

Introduced by: Mayor, Johnson, Hibbert, Smalley,
Cooper, Dunne, Blakeley, Cox, Carpenter
Date: 10/13/20
Action: Adopted
Vote: 9 Yes, 0 No, 0 Absent

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION 2020-073**

**A RESOLUTION DECLARING A LOCAL ECONOMIC DISASTER AND
REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF ALASKA DECLARE AN
ECONOMIC DISASTER FOR THE UPPER COOK INLET FISHERIES REGION AND
SUPPORTING A RECOVERY PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Upper Cook Inlet (“UCI”) 2020 commercial salmon harvest was approximately 1,136,817 fish, which is the lowest harvest of commercial salmon in the Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest since 1971 and approximately 59.6 percent less than the recent 10-year average of 2,8141,926 fish; and

WHEREAS, the estimated ex-vessel value of all salmon species harvested in UCI in 2020 was approximately \$5,237,115, which was 82.4 percent less than the previous 10-year average annual ex-vessel value of \$29,790,752; and

WHEREAS, sockeye salmon are the most valuable of the five species of Pacific salmon present in UCI and in 2020 the commercial sockeye harvest of 658,614 fish was approximately 74.3 percent less than the average annual harvest of 2,568,982million fish for the years 2010 to 2019 and the lowest UCI sockeye harvest since 1975; and

WHEREAS, approximately 1,126,120 Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon returned August 1 through August 24, 2020, which comprises about 62 percent of the total 1,813,386 sockeye counted by sonar in the Kenai River for the 2020 season; and

WHEREAS, AS 44.33.285 authorizes the governor, upon recommendation of the commissioner of commerce, community, and economic development, to designate by proclamation an area impacted by an economic disaster; and

WHEREAS, AS 44.33.310(3) provides that an economic disaster occurs where the annual income to workers in the designated area dropped below the average annual income for the base period, which is, for a fisheries failure, the years during which a fishery produced at economically representative levels as determined by the Department of Fish and Game; and

WHEREAS, this extremely low harvest was below the level necessary to cover the cost of operating and maintaining commercial drift, set net, processing and marketing businesses in the Kenai Peninsula Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough is a political subdivision of the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, an economic disaster declaration by the Governor would allow the legislature to appropriate funds for assistance grants and the governor may recommend in the governor's budget that capital projects planned for the area be accelerated and other steps may be taken as provided in AS 44.33.285 - .310 to accelerate the recovery from this disaster; and

WHEREAS, the United Cook Inlet Drift Association and the Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association have both urged the Kenai Peninsula Borough to ask the Governor of the State of Alaska to declare an economic disaster for the Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon commercial fisheries for 2020 due to the failure of the 2020 season;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:

SECTION 1. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly declares an economic disaster to exist in the areas of the Kenai Peninsula Borough affected by the 2020 Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries.


SECTION 2. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly respectfully requests that the Governor of the State of Alaska declare an economic disaster, as described in AS 44.33.285, to exist in the Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries Region and that the State of Alaska implement a recovery plan that provides private assistance and takes other actions that benefit commercial fisheries participants and others that rely on this important fisheries resource.

SECTION 3. The assembly also respectfully requests that the State of Alaska urge federal agencies to render private and public assistance to all affected persons and entities.

SECTION 4. That a copy of this resolution shall be provided to Governor Michael Dunleavey and Senator Peter Micciche.

SECTION 5. That this resolution becomes effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 13TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2020.



Kelly Cooper, Assembly President

ATTEST:



John Blankenship, MMC, Borough Clerk



Yes: Blakeley, Bjorkman, Carpenter, Cox, Dunne, Hibbert, Johnson, Smalley, Cooper
No: None
Absent: None