

# Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members, Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

**FROM:** Brent Johnson, Assembly President <sup>BJ</sup>  
Lane Chesley, Assembly Member <sup>LC</sup>

**DATE:** November 9, 2021

**RE:** Resolution 2021-~~083~~ Supporting Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association's Saltonstall-Kennedy Competition Grant Application (Johnson, Chesley)

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This resolution supports the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association's grant application submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce Funding Opportunity Title: FY22 Saltonstall-Kennedy Competition for a weir project that enumerates adult salmon at Delight Creek, Alaska.

Delight Creek and Delight Lake are on the east side of McCarty Fiord, north of Nuka Bay; about between Resurrection Bay and the Chugach Islands. Delight Lake supports a stock of sockeye salmon important to the Cook Inlet seine fleet, as well as to sport fishers. Sockeye salmon have been enumerated using a picket weir and crew by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) since 1997. From 1997 through 2014 ADF&G conducted physical weir counts on Delight Creek. In 2015 funding was cut and since then ADF&G has been conducting aerial surveys, which was the enumeration method prior to 1997. In 2018 Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association began installing the weir and staffing its operation.

Weir counts are more accurate than aerial surveys, as seen by the numbers below:

Year	Aerial Survey	Weir Count
2014	2,971	22,289
2015	3,200	No weir operated
2016	5,110	No weir operated
2017	5,380	No weir operated
2018	6,735	13,428
2019	1,130	17,410
2020	1710	12,299
2021	Data not currently available	7,525 (preliminary)

November 9, 2021

Page -2-

Re: R2021- 083

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Cook Inlet Aquaculture has applied for a Saltonstall-Kennedy grant, which was then accepted for a full proposal. Estimated cost of installing the weir, operating it and analyzing the data is \$55,000.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough has a seat on the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) Board of Directors. Dale Bagley currently holds that seat. CIAA's mission is to: (1) protect self-sustaining salmon stocks and habitats upon which they depend; (2) rehabilitate self-sustaining salmon stocks; (3) rehabilitate salmon habitat; and (4) maximize the value of the Cook Inlet (Area H) common property salmon resource by applying science and enhancement technology where appropriate.

Accurately counting salmon entering Delight Lake insures the best understanding of the number of salmon that reach the lake for propagating future returns and allowing for maximizing harvests.

Your consideration of this Resolution is appreciated.