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February 6, 2019

Chairman Morisky and Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries;

Peter Pan Seafoods has had a constant presence on the Alaska Peninsula for over 100 years. We have processing facilities at King Cove and Port Moller and a fleet support facility at Sand Point. Our success is deeply connected to communities and fleets in the region as well as the fishery resources that you and the Department of Fish and Game manage. By their nature fisheries can be highly variable and we all have to roll with them and adjust our harvest targets, techniques and the products we produce to accommodate this. Within this variability, that we accept, we need steady consistent management that always puts the resource first based on vetted and understood guidelines and science.

Last summer the Chignik fishery experienced what was hopefully a once in a lifetime run failure in its early run. Once the magnitude of this was realized the Department took emergency action in an attempt to mitigate this, including significantly cutting back the fishing time in the South Unimak June fishery. This in spite of the fact that the best available science points to a very minimal presence and extremely low harvest rate of the Chignik stocks in this fishery. The minimal effect this might have had on the Chignik escapement shortfall was not commensurate with the loss experienced in this fishery that was proceeding under its established management plan. This was exacerbated by mediocre fishing in the region during the month of July and virtually no pink openings in August. The days given up in June, with negligible benefit to Chignik, would have been among the most productive of the entire season and represents a significant loss to all in the region.

We understand fully that the Department managers, even in "normal times" can be put under a lot of pressure by competing gear groups and interests. This pressure can be raised substantially in responding to a crisis like the Chignik run failure last year. The need to do something should not however rise to the level of deviating from established and accepted management plans. We appreciate the relatively consistent management scheme for the June fishery over the past three Board cycles after a couple of decades of whiplash change based on misinformation relative to concerns of distant regions. This management stability has allowed us to concentrate on providing a good product out of the fishery, benefitting the fleet, and increasing the value to the State and the region. We see no reason that the overall management plan for the June fishery should be changed at this time.

These are exciting as well as challenging times in the Alaska seafood industry. Interest and demand for wild fish products is increasing as well as the competition to access these fish. There are very few new or underutilized fish species to prosecute so we have to do the most with what we have, find better ways to increase value and remain competitive. This is occurring under the specter of potential changes in the ocean environment that might upset the status quo in ways we cannot foresee. In moving forward, we are exploring and investing in new processes and working with our fleets to improve the quality we receive.

After a devastating fire that destroyed most of our Port Moller processing plant in August 2017, we have re-committed to the North Peninsula fishery with an all new facility that will be completed for the upcoming season. This investment is significant. This plant will be fully modern with primary and value-added processing that will take full advantage of the high-quality summer long sockeye fishery that is present on the North Peninsula. As with the June fishery, we are very pleased with the steady and consistent Department management of this valuable fishery and see no reason why it should be changed at this time.

We value the opportunity to participate in the Board process and have been involved for quite some time. We really appreciate Board members' commitment to the process and the often times hard decisions that you must make. There are many competing voices and opinions on most all of these issues and there has been a lot of good work done in the past on drafting sound policies to guide you. We trust that these and the best science available on any given decision will guide you and result in consistent effective management that allows for an effective industry and most importantly, the protection of the resource.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Simpson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Mike Simpson – Vice President, Alaska Production