

Dear Members of the Copper River Marketing Association,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Copper River Marketing Association (CRMA) and to advocate for the continuation of the 1% tax levied on the commercial fishing fleet. This tax is not just an operational necessity; it is an investment in the future and prosperity for Copper River fishermen and processors, as well as the surrounding communities.

As we are all aware, the Copper River brand has become synonymous with high-quality, sustainable salmon. This reputation did not arise by chance; it is the result of dedicated, strategic marketing efforts spearheaded by CRMA over the years. The association has worked tirelessly to ensure that Copper River salmon products are recognized and valued both domestically and internationally, which in turn has benefited the entire commercial fishing fleet.

The marketing initiatives funded by the 1% tax have led to:

1. **Increased Brand Recognition:** CRMA's marketing campaigns have significantly raised the profile of Copper River seafood, making it a sought-after product in competitive markets. This increased demand translates directly into higher prices for our catch, benefiting every member of the fleet.
2. **Market Expansion:** Through targeted promotions, CRMA has successfully expanded the reach of Copper River products to new markets, ensuring that our seafood continues to command premium prices even as global competition intensifies.
3. **Sustainability Advocacy:** CRMA has been a strong voice in promoting sustainable fishing practices, which not only preserves our resources but also enhances the brand's appeal to environmentally conscious consumers.
4. **Economic Stability:** The association's efforts have provided a measure of economic stability to the fleet, ensuring that we can continue to operate profitably even in the face of market fluctuations and environmental challenges.

The recent call to abolish the Copper River Marketing Association is short-sighted and fails to acknowledge the long-term benefits that CRMA provides. Without the support and coordinated efforts of the association, we risk losing the market advantages that we have all worked so hard to achieve. This 1% tax is a small price to pay for the substantial returns we collectively enjoy.

In conclusion, I urge the commercial fishing fleet to recognize the immense value that CRMA brings to our industry. The association's marketing operations are critical to maintaining the Copper River brand's prestige and, by extension, the profitability and sustainability of our livelihoods. I stand firmly in support of CRMA and encourage our fleet to do the same by endorsing the continuation of the 1% tax.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ben Kirk

Fleet Manager

OBI Seafoods, Cordova Facility