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To: Erin Reinders, Mayor Tutikoff, JR Pearson,

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities for March 13, 2021

I have included an update on meetings I have attended the past week and current fishery articles.

Meetings

Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation: The Research Foundation met last Tuesday via Zoom to further discuss research priority list for this summer. I will touch on some of the main topics that the Board of Directors (BOD) covered. The foundation expects to spend an estimated 400K of FY22 funds this summer on research projects.

The next item addressed was on research planning for the summer, we had consensus of moving forward with a crab boat charter to harvest a small amount of under legal size Snow crab (Opilio) Tanner crab. The charter boat harvests the crab and takes the live crab to the NOAA lab in Kodiak for growth studies the foundation has been doing this for 4 years. We are also continuing tagging work on Tanner Crab and possibly Opilio Tanner, with ADFG and NOAA personal we have 3 sail drones on the way to the Bering Sea to look for the acoustic tags placed in 2019. The committee agreed to charter a vessel to do more tagging work this summer or fall with acoustic and satellite tags summer on male and female Red King Crab in the Bristol Bay area with assistance by NOAA and ADFG personal. The deployment of acoustic tags would mean additional funds for a sail drone charter in 2022 as well. The full board of directors will meet on March 18th to approve the research budget.

Thursday, I attend with other BSFRF board members and other crab industry members on a presentation from the newly formed Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) that would replace ASMI. This certification program would replace, the Certified Seafood Cooperative (CSC program. There presentation was to get the Crab industry in Alaska to come on board with their group. We had a 1hour presentation it was pointed out that most of Alaska Seafood Harvesters and Processors have joined the program. The program is based of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations because it meets the highest benchmarks for credible certification for responsible fisheries management. This program is a robust, common sense, practical

and cost-effective approach that allows Alaska fisheries to meet the FOA criteria for credible certification. It was also pointed out that Japan was considering joining this program already apart of it is Denmark and Norway. Its great presentation and the cost to BSFRF represent the crab industry in the certification program would be about \$60K. The BSFRF board will discuss this issue at the March 18th meeting it appears to be a very promising program to be a part of.

Southwest Alaska Municipal Conference: On March 4th and March 5th I attended most of the conference with my own funding since my consulting business is a SWAMC Associate Member. On Thursday, the first session was up a Seaweed and Oyster farming in SW Alaska. It was a particularly good panel with updates from Alaska Sea Grant Program, Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation and Erik Obrien, who operates a seaweed farm on Kodiak Island. The seaweed industry is really growing in Alaska more permits are be issued and the quality of the product had been greatly improved. The Oyster mariculture business is also moving ahead with a goal of reaching 100 million dollars in sales very soon.

The next panel was the Broadband Panel it was pretty much the same panel we had before GCI stated that they will be doing the undersea survey this summer and permitting, and site work that will be needed in the communities they will serve. It appears it would be late in 2022 if all goes well for cable to be laid. Pacific Data Port gave another update on the small satellites that they hope to launch to provide broadband. It was stated that the receivers need on homes to receive the signal are still very costly and that must be overcome. The Kodiak Alaska Aerospace Corporation gave update on the projects and various launches that will be coming up.

Just before lunch we heard from the Alaska Delegation in Washington DC by video. The Makushin Geothermal project was mentioned by the Senators that the project has their support. They talked about other Cares Funding, Energy, Infrastructure, Military, and Fisheries issues they are tracking.

In the afternoon session we had the Fisheries Panel up next Deputy Commissioner of ADFG Ms. Baker discussed issues at the North Pacific Council and how it would impact the State of Alaska. Sam Rabung, Commercial Fisheries Director for the State discussed commercial fisheries issues and Board of Fisheries issues. ASMI Executive Director Jeremy Woodrow, discussed the impacts that Covid-19 has had on the marketing of seafood domestically and overseas and the tremendous impacts of increased costs on processing and harvesting sectors. Rachel Donkersloot, of Coastal Cultures Research discussed initiatives being worked on, at the federal and state level to assist rural Alaskans and tribal groups to be assisted in getting a better understanding of the process getting Local and Traditional Knowledge recognized and included in presentations. The need to representatives of tribal entities to be included on various boards, commissions and as staff members in various organizations. Up next was Andy Wink of the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association, he discussed the upcoming Bristol Bay Sockeye Fishery another large allocation close to

40 million fish to harvest. The projects they are working on to deal with Covid issues in the region, and continued work on improving quality of the salmon delivered in the Bristol Bay region.

On Friday morning the first session was the State legislative panel the only member that showed up on time was Rep Edgmon the new House Rules Chair he discussed a lot of the problems that House had getting organized and some of the bills that he hoped would be moving forward. He took allot of question form the group in the last few minutes with this House Speaker Stutes from Kodiak was able to attend for a few minutes and took questions form the attendees.

The next panel I was able to listen in on was the Covis-19 Impact: Lessons Learned

This was excellent panel Unalaska own John Conwell gave and excellent presentation on how Unalaska School District dealt with the Covid impacts he describe to at home learning program and how it worked for the district and how homework assignments were picked up at the school. He also reviews the procedures that were put in place when Covid levels were reduced, and students were able to attend in person. Nicole Kimball of Pacific Seafood Processors Association this group represents most of the shore-based plants and Pollock Motherships in Alaska. Niccole went over the host of issues that the processors had to deal with and the huge costs that were over 100 million dollars' worth of impacts in medical costs for testing, quarantine costs including hotels, meals charters airflights.

This also included lost production and markets prices that cannot be increased to cover the increased operational costs. Nicole also outlined the procedures that have been put in place so that they can operated safely. Frances Leach United Fishermen of Alaska she discussed how the fishermen side of the Covid issues was being addressed by the harvesters and the procedures they are working such as quarantines being done, testing, not leaving the vessel while in port, and other measures such as crew changes such plane charters. Mary Swain of the Camai Community Heath Center Mary discussed community impacts and issues they had to address and overcome on getting testing and vaccines distributed in small communities. Heidi Hedberg, from the State of Alaska Public Heath discussed the remarkably successful program one of the best in the nation in getting vaccines in arm. She discussed emergency regulations the state put in place at the outset of the pandemic that have kept the number of infections and deaths at exceptionally low level. She also mentioned outstanding work of all the heath care workers across the state.

The last panel of the day was Vaccine Plans for Southwest Alaska: this panel had two RNs from the State of Alaska, Tonda Scott, Safety Nurse for Health and Social Services, Wendy Allen from Rural & Community Heath Alaska Division of Public Health, Robert Onders, Administrator from the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium and Dr. Zink Chief Medical Officer for the State of Alaska. They discussed various issues on increased testing and getting vaccines to communities across the state including the

various programs. The emergency mandates that State of Alaska had in place have expired and is awaiting action by the legislature. They felt that all three vaccines on the market would be available in Alaska and they were confident that they all would do a good job protecting the public. They noted continued the need to continue masking, and social distancing and stay away from large indoor gatherings. That the battle is not over yet and we still to follow the mandates to protect yourself and others.

The conference went well, it tough to do these types of meetings via Zoom but SWAMC lead by Executive Director Shirley Marquardt and her board did a great job. I have enclosed with this memo the 5 SWAMC Resolutions that were passed by the membership for your review.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments

1. SWAMC Resolutions
2. RFM Certification Program
3. Fishery Articles