



Tungwenuk Family Qupak Design, used with permission

KAWERAK, INC.

November 3 2025

REPRESENTING

Brevig Mission

Sitaisaq

Council

Akauchak

Diomede

Injaliq

Elim

Neviarcuarluaq

Gambell

Sivuqaq

Golovin

Chinik

King Island

Ugiuvak

Koyuk

Kuuyuk

Mary's Igloo

Iglaaruk

Nome Eskimo

Sitnasuami Inuit

Savoonga

Sivungaq

Shaktoolik

Saktuliq

Shishmaref

Kigiqtaq

Solomon

Anuutaq

St. Michael

Taciq

Stebbins

Tapraq

Teller

Tupqaqruk

Unalakleet

Unalaqliq

Wales

Kinjigin

White Mountain

Natchigvik

Kawerak, Inc.
P.O. Box 948 Nome, AK 99762

To:

Art Nelson, Executive Director Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526 Juneau, AK 99811-5526 (907)267-2292
art.nelson@alaska.gov

Kawerak is in support of PROPOSALS 29,33,40,43 and Kawerak opposes PROPOSAL 28

Kawerak is the Alaska Native non-profit Tribal Consortium for the 20 federally recognized Tribes of the Bering Strait/Norton Sound region.

Since Time Immemorial, the Inupiaq, Yupik, and St. Lawrence Island Yupik people have subsisted on salmon and other species caught and prepared in the BS/NS region.

PROPOSAL 28

5 AAC 01.170. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Define beach seine gear specifications in effect when Norton Sound-Port Clarence subsistence fisheries are closed and immediately reopened with the non-retention of specific salmon species, as follows:

Kawerak, Inc. opposes Proposal 28 for the following reason: This would put undue difficulty on subsistence fisherman since they are already having to buy new gear to replace the fishing gear destroyed by Typhoon Merbok, and having to change gear to meet the new gear specifications would put another hardship on them.

PROPOSAL 29

5 AAC 01.180. Subsistence fishing permits; annual limits for salmon.

Establish a seasonal harvest limit of 25 sockeye salmon for the Sinuk River subsistence fishery as follows:

Kawerak, Inc. supports a conservative harvest limit in order to preserve the Sinuk River red salmon; this will ensure subsistence fishing is preserved for residents of our region.

KAWERAK, INC.

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Advancing the capacity of our people and tribes for the benefit of the region.

PROPOSAL 33

5 AAC 01.172. Limitations on subsistence fishing gear.

Prohibit the retention of king salmon when subsistence fishing with a beach seine in the Pilgrim River, as follows:

While Kawerak supports all subsistence activities, it also supports conservation efforts especially in relation to the extremely low returns of king salmon in the Pilgrim River. We believe that non-retention of king salmon in subsistence activities that do not target king salmon would aid in their preservation.

PROPOSAL 40

5 AAC 01.130. Subsistence fishing permits.

Establish a subsistence sheefish permit in the Kotzebue Area, as follows:

Kawerak, Inc. has no position insofar as fishing permits are concerned, but it is established that these permits are a valuable tool to gauge the effects of fishing activities in a fishery, commercial or otherwise. That is the main reason that Kawerak, Inc. supports this proposal, especially if there is limited data to show the impacts of an uncontrolled fishery on a species and if those impacts are or may be detrimental to the species' preservation.

PROPOSAL 43

5 AAC 03.610. Fishing seasons.

Repeal the commercial fishing season for Sheefish in the Kotzebue District, as follows: For the same reasons Kawerak, Inc. supports Proposal 40, it also supports Proposal 43. As stated in the proposal, this is a data-poor fishery, and any commercial harvest should be guided by rigorous, accurate, and current data, which is currently lacking.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Charles Menadelook Subsistence Resource Program Director at (907) 443-4265 or email cbmenadelook@kawerak.org.

Respectfully

Melanie Bahnke

Melanie Bahnke
President
Kawerak, Inc.

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