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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF ALASKA

UNITED COOK INLET DRIFT  
ASSOCIATION, et al.,  
Plaintiffs,

vs.

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES  
SERVICE, et al.  
Defendants.

WES HUMBYRD, et al.,  
Plaintiffs,

vs.

GINA RAIMONDO, et al.,  
Defendants.

Case No. 3:21-cv-00255-JMK  
3:21-cv-00247-JMK  
CONSOLIDATED

**DECLARATION OF ROBERT WOLFE**

I, ROBERT WOLFE, declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 years. The facts set forth in this declaration are based upon my personal knowledge and, if called as a witness, I could and would competently testify thereto under oath.

2. I have worked in the Cook Inlet commercial salmon industry for 42 years, starting as a fish processor in 1980 and, by 1987, working my way up to owning my own boat and permit. Seven years ago, I started a retail business to sell my fish directly to consumers. On average, I earn 50% of my income fishing in Cook Inlet for salmon, predominantly in federal waters.

3. I am aware of the rule issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service: *Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Cook Inlet Salmon; Amendment 14*, 86 Fed. Reg. 60,568 (Nov. 3, 2021) (“Rule”). This Rule implements Amendment 14 to the Salmon Fishery Management Plan, which regulates salmon fishing in federal waters off the coast of Alaska. Under this Rule, the commercial salmon fishery in Cook Inlet’s federal waters have been permanently closed.

4. The closure will have a devastating effect on my livelihood.

5. The federal waters are located in the middle of Cook Inlet. As a result, I will be forced to fish in nearshore state waters. Salmon in nearshore waters are not spread out evenly but rather congregate near the river mouths into which they migrate. I will therefore have to travel an additional 8 to 10

hours per trip to arrive at a viable fishing site. If tides are unfavorable, I may be required to drive to state waters the day before I fish. The Rule will therefore increase my operating costs, impose additional travel time, decrease fishing opportunities, and significantly reduce my catch.

6. Further, closing the commercial salmon fishery in Cook Inlet's federal waters will negatively affect the quality of my catch. In my experience, salmon in the open federal waters are fattier and of higher quality in texture, firmness, and color compared to nearshore salmon whose body compositions have changed as they begin to migrate upriver. The catch in state waters is therefore expected to be less competitive and sell at a lower price at market.

7. Closing the commercial salmon fishery in Cook Inlet's federal waters will significantly curtail the volume of my catch. State waters extend only three nautical miles from shore, and much of that space is already taken up by other fishermen. As a result, I will be left to fish in an extremely narrow band of water, significantly limiting the volume of possible catch compared with fishing in the open federal waters.

8. To catch salmon, I use drift gillnets, an efficient and economical method of fishing. But the difficulties and dangers of drift gillnet fishing in state waters will be greater than in open federal waters. Successful drift gillnet fishing requires significant space in which to spread out the gillnet. As a result, crowding the entire commercial salmon fishing fleet into the narrow band of

state waters will require all fishermen, myself included, to constantly maneuver their vessels and gear to avoid sand bars, rocks, and collisions and interference with other fishermen. These hazards of confining me to state waters—made worse by Cook Inlet’s large tidal fluctuations—will increase the likelihood of damage to my fishing gear and vessels.

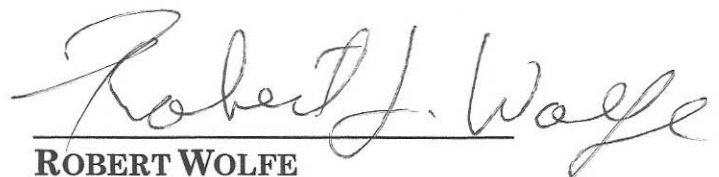
9. The combination of increased costs, decreased catch volume and quality, and higher risks of damage and injury will likely put me out of business, end my decades-long career fishing for salmon, and significantly decrease my income.

10. The Rule also reduces the value of my fishing assets, including my transferable fishing permits, vessels, and gear.

\* \* \*

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 3 day of February, 2022, at Girdwood, Alaska.

  
ROBERT WOLFE