Summary of the Yellow Dot ‘Breakout Group’

Managing Fisheries - Empowering Communities Conference

April 22, 2005
The meeting of the yellow dot breakout group had good participation, with intense and emotional discussion. Clearly, many participants believe that communities are not being heard in the fisheries management process.
What makes a fishing community?

- A long history of lifestyle
- Economic stability over the long term (not currently being achieved)
- Preservation of cultural historic values of community residents
- Communities want the opportunity to participate in use of fisheries resources where they live
Problem areas discussed included:

- A frequently mentioned concern was the loss of fishing permits and opportunity in the communities.
- Both state and federal fisheries management is not working to preserve opportunities for community residents.
- Programs such as salmon limited entry did not serve Alaska marine communities well. Residents ended up selling their permits. The HUD housing payment system encouraged people to sell permits to reduce their payments.
Small scale community fisheries were historically self-limited by need. People only fished to get what they needed to provide sufficient income. For many years, this meant fishing only salmon. When salmon income opportunities declined, moving into other fisheries was precluded by others.

Fisheries regulation create intra-regional resource disputes for fisheries resources at the Board of Fisheries and NPFMC. An example discussed was the different boundaries that exist in state and federal Pacific cod regulations between Chignik and Sand Point.
What is the role of federally-recognized tribes in fisheries management?

Statewide regulations on subsistence do not fit all situations faced by marine communities in Alaska.
RECOMMENDATIONS

- Communities need to be able to hold and own fishing permits for fisheries in their respective areas.

- Residents do not want to be forever precluded from fishing resources near them simply because they did not happen to fish for that species during a short set of 'qualifying years'.

- Better communication will assist residents from being caught 'out of the loop' as fishing opportunities are foreclosed.
Communities need reliable fishing employment to allow young people to remain. Currently, communities are "training kids out of the fishery" due to lack of opportunity.

- Participation in CDQ fisheries allow a community to leverage its existing level of fisheries utilization - using the example of Atka.

- Instead of IFQ, make geographical CFQs that would tie residents to the resource.
- Make sure that a provision exists in all quota or other limitation systems to provide an opportunity for an entry level component.

- Strengthen National Standard 8 in the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

- Improve the ability of the State to make allocation decisions affecting communities. They currently do not have the date, resources or information to make informed decisions.
The state is not devoting sufficient resources and effort to restructuring the salmon fishery. The current small committee will not have the data, analysis or finding to be able to complete this difficult task.

Resource allocation should require consultation with tribal groups or from another perspective, the state and federal governments should be required to negotiate with sovereign entities such as tribes.
LAMP-designated zones are important for entry level fisheries. This may require some change in the law to implement.

Community quota systems should have an apprenticeship requirement to help provide opportunities. For example, some communities in Nova Scotia have established apprenticeship programs.
We need to make sure that young people in the communities are trained and interested in fishing, because there is a future for them.