

Miguel Camacho Castillo  
Captain  
F/V Confidence

January 28, 2022

Mr. Simon Kineen, Chairman  
North Pacific Fishery Management council  
1007 West Third, Suite 400  
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Chairman and members of the council,

My name is Miguel Camacho Castillo and I am an active captain in the Bering Sea crab fishing industry. I've been fishing in Alaska since 2010. My father, uncles, brother and cousin are all Bering Sea fishermen. This industry is our livelihood. We are active members of rural coastal Alaska communities and we rely on this fishery, healthy stocks AND fair treatment from the council and other governing bodies to support us and our families.

With the recent decline and shutdown of Bering Sea crab, the cod fishery for vessels 60 ft and over has become more and more important for our survival. We rely on cod more than ever as we wait for crab stocks to return to a healthy level.

I am very concerned to see our B season cut in half and moved out to the Aleutian Islands, where we can't fish any of this quota. And I am especially disappointed that other sectors are allowed to take advantage of this, while we are sidelined. As we sit back, other sectors are able to go out and can chip away at that TAC – that includes bycatch from trawlers.

We rely on the council to listen to and stand up for our needs. Seeing fixed gear fishermen being mistreated and not listened to is concerning, especially as a young fisherman. I implore you to consider how many of us rely on this industry as a lifeline and take pride in the work we planned to build lifelong careers out of.

Several suggestions have been made by fishermen and boat owners, such as allowing our quota to be added to our A season so that we open May 1st and fish our B season then. Most of us tender in June, July and August so we wouldn't be able to fish during that time. I understand that that may conflict with the protection of Stellar Sea Lions. I don't see this as a road block, but instead hope there is a way we can work together to find some kind of solution.

I – like many others in the industry – suggest that the council put together a working group to find a solution on this before our next B season of cod, and protect this fishery that so many people rely on as their livelihood. If you don't do anything, we will suffer a disaster similar to last year's.

It would be a shame to see Alaska lose this fishery and the vibrance and income it brings to so many coastal communities. I implore you to take action on our behalf.

Regards, Miguel Camacho Castillo, Randall Edward Lee Cook, Danny Parsons, and David Camacho, F/V Confidence crew.