



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

## Homer City Council

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Governor Walker  
POB 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

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Governor Walker,

Because of the unexpected failures in the sockeye salmon returns in the Gulf of Alaska during 2018, the Homer City Council encourages you to declare an economic disaster for the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) fisheries region. The salmon harvests in UCI, as in other fishery regions, are at historic lows and threaten the communities of UCI. These fishing communities are economically and culturally suffering as a result of these unexpected failures in this season's sockeye returns.

- The 2018 sockeye harvest was less than 20% of the prior 10 year average harvest
- The 6 year old salmon from the 2012 brood year were at historic low levels (95% were not in the 2018 return)
- The 5 year old salmon from the 2013 brood year are at near historic low levels (50% were not in the 2018 return)
- Run timing of UCI sockeye run has shifted, now the majority of the run returns in August
- Size at age has also shown a dramatic shift to smaller sockeyes
- The 2012 brood year has a 1.3:1 return per spawner ratio
- The drift fleet harvest has not been this small since 1975

### **FISHING COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY THE 2018 SOCKEYE SALMON DISASTER**

The individuals, families and businesses in the following Kenai Peninsula Borough fishing communities were affected by the 2018 sockeye salmon disaster:

Seldovia, Halibut Cove, Homer, Kachemak Selo, Voznesenka, Anchor Point, Nilolaevsk, Ninilchik, Clam Gulch, Kasilof, Kenai, Nikiski and Seward.

An economic disaster declaration will allow the Legislature to appropriate money for assistance grants and allows you to make budget recommendations to accelerate the region's existing capital projects and provide funding for new ones. In addition to the disaster declaration, the Homer City Council encourages the Division of Economic Development to commit as many resources as possible to assist salmon permit holders who participate in the Commercial Fishing Revolving Loan program and may be unable to meet the terms of their loans because of UCI's low sockeye harvest.

Upper Cook Inlet is accustomed to harvesting nearly 3.5 million sockeye every year. This year, they harvested less than 20% of the 10, 20 or 40-year average harvest. Salmon is an important economic staple in these UCI communities and the failure of this year's fishery will have ripple effects throughout the economy. In light of the harmful impacts of the poor returns across the Kenai Peninsula, the Kenai Peninsula Borough will be considering a similar request at their October 23rd Borough Assembly meeting.

Thank you for considering taking this important step to protect the livelihoods of Alaskan families by declaring an economic disaster for the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) fisheries region.

Sincerely,

Homer City Council