

Strengthening **ALASKA FISHERIES**

Dear Alaskan,

Conserving and enhancing Alaska's fisheries—subsistence, recreational, and commercial—requires a multifaceted strategy and real results, not one-off solutions. Our fisheries underpin Alaska's economy and culture, and touch Alaskans' daily life. This is why having strong, healthy fisheries is a top priority for me in the U.S. Senate.

As your Senator, and a senior member of the Senate Commerce Committee and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard, Maritime, and Fisheries, my team and I work every day to ensure that our fisheries are healthy and abundant for all Alaskans. There is more work to do, but we have made progress toward our shared goal: healthy, strong fisheries for Alaska's fishermen, and rural and coastal communities.

Building on that commitment, we are working together to take on some big challenges that safeguard the future of Alaska, outlined in the sections below.

Through my capacity as a Senator, I've worked hard to ensure fishermen and community voices are heard. Thank you for all you do to make our fisheries what it is today. Strengthening rural and coastal communities; providing abundant harvest opportunities for all Alaska's commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishermen; building the Alaska brand; and ensuring our fresh, wild Alaska seafood remains plentiful and strong on the domestic and international stage are goals we all share.


U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan



Building on that momentum, in 2020, my *Save Our Seas (SOS) Act 2.0* was signed into law. SOS 2.0 boosted U.S. efforts internationally including: marine debris prevention and response, bolstering infrastructure to combat marine debris, and establishing a Marine Debris Foundation, headquartered in Juneau. In December 2025, my *Save Our Seas 2.0 Amendments Act* was signed into law. This legislation updates the administration of the Marine Debris Foundation and the Marine Debris Program and requires the Foundation to develop best practices for conducting outreach to Indian Tribes. In November 2025, the Senate unanimously passed my bill, the *Save Our Seas 2.0 Marine Debris Infrastructure Programs Reauthorization Act*, which reauthorizes four Environmental Protection Agency grant programs that combat plastic waste and microplastics. My Save Our Seas bills are collectively considered the most comprehensive laws ever enacted by Congress to clean up our oceans and help keep our fisheries healthy.

Supporting Science: Fisheries surveys and ocean observation data are critical to supporting sustainable fisheries, conservation, and marine ecosystems. Science informs the decisions we make today and the stewardship we leave for generations to come. This work depends on adequate funding, collaboration, rigor, and the dedication of people across Alaska and the U.S. As your Senator, I have focused on combatting harmful algal blooms, ocean acidification, supporting the Alaska Sea Life Center, and funding robust scientific research and ocean monitoring, including:

- Securing over \$100 million for NOAA's ocean acidification research, mitigation, and monitoring programs since 2015. Funding support for these programs has doubled from \$8.5 million in 2015 to \$17 million in 2026.
- Supporting the Alaska Ocean Observation System, including cosponsoring the *Coordinated Ocean Monitoring and Research Act*, which was passed into law in 2020, reauthorizes and modernizes the nation's Integrated Ocean Observation System.
- Ensuring funding is prioritized and maintained for fisheries data collection, surveys, and assessments.
- Passing into law my *North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) Enhancement Act* in 2025, which strengthens the NPRB's financial footing and adds an Alaska Native board member to ensure that all Alaskans' voices have a seat at the table.



Keeping Our Oceans Clean & Healthy

Save Our Seas Act and Save Our Seas Act 2.0: According to NOAA, roughly 1.4 billion pounds of trash enter the oceans each year, posing a major threat to Alaska's vast coastline and marine ecosystems. In late 2018, President Trump signed my *Save Our Seas (SOS) Act*, legislation I introduced reauthorizing NOAA's Marine Debris Program, supporting state clean-up efforts, and directing the U.S. to engage with nations responsible for the majority of ocean debris.

- Passing through the Senate, my *Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments (HABHRCA) Act of 2025*, which reauthorizes and expands harmful algal bloom monitoring, forecasting, prevention, mitigation, and eradication of HABs and hypoxia by NOAA and EPA.



Alaska Salmon Crisis Response: Research, Funding, and International Cooperation

Alaska Salmon Task Force: Alaska salmon are essential to many of our communities' survival and to our Indigenous communities' way of life. In response to unprecedented variability in salmon returns, I introduced my comprehensive *Alaska Salmon Research Task Force Act*, which was signed into law in December 2022. This bill established a Task Force comprised of the best scientific minds and Indigenous leaders in Alaska, as well as a working group focused specifically on the devastating salmon returns in the Yukon-Kuskokwim region. In 2024, the Task Force published their final report, that identified applied research needs and policy recommendations that would help inform and address negative influences on Alaska salmon productivity. With this collaborative approach from some of the top fisheries experts throughout Alaska, we are focused on federal funding, policies, and continued research to address the significant salmon run declines throughout Alaska.

Critical Funding to Support Salmon Management and Bycatch Reduction: Every year, I strongly advocate for funding to support NOAA Fisheries programs that provide management and conservation of marine resources and habitats, including fish stocks, such as:

- Pacific Salmon Treaty supporting our domestic commitments and international obligations;
- Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund to support salmon conservation;
- Regional Fishery Management Councils and the important work they do to support fisheries management, conservation, and bycatch reduction;
- Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP) to support innovative fishing gear and technologies to reduce bycatch; and
- Electronic Monitoring to inform and improve fisheries management.

Fisheries Disasters: My first priority is for Alaskans to have the opportunity to fish, however, when a fishery disaster occurs, I have repeatedly stepped in to secure hundreds of millions of dollars for Alaska's fishermen, and coastal and Interior Alaska communities. Historically this process has moved at an unacceptably slow pace, regularly taking several years to get disaster funds to affected Alaskans and regions of our state. So in 2022, I helped pass the *Fishery Resource Disasters Improvement Act* and, in 2025, the *Fishery Improvement to Streamline untimely regulatory Hurdles post Emergency Situation (FISHES) Act*. Together, these bills, which became law, establish clear timelines for the Department of Commerce and the Office

of Management and Budget to efficiently navigate the disaster process, ensuring timely relief, and, for the first time, allowing fishery disasters that have a negative subsistence impact to qualify for a disaster declaration.

Transboundary Mining Issues: In 2018, I traveled to Ottawa to press senior Canadian cabinet officials on the threat transboundary mines pose to Southeast salmon fisheries. Later that year, the government of British Columbia began taking steps to clean up and close the Tulsequah Chief Mine 40 miles northeast of Juneau. We continue to push state, federal, Canadian, and provincial stakeholders to build a broad coalition on this issue based on our collective interests. Most recently, I pressed Prime Minister Carney of Canada to ensure Alaskan voices are heard on Canadian transboundary mines.



Focus on Reducing Bycatch

Since the release of the Alaska Salmon Research Task Force report, we are still witnessing extreme variability in the abundances of salmon, halibut, and crab species. The Task Force report identified "marine harvests and bycatch" as one of seven potential impacts hindering salmon productivity, with emphasis on addressing these.

To help strengthen fisheries management and reduce bycatch in Alaska's fisheries I introduced the *Bycatch Reduction Act* in 2025, the most comprehensive approach to reducing bycatch ever introduced in Congress. The legislation builds upon my *Alaska Salmon Research Task Force Act* and would enhance marine environmental data collection in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and the Gulf of Alaska for real time accountability. It prioritizes the development and deployment of technologies that support scientific research, and aims to reduce and avoid bycatch through new innovative methodologies and protect marine seafloor habitats.

Since its introduction, the *Bycatch Reduction Act* has been strengthened to broaden Alaskan representation and technical expertise on the Bycatch Reduction Task Force; enhance transparency, accountability, and public participation in the NPFMC process; establish enforceable monitoring and gear performance standards for pelagic and bottom trawl fisheries to reduce seafloor contact impacts and unintended fishing mortality; require salmon excluders in pelagic trawl fisheries; expand funding support for gear and technologies that reduce bycatch and seafloor contact; and prevent imports of foreign seafood harvested under standards weaker than those required under the *Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act*.

I am committed to continuing my focus on advocacy to reduce bycatch. For example, at a recent North Pacific Fisheries Management Council meeting I emphasized the importance of taking final action that conserves and rebuilds Alaska's chum salmon populations to protect the people and communities that depend on this species. As a result of our advocacy, the Council established a Western Alaska chum salmon bycatch limit. Although this decision was not perfect, it is a meaningful first step.

Every year, I strongly advocate for funding to support NOAA's Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP) to support innovative fishing gear and technologies to reduce bycatch.



Innovative Legislation and Actions to Protect and Defend Commercial, Recreational, Charter, and Subsistence Halibut Fishermen

Addressing Halibut Bycatch and Management: In 2024, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) limited halibut bycatch based on recent halibut abundances, which had strong opposition, and prompted a lawsuit from the groundfish trawl "Amendment 80" fleet challenging this new rule. I opposed this lawsuit and led the filing of an amicus brief in the U.S. District Court for Alaska in support of Alaska's halibut fishermen. My advocacy and court filing helped our Alaskan halibut fisheries to win the case against the Amendment 80 trawl fleet.

Additionally, in January 2026, my team and I strongly advocated with the NOAA Administrator raising strong concern on a proposal from a Washington State trade association that sought to reduce Alaska's unguided recreational bag limit at the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC). Our advocacy, including a detailed letter on this issue, resulted in the IPHC properly deferring the review of this proposal. The daily bag limit for unguided recreational fishermen in Alaska will remain at two halibut.

I remain in constant contact with senior Administration Officials such as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Fisheries and the Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs. At my request, they have attended the IPHC annual meeting and negotiations for the last couple of years. Their attendance has been critical in strengthening the U.S. and Alaska's interests in the challenging negotiations needed to support our halibut fishermen and communities. In January 2026, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Fisheries successfully negotiated with the Canadians to reduce their share of the halibut harvest. I have also been a strong advocate for adequate funding for the IPHC, and its important surveys, through the annual appropriations process.

Recreational Quota Entity: In December 2022, my bill to allow for the collection of fees from charter vessel anglers to support the Recreational Quota Entity (RQE) program was signed into law. This bill, an innovative concept developed by our halibut charter captains, creates a mechanism through which our charter halibut sector can increase their quota and provide for stability and economic growth.



Combating Global Bad Actors—Especially Russia & China—Whose Trawl Fleets Destroy High Seas Fish Stocks, Unfairly Compete, and Hurt Alaska Fishermen and Communities

Shutting off Markets to Russian and Chinese "Communist" Fish: Since 2014, Russia has banned U.S. seafood from its markets, while Russia continued to dump massive quantities of their lower quality seafood into the United States duty-free. This flooded both the U.S. and global markets with cheap, unsustainable "communist" fish, pushing out U.S. and Alaska seafood products. After Democrat U.S. Senators continued to block my legislation to ban Russian seafood into U.S. markets, I successfully led the effort to secure an Executive Order banning Russian seafood in the U.S. in 2022, and in 2023 we were finally able to close a loophole that was allowing Russian seafood access when reprocessed in other countries, like China. I worked relentlessly for years to fix this unfair, non-reciprocal seafood trade imbalance, delivering a blow to the authoritarian regimes in Russia and China.

I remain committed to ensuring these import prohibitions remain in place. Unfortunately, Russia continues to flood global seafood markets, creating a surplus of seafood that is impacting exports and fish prices in Alaska.

I have successfully worked to ensure that our allies also sanction unsustainable Russian fishing practices by enhancing policies across the Group of Seven (G7) nations, and have seen success in increased sanctions on Russian seafood in the EU and a ban on Russian products in Canada. In 2016 I authored a provision, signed into law requiring—for the first time—fisheries to be a principal negotiating objective for all future U.S. trade agreements with foreign countries. I have been able to secure language in the annual Agriculture Appropriations bill, prohibiting the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from procuring seafood from China for use in federal nutrition programs. I have also successfully targeted prohibiting the importation of unsustainable Chinese trawl-fleet fish.

And, in December 2025, the *National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)* for Fiscal Year 2026 was signed into law and included my bill to prohibit seafood that originates or is processed in China to be purchased and sold in commissaries or on U.S. military bases.

Fighting Foreign Illegal Seafood Harvests: I have successfully passed legislation that targets Russian, and especially Chinese, Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing practices across the world which ravage global fish stocks. One of the first bills I helped pass in the Senate was the *Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Enforcement Act*, signed into law in 2015. This bill denied IUU vessels

from landing the illicit catches in ports, increased international IUU coordination, and strengthened Coast Guard and Commerce Department IUU enforcement.

Building on that law, I authored the *Fighting Foreign Illegal Seafood Harvest (FISH) Act*, which would combat IUU fishing by blacklisting offending foreign vessels from U.S. ports and waters, bolstering the U.S. Coast Guard's inspection and enforcement capabilities, and advancing international and bilateral negotiations to achieve enforceable agreements against IUU fishing. In March, the Senate passed my bipartisan FISH Act.



A Whole-of-Government Approach to Support Alaska's Fishermen, and Rural & Coastal Communities

Alaska's freshwater and marine resources are incredibly complex, and it is critical that the entire federal government work with us and make the long-term viability of Alaska's fishermen and communities a priority through a whole-of-government approach.

At my urging last year, President Trump announced the Executive Order (EO), "Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness." This EO provides several direct pathways to support Alaska's fisheries and the U.S. seafood supply chain.

Alaska Seafood Roundtables: In May 2024, I organized an Alaska Seafood Roundtable with former U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo, and other senior federal officials, to discuss the global seafood market crisis with Alaska fishing and community leaders. In September 2025, I organized another Alaska Seafood Roundtable with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, and other senior federal officials to continue the discussions from the first roundtable. Both roundtables are a critical step to continue tackling Alaska's seafood priorities and to address the global seafood market crisis, including charting a path forward with strategies for implementing the Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness EO and addressing the health of our fisheries.

American Fisheries Advisory Committee Act: In 2022, my *American Fisheries Advisory Committee Act* was signed into law. This legislation empowers fisherman across Alaska and the nation to oversee an important NOAA grant program that funds research, marketing, and product development.

Young Fishermen's Development Act: Many challenges face the next generation trying to enter Alaska's fisheries, contributing to a shift in demographics for commercial fishermen. In 2021, my *Young Fishermen's Development Act* was signed into law to mitigate these hurdles by providing grant funds for regional training opportunities and apprenticeship

programs, and I have worked hard to ensure funding for this program to safeguard its success.

USDA Office of Seafood: In April 2026, I joined the Commerce Secretary and Agriculture Secretary to announce the creation of a new USDA Office of Seafood. After years of advocacy for an office, I secured \$500,000 in the FY 2026 Agriculture Appropriations bill to establish a Seafood Industry Liaison within the USDA. This Office of Seafood announcement aligns with my previously introduced legislation, the National Seafood Supply Act, to better coordinate seafood policies across the USDA and ensure fishermen have access to the same programs available to American farmers, including loans, trade adjustment assistance, and risk management tools.

Protecting Alaska's Fisherman from Frivolous Lawsuits: After a radical Washington State environmental group filed a lawsuit to shut down Southeast's small-scale, hook and line troll salmon fishery, I responded by authoring multiple court filings to intervene in this lawsuit. The result of our efforts was that the courts ruled in favor of Alaska's hard-working fishing families. We have been successful in keeping this small boat fishery open and operating during the summers, despite continued attacks by far-left Lower 48 groups who are trying to shut this fishery down.