

CITY OF UNALASKA
UNALASKA, ALASKA

RESOLUTION 2020-39

A RESOLUTION OF THE UNALASKA CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF AERIAL SALMON SURVEYS DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2020 BY ALEUTIAN AERIAL LLC IN THE AMOUNT OF \$6,550 WITH FUNDING FROM FY21 COUNCIL CONTINGENCY BUDGET

WHEREAS, in 2018 the Unalaska Native Fishermen Association (UNFA) provided funding to Aleutian Aerial for sockeye salmon surveys of three road system drainages of Morris Cove, Summer Bay and Iliuliuk Lake; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the City of Unalaska joined with Ounalashka Corporation (OC) and the Unalaska Native Fishermen Association (UNFA) to financially support the same aerial salmon surveys; and

WHEREAS, in 2020 an aerial survey of McLees Lake likely will be included; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the Qawalangin Tribe of Unalaska (Q-Tribe) has indicated an interest to financially support the aerial salmon surveys; and

WHEREAS, Unalaska residents, UNFA, the Unalaska Fish and Game Advisory Committee, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) continue to be concerned that the lack of escapement estimates for sockeye salmon in local lake drainages could jeopardize future opportunities for subsistence and sport fishing; and

WHEREAS, ADFG, with budget constraints, feels that drone surveys have shown the potential to be a reliable and cost-effective way to survey small river and lake systems; and

WHEREAS, the Unalaska City Council believes the aerial salmon surveys to be a benefit to the citizens of Unalaska to allow for continued subsistence and sport fishing seasons.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that that the Unalaska City Council approves funding in the amount of \$6,550 to support aerial salmon surveys during calendar year 2020 to be performed by Aleutian Aerial LLC, with funding from the Council Contingency line item in the FY21 budget.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a duly constituted quorum of the Unalaska City Council on June 9, 2020.



Vincent M. Tutiakoff, Sr.
Mayor

ATTEST:



Marjie Veeder, CMC
City Clerk



MEMORANDUM TO COUNCIL

To: Mayor and City Council Members
From: Erin Reinders, City Manager
Date: June 9, 2020
Re: Resolution 2020-39: Authorizing financial support of aerial salmon surveys during calendar year 2020 by Aleutian Aerial LLC in the amount of \$5,000, with funding from FY21 Council Contingency Budget

SUMMARY: Council will hear from Andy Dietrick of Aleutian Aerial LLC this evening requesting support for and describing the importance of the aerial drone salmon surveys. The passage of this resolution will approve City Council's financial support in the amount of \$5,000 for surveys of the Morris Cove, Summer Bay, and Iliuliuk Lakes road system drainages. This year there is also a plan to include McLees Lake. These surveys will then be provided to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) for use in their analysis. This will be the third year of aerial drone surveys and would be the second year that the Unalaska City Council provided financial support for the project.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION: The Unalaska City Council provided funding in July of 2019 in the amount of \$5,200. The partnership in 2019 had three participants including the City of Unalaska, Ounalashka Corporation (OC), and Unalaska Native Fishermen Association (UNFA).

BACKGROUND: Andy Dietrick of Aleutian Aerial emailed a request for financial support for the aerial drone salmon surveys. The surveys will assist ADFG in their analysis. This email is included in your packet. OC and UNFA have indicated that they are again interested in the effort, and this year the Qawalangin Tribe (Q-Tribe) is also interested. The Mayor requested that City Council consider this item and potentially take action this evening. Staff has prepared a resolution should Council wish to provide financial support.

DISCUSSION: Again, the passage of this resolution will approve City Council's financial support in the amount of \$5,000 for aerial drone salmon surveys of the road system drainages of Morris Cove, Summer Bay, and Iliuliuk Lake with potential for McLees Lake as well. This contribution will be combined with the contribution of the Q-Tribe, UNFA and the OC. This information will be provided to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for analysis. This will be the third year of aerial drone surveys work on the road system lakes.

The lack of salmon escapement on the local lake drainages has been a concern of the local residents who participate in subsistence and sport fishing activities. The Unalaska Fish and Game Advisory Committee, UNFA and ADFG have also expressed their concern.

ADFG has faced budget constraints that have impacted their ability to perform the needed survey work. However, ADFG feels that drone surveys have shown the potential to be a reliable and cost-effective way to survey small river and lake systems. The video and images provided to ADFG in 2018 and 2019 by Aleutian Aerial LLC was found of good quality, sufficient in estimating salmon escapement. ADFG has provided a letter (included in your packet) to that affect with survey data numbers. Continued participation in the drone salmon surveys will help provide needed information to ADFG on the status of the local salmon drainages

ALTERNATIVES: Council may choose not to get involved with this issue, or may choose to support a different contribution amount. Council may also choose to defer this item and consider it at a future date.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: The FY21 Council Contingency line item contains sufficient funding to cover a \$5,000 contribution.

PROPOSED MOTION: I move to approve Resolution 2020-39.

ATTACHMENTS:

- April 9, 2020 letter from Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- May 27, 2020 and May 14, 2020 emails from Aleutian Aerial