



PSPA State and Federal Policy Positions to Improve Competitiveness and Resilience of the Alaska Seafood Sector

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The Alaska seafood industry is facing economic conditions unlike any since the collapse of salmon value in the 1990s, except this time, it is across multiple species. Experts estimate Alaska and its coastal communities lost \$2 billion in 2023: \$1 billion in lost first wholesale revenues and \$1 billion in decreased spending on vessels and facilities. Today's problems are a result of the confluence of multiple global and national economic factors occurring simultaneously, which are [outlined in this attachment](#).

Many communities across Alaska depend on the seafood industry. The industry is comprised of thousands of small and independent businesses, including fishermen, processors, and support businesses, such as transportation, fabrication, mechanics, supplies, sales and marketing. The health of these communities and businesses, as well as Alaska's economy, depends on the competitiveness and resilience of the entire Alaska seafood supply chain.

While some challenging market conditions will improve over time, the need for state and federal government action is critical at this time in order to support the US seafood industry and help meet current challenges in the following areas:

- Reduce operating costs
- Expand and diversify markets
- Invest in modernizing the industry
- Create a stable regulatory environment
- Maintain core data collection foundational to sustainable fisheries management.

PSPA supports the priorities of United Fishermen of Alaska, Alaska's salmon hatcheries, and fishing-dependent communities that address these challenges. PSPA also supports the following specific priority actions:

STATE GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

1. Make direct requests of federal administration and Congressional contacts regarding federal actions to increase USDA Alaska seafood purchases, to create an Office of Seafood Policy/Programs in USDA, and to improve trade policy via the Office of the US Trade Representative (USTR)
2. Provide loan guarantees and/or low-interest loans for seafood processors (AIDEA)
3. Defer loan and interest payments, defer interest accrual, and extend terms for fisheries enhancement and fishermen (revolving loan funds)
4. Expand Alaska's seafood product development tax credit to include automation and renewable energy conversion

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5. Implement recommendations from the State's 2023 Alaska Workforce Convening, including increased workforce development for skilled trades, in coordination with industry
6. Integration of seafood into newly proposed Alaska Office of Food Security and state food purchases
7. Appoint people to the NPFMC and BOF that support science-based decision-making and a stable regulatory environment
8. Provide funds (\$10 million) for ASMI to fill the void due to low prices and seize domestic market opportunity due to the prohibition of Russian seafood

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS ([more details here](#))

1. Improve and expand existing agency functions that support US seafood
 - Improve and expand government purchasing programs for US seafood
 - Expedite payment of disaster funds by advancing funds; concentrate funds on impacted recipients
 - Improve and expand governmental policies on recapitalization, vessel construction, tax structures, workforce accessibility, energy, infrastructure and US manufacturing
 - Increase government funding for new product development, testing, promotion, and marketing of US produced seafood
2. Integrate US seafood production into national food policy strategies and USDA programs designed to support domestic food production
 - Create an Office of Seafood Policy and Program Integration in USDA
 - Increase re-investment in US seafood by expanding eligibility of USDA low-interest loans or loan guarantees to fishermen and processors
 - Fully integrate seafood and seafood nutritional guidance into national strategies for improving public health and nutrition
3. Restore fairness and reciprocity for international trade in U.S. seafood products
 - Improve seafood expertise and leadership in the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to coordinate seafood trade objectives among offices
 - Create a more reciprocal tariff structure for seafood exports and imports and develop more effective tools for monitoring supply chain traceability and deterring Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing
 - Implementation to resolve the unbalanced and unfair seafood trade relationship between Russia and the U.S., within the U.S. and in other countries, including catch certificates and country of harvest labeling