


Kenai Peninsula Borough
Office of the Borough Mayor

MEMORANDUM

TO: Brent Hibbert, Assembly President
Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

FROM: Charlie Pierce, Mayor 

DATE: December 7, 2021

RE: Resolution 2021-008, Requesting the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to Declare a Commercial Fishery Resource Disaster Due to the 2020 Failure of the Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Sockeye Salmon Fishery (Mayor)

In response to the devastating Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) 2020 commercial salmon fishing season the assembly adopted resolution 2020-073 on October 13, 2020, requesting Governor Michael Dunleavy to declare an economic disaster in the UCI fisheries region. To date the borough has not yet received a response from the state to that request.

Commercial fisheries groups have discussed with the Mayor's office their ongoing concerns regarding the serious impacts of the 2020 UCI commercial sockeye salmon fishing season. The Magnuson-Stevens Act includes a provision at section 312 authorizing the Secretary of Commerce to determine whether there is a commercial fishery failure due to a fishery resource disaster as a result of natural causes, man-made causes beyond the control of fishery managers to mitigate, or undermined causes. Requests for such a determination may be made by a state governor or from an elected or duly appointed representative of an affected fishing community.

This resolution, from the elected Mayor and members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly, a fishing community, asks the Secretary of Commerce to make that determination and declare a Sockeye salmon fisheries failure and economic disaster in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District of Cook Inlet, Alaska. This would be based on the considerably low returns, harvests, and reduced size of Sockeye salmon in the commercial drift and set net gillnet commercial salmon fishing industry as a result of the devastating 2020 UCI sockeye salmon fishery and to implement a recovery plan to benefit the commercial drift and set gillnet fishery industry in the borough.

Your consideration is appreciated.