



## Salmon Committee Meeting DRAFT Minutes

All Hands on Deck

December 3, 2024

2:30 – 5:00 PM AKST

Aft Deck (lobby level), Hotel Captain Cook, Anchorage  
[Held in-person and virtual]

**I. Chair Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 2:50pm**

**a. Roll Call & Introduction of guests**

Present:

- Michael Jackson (Chair)
- José Montero, Jr. (Vice Chair)
- Robert Gershberg
- Nicholas Dowie
- Alex Pihl
- Carleigh Hugh
- Matt Alward
- Sandy Souter
- Ted McDermott
- Amy Shaub
- Hayley Hoover
- Melanie Brown
- Adam Drouhard (Ex Officio)
- John Daly (Board Member)
- Steven Nast (virtual)

Also present were ASMI staff, other industry members, and members of the public.

**b. Approval of Draft Agenda**

Matt Alward made a motion to approve the draft agenda. Sandy Souter seconded the motion. None opposed, the motion passed.

**c. Approval of Draft Minutes from Nov 14, 2024**

Nicholas Dowie made a motion to approve the draft salmon committee minutes from the November 14, 2024 meeting. Hayley Hoover seconded the motion. None opposed, the motion passed.

**d. ASMI Antitrust Statement**

The ASMI Antitrust statement was read aloud by Melanie Brown in-person and made available online in the Zoom meeting chat.

**e. Chair Remarks**

Chair Jackson recognized the many challenges faced by the industry and urged committee members to provide actionable and reasonable recommendations for ASMI funding priorities. Jackson notes that we need to answer the species questions so that the Board and ASMI has direction.

f. **Vice Chair Remarks**

Vice Chair Montero, Jr. thanked the industry members and others involved and emphasized the importance of constructive feedback for the ASMI staff. Vice Chair Montero notes that he looks forward to the discussion.

g. **Public Comment**

No public comment.

h. **Old Business**

Vice Chair Montero asked for old business, and there were no items for discussion.

**II. New Business**

a. Salmon species updates by Committee members, roundtable:

- King update provided by Vice Chair Montero
  - Successfully integrated into the fresh market domestically
- Coho update provided by Vice Chair Montero
  - Most of this species goes into the frozen market
- Sockeye update provided by Ted McDermott
  - There are smaller fish sizes this season, which has caused a slower inventory turnover
  - The consumer has been getting used to smaller fillet sizes, and these have largely been accepted by the marketplace
  - Notes there is a higher percentage of softer fish coming out of this past season which opens opportunities for creativity to maintain quality
- Keta update provided by Vice Chair Montero
  - Reached 60% of projections in the last season
  - Gershberg notes that on the export and commodity sides, we are seeing a very strong Puget Sound run that is creating market confusion and is affecting market demand, and he notes there will be some carry-over from the Puget Sound run; something to be mindful of moving forward.
- Pink updated provided by Vice Chair Montero
  - Reached 50% of the projected harvest last season
  - Souter notes that the forecast is not out for this coming season, but we are expecting a large run and will require some marketing support for pink salmon

Roundtable key discussion points:

- Daly noted that primary processors will not have poundage to start 2025, but in the next few months there needs to be a focus on how we market these typically lower priced species and ensure that we have created market or consumer demand in advance of the harvesting season.
- Chair Jackson notes that there are challenges in messaging and marketing due to king salmon's Endangered Species Act listing.
- Group discussion about opportunities that exist to expand pink salmon into sushi, poke bowls, value-added and blended products.
- Importance of proactively marketing pink salmon ahead of anticipated high-volume seasons to ensure we are not in a reactive state when the harvest hits shelves and consumer spaces. Promoting product diversity and creative innovation will be valuable.

b. **Discussion and answers to [Board's Species Questions](#) for the Salmon Committee**

Discussion highlights and responses to the Board's Species questions are recorded on page 4 of these meeting minutes. Please double-click on the pdf to open the document fully.

c. **Vice Chair election**

Matt Alward made a motion to elect José Montero Jr as the Vice Chair. Chair Jackson seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

**III. Good of the Order**

Chair Jackson thanked the committee and staff for their passion and efforts on the salmon committee and in the industry. He appreciated their time and energy.

Souter noted that we were in a williwaw last year, and he highlighted the urgency of addressing the challenges facing the pink salmon industry. He noted that the pink salmon needs to get out of that storm and will do so through re-branding, imaging, and marketing opportunities.

**IV. Adjourn**

Chair Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Souter seconded the motion. None opposed, the motion passed, and the meeting concluded at 4:31pm.



**2024 ASMI All Hands on Deck**  
**ASMI Species Committee Questions**  
**SALMON**

- **What do your species need from ASMI to be immediately successful in the marketplace?**
- **What opportunities do you see for your species in international markets?**
  - Russia came through under forecast, creating greater opportunity for Alaska seafood; increase salmon promotions to capitalize on the gap left.
  - Target Southeast Asia, LATAM, MENAWA international markets.
  - Promote pinks into fresh counters in Europe to drive consumption.
  - Develop innovative products for international markets.
  - Educate consumers on the variety of applications for keta and pinks using ASMI materials and influencers (e.g., sushi, poke bowls, gravlax as sandwich fillings).
    - Appeal to Gen Z and Millennial consumers.
  - Leverage the tinned fish trend; collaborate with brands that feature appealing designs and organize pop-up activities.
  - Promote RFM certification.

**What opportunities do you see for your species in the US domestic market?**

- Integrate pink and keta into the influencer program; adjust promotions based on industry input and market demand.
- Capitalize on the more stable domestic marketplace amid international uncertainty.
- Educate consumers on the versatile applications of keta and pinks using ASMI materials and influencers.
- Analyze pollock's success in creating value-added products and apply these strategies to pinks.
- Develop product forms suitable for school lunch programs.