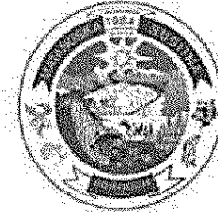


RC28

Matanuska-Susitna Borough



February 6, 2020

Alaska Board of Fisheries Members – *Transmitted Via Fax to 907-465-6094*

**Re: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Manager Comments for Consideration
Upper Cook Inlet Finfish Meeting February 7-19, 2020**

Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

I am writing in support of the efforts of our Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) and their five proposals before the Board of Fisheries: 133, 199, 215, 217, and 219. The MSB FWC has been dealing with the decline of salmon returns in the Mat-Su rivers of Cook Inlet for decades. The low returns of all species of salmon, particularly Chinook, Coho, and Sockeye salmon, have forced the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to declare eight northern Cook Inlet stocks as Stocks of Concern out of 16 Stocks of Concern statewide. The FWC's five proposals, especially 133 that strengthens the conservation corridor in Cook Inlet, will help restore the once vibrant fisheries that the borough has historically offered to residents and visitors.

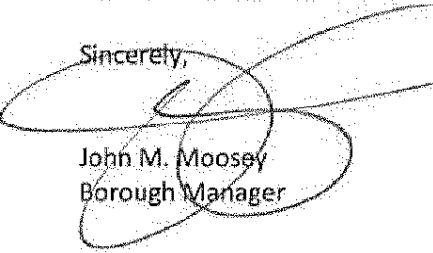
Our FWC has advocated for years to use genetic studies to guide reasonable management by ADF&G to return Chinook and Sockeye salmon to their natal streams. The economic impact of salmon returning to our Borough has been significant. We ask that the Board consider the impacts to communities in the Mat-Su where the impact of low salmon returns on livelihoods and economies have been severe. However, the source of the problem reaches beyond Northern Cook Inlet, including the interception of fish trying to return to their natal streams. The mixed stocks of salmon running up Cook Inlet requires careful management utilizing the precautionary principle, and the FWC's five proposals encourage careful, conservative management befitting the situation.

I also ask the Board of Fisheries to support RC #131, the Kodiak Salmon Workgroup RC regarding Proposal 37. The FWC has previously helped ADF&G fund critical genetic studies in Cook Inlet, and these studies have laid the foundation for their five proposals before you. But more work remains to be done on genetic research, and we hope you give RC #131 serious consideration in order to improve management of Cook Inlet salmon stocks.

On February 4, 2020 our Borough Assembly unanimously approved a resolution of support for the FWC's proposals and for RC #131. We urge Board members to look at genetics and consider the impacts on local Mat-Su fisheries and economies, and take actions that rebuild our dwindling stocks and economy in Northern Cook Inlet. Our local communities are counting on you to revitalize our historic fisheries – it takes fish to make fish.

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough thanks you for your consideration and service.

Sincerely,


John M. Moosey
Borough Manager

