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Robert D. Mecum, Acting Administrator
Alaska Region, NMFS, NOAA
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK 99802

February 11, 2009

RE: Salmon Bycatch EIS

Dear Dr. Mecum;

I am a commercial/subsistence fisherman in Saint Mary's, AK on the Lower Yukon River. I am writing to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on salmon bycatch reduction measures in the Bering Sea management area. The high salmon bycatch numbers of recent years threaten our salmon and our way of life. Salmon serves an important cultural and economic role in my community and throughout Western Alaska. Salmon provides a primary source of food for us, and the commercial salmon harvest provides the only means of income for many who live in the remote villages of the Yukon River. Salmon is an irreplaceable resource that must be protected.

The model utilized in the DEIS drastically underestimates the impacts to Western Alaska Chinook salmon stocks, and to Chinook salmon users. We recommend that the Council and NMFS should set a hard cap of 29,000 immediately to protect Western Alaska Chinook salmon.

Sincerely,



William F. Alstrom
PO Box 62
Saint Mary's, AK 99658