early, worked hard, listened a lot, and learned what it means to fish commercially, but also for family, tradition, and survival. It wasn't easy work but it was honest. And it taught me to respect the waters that give life to our communities.

Then in the fall, I traveled to Holy Cross to visit my maternal grandparents. While I was there, I went fishing on the river for pike and white fish. I also had my first successful moose hunt, something that carries deep meaning in the AYK. I felt the same respect there, the same connection to the land and to the animals that feed our families. I saw how much subsistence means to the people who live there and how it isn't just food. It's culture, identity, and responsibility.

What I realized is that both places, Area M and the AYK, depend on the same things: healthy fish, clean water, and respect for the land. The people in both regions love their families, their history, and their way of life. They teach their kids to be humble, to work hard, and to take only what they need.

When I hear people say that one region is to blame for another region's struggles, or that one way of living should come before the other, I don't see how that helps anyone. Pinning one region against another accomplishes nothing. It just makes it harder for people who are actually very similar to hear each other.

I've stood on a commercial boat in the rough waters of Area M and I've stood in the quiet woods of the Yukon. I've eaten food from both places. I've learned from the Elders on both sides. And what I see is not division. I see connection.

There is value in both worlds. There is culture in both worlds. And there is a future only if we learn to respect each other the same way we respect the land and water that feed us.

I'm proud to come from both places. My mom always teaches me to listen before I speak, to respect people even when they disagree, and to think about how our choices affect the future. I hope that someday our conversations about fish, wildlife, and harvests will sound more like the way I am spoken to by my grandparents in both regions: steady, respectful, and patient, grounded in care for the land and guided by what we are meant to pass on, not what divides us now.

Liam Hoblet is a fourth-generation fisherman from False Pass, AK and a proud product of the Yukon out of Holy Cross. Raised in a family deeply rooted in the river's traditions, he carries forward generations of knowledge, stewardship, and respect for the fish and the way of life they sustain.