



## **Alaska Trollers Association**

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To: City of Sitka Assembly Members and Sitka City Manager John Leach

Dear Assembly Members,

As you know the Historic Southeast Alaska Chinook Fishery, the hub of which is the City of Sitka, is under a threat of elimination by a law suit brought by a radical Puget Sound environmental organization called the Wild Fish Conservancy. WFC has sued the National Marine Fisheries Service over a claimed failure to account for the effect of the SEAK Chinook Harvest on Southern Resident Killer Whales. In a 12/13/22 Recommendation the magistrate hearing the case (and who lives on Puget Sound) recommended the elimination of the Incidental Take permit that allows SEAK fishers to harvest any King Salmon.

The Alaska Trollers Association, of which I am the President, has been fighting this legal battle since 2020. WFC states that the SRKW are starving from lack of king salmon which they claim is 80% of these whale's diet. This claim is absurd in every aspect. The decade of 2010 to 2020 had the biggest king salmon return on the Columbia River since the dams were built. 2022 had a huge return of Puget Sound Chinook. The science easily debunks WFC claims but the Magistrate wouldn't allow an Evidentiary Hearing at which the facts could be demonstrated.

Since 2020 ATA has spent over 96 thousand dollars (\$5,000 donated by the City of Sitka) defending Alaskans' historic harvest rights. This fight will continue. To help with that ATA is asking for a contribution from Sitka of \$25,000. I know this is a significant ask but the simple truth is that without the financial support of SEAK communities our region will lose it's historic Troll fishery and other supporting Industries.

Thank you for your support and Consideration

Matthew Donohoe

President ATA