

SEAK Red King Crab Assessment
PO Box 232 Petersburg AK, 99833

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association
(907) 772-9323 email: pvoa@gci.net

February 8, 2020

Representative Ortiz
House Finance Budget Subcommittee
Department of Fish & Game
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Southeast Red King Crab Assessment

Dear Representative Ortiz and House Finance Subcommittee Members,

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association (PVOA) is a non-profit organization representing commercial fishermen. Members participate in state and federally managed fisheries throughout Alaska and the West Coast for a wide variety of species using various gear types. Targeted species include salmon, Pacific herring, Pacific halibut, sablefish, Pacific cod, shrimp, pollock, squid, tuna; Dungeness, tanner, and king crab.

PVOA respectfully requests the House Finance Subcommittee add funding for the Southeast Alaska red king crab assessment to the ADF&G commercial fisheries budget. *As you heard in testimony on January 28th, without funding for a survey and stock assessment, the department plans to close the personal use and commercial fisheries.*

Our membership supports a well-funded ADF&G budget to lend the best available science in providing harvest opportunity. Under our State's current economic conditions, we realize this is a hard balance to find. However, we are concerned by ADF&G's willingness to propose a budget cut that would close a fishery entirely. We find this is in direct conflict with the Alaska Constitutional requirement for fish, among other replenishable resources, to be managed under the sustained yield principle.

The most recent red king crab commercial season opened in 2017 with a GHL of 201,200 pounds of legal male king crab. Only 65% of the GHL was harvested and ex-vessel value totaled over \$1.3 million. A diversified portfolio of fisheries is important to the viability of the family owned fishing businesses in Southeast and the crews they employ. Closing fisheries in Southeast will erode the sustainability of these business models and the economies of the coastal communities reliant on them.

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Petersburg residents own 30 of the 57 permanent and interim red king crab permits in Southeast Alaska and our economy will be disproportionately affected by the loss of this fishery.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Megan O'Neil". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Megan O'Neil
Executive Director

CC: Senator Stedman