

**CITY OF HOMER
HOMER, ALASKA**

Mayor/City Council

RESOLUTION 20-127

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, STRONGLY OPPOSING ALTERNATIVE 4 IN THE PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT/REGULATORY IMPACT REVIEW FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENT XX TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SALMON FISHERIES IN THE EEZ OFF ALASKA THAT WOULD CLOSE ALL FEDERAL WATERS IN COOK INLET TO COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHING AND FINDING THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF ALTERNATIVE 4 WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY OF HOMER

WHEREAS, The North Pacific Fishery Management Council developed the *Fishery Management Plan for Salmon Fisheries in the EEZ off Alaska*, (FMP) that manages salmon fisheries in the United State Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ; 3 nautical miles to 200 nautical miles off shore of Alaska); and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to a United States Court of Appeals Ninth Circuit ruling, after successful litigation brought by Cook Inlet commercial fishermen and seafood processors, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council must amend the FMP to bring it in line with the Ninth Circuit Court’s decision; and

WHEREAS, Through its Public Review Draft Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review for Proposed Amendment XX to the Fishery Management Plan for the Salmon Fisheries in the EEZ off Alaska the North Pacific Fishery Management Council is considering four alternative amendments to the FMP:

Alternative 1 is status quo or no action, deferring management to the State of Alaska by excluding the traditional net fishing area in the Cook Inlet EEZ from the FMP (the Ninth Circuit Court ruling makes this alternative “untenable” according to the authors’ of the Public Review Draft EA/RIR for Proposed Alternative XX to the Fishery Management Plan for the Salmon Fisheries in the EEZ Off Alaska);

Alternative 2 would establish federal management of the commercial salmon fishery in Cook Inlet with management of the commercial fishery delegated to the State of Alaska in accordance with the Magnuson Stevens Act and other applicable federal law;

41 Alternative 3 would establish Federal management of the commercial salmon fishery
42 in Cook Inlet with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and national Marine
43 Fisheries Service without delegation of management to the State of Alaska; and
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45 Alternative 4 would establish Federal management of the commercial salmon fishery in the
46 Cook Inlet EEZ with the EEZ closed to commercial fishing; and
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48 WHEREAS, The waters of the Cook Inlet commercial salmon drift gillnet fishery included
49 by the EEZ are the closest fishing grounds to Homer and have been part of traditional fishing
50 grounds since statehood; and
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52 WHEREAS, In 2014 the Homer City Council voiced opposition to restrictions on the Cook
53 Inlet Fishing District 1 (Resolution 14-019(A)), which is roughly equivalent to the area of the
54 EEZ, citing widespread and deleterious effects to local and regional economies; and
55

56 WHEREAS, The Homer City Council has consistently advocated for science-based
57 fisheries management decisions that are equitable across fishery users and sustainable for
58 continued human benefit into the future; and
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60 WHEREAS, Alternative 4 was proposed by the State of Alaska Department of Fish and
61 Game Deputy Commissioner at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's October 12,
62 2020 meeting after closure of public comment; and
63

64 WHEREAS, Alternative 4 is not a science-based alternative to fishery management, does
65 not result in equitable or sustainable distribution of the salmon harvest resource, was
66 introduced after public comment which is counter to the intent of the National Environmental
67 Policy Act, and does not adequately address the Ninth Circuit court ruling; and
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69 WHEREAS, If Alternative 4 were adopted by the North Pacific Fishery Management
70 Council, it would close the area of fishing where most of the Cook Inlet salmon drift gillnet
71 fishery harvest occurs, effectively eliminating the economic viability of the fishery and viability
72 of local seafood processors; and
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74 WHEREAS, The loss of the salmon drift gillnet fishery in Cook Inlet would cause severe
75 job loss, loss of capital investment in the fishery and support businesses, and could impact
76 other fisheries if local processing capacity is lost or reduced; and
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78 WHEREAS, A 2015 report published by the McDowell group titled "The Economic Impact
79 of the Seafood Industry in Southcentral Alaska" reported that the seafood industry in the
80 reporting region directly employs over 10,000 people seasonally and had an economic output
81 of \$1.2 billion; and
82

83 WHEREAS, The Homer City Council recognizes that the salmon drift gillnet fleet, like
84 other fisheries users, is a critical component of Homer, positively contributing to the City's
85 local history, culture, and economy; and
86

87 WHEREAS, Section 4.55 of the EA/RIR presents information about fishing communities
88 associated with the Upper Cook Inlet salmon drift gillnet fishery and includes some of the
89 following information regarding the City of Homer:
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91 Homer has the highest vessel participation of any community with participants in the
92 fishery with an annual average number 2009-2018 of 104.9, average percent of 24.38 of
93 total participants, and 197 unique vessels (Table 4-13);
94

95 Homer-based vessels receive the highest gross revenue from the fishery of communities
96 with participants in the fishery with an annual average revenue 2009-2018 of \$5,505,099
97 and 28.6 percent of total revenue (Table 4-14);
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99 Homer has the highest permit participation in the fishery of communities participating
100 in the fishery with an annual average number 2009-2018 of 107.1, average percent of
101 23.55 of total permit holders, and 216 unique permits; and
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103 WHEREAS, The closure of the fishery as proposed under Alternative 4 would have a
104 significant adverse impact on the economy of Homer through the loss of the livelihoods of
105 Homer based fishermen who participate in the Cook Inlet salmon drift gillnet fishery, marine
106 trades and other businesses based in Homer, and the City of Homer primarily through the loss
107 of harbor fees, ice and crane sales, fish landing tax revenues, and sales tax revenues; and
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109 WHEREAS, The timeline allowing for public comment on Alternative 4 has been
110 inadequate generally, but particularly because the proposed closure of the fishery under
111 Alternative 4 would disproportionately affect the economic health of the Homer community.
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113 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, hereby
114 opposes the North Pacific Fishery Management Council adopting Alternative 4, proposed to
115 the North Pacific Fishery Management Council that would close all federal waters in Cook Inlet
116 to commercial salmon fishing.
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118 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of Homer, Alaska, has determined that
119 implementation of Alternative 4 would have a significant adverse impact on the economy of
120 Homer.
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122 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Homer City Council on this 25th day of November, 2020.
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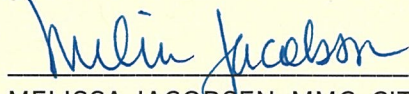
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CITY OF HOMER



KEN CASTNER, MAYOR

ATTEST:



MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK

Fiscal Note: N/A

