



CENTRAL COUNCIL
Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska
Office of the President • Edward K. Thomas Building
9097 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

Executive Council of the Central Council
TLINGIT & HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA

Resolution EC 23-14

Title: Opposition to the Wild Fish Conservancy Lawsuit to Close the 2023 Winter and Summer Commercial Troll Fishery in Southeast Alaska

WHEREAS, the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a federally recognized tribe with more than 35,000 citizens; and

WHEREAS, under Article X of the Tlingit & Haida Constitution, the Executive Council is the governing body of Tlingit & Haida when the Tribal Assembly is not in session; and

WHEREAS, the Tribal Assembly is not in session; and

WHEREAS, Tlingit & Haida opposes the Wild Fish Conservancy's lawsuit that challenges the Nation Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Biological Opinion regarding Southeast Alaska's fisheries and the impact of the fisheries on the state of Washington's Chinook and Southern Resident Killer Whales; and

WHEREAS, the commercial fishing industry is a mainstay of Alaska's economy and the largest private sector employer in the state of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the troll fleet is the second largest fleet in Alaska with Chinook harvest being 44% of their fishing income; and

WHEREAS, the commercial salmon trolling is a year-round contributor to Southeast Alaska's economy and sustains year-round employment in the fishing, processing, and support sector industries; and

WHEREAS, including fishing, processing, and all related multiplied effects, the troll fleet has a total economic impact of approximately \$85 million for the Southeast Alaska economy; and

WHEREAS, the lawsuit filed by the Wild Fish Conservancy against the NMFS threatens to close the Southeast winter and summer troll fishery despite the fact that the closure would provide no meaningful benefits to the state of Washington's Southern Resident Killer Whales; and

WHEREAS, the Wild Fish Conservancy has pledged to eliminate mixed stock fisheries and eliminate hatcheries; and

WHEREAS, the Wild Fish Conservancy lawsuit has the potential to impact other Southeast fisheries through effects on the Pacific Salmon Treaty, a new biological opinion and the Section 7 take permit; and

WHEREAS, the communities of Southeast Alaska will suffer severe economic hardship if the Southeast Alaska troll fishery is closed; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska hereby opposes the Wild Fish Conservancy lawsuit to close the 2023 winter and summer troll fishery in Southeast Alaska;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Tlingit & Haida further requests:

- National Marine Fisheries Service prioritize preparation of necessary documents and processes to support the protection of the Southeast Alaska winter and summer troll fisheries; and
- National Marine Fisheries Services and Alaska Department of Fish & Game commit the necessary resources to effectively defend Alaska's fisheries and the Southeast Alaska troll fishery; and
- All necessary and available state, federal, and private resources be made available to support lawsuit defendants and intervenors through all possible appeals; and
- The State of Alaska work with Alaska's Congressional delegation to protect Alaska's fisheries from present and future misguided lawsuits.


ADOPTED this 20th day of March 2023, by the Executive Council of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, by a vote of 5 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstentions and 1 absence.

CERTIFY



President Richard J. Peterson

ATTEST



Tribal Secretary Jacqueline L. Pata