



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Bristol Bay Salmon Permit Holders Approve Regional Marketing Association**

(May 19, 2006) Bristol Bay salmon drift gill net permit holders have approved a self-imposed one-percent tax for a regional marketing effort. By a margin of 410 “yes” votes to 297 “no” votes a one-percent tax passed to go to the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association (BBRSDA).

The election was completed by Alaska Division of Investments staff and certified by Commerce Commissioner Bill Noll. The vote represents 38 percent of Bristol Bay salmon drift gill net permit holders.

This is the second RSDA to be formed in the state under legislation HB 419 that was signed into law by Governor Frank H. Murkowski on June 21, 2004. The first RSDA, Copper River/Prince William Sound Marketing Association, was formed on May 26, 2005.

Governor Murkowski said giving the industry the opportunity to jointly market their product is simply good business. “The State of Alaska has been putting a tremendous effort toward marketing its seafood and the results are showing,” said Murkowski. “International seafood sales have doubled in the last five years and it makes sense for regional groups to want to continue the positive momentum.”

Commissioner Noll said the willingness to impose a self-tax underscores the change in the industry. “It wasn’t that long ago that the salmon industry was severely depressed in Alaska,” said Noll. “Today, Alaska has been able to gain new markets for its seafood and build a reputation for its superior wild Alaska salmon—this cooperative marketing agreement only serves to strengthen that niche.”

The tax is collected through the state and distributed to the RSDA. The BBRSDA anticipates that self-imposed tax will generate about \$700,000 annually.

The BBRSDA mailed election ballots to permit holders on March 21, 2006 and again on April 17, 2006. Per the Notice of Election, only ballots postmarked by May 1, 2006, and received by close of business at the Alaska Division of

Investments in Juneau on May 15, 2006, were accepted. According to law, the association needed returned ballots from 30 percent of eligible permit holders to certify the election.

Southeast salmon drift permit holders turned down a similar regional tax by a razor thin margin. The vote total was 91 “yes” votes to 107 “no” votes. A total of 473 permit holders were sent ballots.

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