



*Wild, Natural & Sustainable®*

November 2017

Dear ASMI Team,

Welcome to ASMI's annual All Hands Meeting. The year since we last all met has been a challenging one for ASMI. The State of Alaska budget crisis continues to impact ASMI both in terms of funding and political pressure. The loss of many long-serving staff members, as well as natural attrition, brought many new faces to ASMI. To say it's a time of transition for the organization would be an understatement.

On the industry side, while certain market conditions continue to challenge us, there are more reasons to be optimistic than we've had in a while. Alaska salmon experienced a banner year, with initial ex-vessel value estimates coming in at almost 67% higher than 2016, marking the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest season in 40 years, both in terms of volume and value. Market conditions and harvest prospects for most Alaska species are either stable or improving compared to the past couple years. Alaska pollock remains an industry-wide challenge, but even there we see reason for cautious optimism.

Despite the challenges within the State of Alaska, our industry remains a major bright spot that should make all of us proud. The seafood industry directly employs more workers than any other industry in Alaska and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest overall job-creator in the state after the oil and visitor industries. Seafood remains the economic foundation of many rural communities. Our industry catches and processes enough seafood each year to feed everybody in the world at least one serving of Alaska seafood, or one serving a day for every American for more than a month.

Despite the transitions at ASMI, we have a great portfolio of work from throughout the year to share with you this All Hands. The amount, quality, and creativity of the work conducted impresses me. Our program accomplishments would be significant under normal circumstances, but given the challenges we've faced I believe they are even more so. That's a strong credit to our hardworking contractors, our staff, and the "all hands on deck" attitude everyone has applied toward continuing to do our best work promoting the Alaska Seafood brand.

I'd like to close with a huge thank you to you, our board, committees, industry, legislators, and guests for spending this week with us in Anchorage. You all have busy schedules so it's meaningful that you volunteer your time and energy to help improve our programs for the greater good of the Alaska industry. We look forward to sharing our accomplishments with you and welcome your strategic guidance as we forge a path forward.

~Alexa