

Adopted

HAINES BOROUGH, ALASKA
RESOLUTION No. 20-09-885

A Resolution of the Haines Borough Assembly Declaring an Economic Disaster in the Haines Borough due to COVID-19 and Poor Regional Returns of All Salmon Species

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the virus a pandemic; the State of Alaska issued a declaration of public health disaster emergency in response to the anticipated outbreak of COVID-19 in Alaska; and the President of the United States declared a national emergency in response to the virus pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, the Haines Borough Declared an Emergency in the Haines Borough based on the Risk to the Public posed by the Global COVID-19 Pandemic and the Substantial Economic Impacts to the Haines Borough; and

WHEREAS, on March 21, 2020, the President of the United States issued Disaster Declaration No. 16386, Disaster No. AK-00046, freeing up economic assistance through the Small Business Administration for businesses impacted by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, numerous federal and state economic programs have been established for business assistance due to impacts from COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Haines Borough has created several different grant programs for individuals and businesses to help mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Haines Borough has two seafood processing plants which operate seasonally each year; and

WHEREAS, the June 2020 Haines Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey revealed Haines business revenue was down 8% in 2020 through June, compared to the same period in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the June 2020 Haines Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey also revealed that 93% of respondents call the current economy poor or very poor, and 71% feel that the upcoming year will be worse; and

WHEREAS, the June 2020 Haines Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey further revealed responding Haines Borough employers have already laid off 34% of their total workforce due to the COVID-19 virus, and cancelled hiring an additional 141 workers. More than 21% of businesses expect to cut even more staff; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Labor Statistics confirmed Haines had a 20.1% unemployment rate in June of 2020 as compared to 5.8% in June of 2019; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Southeast Jobs COVID Impacts Report also outlines the regional change in Southeast Jobs from April to July 2020 compared to 2019 including a 50% drop in Transportation jobs; a 38% decline in Leisure and Hospitality Jobs; and a loss of 27% in Seafood Processing jobs; and an 11% reduction in Retail jobs; and

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WHEREAS, Southeast Alaska, including Haines, is enduring the complete cancellation of the summer cruise season, the impact to Haines of which is a loss of approximately 36,471 visitors from cruise ships as well as 52,926 visitors who come to Haines from Skagway via the Haines Skagway Fast Ferry (as reported in the 2018 Haines Economic Baseline Report); and

WHEREAS, according to the 2018 Haines Economic Baseline Report, visitors to Haines spend an average of \$111 per passenger per day, thus, the annual summer visitor spending in Haines exceeds \$10 million, including visitors arriving by cruise ship, ferry, yacht and air, all of which have seen catastrophic declines due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, though the fishing season has not yet concluded, reports from the Commercial Fishing Fleet indicate a dismal year for salmon returns in the region, along with a significant drop in the prices paid to fishermen by processors; and

WHEREAS, the 2020 Southeast Alaska Salmon season has seen some of the lowest harvest numbers since statehood; and

WHEREAS, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Salmon Fishery report, the region's common property chum salmon harvest was poor with fewer than 800,000 chum salmon harvested, reporting the poorest harvest level since 1983; and

WHEREAS, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Salmon Fishery report, the 2020 pink salmon harvest was very poor with fewer than 5 million fish harvested, reporting the poorest harvest level since 1976; and

WHEREAS, gillnet fisheries are ongoing, the preliminary harvest information estimates are 70-80% below the 10-year average and 60-80% below last season; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Pandemic and related economic impacts are expected to continue for the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, poor regional salmon returns suggest the fishing season could be worse than 2016 when a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the Pink Salmon fishery was issued.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Haines Borough Assembly, by this resolution hereby:

Section 1. An Economic Disaster is hereby declared in the Haines Borough due to COVID-19 and Poor Regional Returns of All Salmon Species.

Section 2. The Haines Borough Assembly urges the State of Alaska and United States Secretary of Commerce to issue two Economic Disaster Declarations:

A) 2020 Statewide Tourism Disaster resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic; and

B) 2020 Southeast Alaska Salmon Fisheries Disaster resulting from poor returns and harvests of all salmon species.

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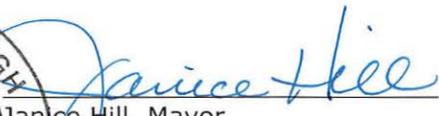
Section 3. This resolution and Economic Disaster Declaration take effect immediately upon passage and approval.

Adopted by a duly-constituted quorum of the Haines Borough Assembly on this 8th day of September, 2020.

Attest:


Alekka Fullerton, CMC, Borough Clerk




Janice Hill, Mayor