



# UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

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## **United Fishermen of Alaska announces new President, VP, and at-large board members**

United Fishermen of Alaska announces Joe Childers as new president and Deborah Lyons as vice president for the statewide commercial fishing trade association, effective today.

Joe Childers was elected by UFA's board of Directors at its January meeting to take over as UFA President effective June 15th, replacing outgoing President Bob Thorstenson Jr. Childers has participated in salmon, crab, herring, halibut, blackcod, groundfish, and shrimp fisheries and currently trolls for salmon from Juneau and Sitka. He represents UFA member group Western Gulf of Alaska Fishermen, and served as UFA Vice President since 2004. Childers also serves as vice chair of the Advisory Panel of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

"I am proud to have been involved in Alaska commercial fisheries since 1966. Our fishing industry today is much different than when I started. In those days there was no limited entry, the Bering Sea white fish industry was unknown because it was completely owned and prosecuted by foreign fleets, and every salmon went into a can. Today, Alaska fisheries are a model for every other fishery in the world, but we have challenges facing us that most of us never anticipated when we started. Our fish competes on the world protein market, and we must be aware that substitutes for our production, will be coming from aquaculture and other sources at a relentless and an accelerating pace. We must constantly strive to increase our efficiency and quality. In addition, we face increasing competition for our very access to the ocean, from tourism, charter fishing, oil and gas and mining, aquaculture, and others. And, we must work together to ensure that Entry Level opportunities continue to be attractive enough to encourage young people to choose commercial fishing careers, if the Alaska commercial fishing industry to survive and prosper into the future.

"UFA is the umbrella organization which includes 36 member fishing associations and four at-large representatives. Collectively, UFA represents virtually every section of the Alaska fishing industry. It is the best forum I know of for the fishing industry to work together and meet the challenges facing us. I am proud to serve as President of UFA and look forward to the work ahead of us," said Childers.

Bob Thorstenson Jr., a Southeast Alaska salmon seiner, is stepping down after serving as UFA President for seven years as the statewide commercial fisheries umbrella group nearly doubled in size to an all time high of 36 member organizations.

“It has been a pleasure to serve on the UFA board for ten years and the last seven as president, to work to help solve problems facing Alaska fishermen. Nothing gets done with just one person, but the range of groups involved in UFA give us good momentum when more than half agree on a course of action,” said Thorstenson.

UFA milestones during Thorstenson’s tenure as president included the Petersburg Fall 2001 salmon summit, 2002-2004 Joint Legislative Salmon Industry Task Force, the passage of over 50 legislative measures, inclusion of salmon fishermen in USDA Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the inclusion of Wild & Farmed differentiation in USDA Country of Origin seafood labeling.

The UFA board elected Deborah Lyons to replace Childers as Vice President. Lyons represents UFA member group Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, and served on the Alaska Board of Fisheries from 1991 – 1994, and the Pacific Salmon Treaty from 1995 – 2000.

“UFA is recognized as the voice of the Alaska fishing industry and has done a lot to help our fishing families. I look forward to giving back to help the organization,” said Lyons.

Bristol Bay salmon driftnetter Lindsey Bloom and Southeast Alaska salmon seiner Bruce Wallace were elected as at large members for their first terms. Bruce Schactler and Chip Treinen were reelected to at-large seats. At large representatives are elected by UFA’s individual fishermen members and serve for two year terms.



New UFA President Joe Childers  
Photo Courtesy of United Fishermen of Alaska

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#### MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition • Alaska Draggers Association • Alaska Independent Tendermen’s Association • Alaska Longline Fishermen’s Association  
Alaska Shellfish Association • Alaska Trollers Association • Armstrong Keta • At-sea Processors Association • Bristol Bay Reserve  
Cape Barnabas Inc. • Concerned Area “M” Fishermen • Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association • Cordova District Fishermen United  
Crab Group of Independent Harvesters • Douglas Island Pink and Chum • Fishing Vessel Owners Association • Groundfish Forum  
Kenai Peninsula Fishermen’s Association • Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association • North Pacific Fisheries Association  
Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association • Petersburg Vessel Owners Association • Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation  
Purse Seine Vessel Owner Association • Seafood Producers Cooperative • Sitka Herring Association • Southeast Alaska Fisherman’s Alliance  
Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association • Southeast Alaska Seiners Association • Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association  
United Catcher Boats • United Cook Inlet Drift Association • United Salmon Association • United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters  
Valdez Fisheries Development Association • Western Gulf of Alaska Fishermen