

December 10, 2019

Petersburg Borough Assembly
PO Box 329
Petersburg, AK 99833

Dear Mayor Jensen and Borough Assembly Members,

Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association is a local non-profit organization representing commercial fishermen. Members participate in state and federally managed fisheries for a wide variety of species and gear types. Targeted species include salmon, herring, halibut, sablefish, cod, crab, shrimp, pollock, tuna, geoduck, and sea cucumber.

We are writing today in support of the Project Partnership Agreement with the U.S Army Corps of Engineers to dredge the South Harbor. Commercial fishing is a major driver of Petersburg's economy and our harbor system is a vital asset to support our fleet. PVOA asks you explore funding options to satisfy the cost-sharing portion of a partnership with USACE.

The alley between the C and D floats of the South Harbor and the space between the crane dock and D float have filled in with material since the areas were last dredged. In recent years, our members have had increasing incidents of their vessels getting stuck on bottom during low tides while trying to use the crane dock or leave/return to their stalls. Additionally, the ramp at the North end of the South Harbor now sits on bottom at extreme minus tides.

According to CFEC, in 2018, the total gross earnings of seafood landed in Petersburg were over \$49 million from 39.5 million pounds of seafood landings.¹ In the same year, Petersburg received \$893,722 in Fisheries Business and Fisheries Landings Taxes.² In NMFS's most recent report (2017), Petersburg is ranked the 19th top port in pounds of seafood landings compared to all U.S. fishing ports and 26th by landed value.³

The most current CFEC data shows Petersburg has 468 commercial fishing permit holders owning 1,095 permits and 408 residents holding commercial crewman's licenses.⁴ In 2017, 730 processor workers were

¹Permit and Fishing Activity by Year, State, Census Area, or City, Commercial Fishery Entry Commission, State of Alaska, <https://www.cfec.state.ak.us/gpbycen/2018/195424.htm>

²Revenue figures are from the Alaska Department of Revenue Shared Taxes report <http://tax.alaska.gov/programs/documentviewer/viewer.aspx?1499r>

³NOAA, NMFS Office of Science and Technology, see reports "Total Commercial Fishery Landings at Major U.S. Ports" ranked by value and by weight at <https://foss.nmfs.noaa.gov/apexfoss/f?p=215:200:::>

⁴Commercial fishing permit activity and estimated harvest and earnings by permit holder are from the Alaska Commercial Fishery Entry Commission (CFEC) for Petersburg Census Area, online at <https://www.cfec.state.ak.us/cpbycen/2010/280WRANG.htm>

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employed in Petersburg by local landings providing over \$11 million in wages.⁵ These numbers account for direct harvesters and processor workers only. There are many local private sector and government jobs provided by the fishing industry as well.

Thank you for considering the importance of maintaining our harbors in order to retain and grow fisheries related jobs and seafood landings.

Sincerely,



Megan O'Neil
Executive Director

⁵Processor employment and wage data is from the Alaska Department of Labor at <http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/seafood/Southeast/SESFPBorca.pdf>