



October 14th, 2020

Alaska Board of Fisheries
ATTN: BOF COMMENTS
dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov

RE: Board of Fisheries Work Session comments, upcoming meeting cycle

Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

OBI Seafoods is one of the largest and most diversified seafood companies in North America. We operate 10 shorebased processing facilities in areas throughout the State of Alaska including Southeast, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Bristol Bay. Icicle Seafoods operates a shorebased processing facility in Dutch Harbor and a floating processor, both of which process groundfish primarily in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. As sister companies, our processing facilities and our fishermen depend on regulatory stability and sustainable management of Alaska's fisheries resources.

We would like to commend the Board of Fisheries and staff for adapting to an online format for the Work Session in light of the current pandemic. We recognize that it takes a lot of work and effort to switch from a long-established public meeting process to a virtual one and we thank you all for the ability to weigh in on the process moving forward. The BOF is known throughout fisheries management as one of the most public processes. Part of what makes the BOF process successful is the ability to hear from and meet face to face with the public as regulations are being discussed and adopted. Conversations with ADF&G managers, AC members, users and board members help create solid policy and successful management of Alaska's fisheries.

As such, we respectfully request that the BOF consider delaying the upcoming meeting cycle until a time where the board can meet in person with the public safely. Our number one priority as Alaskans must be the health and safety of our fellow meeting participants. For this reason, and due to the extreme public nature of BOF meetings, we urge the board to hold off on the upcoming cycle. It's unlikely that the current COVID situation will be resolved by March or April and large in-person meetings will be problematic if not impossible. Additionally, simply pushing the meeting cycles back a few months will result in significant overlaps with long-standing fisheries thereby limiting participation by the very members of the public who are needed to help shape decisions made by the board. Although there are time-sensitive issues such as stocks of concern and sunsets that need to be discussed, those proposals and issues can be dealt with on a case by case basis on a virtual platform.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter, and thank you for your service on the BOF.

Sincerely,

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