



# ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF KASAAN

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## RESOLUTION OVK 17-12-001

### **A Resolution of the Organized Village of Kasaan in Support of Updating Alaska Habitat Laws to Adequately Protect Salmon Spawning and Rearing Areas**

**WHEREAS**, the Organized Village of Kasaan is a federally recognized Tribe organized pursuant to the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984) and May 1, 1936 (49 Stat. 1250); and

**WHEREAS**, the Corporate Charter of the Organized Village of Kasaan (Ratified October 15, 1938) states in its Purpose and Existence, "In order to further the economic development of the Indians residing in the neighborhood of Kasaan, Alaska, by conferring upon the Organized Village of Kasaan corporate rights and powers; and to enable this Village and its members to undertake enterprises designed to secure for the members of the corporation an assured economic independence..." and

**WHEREAS**, the Organized Village of Kasaan (hereinafter "OVK") is governed by a Council of elected representatives composed of a President and six members who act in accordance with the powers granted to it by its Constitution and By-Laws (Ratified on October 15, 1938); and

**WHEREAS**, the Kasaan Haida people have depended on salmon to sustain their cultural, traditional, spiritual, and economic well-being and way of life; and

**WHEREAS**, salmon are a critical and irreplaceable food source for the Organized Village of Kasaan where traditionally harvested foods account for up to 33% of their caloric intake and up to 60% of the protein consumed in rural Alaska is salmon; and

**WHEREAS**, the OVK believes that current habitat laws, as written in Title 16, are too vague and open to different interpretation with changing administrations, creating uncertainty in the permit process and do not adequately and consistently safeguard against harmful impacts to salmon; do not currently allow for a public input process, leading to a lack of transparency; and place the burden of proving salmon use the waterways proposed for development, which can be expensive and often falls to local communities, Tribes, and non-profits; and

**WHEREAS**, the OVK seeks to reaffirm its support for habitat protections that would ensure the sustainability of river salmon and other species to provide for healthy populations for generations to come; and

**WHEREAS**, the OVK recognizes that economic and community development are needed in rural Alaska, but believe development must be balanced with adequate protections that would reduce or mitigate negative and harmful impacts salmon resources; and

**WHEREAS**, OVK Tribal Citizens have already experienced tremendous hardship from declines in salmon populations due to unknown factors, but are undoubtedly impacted by changes in climate in both the freshwater and marine environments; and

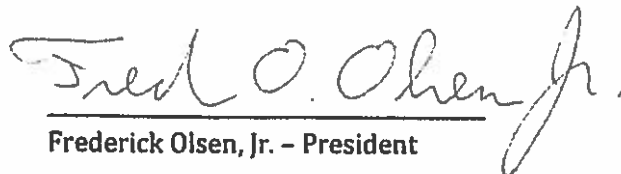
**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Organized Village of Kasaan Tribal Council unanimously supports the Stand for Salmon ballot initiative, which amends the State of Alaska Title 16 habitat laws; and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the OVK preferentially supports the ballot initiative over the current house bill (HB 199), as the house bill could change significantly through the legislative committee process before being passed in to law and be influenced by industry lobbyists, while the ballot initiative would give the voters of Alaska a voice; and

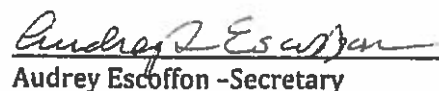
**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, the OVK, in particular, supports the ballot initiative because it would clearly define "the proper protection of fish and game" and clarify important habitat characteristics to support salmon runs, such as water quality, flow levels, and fish passage; would include a public process for commenting on permits so that Tribes can bring local and traditional knowledge to the table; and would assume all waterways are capable of supporting salmon and would place the burden of proving that a waterway does not get used by salmon on the developer, who, generally, has the monetary resources to conduct such studies.

#### **CERTIFICATION**

**APPROVED, PASSED AND ADOPTED** by a duly constituted quorum of the OVK Tribal Council on this 21 day of December 2017; by a "Telephone Poll, Roll Call Vote: Della Coburn: yes, Audrey Escoffon: yes, Glenn Hamar: yes, Ronald Leighton: yes, And Marina Anderson: yes.

  
Frederick Olsen, Jr. – President

ATTESTED:

  
Audrey Escoffon –Secretary