THE ‘GRAYING OF THE FLEET’ IN AK FISHERIES

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Project Rationale

• Limited entry and catch share programs affect fishing communities (Carothers & Chambers 2012; Olson 2011)

• Barriers to entry most commonly perceived negative impacts of these programs (Carothers 2013)

• Youth in rural coastal Alaska highly value fishing careers, but express minimal opportunities for entry and advancement (Donkersloot 2010, 2015; Lowe 2012)

• 2012, Alaska State Legislature passed resolution stating "graying of the fleet" is a concern for whole state
Aging Fleet – State permit holders

Shriver et al. 2014 CFEC
Permit Holders Under Age 40

![Bar chart showing the number of permit holders under age 40 in different areas.](attachment:image.png)

Shriver et al. 2014 CFEC
Net Change in Permit Holdings

ARL: Alaska resident of rural community, local to fishery
ARN: Alaska resident of rural community non-local
AUL: Alaska resident of urban community local
AUN: Alaska resident of urban community is nonlocal
NR: Non-resident of Alaska

Shriver et al. 2014 CFEC
Salmon Seine Permit Holdings

- akhiok: 2 (2014), 2 (high)
- karluk: 0 (2014), 0 (high)
- larsen bay: 2 (2014), 2 (high)
- old harbor: 13 (2014), 13 (high)
- ouzinkie: 4 (2014), 4 (high)
- port lions: 8 (2014), 8 (high)

Shriver et al. 2014 CFEC
Bristol Bay Drift Gillnet Permits

1975
- Local: 36%
- Non-local: 64%

2013
- Local: 19%
- Non-local: 81%

Shriver et al. 2014 CFEC
Research Questions

- What are barriers to entry & upward mobility for youth?
- How do barriers differ by geographic, demographic, and sociocultural variables?
- What factors influence young people’s attitudes towards & participation in fisheries?
- What are models of successful pathways to establishing ownership-level fishing careers?
- What policy responses may address the graying of the fleet?
Study Communities
Methods

- 130+ semi-structured interviews
- 800+ school surveys
- Participant observation
- Literature review
Data Analysis

RD: Mmm-hmm. You've kind of addressed this one too, but you can add to it if you want, but it's: what barriers exist for the next generation of fishermen trying to get their start in fishing?

KC: I think money has gotta be a huge one. And I think it's probably—it's not too hard—well, depending on who the next generation is, I guess—but I think for people growing up in fishing communities and here, it's probably not that hard to get a crew job or get started fishing, but making the jump to buying a permit is just money and confidence and support, probably. Confidence the biggest one, and I don't know what the barriers to confidence are, if it's money and support being able to visualize how it would work out. And there's not really much of a safety net, once you get into that, what are you going to do if it's not working out? You have to end it. I mean, I'm even thinking and I think it's a lot of the local hard work. Local hard work.
1. Beyond the Bank: Barriers to Entry

- High cost of entry
- Lack of fishing experience and knowledge
- Diversification & work challenges
- Rising social problems
High Cost of Entry

“The costs are just astronomical when you’re really young. Trying to secure loans that are $500,000 or more is just—nobody’s just going to hand it over to an 18 year old.” (Permit holder, salmon drift, Bristol Bay region)
Lack of Experience & Knowledge

“I think a lot of youth would like to go fishing, they’d like to be a part of it, but I see there being less opportunity, just because your permit holders aren’t there in the village, a lot of people have sold out... A lot of kids in the village here, they’re not experienced... You get to be, you know, 16, 18 years old and you have no experience.”

(Permit holder, salmon setnet, Bristol Bay region)
**Lack of Experience & Knowledge**

- **Youth engaged in fishing**
- **Current family ties to fishing**
- **Historic family ties to fishing**

**Student Survey Data, Kodiak n=608; Bristol Bay n=204**
Lack of Experience & Knowledge

- **Youth engaged in fishing**
- **Current family ties to fishing**
- **Historic family ties to fishing**

- Kodiak
- Old Harbor
- Ouzinkie
Q: Why might you or another young person not enter commercial fishing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Kodiak</th>
<th>Bristol Bay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishing costs too much money to start</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishing jobs are hard to find here</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and skills are hard to find</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen don’t want to hire young people</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better money doing something else</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No family ties to fishing</strong></td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interest in fishing</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diversification Challenges

- Lack of alternative fishery & non-fishery employment opportunities
- Commodification of access rights means that very few fisheries remain open to newcomers without substantial investment (cod jig fishery one exception)
- Off season employment limited but essential to supplement fishing income
- Time off work to prepare for / participate in fisheries
Diversification Challenges

“The toughest part right now is – like for me, for my job, I can’t go fishing. It’s so busy in the summer that I don’t have time off and this job pays, and it pays well, and it lets me do the kinds of things I like to do anyway. And I get, you know, year-round employment. You can’t really put a price on that with the benefits, insurance and everything.” (Retired crew, salmon drift, Bristol Bay region)
Rising Social Problems

Q: What’s the biggest concern you have about your community? (open-ended)

R: Drugs & alcohol

56% in Bristol Bay, 38% in Kodiak
Rising Social Problems

“I was supposed to get a boat this year, and a motor. But I ended up getting caught up in the legal system, so that didn’t happen for me. I had to use what [money] I had.” (Permit holder, salmon drift, Bristol Bay region)

When I was little, I remember it being completely different... I think it’s a pretty rough place right now. And so I don’t think I would want to live here right now. I think there’s better places.” (Crew, salmon drift, Bristol Bay region)
“I’d rather live there up in the village than here [in Anchorage], because it’s just so—you’re not free [in the city]. You can’t go out and snow machine out your door or go shoot something or go catch something without a permit. So I’d rather live [in the village]. But we’re living here because of the jobs during the wintertime... I do want to go back, but it’s getting so bad there... [The] drugs — drugs are really bad.” (Permit holder, salmon setnet, Bristol Bay region)
The future looks good for young people who stay here.
Rising Social Problems

The future looks good for young people who stay here.
2. Migration of Permits & People

• Population Decline 2000-2010

Kodiak City (-3.2%)
Old Harbor (-8%)
Ouzinkie (-28.4%)

Dillingham (-5.6%)
Kokhanok (-2.3%)
Naknek (-19.8%)
South Naknek (-42.3%)
King Salmon (-15.4%)
Togiak (+1%)
PERMIT LOSS: TRANSFERS & MIGRATION

- Net loss of 1,202 ARL permits thru migration for state (vs. -224 through transfers)
- 2005-2014 – BBB lost 26 local salmon (drift and setnet) permits through out-migration.

Table 2: Initial Issuance, Total Net Changes, and Year-end 2014 Permanent Limited Entry Permit Holdings by Resident Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residency</th>
<th>Permits Initially Issued</th>
<th>% Issued</th>
<th>Transfer Change</th>
<th>% Transfer</th>
<th>Migration Change</th>
<th>% Migration</th>
<th>Cancelled Change</th>
<th>% Cancelled</th>
<th>Total Change</th>
<th>% Total</th>
<th>2014 Year-end Permits</th>
<th>% Year-end</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Rural Local</td>
<td>8,245</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>-224</td>
<td>-2.7%</td>
<td>-1,202</td>
<td>-14.6%</td>
<td>-878</td>
<td>-10.6%</td>
<td>-2,304</td>
<td>-27.9%</td>
<td>5,941</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Rural Nonlocal</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>-116</td>
<td>-15.4%</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Urban Local</td>
<td>3,684</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>-304</td>
<td>-8.3%</td>
<td>-745</td>
<td>-20.2%</td>
<td>-867</td>
<td>-23.5%</td>
<td>2,817</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Urban Nonlocal</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>-173</td>
<td>-20.0%</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident</td>
<td>3,036</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>-344</td>
<td>-11.3%</td>
<td>1,056</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>-490</td>
<td>-16.1%</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>3,258</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCCED / CFAB</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16,583</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2,402</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14,181</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CFEC 2015:11
3. Valuing Fisheries

- More than money
- Family time
- Subsistence lifestyle and activities
- Connections to place, culture, identity

“[Fishing] gives people a sense of purpose, culture. I see that missing here for young people today. They have nothing to belong to, and they’re looking for that.”

Bristol Bay fisherman
Fishing is a major part of life here

Bristol Bay

Kodiak
4. Potential Models & Alternatives

- Student licensing & apprenticeships
- Canadian PEI’s first entry program
- Norwegian youth fishing program
- Iceland – quota-free strandveiðar or “coastal fishing”
- New Zealand – annual catch entitlements
- Maine – Island Entry Program
- Newfoundland – Embedded Rights
- Agricultural & Land Access Models
ALASKA’S NEXT GENERATION OF FISHERMEN

http://fishermen.alaska.edu/
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