



RESOLUTION 23-56

A RESOLUTION OF THE ALEUTIANS EAST BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING SOUTHEAST ALASKA SALMON TROLL FISHERMEN

WHEREAS, the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery is a sustainable fishery that has operated for over one hundred years, much like salmon fisheries of the Aleutians East; and

WHEREAS, Southeast Alaska fishermen and communities are dependent on the troll fishery; and

WHEREAS, on May 2nd, U.S. District Judge Richard Jones remanded the 2019 Southeast Alaska Biological Opinion back to NMFS to remedy ESA and NEPA violations, and vacated portions of the Biological Opinion that authorized the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery; and

WHEREAS, U.S. District Judge Jones ruling attempts to reallocate Chinook salmon from Southeast Alaska salmon trollers to the endangered Southern Resident killer whales, by closing the summer and winter Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery; and

WHEREAS, the Southern Resident killer whales spend winters along the West Coast of California, Oregon and Washington and summers in their critical habitat of Puget Sound, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the San Juan Islands, and generally not in waters off Alaska; and

WHEREAS, threats to the endangered Southern Resident killer whales include vessel traffic noise, disturbances and pollution in their habitat as well as reduced prey availability; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska, Governor Mike Dunleavy and the Alaska Congressional Delegation of Senators *Dan Sullivan*, *Lisa Murkowski* and Representative *Mary Peltola* have condemned Judge Jones ruling to close the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery; and

WHEREAS, the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery is integral to Southeast Alaska communities' culture and economies; and

WHEREAS, the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery is not an existential threat to Southern Resident killer whales and closing the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fishery will not significantly improve conditions for Southern Resident killer whale survival.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly supports Southeast Alaska troll fishermen efforts to continue the historic sustainable Chinook salmon fishery that supports Southeast communities and provides Alaska Chinook salmon to markets; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly supports an appeal to the Ninth District Court of Appeals that would stay U.S District Judge Jones ruling and would allow Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon troll fisheries to commence July 1, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Aleutians East Borough Assembly urges NMFS to expedite issuance of an updated Southeast Alaska Biological Opinion that would include Chinook salmon commercial harvest by the Southeast Alaska troll fleet.

Approved and Adopted this 18th day of May 2023.



Alvin D. Osterback, Mayor



Beverly Rosete, Clerk