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ALFA Launches Documentary Project about Local Fishing Families' Efforts to Protect Fisheries

Last week, the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association (ALFA) was awarded a grant from the popular clothing company Patagonia to film a documentary entitled "WE ARE ALL FISHERMEN", which will feature local fishing families and explore the connection between small-boat fishing fleets and the vitality of healthy oceans and coastal communities.

The film tells the stories of local fishermen and examines the obstacles facing small boats who are trying to preserve their way of life for future generations. It will highlight the importance of small-scale fisheries in ensuring healthy coastal communities and, in turn, the role that thriving community-based fisheries play in ensuring a viable and sustainably caught food source for the rest of world.

ALFA is an alliance of small-boat, commercial fishermen that support sustainable fisheries and thriving coastal communities by involving fishermen in research, advocacy and conservation initiatives. Executive Director and longtime commercial fisherman Linda Behnken has noticed an increased need to share stories of fishermen-led advocacy, especially as obstacles facing the next generation of fishermen, including high costs to entry, escalate.

Fishing families have a long-term commitment to sustainable fisheries," says Behnken. "They provide a vital voice for ocean health and strong coastal economies. This film will celebrate that legacy, while capturing the many challenges young fishermen face as they enter today's fisheries."

The film will be produced by award-winning filmmaker Emmett Williams. Williams is the founder of Mission Man Media, a documentary film production company dedicated to helping organizations around the world tell their story. Williams has created several films locally and spent a week filming Juneau-based longline and Dungeness crab fisherman Peter Ord, his daughter Annika, and his son Nathan last spring after ALFA officially launched the project.

"The challenges facing small boats and young people interested in fishing are complex and growing," said Williams. "Our goal with this film is to simply tell their stories, and also the stories of the fishermen who came before them and are worried about the industry's future."

Filming has already begun on location out of Sitka and Juneau, and production is expected to finish this summer.

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