



April 4, 2018

**RE: Protecting habitat protects Alaska business; support reforms to fish and game habitat permit laws.**

Dear Alaska decision makers and voters,

As Alaskan business owners, anglers and hunters, we depend on robust populations of fish and game to feed our families, pay our employees, and help give visitors and residents alike the sporting experiences Alaska is well known for delivering. Maintaining our wild salmon runs and abundant wildlife populations will ensure Alaskan businesses, our lucrative recreational fishing and hunting industry and Alaskan lifestyle continue to thrive. We support efforts to update our laws and regulations to safeguard important habitat, and we urge our elected officials and fellow Alaskans to do the same.

Healthy ecosystems and abundant fish and wildlife populations bring tourists from around the world to fish, hunt and view wildlife, creating more than 43,000 jobs and contributing \$4.8 billion annually to Alaska's economy. The sport-fishing industry in Alaska supports more than 1,150 businesses, licenses nearly 2,500 Alaskan-resident fishing guides, and hosts more than 450,000 participants annually. Our businesses play an important and growing part of our state economy and help buoy Alaska during turbulent economic times by providing a diverse and resilient economic base. Clarifying our laws and regulations for protecting fish and wildlife habitat isn't just the right choice for natural resources, but it is the right choice for our economy and for the long-term interests of Alaska.

Reforming our fish and game laws and regulations will create predictability and the confidence to know that when a permit is issued to develop in important fish and game habitat, the development will occur in a way that protects the natural resources that form the foundation of our businesses. These protections will allow us to continue to invest with confidence.

Alaska is at a crossroads. A look at formerly resource-abundant states in the Lower 48, now depleted or devoid of wild salmon, makes clear what Alaskans must expect if we fail to implement strong protections for our fish and wildlife habitat. This threat compels us to support measures that will

safeguard our abundant fish and game resources while allowing truly responsible projects to move forward.

Therefore, the undersigned businesses and organizations support strengthening the laws and regulations that guide development in fish and game habitat and encourage Alaska lawmakers and voters to also support such measures. Our laws and regulations must do more to protect habitat, promote responsible development through decisions that are based on clear scientific standards, and ensure Alaskans have a voice in decisions impacting the future of our salmon streams and wildlife habitat.

Sincerely,

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