

we not want to have healthy fishery resources?" We are outright gambling with the natural resources of the state of Alaska, resources which touch all Alaskans' lives in one way or another. We know UFA is asking for sustained funding in a declining budget year, but is justifiable since we do pay our way and are only asking for a fair shake back to manage the state's future.

In today's complex fisheries, the challenges are compounding at an alarming rate. ADF&G needs basic funds to maximize escapement returns, maintain healthy stocks, and expand harvest opportunities for all user groups. If ADF&G loses sonar information, weir counts, aerial survey time, field biologist and other valuable resources management tools, the department will be forced to close some fisheries and take a conservative management approach on all commercial fisheries.

While we don't argue with a conservative approach to management as it protects the resource base, you should know a conservative approach directly translates into lost revenues and jobs. Any more cuts and the resource base will suffer.

I hope we, the trustees of Alaska's resources, do not let this happen. UFA urges you to support the ADF&G's budget request, particularly the Commercial Fisheries Division's budget. The department is stretched to the limit!

There is an old adage: Sometimes you have to spend money to make money. This applies to the current situation with Alaska's fisheries. We are foregoing tens of millions in state revenue because these fisheries will be undermanaged or closed.

These are only a few examples of lost revenues to the fishermen, state and the seafood kindustry. There are untold millions more.

It is clear from the information above, ADF&G's budget is not a fiscal problem for the state; rather, if viewed properly, it is a revenue and job creator. I urge Alaskans to be positive and support ADF&G's budget by contacting your legislators as soon as possible. All Alaska fisheries depend on it.

Sincerely,
Jerry McCune, President
UFA

Juneau

THE YUKON TIMES is published weekly by The Yukon Times, Inc., 5000 Spruce Street, Suite A, Anchorage, Alaska 99503. Telephone (907) 274-8211. Subscription rates: \$20.00 per year or \$3.00 per copy. Foreign subscriptions: \$35.00 per year payable in U.S. dollars. Second class postage paid at Anchorage, Alaska. POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to The Yukon Times, Circulation Dept., P.O. Box 68547, Anchorage, Alaska 99568-0547.