WE ARE THE BERING SEA

FIGHTING FOR ALASKA'S SMALL BOAT FISHERMEN

OVERVIEW

We are elevating Western Alaskans' voices into the conversation around trawling. Messages from this campaign are intended to balance the blanket, "anti-trawl" messages and instead, build broad understanding about what community-based fishing means to Alaska Native communities and Western Alaska villages, and how protecting the Bering Sea helps protect all of us: our culture, industries, economies, and Alaska way of life.

KEY MESSAGING

In order to take action, Americans must understand four main things:

1. Fishing Feeds Alaska: When Alaska's fishing communities thrive, Alaska thrives.

Small-boat fishermen and subsistence fishing traditions have put food on our tables, supported local jobs, and sustained rural economies for generations. Community-based fishing keeps the benefits of Alaska's fisheries in state and supports our families and villages, rather than Outside shareholders.

2. Fishing Is Our Way of Life: Protecting our fisheries protects who we are.

Fishing traditions have been passed down for generations. Closures and diminishing populations threaten not only food security, but our connection to our Native Heritage and ability to pass on our cultures to future generations.

3. Healthy Fisheries Mean Healthy Communities: A healthy Bering Sea benefits all of us.

Healthy oceans and thriving fishing communities go hand in hand. Salmon, crab, halibut, and other species sustain families, local economies, and entire ecosystems. Reducing wasteful fishing, protecting habitat, and ensuring sustainable fish populations are essential to the long-term future of Alaska's fisheries.

4. Alaska's Fisheries Need Alaska's Voices: Our waters and communities depend on it.

The people who depend on the Bering Sea deserve a defining voice in how our resources are managed. For more than 45 years, the Bering Sea Fishermen's Association has stood alongside Alaska fishermen and their families. Decisions about Alaska's fisheries must reflect the knowledge, experiences, and needs of the people whose lives are connected to the sea.

CALLS TO ACTION

Join us in demanding the North Pacific Fishery Management Council:

- **Gives equitable representation on Council seats**
- **Prioritizes the voices of communities which depend on these fisheries**
- **Commits to meaningful consultation with Alaska Native Tribes and rural fishing communities before making decisions that affect them.**

A link to the campaign website — We Are the Bering Sea — can be included in all shared content and contains a petition action form for people to sign.

wearetheberingsea.org
wearetheberingsea.org/media-toolkit/

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SOCIAL MEDIA

POSTING RECOMMENDATIONS

X Posting Strategies

- Post content in the style(s) of existing popular or relevant threads
- Tag relevant elected officials, journalists, influencers, and organizations concerned with this issue
- Schedule posts for the morning and early afternoon for higher visibility

Facebook Posting Strategies

- Can expand to post longer captions, or add links to full articles
- Share within local groups when possible and encourage followers to share
- For videos, upload directly instead of sharing YouTube links

Instagram Posting Strategies

- Try carousel posts and reels for dramatic visuals and storytelling
- Include polls and quizzes in Stories for engagement
- Pin key stories with action links to Highlights
- Do not include links in post copy, instead use bio links/Linktrees or include in bio
- Incorporate hashtags into post copy

HASHTAGS

Primary Hashtags

#WeAreTheBeringSea #BeringSeaFishermen

Secondary Hashtags

#BeringSea #AlaskaFishermen #SmallBoatFishermen #StopTrawling #StopBycatch #bearweek #welovebears #bearlovers

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SOCIAL GRAPHICS

You can download campaign social graphics and our video spot from our media toolkit page.

DOWNLOAD GRAPHICS & CAPTIONS

SAMPLE POST COPY

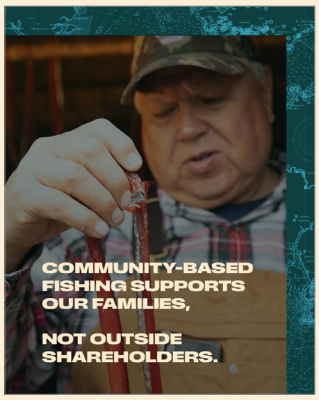


Post #1: More Than A Fish

In Alaska, salmon is more than what's on the dinner table.

For generations, salmon has provided food for families, sustained cultural traditions, supported local economies, brought communities together, and helped pass knowledge from elders to younger generations.

When salmon disappear, Alaska stands to lose far more than a fish. We risk losing the traditions, knowledge, and ways of life that have long connected Alaska's communities to these waters.



Post #2: Community-Based Fishing

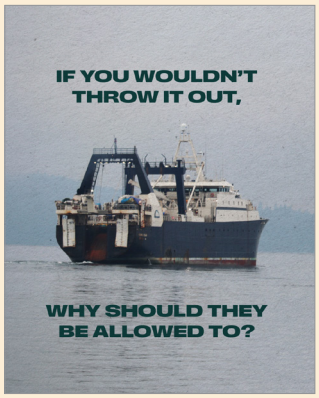
Today, 75% of trawling industry vessels are non-Alaskan owned. As a result, 71% of labor income and 62% of jobs leave the state.

Community-based fishing offers a different path: local boats, local knowledge, and more economic benefit staying in Alaska. When Alaska's fisheries support Alaska communities, families, coastal economies, and future generations all benefit.



Post #3: Feeding Families

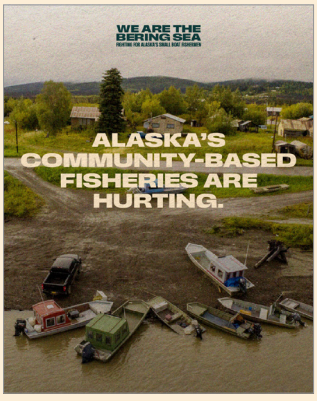
Since 2011, trawlers have discarded over 132,000 Chinook salmon and 615,000 chum salmon. That's equivalent to 18.4 million meals that could have filled freezers, fed families, and helped provide food security in communities across Alaska.



Post #4: Throw it Out

More than 9 million crabs caught, discarded, and wasted.

That's what happened aboard trawl vessels in the Bering Sea between 2017 and 2026. If we want healthy fisheries for the future, we can't treat what lives in the Bering Sea as expendable.



Post #5: In Decline

King salmon spawners in the Yukon and Kuskokwim regions have declined by more than 60–80% since the late 1990s. Herring, halibut, and crab have also faced significant decline, and are all important species to Alaska's coastal communities.

Yet trawlers are allowed to bycatch tens of thousands of king salmon and unlimited chum salmon each year. While trawlers waste, local Alaskans watch their fishing communities and future generations suffer.

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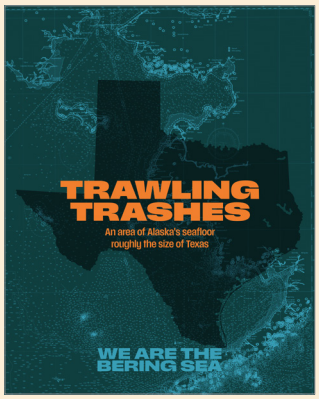
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Post #6: We Are the Bering Sea

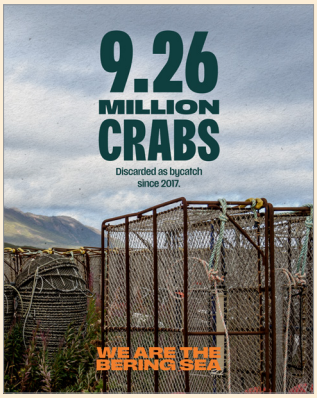
For generations, Alaska's fishing communities have depended on the Bering Sea to feed our families, sustain our cultures, and support our local economies. Today, 128 fishing communities and more than 5,000 small, Alaska-owned commercial fishing boats carry that legacy forward.

We Are the Bering Sea. And we're standing together to protect our way of life for generations to come.



Post #7: Texas

Every Alaska fishing community depends on thriving fish habitat and a balanced food web. But industrial trawling, including bottom and mid-water trawling, puts that ecosystem at risk. Protecting Alaska's fisheries means protecting the ocean that sustains them. We can support a strong fishing industry without supporting destructive fishing practices.



Post #8: Crabs

That's enough crabs for every Alaskan to eat a crab a day for nearly two weeks.

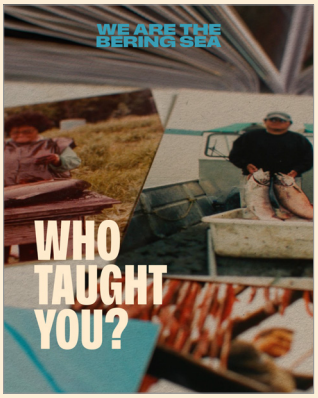
Meanwhile, Alaska's Bering Sea snow crab fishery was forced to close for two years, starting in 2022 following a devastating population collapse, leaving fishing communities' futures uncertain. We can't afford to keep losing valuable marine resources to industrial trawling.



Post #9: More Than A Job

Fishing is more than a job. It's how we feed our families, sustain our Native cultures, and carry on generations of tradition.

Since 1979, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association has stood up for Alaska's fishing communities. From fighting foreign fishing fleets to confronting today's industrial trawling practices, the challenges have evolved, but our mission remains the same: protecting our fisheries, preserving our way of life, and ensuring Bering Sea fishermen remain in control of their own future.



Post #10: Who Taught You?

Some things passed down from generation to generation don't need to be written down. They're learned on the water, through the hands of elders, and in the traditions that connect us to our communities.

For generations, Alaska's fishing communities have passed down more than skills. They've passed down a way of life. Today, industrial trawling threatens the fisheries these traditions depend on. We're fighting to make sure future generations have the same opportunity to learn, fish, and carry on our way of life.