



CENTRAL COUNCIL  
*Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska*  
Office of the President • Edward K. Thomas Building  
9097 Glacier Highway • Juneau, Alaska 99801

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CENTRAL COUNCIL OF TLINGIT & HAIDA INDIAN TRIBES OF ALASKA  
Eighty-Eighth Annual Tribal Assembly  
April 19-21, 2023  
Juneau, Alaska

Resolution TA 23-23

Title: Opposition to the Lawsuit by the Wild Fish Conservancy Against the National Marine Fisheries Service

By: Ketchikan Tlingit & Haida Community Council

WHEREAS, the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (Tlingit & Haida) is a federally recognized tribe with more than 35,000 citizens; and

WHEREAS, the tribal citizens of Tlingit & Haida have utilized king salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) for traditional practices for generations and king salmon is one of the most sought out after traditional foods in the Indigenous community; and

WHEREAS, Tlingit & Haida recognizes the ecological importance of king salmon in the waters of the north Pacific where kings are a major food source for many species, keep prey species in check, and provide many nutrients to freshwater ecosystems when they come back to spawn; and

WHEREAS, the Wild Fish Conservancy sued the National Marine Fisheries Service in order to seek protections for the Southern Resident Killer Whales, which population of killer whales is listed on the Endangered Species List, and such protections could include the closure of the Southeast Alaska troll fisheries; and

WHEREAS, while southern resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) are currently endangered, attributing that endangerment to the population of Alaskan origin king salmon is not supported by traditional ecological knowledge or western science; and

WHEREAS, there are a number of issues that face the southern resident killer whale population that should take precedence over the population of the Alaskan origin king salmon including infrastructure, changing climate conditions, overfishing and bycatch from Washington-based fisheries; and

WHEREAS, while it is not clear what a successful lawsuit will mean for the traditional harvesters of Alaska, Tlingit & Haida will not risk the livelihoods of its tribal citizens for a claim in a lawsuit that is not supported by traditional ecological knowledge or western science;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Eighty-Eighth Tribal Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska delegation convened April 19-21, 2023, hereby opposes the lawsuit filed by the Wild Fish Conservancy against the National Marine Fisheries Service seeking protections for the southern resident killer whales at the expense of Southeast Alaska;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Tlingit & Haida recognizes that the reduction of the population in killer whales impacts tribal culture and Tlingit & Haida supports all tribal nations in Alaska and Washington State.

ADOPTED this 19<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2023, by the Eighty-Eighth Tribal Assembly of the Central Council of Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska.

**CERTIFY**

  
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President Richard J. Peterson

**ATTEST**

  
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Tribal Secretary Jacqueline L. Pata