

JOINT VISION STATEMENT

Sawitqatigiit / Qepghalgutkulluta / Ilakulluta caliukut /
Cuut calilgutkut / Usugilix awakun / People Working Together

*Between the Task Force on the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area
And the Bering Intergovernmental Tribal Advisory Council
On the Development of a Salmon Resilience Plan*

The Task Force on the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area (BTF) and the Bering Intergovernmental Tribal Advisory Council (BITAC),

Recalling Executive Order 13754 of December 9, 2016, which created the Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area (NBSCRA) and the BTF and which also envisioned the creation of the BITAC, as well as Executive Order 13990 of January 21, 2021, which reinstated the NBSCRA,

Reaffirming the policy of the United States set forth in Executive Order 13754 to confront the challenges of a changing Arctic by working to conserve Arctic biodiversity; to support and engage Alaska Native Tribes; to incorporate Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge into decisionmaking; to build a sustainable Arctic economy that relies on the highest safety and environmental standards, including adherence to national climate goals; and to enhance the resilience of the northern Bering Sea region by conserving the region's ecosystem, including those natural resources that provide important cultural and subsistence value and services to the people of the region,

Also reaffirming the commitment to achieve these goals in partnership between the United States Government and Indigenous communities; that joint efforts between the BTF and BITAC are consistent with the government-to-government relationship between the United States and Alaska Native Tribes; and that, in developing a Salmon Resilience Plan, there will need to be coordination with other relevant governmental and non-governmental entities,

Recognizing the crisis affecting communities in the Northern Bering Sea and adjacent interconnected regions including in the marine ecosystem and Western and Interior Alaska (hereinafter "these regions") resulting from long-term downward trends in salmon populations, which has grown acute in recent years,

Desiring to co-produce a Salmon Resilience Plan aimed at restoring, conserving, and protecting salmon populations; addressing the adverse consequences that the crisis is causing among all communities and user groups who depend on the salmon resource, as well as to the ecosystem itself, with the goals of ensuring long-term sustainability of the salmon resource and communities dependent on it in these regions, promoting climate adaptation, and maintaining the historical relationship between Tribes, salmon, and the ecosystem,

Agree to develop such a Salmon Resilience Plan in accordance with the following:

Problem Statement

Salmon are critical to Tribal communities in these regions. They are key to physical survival, though their importance extends far beyond calories. They are central to Tribal identity, economies, intergenerational relationships, social networks, knowledge transmission, cultural preservation, and many aspects of health and well-being. The traditional practices, knowledge, values, principles and ways of life of Tribes in these regions are intertwined with a sustainable, respectful relationship with salmon and the ecosystem. These regions have experienced a multi-decadal, multi-species set of salmon crises, which has become even more acute in recent years. This threatens everything mentioned above, from food security to health to social structure to cultural continuity. Salmon cannot be replaced. The BITAC and the BTF are committed to explore all steps necessary to identify and implement ways to restore, conserve, and protect the invaluable salmon resource.

Goals

- Restore, conserve, and protect ecosystem health and salmon populations throughout their entire life cycle, in these regions
- Address impacts to, and promote resilience of, Tribal communities in these regions stemming from the salmon crisis
- Promote food and natural resource security and sovereignty, particularly for Tribal communities in these regions
- Ensure the endurance and sustainability of salmon, communities dependent on them, and the relationships between Tribes, salmon, and the ecosystem
- Enhance co-management and co-stewardship of salmon and their ecosystems
- Develop policies and actions in furtherance of the goals set forth above

Principles

- Support for the co-production of policy, management, and knowledge related to salmon
- Recognition that subsistence salmon fishing is essential to Alaska Native physical, economic, traditional, and culture existence, and that subsistence is vital in the management of ecosystems relevant to salmon
- Decision-making related to salmon issues that is grounded in equitable and appropriate use and consideration of all relevant sources of knowledge, including Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge
- Management and policy related to salmon that are grounded in equity, justice, and inclusivity
- Management and policy that honor Tribal sovereignty and the trust relationship
- Management and policy that focus on sustainability, resilience, and well-being of – and respect for – ecosystems, salmon resources, and Tribal communities and their cultures

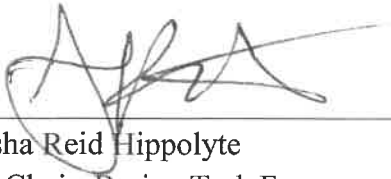
Substantive Elements

- Use of a whole-of-government approach that includes both Tribal and Federal governmental efforts being brought together to promote salmon resilience and community resilience. This approach will include all Federal departments and agencies with responsibility for matters relating to salmon resilience and community resilience
- Amelioration of issues created by divided governmental authorities and jurisdiction related to salmon
- Support for the development, advancement, and implementation of co-management and co-stewardship structures regarding salmon and their ecosystems (with a recognition of millennia of successful Tribal resource management and stewardship, and a need for co-management and co-stewardship to meet that standard)
- Measures aimed at strengthening the restoration, conservation, and protection of salmon, and community resilience, in these regions concerning:
 - Fisheries management
 - Climate change
 - Habitat conservation
 - Environmental protection
 - International engagement
 - Food security
 - Vessel traffic
 - Pollution
 - Economic support
 - Health and wellness
 - Disaster and emergency management response
 - Education
- Co-productive research planning, development, conduct, and application
- Integration of Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge in all salmon-related activities and decisions, including research
- Systematic integration of meaningful Tribal Consultation in all salmon-related activities and decisions, including research
- Policy, legislative, regulatory, and capacity changes to support and align with the goals, principles, and other substantive elements laid out herein (this includes funding for Tribes and Tribally authorized entities)
- Engagement of other entities in the development and implementation of the Salmon Resilience Plan in line with the goals, principles, other substantive elements, and timeline laid out herein, based on the BTF and BITAC working together in consensus determining the optimal ways to engage these entities in the process
- Development of benchmarks and an evaluation plan

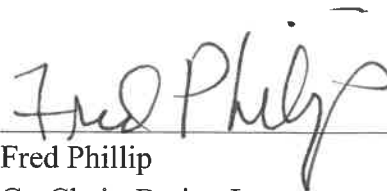
Timetable

An implementable Salmon Resilience Plan will be developed by the end of CY 2025. The elements of the plan will be implemented beyond that, beginning as early as CY 2026.

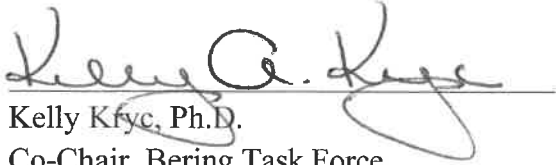
Signed on October 23, 2024, in Washington, D.C.



Tasha Reid Hippolyte
Co-Chair, Bering Task Force
Department of Homeland Security



Fred Phillip
Co-Chair, Bering Intergovernmental Tribal
Advisory Council



Kelly Kfyc, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, Bering Task Force
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration



Vivian Korthuis
Co-Chair, Bering Intergovernmental Tribal
Advisory Council



Raina Thiele
Co-Chair, Bering Task Force
Department of the Interior



Charlie Brown
Co-Chair, Bering Intergovernmental Tribal
Advisory Council