



BRISTOL BAY

Regional Seafood Development Association

To: Office of Governor Mike Dunleavy
From: Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association
Date: May 1, 2020
RE: COVID-19 Resource Needs for the Bristol Bay Salmon Industry

Dear Governor Dunleavy,

On behalf of Bristol Bay's 8,200 driftnet and setnet fishermen, the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association (BBRSDA) would like to express our appreciation for the State of Alaska's outstanding commitment to address the COVID-19 pandemic. We are very pleased to see the State collaborate with industry, local communities, and tribal organizations to protect public health and maintain critical economic activities, such as commercial seafood operations.

With Health Mandate #017 providing a protection plan for Alaska's commercial fishermen, and other mandates addressing travel protocols we would like to outline what resources will be needed to meet the goals of maintaining public health and critical infrastructure activities in Bristol Bay.

It is hard to understate how important the Bristol Bay salmon fishery is to Alaska's economy and to national health. Bristol Bay contains the world's most valuable wild salmon fishery in the world and the region is responsible for over half of Alaska's commercial salmon harvest value. The Bristol Bay fishery is prosecuted by roughly 2,000 small businesses which create 5,200 FTE jobs and \$272 million of labor income in Alaska, providing over 400 million servings of healthy, wild sockeye salmon – a strategic public health need during this pandemic.

BBRSDA has reached out to processing companies, municipalities, and tribes in order to have a thorough understanding of the issues and begin addressing solutions that will protect local communities, while allowing for a fishery to occur. We have been actively engaged with State of Alaska officials in the Governor's office, ADF&G, DHSS, DCCED, CFEC, and the Unified Command. We are also in communication daily with officials regarding the logistical support needed.

BBRSDA would like to formally request the State of Alaska ensure the following needs are met:

1. Medical services
 - a. Screening supplies and personnel
 - b. Testing supplies and personnel, as available and required
 - i. Quarantine lodging for people who test positive
 - c. Supplemental medical capacity
 - i. Contracting two floating medical ships to be stationed in the east and west side of the Bristol Bay fishing district, and/or
 - ii. Rapidly deployable shoreside field hospitals
2. Local infrastructure support and distribution of PPE supplies
 - a. Resources to create an alternate disembarking and baggage retrieval process to avoid traffic into local airports
 - b. Temporary bathroom facilities

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- c. Funding for delivery services to avoid traffic in retail stores
 - d. Ground transportation for transporting fishermen from airport to boatyard
 - e. Hand sanitizer: liquid/gel and dispensers to be posted near doors or common touch points
 - f. Masks & thermometers
 - g. Cleaning supplies and spray bottles for disinfecting surfaces
3. Compliance needs
- a. Enforcement: security contractors to enforce quarantine & other directives
 - b. Funding and support for signage
 - c. Funding to create digital, media, and printed materials to educate industry for successful compliance
 - d. Communication support funding for industry and local government

All of these items are important, but BBRSDA requests that the State of Alaska expedite support for a) enforcement, b) sanitizer for local businesses and community buildings, and c) supplies for an auxiliary disembarking area at the Dillingham and King Salmon airport. Ensuring people are following the Mandates, disinfecting common touch points, and avoiding people crowding in the airport are immediate needs.

In addition, BBRSDA is incurring costs to support the mutual safety goals of industry and government, and would request reimbursement for related costs at a later date. Thus far, these include:

- Communications and support contractors
- Quarantine and all-clear flags
- Buffs (i.e. cloth facemasks)

The board, staff, and members of BBRSDA will continue working hard to find solutions to the issues in prosecuting such a large fishery in an area without large resource capabilities. We are standing by to support the State of Alaska to keep people safe while providing critical services to Alaska. Please do not hesitate to have State personnel reach out to us for input on evolving planning efforts or to discuss what resources will be needed to ensure successful execution and compliance on the part of fishermen. We have heard loud and clear from our fleet. They want to have a fishery, they want to protect public health, and they want to comply with State Mandates and local ordinances. We just have to work together to make this happen.

Sincerely,

Andy Wink
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CC: Ben Stevens, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor; John Moller, Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor; Adam Crum, Commissioner, DHSS; Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner, ADF&G; Sam Rabung, Commercial Fisheries Division Director, ADF&G; Heidi Hedberg, Division Director, DHSS; Bryan Fisher, Emergency Program Manager, MVA; Thomas Koloski, Critical Infrastructure Sustainment Branch, MVA; Julie Anderson, Commissioner, DCCED.