



Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI)
Domestic Marketing Committee Virtual Meeting
August 29, 2025
9:00 – 11:00 AM Alaska Time

DRAFT MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Chair Kendall Whitney called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM AKST.

II. Roll Call

- **Committee Members Present:** Kendall Whitney (Chair), Mike Cusack (Vice Chair), Thea Thomas, Pat Shanahan, Scott Sandvig, Greg Ness, Jeff Welbourn, John Daly, Lilani Dunn (Ex Officio), Ron Christianson (Ex Officio). Committee members not present: Steven Becic
- **Board Members Present:** Michael Erickson, Tomi Marsh, Richard Riggs
- **Also Present:** Sidney Riggs, Craig Morris
- **ASMI Staff & Contractors:** Megan Rider, Leah Krafft, Amy Dukes, Margie Sherman, Greg Smith, Tricia Sanguinetti, Mark Jones, Jann Dickerson

Chair Whitney read the ASMI Antitrust Statement.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve: 1st Thomas, 2nd Dunn. Motion carried.

IV. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve: 1st Shanahan, 2nd Thomas. Motion carried.

V. Public Comment

No public comment.

VI. Director's Remarks

Director Megan Rider thanked the committee and chair for their time. She noted that the late summer board meeting had concluded, with the main takeaway being that the Wild Alaska Pink Salmon push should be reassessed moving forward, and she encouraged more direct board direction.

She discussed the CAP meeting in Homer with representatives from Whole Foods, Seven & I Holdings, and other partners, highlighting their engagement and enthusiasm.

Rider also thanked Sidney Riggs for her service on the DMC, welcomed John Daly and Steve Becic, and recognized the newly appointed ASMI board members.

VII. Industry Update Roundtable

Salmon

- *Thomas*: Prince William Sound and Copper River harvests started late due to king salmon conservation concerns, affecting sockeye catches. Escapement goals were just met. PWS saw strong keta and pink returns (36–37 million), with decent prices. Coho outlook is strong.
- *Whitney*: Silvers are looking good.
- *Erickson*: Southeast coho catches are strong, fish quality is good, prices are firm, and product is moving quickly.
- *Daly*: The canned salmon market will be challenged, with 2025 pink salmon season expected to exacerbate low catch numbers and inventory defense.
- *Welbourn*: Frozen market prices rising in line with supply; concern about Russian products entering the U.S. falsely labeled as Alaskan. Encouraged diversification into value-added products.
- *Dunn*: Strong Bristol Bay season with larger, high-quality fish. Restaurants (especially in DC) being incentivized to choose sockeye over farmed with rebates. Growing wholesale interest and fleet–processor transparency noted.
- *Christianson*: Smoked salmon market challenged by farmed vs. sockeye price gap (\$2–\$4 difference). European tariff relief helps but doesn't affect Chilean supply. Retailers are still seeking cost neutrality.

Sablefish & Halibut

- *Whitney*: Strong demand for halibut, but poor availability. Sablefish are expected to increase in the fall harvest.
- *Ness*: Decreased quota affecting supply; competition from Eastern fisheries, though Alaska halibut holds firm on the West Coast.
- *Sandvig*: Sablefish markets are strong; Chilean sea bass is the main competitor, but tariffs give sablefish an advantage.

Cod

- *Sandvig*: Cod market is “red hot” with limited supply from Alaska. Concern about Norway farmed cod filling the demand gap.

Pollock

- *Cusack*: USDA bid success for pollock; strong block sales ahead of Lent. Surimi seafood is doing well thanks to ASMI promotions.

- *Welbourn*: U.S. surimi market growth could offset reduced pink salmon promotion. Fishing has been challenged by herring biomass, but bycatch avoidance efforts are working well.

Crab

- *Welbourn*: Crab markets are strong, with optimism for fall season and recovery after past collapse.

Flatfish

- *Shanahan*: Fleet losses and reduced harvest are impacting supply. Prices firming slightly. WASA increasing focus on domestic promotions and working with ASMI.
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VIII. Retail Update

Mark Jones presented an update on retail partnerships since last fall.

IX. Foodservice Update

Jann Dickerson presented a foodservice update for FY25.

X. CSI Update

Provided by Tricia Sanguinetti.

- *Welbourn*: Emphasized importance of reporting on the scale of fisheries under CSI oversight as a credibility metric (millions of metric tons).

XI. Inbound Missions Recap

Whole Foods Market and Sprouts Farmers Market inbound mission recap presented by Amy Dukes and Margie Sherman.

XII. Discussion

General discussion held.

XIII. Old Business & Good of the Order

- *Cusack*: Thanked ASMI staff and expressed appreciation for the committee's work.
 - *Welbourn*: Thanked staff and invited ASMI to bring requests for support.
 - *Dunn*: Thanked ASMI staff and Bristol Bay processors for their assistance in hosting trips.
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XIV. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Cusack, 2nd Welbourn. Meeting adjourned at 10:58 AM AKST.