



Sponsored by: Council Members Molloy and Glendening
Vice Mayor Navarre

CITY OF KENAI

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-58

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KENAI, ALASKA, REQUESTING THAT GOVERNOR BILL WALKER DECLARE AN ECONOMIC DISASTER FOR THE UPPER COOK INLET FISHERIES REGION AND SUPPORTING A RECOVERY PLAN.

WHEREAS, the City of Kenai recognizes and supports the positive economic and cultural impact of commercial fisheries in the Upper Cook Inlet Region; and,

WHEREAS, the City supports the Upper Cook Inlet salmon fishery and City residents, families and businesses that participate in the salmon fishery along with other users of this fishery's resource; and,

WHEREAS, commercial fishing harvests in the Upper Cook Inlet were at historic lows in 2018, which threatens the livelihood of the individuals, families, and businesses participating in the fishery, and jeopardizes the continued viability of the industry in the Upper Cook Inlet Region; and,

WHEREAS, the Commercial Salmon Season Summary for Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest by species, 1970 – 2017, with handwritten notes for 2018 define the economic plight and puts a number to the disaster resolution we are requesting; and,

WHEREAS, a Governor's State of Alaska disaster declaration creates a means for financial assistance for those involved in the fishery and could also provide assistance for science and resource management benefiting all users; and,

WHEREAS, a declaration of disaster from the Kenai Peninsula Borough is an important step in obtaining financial relief; and,

WHEREAS, the City also receives revenue from a share of fish taxes collected by the State of Alaska from fisheries businesses; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the City of Kenai to request that Governor Bill Walker declare an Economic Disaster in the Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries Region, and to support a recovery plan that directly assists fisheries participants and benefits all users of this important natural resource of salmon.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KENAI, ALASKA:

Section 1. That the City Council of the City of Kenai requests that Governor Bill Walker declare an Economic Disaster in the Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries Region and that the State of Alaska implement a recovery plan that benefits commercial fisheries users and others that rely on this important fisheries resource.

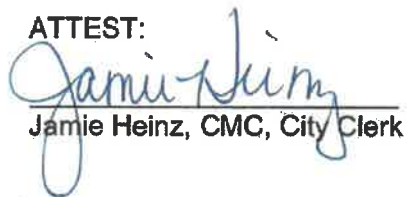
Section 2. That a copy of this Resolution be provided to Governor Walker, Senator Peter Micciche, Representative Gary Knopp, and Kenai Peninsula Borough Mayor Charlie Pierce.

Section 3. That this Resolution takes effect immediately upon passage.

ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KENAI, ALASKA, this 17th day of October, 2018.


TIM NAVARRE, VICE MAYOR

ATTEST:


Jamie Heinz, CMC, City Clerk





40610 Kalifornsky Beach Road
Kenai, Alaska 99611

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info@ciaanet.org
www.ciaanet.org

Charlie Pierce
Office of the Borough Mayor
Kenai Peninsula Borough
144 N. Binkley Street
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

September 21, 2018

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am writing to urge the Kenai Peninsula Borough to ask the State of Alaska to declare an economic disaster for Cook Inlet sockeye salmon fisheries for 2018. During the 2018 salmon season, the communities of Cook Inlet that rely on sockeye salmon harvesting faced unusual run timing on the Kenai River. For only the second time on record, over one-half of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon returned in August, causing confusion for fishery managers and resulting in significantly-less harvest opportunity for commercial fishermen. And the 2018 sockeye salmon harvest was less than 20% of the prior average harvests. The lower harvest has resulted in hardships for commercial fishing communities, families, individuals, and businesses.

If the State of Alaska makes an economic disaster declaration, opportunities will be opened up for relief including the potential for legislative appropriation of assistance grants as well as possible assistance to salmon permit holders who participate in the Commercial Fishing Revolving Loan program and may be unable to meet the terms of their loans because of the low sockeye harvest.

Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association is a non-profit corporation founded in 1976 to provide and protect the salmon resource in the Cook Inlet Watershed. We produce hatchery-born, ocean-raised salmon for the common property fishery. Maintaining and improving salmon habitat and natural salmon populations is also an important part of CIAA's work. Our operations are supported in part by a 2% Salmon Enhancement Tax levied on salmon caught or sold within Area H (Cook Inlet region). Decreased harvest to the Area H fishermen means decreased funding for our mission of providing and protecting the salmon resource of the Cook Inlet region, which is why we urge you to support a sockeye salmon disaster declaration.

Thank you for considering putting forth a statement to the State of Alaska requesting a 2018 sockeye salmon economic disaster declaration for Cook Inlet.

Sincerely,

Gary Fandrei
Executive Director

Cc: John Quick, Chief of Staff, Office of the Borough Mayor

Salmon enhancement today means better salmon fishing tomorrow.



COOK INLET FISHERMAN'S FUND

Non-profit Advocate for all Commercial Fishing Gear Types in Area H

P.O. Box 39408 Ninilchik, AK 99639 phone/fax 907-260-5614

Charlie Pierce
Office of the Borough Mayor
Kenai Peninsula Borough
144 N. Binkley Street
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Dear Mr. Pierce,

Cook Inlet Fisherman's Fund is one of the oldest fisherman's organizations in Cook Inlet. We represent all salmon fishermen in Area H which includes setnetters, drifters, and seiners.

As you know the sockeye salmon fishery in Cook Inlet in 2018 was a total disaster. Most fishermen didn't even cover expenses. We, therefore, are asking, on behalf of our membership, that the Kenai Peninsula Borough appeal to the State of Alaska to declare an economic disaster for Cook Inlet sockeye salmon fisheries for 2018.

Resident commercial fishermen are an important contributor to the economy of the Borough. We appeal to the Borough for assistance.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

For the Board of Cook Inlet Fisherman's Fund



COPPER RIVER SEAFOODS

Main Administrative Office

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Phone: (907) 522-7806 · (888) 622-1197 · Fax: (907) 274-0348

www.CopperRiverSeafoods.com

October 2, 2018

Mayor Charlie Pierce
144 North Binkley Street
Soldotna, AK 99669

Dear Mayor Pierce,

As you are aware, the 2018 commercial fishing season in Cook Inlet was disastrous to say the least. As a large processor with expansion plans in Cook Inlet, this season was especially difficult. Being a large company with operations in almost every major fishery in the State, we will absorb this loss (as we do not have a choice) and continue with business. However, this is not the case for many of the folks who focus their fishing activities in Cook Inlet. It is for their sake and the sake of the future of this fishery that we write this letter in support of a disaster recovery effort on the part of the State of Alaska.

The hardship of several poor fishing years in Cook Inlet and the complete failure of the 2018 season have many people in the industry wondering how they are going to get through the winter. We believe the State needs to take a very hard look at how it can assist in giving them the relief to ensure they can get to what will hopefully be a better year of fishing in 2019.

We are dealing closely with the 2016 Prince William Sound Pink Salmon disaster declaration and recovery funds and I am afraid this type of relief will not work for Cook Inlet. It is taking way too long to get the funds to the people who were truly affected by that run failure. The people of Cook Inlet need assistance sooner than that.

We hope we have your support in this matter and are happy to discuss this further at your request.

Regards,

Martin Weiser
Corporate Development Officer
Copper River Seafoods

ANCHORAGE PLANT

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COPPER RIVER SALES

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CORDOVA PLANT

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NAKNEK PLANT

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KOTZEBUE PLANT

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14896 Kenai Spur Highway, Suite 103-A • Kenai, AK 99611
Phone: (907) 283-3335 • Fax: (907) 283-3913
www.kpedd.org

Leadership to enhance, foster and promote economic development

Kenai Peninsula Borough
144 North Binkley Street
Soldotna, Alaska 99669

Attn: Mayor Charlie Pierce
RE: 2018 Sockeye Fishery Disaster Declaration

Dear Mayor Pierce,

The 2018 Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon harvest was less than 20% of the 40-, 20- or 10-year average harvest. This year, the value of salmon was well below the level necessary for covering the cost of operating and maintaining commercial drift, setnet, processing or marketing businesses. These businesses are essential to the local, regional, and state economies. Maintaining the commercial seafood industry in Cook Inlet is also essential for the biological management of fish stocks.

The Cook Inlet Economic Recovery Proposal identifies the areas and businesses most effected by this year's historically low returns, the required research for stronger future harvests, as well as recovery funding disbursements. We support the 2018 sockeye salmon harvest declaration of disaster and believe the Cook Inlet Economic Recovery Proposal to be the best path forward.

Please let me know if there is anything further KPEDD can do to support this declaration.

Respectfully,

Tim Dillon
Executive Director
Kenai Peninsula Economic Development District
(907) 283-3335



Alaska Regional Development Organization (ARDOR)
The State of Alaska Department of Commerce, Community
and Economic Development certified KPEDD as an
ARDOR in 1989.



Economic Development District (EDD)
The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic
Development Administration (EDA) recognized KPEDD
as an Economic Development District in 1988.