

Expert Finds Individual Catch Shares Hurt Communities

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

All eyes and ears were on visiting fisheries professor Seth Macinko Tuesday night during the joint session of the Kodiak Island Borough and the City Council. Macinko, who teaches at the University of Rhode Island has worked closely with catch share management programs thought the world and offered hi take on the growing issue in Alaska. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is working toward a catch shares in the Gulf of Alaska to help address bycatch issues. Macinko said the rationalization of groundfish mirrors steps taken in other fisheries around the world.

He said assigning individual quota shares, much like what was done in Alaska sablefish and halibut fisheries, is not in the best interest of coastal communities. He showed a map of Denmark that showed how rationalization has negatively affected fishing communities there.

Macinko recommended the city and borough work together to urge the management council to look at other catch share options. One alternative Macinko suggested is to assign quotas to communities instead of individuals and let those communities then lease the shares to members of the fishing fleet.

The joint city and borough fisheries work group is working on a letter they intend to send to the management council before its February meeting. It will be finalized on Monday, but then must be approved by both the Kodiak City Council and the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly before being passed on to the NPFMC.