

RESOLUTION 20-50

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING WESTERN GULF OF ALASKA FISHERMEN'S REQUEST FOR FISHERY DISASTER ASSISTANCE IN THE 2020 WGOA PACIFIC COD FEDERAL FISHERY.

WHEREAS, fishermen/women of the Aleutians East Borough depend on participation in multiple local fisheries including Pacific cod to continue viable operations and provide employment for crew, and

WHEREAS, federal fishery managers were forced to close the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod fishery, for the 2020 season based on the recent stock assessment, and

WHEREAS, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) states that: 'A fishery resource disaster is a sudden, unexpected, large decrease in fish stock biomass or other change that results in significant loss of access to the fishery resource.', and

WHEREAS, the closure of the federal 2020 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod fishery qualifies as a fishery resource disaster because this sudden decrease in cod from undetermined causes has resulted in economic harm for WGOA fishermen, and

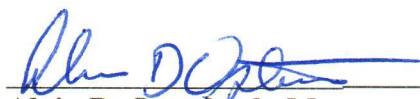
WHEREAS, WGOA Pacific cod fishermen have reached out to the Aleutians East Borough asking for assistance in seeking relief from this economic disaster.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly concludes that the 2020 GOA Pacific cod fishery qualifies as a fishery disaster under MSA, and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly wishes to support and provide assistance to WGOA Pacific cod fishermen and communities in this difficult time, and

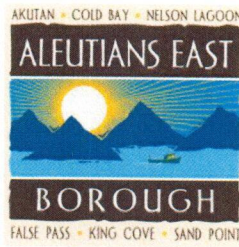
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly urges Governor Dunleavy to request the US Secretary of Commerce to determine the 2020 GOA Pacific cod fishery closure as a disaster, and to potentially qualify our local fishermen for disaster assistance.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Aleutians East Borough on this 13th day of February 2020.


Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

ATTEST:


Tina Anderson, Clerk



February 14, 2020

The Honorable Governor of Alaska Michael J. Dunleavy
Office of the Governor
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: 2020 Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Fishery Resource Disaster

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

The Aleutians East Borough respectfully requests that you call on the US Secretary of Commerce to declare the 2020 Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Pacific cod fishery a federal fisheries disaster as allowed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) Section 312(a). I have attached Resolution 20-50 adopted February 13, 2020 by the Aleutians Borough Assembly making the same request.

The federal Pacific cod fishery in the GOA will be closed for 2020 season based on the recent GOA Pacific cod stock assessment, which projects the spawning biomass to reach an all-time low in 2020, just above the 'overfished level' of $B_{17.5\%}$. Since the stock is below the $B_{20\%}$ threshold, federal regulations require the directed fishery for Pacific cod to be closed for 2020-2021 due to Steller sea lion conservation measures.

The local fishing fleet out of Sand Point, King Cove and False Pass is largely comprised of 58 feet and under length overall vessels that fish in multiple fisheries during the year. In recent years most of these local boats have participated in salmon fishing during the summer and cod fishing in winter. The Aleutians East Borough concludes that circumstances under the current year closure of the GOA Pacific cod fishery will qualify under MSA Section 312(a) as a fishery resource disaster that will result in a commercial fishery failure.

The AEB Natural Resources Department has put together the chart below to show the average gross revenue for the local fleet in the previous five years of the WGOA Pacific cod fishery. The average price paid per pound data is from ADFG & NMFS, confirmed by Aleutians East Borough raw fish tax data. The combined catcher vessel trawl, pot and jig gear landings data are from NMFS. We calculate the previous five-year average local fleet revenue at **\$6,727,845.00**. We project the fleet revenue from the WGOA 2020 Pacific cod fishery will be **\$0**.

WGOA Catcher Vessel Pacific Cod Harvest and Revenue 2015-2019

Year	Total Harvest in lbs. jig, pot, trawl CV.*	Average price per lb.**	Gross fleet revenue
2015	32,002,263	.27	\$8,640,601.00
2016	31,418,039	.27	\$8,482,870.00
2017	29,751,346	.31	\$9,222,917.00
2018	8,430,466	.42	\$3,540,795.00
2019	8,337,872	.45 ***	\$3,752,042.00
5 year average	21,987,997		\$6,727,845.00

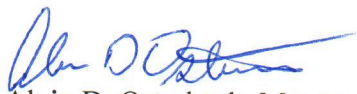
* [NOAA Fisheries Commercial Fisheries Catch and Landings Reports](#)

** [ADFG Commercial Groundfish Exvessel Price Information](#)

*** [Federal Register 84 FR 65357 Notice of standard prices and fee percentages. 11/27/19.](#)

We believe the closure of the 2020 federal WGOA Pacific cod fishery will lead to serious revenue losses for fishermen, local shore-based processors and other local businesses. Please request the Secretary of Commerce declare a Fishery Resource Disaster for the 2020 GOA Pacific cod fishery. Our Natural Resources Director Ernie Weiss at 907-274-7557 is standing by to provide any additional information you or your staff may require.

Thank you for your consideration.


Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor

Cc:

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Rachel.Baker@alaska.gov