

CITY OF UNALASKA  
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2018-61

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL IN SUPPORT OF MAINTAINING THE CURRENT 5 VESSELS USED FOR THE NOAA FEDERAL GROUND FISH SURVEYS THAT SUPPORTS THE GROUND FISH STOCK ASSESSMENTS FOR THE BERING SEA, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, AND GULF OF ALASKA FISHERIES

WHEREAS, historically the City of Unalaska has benefited from the rich fishery resources of the Bering Sea, and for the past 24 consecutive years, Unalaska has been the nation's number one commercial fishing port in terms of pounds landed, and second during that time frame in dollar value of product landed ; and

WHEREAS, the fishing industry of the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands is our only industry, and economic engine of this area, if seafood industry is negatively impacted by reduced surveys and lack scientific data ,it will cause harm to this regions fishery dependent communities ; and

WHEREAS, without current fisheries data and annual surveys this could impact all sectors of Unalaska economy including revenues to the City, and State of Alaska, employment in the community, impacts to the processing operations, both inshore and offshore, harvesters, support sector businesses and the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, with the environmental changes we are seeing in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska with many years of warm water temperatures, have severely reduced groundfish and crab allocations, these changes have impacted fishery stocks of the North Pacific, and in some cases we are seeing the migration of stocks of groundfish and crab moving further into the Northern Bering Sea region which is an area that may need additional survey work in the near future; and

WHEREAS, we have seen a 30% reduction over the past three years in the Bering Sea total allowable catch amounts of Pacific Cod the second most important groundfish species in the Bering Sea after Pollock, and the lowest levels in years on most Bering Sea Crab populations, with many crab seasons closed; and

WHEREAS, we believe that based on the changes in the North Pacific environment; that now is not the time for NOAA to reduce groundfish surveys, and we would ask that all alternative measures be looked at, including the use of NOAA vessels from other regions to assist in survey work for Alaska ; and


WHEREAS, this nation largest and most valuable fisheries are in the North Pacific, we would ask that NOAA leadership to do all it can to sustain the normal 5 charter survey vessels needed in the North Pacific; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Unalaska asks that NOAA sustain the normal 5 survey vessels needed, for the nation largest and an most valuable fisheries which are critical to the wellbeing of all fishery dependent communities of Alaska.

PASSED AND ADOPTED BY A DULY CONSTITUTED QUORUM OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL  
THIS 23<sup>rd</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER 2018.

ATTEST:

  
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City Clerk

  
Dennis Robinson, Vice Mayor



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## MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

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To: City Council Members, Thomas Thomas, City Manager  
From: Mayor Frank Kelty  
Date: October 23, 2018  
Re: Resolution 2018-61: A Resolution of the Unalaska City Council in Support of Maintaining the Current 5 Vessels used for the NOAA Federal Groundfish Surveys that Supports the Groundfish Stock Assessments for the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska Fisheries

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**SUMMARY:** Resolution No. 2018-61 is in support of maintaining the current 5 charter vessels that do the bottom trawl survey work in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska. This survey work supports the annual groundfish stock assessment and modeling data used in setting the annual Groundfish allocations for the North Pacific.

**BACKGROUND:** While on the Washington DC lobbying trip, we made a stop at NOAA headquarters and discussed many fisheries issues with Chris Oliver, Assistant Administrator for NOAA. One of the most important issues was the rumored cut back on the survey work done annually in Alaska.

Chris Oliver, Assistant Administrator for NOAA, relayed there was a real possibility of losing one of the vessels used for survey work in Alaska due to two factors; the RV Oscar Dyson is currently in the shipyard for repairs, and additional funds are needed for overdue maintenance work at the NOAA Alaska Science Center in facility in Seattle.

We plead are case that reduced trawl survey work was a bad place to start looking for cuts especially with the many environmental changes we are seeing in the North Pacific. Brad Gilman advised us to send a letter or resolution to Mr. Oliver and to get our objection on record that the possibility of reduced survey work and the impacts it may cause in the North Pacific, a region that supports the nation's largest and most valuable fisheries, are of critical importance to the fishery dependent communities of the region.

I ask for your support, in adopting Resolution 2018-61. The City of Kodiak, Kodiak Island Borough, and I believe the Aleutians East Borough; have already sent letters to Chris Oliver, Assistant Administrator for NOAA, voicing their concerns about the impacts to the Gulf of Alaska.