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Alaska Board of Fish:

On behalf of the Native Village of Chignik Lagoon, the Chignik Lagoon Village Council is submitting this comment to support and show the urgency of ACR 6 for the Chignik Fisheries.

The Chignik Lagoon Village Council urges the Board of Fish to accept ACR 6 so that it can be considered out of cycle modifications to 5 AAC 09.365 and 5 AAC 09.366. There are conservation and sustained that yield major concern with the early and late run of Sockeye salmon stocks returning to Chignik Lake and Black Lake. These concerns are demonstrated by the failure of the early run to meet its minimum escapement goal every year since 2018, and the failure of the late run to meet its minimum escapement goal for 2 of the 4 years since 2018.

The devastating failure of these runs has had a damaging economic and cultural loss for the tribes in the Chignik area, which includes all residents and local businesses in Area L, who depend on commercial and subsistence harvest of Sockeye salmon. Yet despite the obvious severity of this disturbing situation, with absent Board action, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game cannot and will not change its implementation of these regulations.

The Board has the ability to help change an economically and biologically untenable situation. Yet, unless and until the Board acts, the commercial and subsistence fisheries in Area L will remain closed or severely limited. Residents, and businesses within Area L will continue to bear the entire burden of conservation for these sockeye runs, and the precedence of this crisis will grow more critical. The Native Village of Chignik Lagoon supports and urges the board to do the same.

Thank you,

Chignik Lagoon Village Council