

RSDA Pre-application

Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Marketing Association Application

Organization: Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Marketing Association, forming committee

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Proposed Mission Statement:

The Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Marketing Association (BB-RSMA)'s mission is to market and promote Bristol Bay seafood products. The BB-RSMA will, on behalf of all member association's members, work to improve regional seafood quality and promote improvements to both the commercial fishing industry and the region's infrastructure. All of these activities will be guided by responsible fiscal management and the defined non-profit guideline of no more than 10% administrative costs.

Proposed Management Structure:

The proposed BB-RSMA will be guided by a board of directors consisting of permit holders of each permit type represented. The board will consist of 11-13 members. The first round of board elections will be available to all permit holders of the represented regions fisheries. The number of board seats per fishery and gear type will be allocated as closely as possible to the revenues generated by each permit type as a fraction of revenue generated by all assessments in the region. The by-laws will allocate a minimum of one board member seat per fishery and gear type. No more than one member will be available to association members who are not permit holders. (These members who are not permit holders and choose to join will be pay a membership fee to be set by the board) An Association office administrator will be hired by the board to coordinate the day to day efforts for the executive management team.

The board duties will include; establishing policies, determining priority activities, supervising paid staff, maintaining fiscal integrity and accountability - keeping inside the guideline of 10% administrative costs/90% return to mission goals. (A major theme in the feedback received while working to form this group was to not have this organization be management heavy.) If it is deemed by the BB-RSMA association members, that an Executive Director is desired the board will be responsible for hiring/firing. An interim board, of 9 members, will guide all activities through the election and creation of the permanent board. The interim board will be represented by permit holders from each of the fisheries currently fished in Bristol Bay; salmon, herring, and halibut, all gear types.

Proposed Economic Development Goals and Strategies:

The goals of the proposed BB-RSMA interim board will develop and approve a temporary set of goals. These goals, and related statements, will serve as the basis for permit holders to vote for or against approving the tax needed to fund the new Association. (The second theme that was overwhelmingly heard was the need for this organization to be regionally-controlled, committed to marketing the region and stimulating improvement the economic viability of the region's fishing industry.)

The interim board, currently forming, has drafted the list of goals for consideration include the following:

- Establish an better image, reputation and value for seafood from Bristol Bay.
- Increase the prices paid to fisherman for fish harvested over the long term.
- Increase market share of Bristol Bay seafood products in both the domestic and international markets.
- Engage and support a wide range of strategies to improve fisherman's income:
 - research methods and support activities to increase fisheries revenues by-improving quality

marketing reputation
Improve regional infrastructure
Develop solutions to transportation issues, such as airport cold storage and freight logistics.
Decrease fisheries costs

Plans to involve all eligible commercial fishing permit holders from fisheries from the Bristol Bay Region.

Every effort will be made to encourage all eligible permit holders (current represented fisheries in Bristol Bay - salmon, halibut, and herring) to become members of the marketing association. Those who choose to become members will be fully represented on the BB-RSMA Board. Policies will be developed to eliminate any possibility of discrimination or exclusion based on residency, ethnicity, volume, product, etc. The Association bylaws will expressly prohibit the adoption of any policy that unreasonably favors or discriminates against any subgroup of permit holders. The Association will fairly represent, and expressly adopt bylaws that discriminate against any particular group of any regional seafood permit holders.

The 11-13 member board will be balanced under the following guidelines:

- Individuals will be nominated and elected by permit holders.
- The permit holders will fall into two residence groups:
 - Alaska residents
 - Non-AK residents

These two groups of permit holders will consist five members from resident in the marketing region, two residents from outside the marketing region but Alaska residents, four members from non- Alaska residents. (This structure represents the current make-up of permit types and residency.) Two board seats may be used at a later time or set up to represent such groups as regionally based processors, or emerging fisheries. BB-RSMA will encourage any commercial fisherman who holds a commercial fishing permit for a fishery that is conducted in Bristol Bay region and other persons or groups in the region to become members of the marketing association. Anyone not being permit holder in the region will become a member by paying a membership fee set by the board.

The board will make it a priority to actively encourage participation by all RSDA permit holders/tax payers. Methods for soliciting input will include:

- Quarterly, minimum, newsletters informing permit holders and residents of actions taken by BB-RSMA. Any relevant activity or issue will also be presented and input will be solicited.
- Annual meeting. (The current suggestion is to have two of three year's annual meeting be in the region. Making every third year meeting to be held out of the region, either in Anchorage or a lower 48 city. Regional meetings can be held in the region that where the annual meeting is not held that year for representatives to gather input for the annual meeting.)
- Posting in each regional municipality, tribal center and various public places of the current newsletter and contact information.
- Individual member mailings could be used to inform membership if needed.

The election will follow all procedures as outlined in Sec.43.76.370 (election procedures) and Sec.43.76.375 (termination of seafood development tax).

Mechanisms to Fairly Administer Permit Holders:

Any financial assistance will be administrated under policies that do not favor any particular interest group. The Association board and executive management will carefully monitor and be held accountable for all funds used.

- Representatives from each fisheries group participating in the association will help determine how it spends the revenues generated by its particular fishery.
- The association board will conduct, at a minimum, an annual meeting in which to solicit comments for the general membership on priority projects and marketing strategies that should be incorporated in the association's annual and multi-year budgets.
- Board meetings will be held quarterly, at a minimum.

- An annual list of priorities will be identified and voted on by the board for incorporation into the association's budget.
- Board elections will be held annually with seats staggered so that not all seats turn over at the same time. This will allow for changes in representation by the membership as well as a chance for more senior board members to orient the newer board members with some of the association's institutional history.