



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

Communications Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 11th, 2025

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Alaska Time

Virtual Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES (on 11/07/2025)

Meeting Link: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/86914553202>

Meeting ID: 869 1455 3202

Call In Number: +12532050468

Summary:

Key Program Highlights (FY25)

- **Pink Salmon Campaign (“Pink Package”)** launching October – reels, recipes, and harvester videos. Strong committee support.
- **Fishermen Outreach** – preseason packets, spokesperson list, town halls, and summit participation.
- **Partnerships** – Collaboration with BBRSDA, Copper River/Prince William Sound, Wild Alaska Sole Association, GAPP/APFA, hatcheries, and tourism/cruise sector.
- **Bycatch Portal** – In development with ADF&G.
- **Seafood Sustains Alaska Campaign** – Expanded to retail and food service.
- **Crisis Comms** – Prepared on salmon harvest, ESA listing, and halibut.
- **Media Engagement** – FAM trip in Seward with chefs/influencers; strong media coverage.

Budget Update (FY26)

- **Cuts over \$1M** across programs:
 - \$100k from Communications
 - \$200k from Consumer PR
 - Reductions in ads, swag, travel.
- Team/staff resources maintained.

Consumer PR (Edelman)

- **FY25 Results:**
 - 38 influencer placements, 78k engagements, 5.51M impressions.
 - **Food & Wine** – 14-page feature.
 - Lent season earned media +24%.
 - IG growth: +11% followers, 17.7M impressions.
- **FY26 Plan:**
 - Target Millennials/Gen Z, Gen X/Boomers, food service/retail.
 - Themes: Culinary, sustainability, health/wellness.
 - Seasonal activations (Back to School, Holidays, Mindful Eating, Summer Grilling).
 - Influencer focus: Family meals, hosting, grilling.

Committee Priorities & Concerns

- Support for **Seafood Sustains Alaska** campaign despite tight budgets.
- Calls for stronger **health messaging** (diabetes, inflammation, omega-3s).
- Expand presence at **Alaska State Fair** and better connect with **direct marketers**.
- Address **counterfeit fish/traceability** concerns.
- Promote **fact sheets** (e.g., herring, chalky halibut) and ensure accessibility.
- Strong support for **cruise program** visibility.
- Interest in **mariculture** as future discussion area.

Next Steps

- **All Hands on Deck:** Nov 5–8, 2025 (Anchorage, AK). Focus on improving committee orientation for new members.
- Continue outreach to direct marketers and harvesters.
- Maintain visibility despite budget cuts by leveraging partnerships and high-value programs.

Decisions:

- **Chair:** Ford Ward

- **Vice Chair:** Welch

Full Minutes:

- I. Call to Order
Shannon Ford Ward called the meeting to order.
- II. Roll Call
Khrystl Brouillette did roll call.
- III. ASMI Antitrust Statement
Ford Ward read the ASMI Antitrust Statement.
- IV. Approval of Agenda
Tracy Welch moved to approve agenda, Cassandra Squibb seconded. No Objections, all voted in favor. Agenda approved
- V. Approval of Previous Minutes
 - A. May 1, 2025, Communications Committee meeting
Welch moved to approve minutes, Jessie Keplinger seconded. No discussion and all vote in favor, with the exception of Christa Hoover who abstained because she was not present at that meeting.
- VI. Public Comment
No members of the public were present.
- VII. Committee Member Introductions
Round robin introductions from committee members
Ford Ward – Harvester, business owner, on committee for 3 years
Keplinger – AGS in Juneau, on committee for 5 years
Squibb – Copper River seafoods in Anchorage, 3rd term on committee.
Nicole Kimball – North Pacific Seafood Processor Association, third term on committee
Julianne Curry – Harvester based in Kodiak, third term on committee.
Welch – UFA executive director, second year on committee
Everette Anderson – Bristol Bay Native Corporation, third term on committee
Hoover – Copper River Marketing Association.
- VIII. Communications Program
 - A. FY25 Brief Recap
Program highlights
Greg Smith, staff, and contractors present updates on projects and budget.
The team discussed their summer content production efforts, highlighting a major pink salmon marketing campaign featuring 6 culinary reels, 11 consumer recipes, and various harvester videos that will launch in October. Kate Constenstein, Rising Tide Communications, shared that Pink Package is designed so show moments in meals, show how simple an intuitive cooking with pink salmon can be, and to encourage people to go for what's easy. Curry and Ford Ward both expressed excitement and support around the Pink Package campaign. And commended RTC's/ASMI's work on the campaign so far.

They reviewed their fleet fishermen outreach initiatives, including sending preseason packets to processors and building a harvester spokesperson list, while also noting upcoming town hall meetings and young fishermen summit participation. Welch volunteered to help share event information when needed.

The team also covered industry alignment efforts with various organizations and other regional marketing organizations like BBRSDA, Copper River/Prince William Sound Marketing Association, Wild Alaska Sole Association, GAPP/APFA, and hatchery association. Collaborative work with the domestic team created tourism partnerships with ATIA and the cruise sector. Also working with ADF&G to develop a bycatch portal.

Seafood Sustains Alaska has entered a food service and retail phase to highlight seafood offerings in state via a window clinging to purveyors.

With support from Edelman, crisis comms and messaging support are being prepared around key issues like salmon harvest, cean's documentary, salmon ESA listing, and halibut.

Smith also reported on successful media visits to Alaska, including a fam trip in Seward that hosted food influencers and chefs to showcase Alaska seafood.

Kimball asked if there was any effort around creating and distributing a list of where to get Alaska Seafood in Alaska.

B. FY26 Update

Smith presented revised budget numbers for FY26, noting significant cuts of over \$1 million across programs, including a \$100,000 cut to Communications and a \$200,000 reduction to Consumer PR budget. Budget was preserved to maintain a strong team and continue with asset acquisition, with cuts to advertising (specifically SSA digital ads, fishalaska, instate publications), swag, and travel.

Welch noted the personal services line has increased substantially since 2022 and wanted to know why. Smith to research – possibly inflated due to addition of new position, or due to scheduled salary increases set by the legislature.

IX. Consumer PR Plan, Edelman

A. FY25 Campaign Recap

Elizabeth Mulligan, Edelman, presented a review of FY25 PR efforts, highlighting successful influencer campaigns, social media engagement, and earned media coverage including a 14-page feature in Food & Wine magazine.

Influencer partnerships delivered high engagement at scale, yielding 38 placements, 78k engagements, 5.51 M impressions, and a 3% engagement rate. A shift to creator-led content created engaging, community focused content which fueled social success - 7% engagement rate, 104k engagements, 17.7m impressions, 11% increase in follower growth on IG. Earned media coverage drove reach expansion, especially during the Lent season with a 24% increase. A 14-page spread in Food & Wine reads like a love story to Alaska seafood and was an outcome of a previous inbound mission. Trade media is still important with influential stakeholders with 12 domestic placements, 8 coordinated interviews, 729k impressions, and 3 lent placements. This year's FAM trip drove social coverage, yielding 78 social posts, 2.9M reach, and 24 placements.

B. FY26 Campaigns preview

Mulligan outlined plans for FY26, focusing on three target segments: adventurous seafood seekers (millennials/Gen Z), tradition-rooted enthusiasts (Gen X/Boomers), and food service/retail partners. Plan highlights:

- *Niche to next gen – tapping millennial and gen z demand for sustainable seafood: eat over 50% of s seafood and care about sustainability and new food.*
- *Focus – Build awareness, Amplify relevance, Drive Advantage, Guide Behavior*
- *Activation Framework - AskforAlaska. Planned story moments, reactive cultural moments, retail and food service engagement.*
- *Planned cultural moments – Q1 Back to School, Q2 Holiday Season Q3 Mindful Eating Season Q4 Summer Grilling*
- *Social presence 3 pillars – culinary, origin/sustainability, health/wellness. And also join in on cultural conversation.*
- *Influencer Archetypes – Family Meal Architect, Hostess with the Mostest, Elevated Griller*
- *Engaging media across outlets*

Ford Ward asked about the post that appeared as ASMI was promoting farmed salmon. Mulligan explained that this was part of a three-part series where the headline was improperly shared.

Squib asked if Omega-3s resonate with a younger audience. Mulligan explained that they do, especially with young/new parents.

- X. Possible break
10-minute break
- XI. Committee Roundtable

Committee members discuss this question: Has anything happened since the last Communications Committee meeting that the Comms Program and Consumer PR contractors need to be thinking or aware of to help us better achieve our strategic objectives?

Curry – 1.) Seafood Sustains Alaska campaign is a priority. It is really important right now to keep communicating with Alaskans about the value of ASMI, even with a tight budget.

2.) Type 2 diabetes and insulin resistant diabetes are on the rise in the US, and AK Seafood health benefits can help control and reverse insulin resistance. Incorporate messaging around type II diabetes as it is trending.

3.) Continue focusing on how to keep reaching harvesters, and remind them what ASMI brings to the table, and where people can get Alaska Seafood in Alaska. I would love to see more Alaska Seafood presence at the State Fair -- legit one of the easiest ways to reach Alaskans.

Kimball – Echoes the need to support the Seafood Sustains Alaska Campaign.

ASMI swag at the Seafood Throwdown at the state fair was a success and need more for next year. Alaskans need to know where to get Alaska fish.

Social media feed filled with reducing inflammation trends – wondering how much of the population is seeing this content.

Try to tap into new groups that might be more into Alaska Seafood given the national administration, and get into the Midwest mindset.

Welch – Interested in a conversation about mariculture.

Ford Ward – An evergreen issue of how do you vet if a fish really came from where it says it does // how do we/should we combat the idea of counterfeit fish in the marketplace

Keplinger – Stick with the messages of Alaska Seafood as wild, natural, sustainable. Keep it simple and don't confuse people.

Supports the idea of ASMI connecting with fishermen while on the docks during asset acquisitions.

Squibb – Is there a time line for an English version of the herring fact sheet? There are lots of great fact sheets that perhaps people don't know about, like chalky halibut.

Kimball – Is halibut at crisis level?

Squibb – Probably not yet, but if there are talking points, it would be important to remind the industry that the exists and where to find them.

Ford Ward – Cruise Program was great way to showcase Alaska Seafood and create a positive association in people's minds. Great bang for the buck

{FYI – Brouillette is scheduled to be a cruise ship speaker in 2026 to help with expansion of cruise program, which is ran by Domestic}

Hoover – Agrees SSA should continue, instate PR is super important. Need Alaska to be on the industry's side; no more us vs them.

Welch – With reduced event sponsorships, UFA and AFDF sponsor symphony of seafood, the premier leg event in Juneau. This year, AFDF might go a different route and cut the Juneau event. There is industry interest to still do an industry sponsored event for the legislature to make sure we can tell our story in a relaxed setting.

Curry – Need to continue to expand communications with direct marketers. Very few direct marketers/processors know about ASMI and the resources we provide. Continue to chip away at the low hanging fruit and get to the direct marketers.

Ford Ward – has ASMI ever reached out/partnered with Sea Grant?

Smith – yes. And ASMI presents to their direct marketer class. We are listed on their resources page, we share their resources too. Also listed on ADFG page. Been to event in Bellingham before.

Hoover noted that DEC has a list of direct marketers.

Kimball noted that you can be listed as a resource on Sea Grant's FishBiz website and link direct to direct marketer materials.

- XII. *All Hands on Deck November 5-8, 2025, at the Hilton, Anchorage AK
Reminder for everyone to make their travel arrangements – look for an email from Heather.*

Curry noted that new committee orientation sometimes misses the mark – committee members want to know how to be a good committee member and would be helpful for that to be a focus.

Keplinger added that sometimes new committee members don't know what ASMI can do, so it would be helpful to get everyone oriented.

Squibb agreed that orientation is often too broad and would be improved by being tailored to ASMI process. She volunteered to sit in on the orientation meeting this year.

XIII. Old Business and Good of the Order

A. Communications Subcommittees

Committee had no further discussion or changes to subcommittee memo.

XIV. Chair and Vice-Chair Elections

Keplinger nominated Ford Ward as chair and Welch as vice chair. Squibb seconded. All voted in favor, and the motion passed. Ford Ward elected as chair and Welch elected as vice chair. This is effective immediately, but term will officially start at All Hands.

XV. Adjourn

Ford Ward adjourned the meeting.