

**CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA**

**RESOLUTION 2015-09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY AND BOROUGH OF SITKA REQUESTING THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL REDUCE HALIBUT BYCATCH IN THE GULF OF ALASKA AND BERING SEA TRAWL FISHERIES BY LOWERING HALIBUT PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH CAPS BY NOT LESS THAN 50% OF THE CURRENT LIMITS. AND FURTHER REQUESTING THAT GOVERNOR WALKER MAKE HIS NOMINATIONS OF ALASKANS TO SERVE ON THE NORTH PACIFIC COUNCIL CONTINGENT ON A MANDATE TO REDUCE THE QUANTITY OF HALIBUT BY-CATCH IN THE GULF OF ALASKA AND BERING SEA TRAWL FISHERIES BY NOT LESS THAN 50% OF THE CURRENT LIMITS.**

**WHEREAS**, the abundance of North Pacific halibut has declined significantly over the past two decades; and

**WHEREAS**, the commercial catch limits for halibut in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea have been reduced by 70% over the past decade in order to conserve halibut stocks; and

**WHEREAS**, the halibut fishery is of critical importance to Alaska's subsistence, sport, and commercial fishermen; and

**WHEREAS**, coastal communities in Alaska depend on Alaska's halibut resource for subsistence, recreation, and livelihood, and

**WHEREAS**, the daily halibut catch available to charter clients in the Gulf of Alaska has been reduced by 50% in some areas; and

**WHEREAS**, halibut bycatch limits for trawl fisheries operating in the Gulf of Alaska have been reduced by only 15% over the same time period; and

**WHEREAS**, observer coverage of Gulf of Alaska trawl catch fell 50% between 2013 and 2014; and


**WHEREAS**, halibut by-catch limits for trawl fisheries operating in the Bering Sea have not been significantly reduced for 30 years; and

**WHEREAS**, trawl by-catch of halibut in the Central Bering Sea is now more than 10 times the catch allocated to historic halibut harvesters in the area.


**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the City and Borough of Sitka requests immediate action by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to reduce halibut bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea trawl fisheries by not less than 50%; and, to increase observer coverage on Gulf of Alaska trawlers to 100% and to maintain observer coverage on Bering Sea trawlers at not less than 100%; and,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City and Borough of Sitka requests Governor Walker make his nominations of Alaskans to serve on the North Pacific Council in March in keeping with the "Alaska first" principles of fisheries management that protects our fishery resources and the fishermen and fishing communities dependent on those resource. Additionally, the CBS respectfully request copies of this resolution be sent to all members of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, the Honorable Bill Walker, Governor of Alaska, members of the Alaska State Senate and House, the Alaska Congressional Delegation, and regional Tribal entities within the State of Alaska.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** by the Assembly of the City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of February 2015.

  
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Mim McConnell, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Colleen Ingman, MMC  
Municipal Clerk