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February 25, 2019

Submitted via ADF&G fax (907) 465-6094

State of Alaska, Board of Fisheries

Reed Morisky, Chair

John Jensen

Fritz Johnson

Robert Ruffner, Vice Chair

Orville Huntington

Alan Cain

Israel Payton

Re: Joint Protocol on Salmon Enhancement & Hatchery Committee Meeting

Dear Board of Fisheries,

The Petersburg Borough Assembly supports sustainable salmon fisheries and strong hatchery production in Alaska. We also support the convening of the Salmon Hatcheries Committee Meeting and Joint Protocol on Salmon Enhancement, and the intent of the Joint Protocol to highlight statewide perspectives to issues associated with hatchery production of salmon. The upcoming Board of Fisheries Hatchery Committee Meeting scheduled for March 8, 2019 is a valuable opportunity to provide a forum for open discussion on hatchery topics to improve dialogue and transparency between the Board of Fisheries, ADF&G, fisheries stakeholders, and the public.

The Alaska salmon hatchery program provides economic and ecological stability to our salmon returns, which fluctuate year to year. Salmon hatchery production supports our local economies, communities, and all user groups. The economic footprint of Alaska's hatcheries includes \$95 million in labor income associated with commercial fishing, \$82 million in labor income associated with processing, and \$25 million connected to hatchery operations. Resident sport/personal use/subsistence harvests of hatchery salmon have additional economic impacts as well as very significant social and cultural impacts in Alaska. Alaska's salmon hatcheries account for the annual equivalent of 4,700 jobs and \$218 million in total labor income, including all direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts. A total of \$600 million in annual economic output is connected to Alaska salmon hatchery production. More than 16,000 fishermen, processing employees, and hatchery workers can attribute some portion of their income to Alaska's salmon hatchery production.

Our Assembly passed Resolution #2018-12 on October 1, 2018 in support of the Alaska Salmon Hatchery Program and urged the Alaska Board of Fisheries to further its understanding of the importance of the program to all Alaskans. A copy of Petersburg Borough's Resolution #2018-12 is attached for your review.

Respectfully,

Mark Jensen

Mayor

**Borough Administration**

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**Petersburg Borough, Petersburg, Alaska
RESOLUTION #2018-12**

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE ALASKA SALMON HATCHERY PROGRAM
AND URGING THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES TO FURTHER ITS
UNDERSTANDING OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROGRAM TO ALL ALASKANS**

WHEREAS, the Petersburg Borough and our fishermen, processors and businesses in Petersburg all benefit greatly from the State of Alaska Salmon Hatchery Program; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's salmon hatchery program has operated for 45 years and supplements wild salmon harvests throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's salmon hatchery program is an example of sustainable economic development that directly benefits subsistence fishermen, personal use fishermen, sport fishermen, charter fishermen, commercial fishermen, and seafood processors, as well as state and local governments which receive raw fish tax dollars; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's salmon hatchery program employs strong scientific methodology and is built upon precautionary principles and sustainable fisheries policies to protect wild salmon populations; and

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulates hatchery operations, production, and permitting through a transparent public process and multi-stakeholder development of annual management plans; and

WHEREAS, returns of hatchery and wild salmon stocks follow similar survival trends over time and the largest returns of both hatchery and wild salmon stocks have mostly occurred since hatchery returns began in about 1980; and

WHEREAS, there are no stocks of concern where most hatchery production occurs, indicating that adequate escapements to wild stock systems are being met in these areas over time; and

WHEREAS, Alaska hatcheries contributed an annual average of nearly 67 million fish to Alaska's commercial fisheries in the past decade; and

WHEREAS, Alaska hatcheries accounted for 22% of the total common property commercial catch and 43% of the total ex-vessel value in the Southeast region in 2016; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's salmon hatchery program has proven to be significant and vital to Alaska's seafood and sportfish industries and the State of Alaska by creating employment and economic opportunities throughout the State and in particular in rural coastal communities such as Petersburg; and

WHEREAS, Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA), a non-profit corporation whose mission is "to enhance and rehabilitate salmon production in Southern Southeast Alaska to the optimum social and economic benefit of salmon users", operates

salmon hatcheries at Whitman Lake near Ketchikan, Neets Bay in Behm Canal, Burnett Inlet in Clarence Strait, and Crystal Lake near Petersburg; and

WHEREAS, a McDowell Group report identifies the economic contribution in 2017 of SSRAA to be 680 jobs, \$32 million in labor income, and \$70 million in total economic output; and

WHEREAS, Petersburg's Crystal Lake Hatchery, owned by the State of Alaska and managed by SSRAA, releases 600,000 Crystal Creek King Salmon into Blind Slough, 500,000 Crystal Creek King Salmon at Anita Bay near Wrangell, 100,000+ Crystal Creek King Salmon at City Creek in Petersburg, 500,000 Chickamin River King Salmon at Neets Bay near Ketchikan, and 150,000 Crystal Creek Coho Salmon into Blind Slough annually, benefiting all fishing user groups in Southeast Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA), a non-profit corporation whose mission is "to assist in the restoration and rehabilitation of Alaska's salmon stocks, and to supplement the fisheries of Alaska by utilizing artificial propagation to enhance the availability of salmon to all common property users", operates salmon hatcheries at Medvejie and Sawmill Creek near Sitka, Hidden Falls in Chatham Strait, and Gunnuk Creek in Kake; and

WHEREAS, Hidden Falls Hatchery, owned by the State of Alaska and managed by NSRAA, releases 45 million Chum Salmon, 400,000 King Salmon and 2.2 million Coho Salmon in Chatham Strait, 45 million Chum Salmon and 200,000 King Salmon at Southeast Cove in Keku Strait near Kake, 2 million Coho Salmon in lower Chatham at Deer Lake, and 25 million Chum Salmon in Thomas Bay near Petersburg annually, benefiting all fishing user groups in Southeast Alaska; and

WHEREAS, Alaska's salmon hatchery program is non-profit and self-funded through cost recovery and enhancement taxes on the resource and is a model partnership between private and public entities; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has significantly invested in Alaska's salmon hatchery program and associated research to provide for stable salmon harvests and to bolster the economies of coastal communities while maintaining a wild stock escapement priority; and

WHEREAS, the Petersburg Borough Assembly supports unbiased and scientific methods to assess the interaction of Alaska's salmon hatchery programs with natural salmon stocks, such as the Alaska Hatchery-Wild Salmon Interaction Study which began in 2011 and is scheduled to conclude in 2023; and

WHEREAS, Alaska salmon fisheries, including the hatchery program, continue to be certified as sustainable by two separate programs, Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) and the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Petersburg Borough Assembly affirms its support for Alaska's salmon hatchery programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Petersburg Borough Assembly urges the Alaska Board of Fisheries to work with the hatchery community, the Alaska Department of Fish and

Game and industry leaders to further its understanding of the importance of the Alaska salmon hatchery program to all Alaskans.

Passed and Approved by the Petersburg Borough Assembly on October 1, 2018.


Mark Jensen, Mayor

ATTEST:


Debra K. Thompson, Borough Clerk