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### **Media Contacts:**

Keri Johns | The Wave Foundation | 541-923-3187 | [keri@thewavenw.org](mailto:keri@thewavenw.org)

Elizabeth Herendeen | Alaskans Own | 970-889-1440 | [info@alaskansown.com](mailto:info@alaskansown.com)

### **The Wave Food Program Delivers Economic and Food Relief to Communities Impacted by COVID-19**

*Food distribution event in Cascade Locks, OR brings Alaska Seafood to  
Tribal communities through unique regional partnerships*

[Portland, OR, July 28, 2020]: The Wave Foundation (The Wave) had its first taste of what its healthy and sustainable food program means to local communities and regional food systems at a food distribution event July 15th at City Hall in Cascade Locks, Oregon. This event was a coordinated effort with the Columbia Gorge Food Bank and open to the public, with pre-event outreach focused on the area's Tribal Nation communities. Post-event outreach included distribution to Tribal in-lieu fishing communities along the Columbia River.

"The recent COVID pandemic has amplified many social, health, housing, and food security disparities for our Tribal members along the Columbia River. Combining efforts among many partners has helped with some of these disparities. The recent food distribution was able to help many Tribal residents with both food and other additional resources at Cascade Locks," said Buck Jones, with Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. "Having the ability to bring food boxes and frozen cod by The Wave to residents of the Treaty Fishing Access and In-Lieu Sites helped many that were unable to attend this event. It also allowed The Wave staff to see first-hand the living conditions that Tribal members live in."

The Wave, through its range of stakeholders, recognized early in the COVID-19 pandemic that whole segments of the Northwest's food system were faltering because of the sudden closure of event centers, restaurants, and other public venues. Food producers, like the seafood industry, lost a massive portion of their market overnight due to these closures. And thousands of people in the Northwest found themselves out of work and facing insecurity, with no end in sight. In response, The Wave created its healthy and sustainable food program to increase local food recovery, get people back to work, feed vulnerable communities, and shift to more resilient community food systems.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a devastating toll on our region, leaving many local families struggling to access nutritious, sustainable food. At The Wave, we believe that our region's food system is a critical way to restore health and well-being to the Northwest," said Justin Zeulner, The Wave director. "We decided to put our attention and resources toward local Tribal Nation communities, which have been hit especially hard by the virus. Thanks to our generous partners, we were able to bring support directly to them in the form of healthy and sustainable food, services, and other items they've told us they need."

The event featured seafood from Alaskans Own, a joint program of Sitka-based organizations Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust and Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, that sources seafood from small-boat, independent fishermen who are committed to sustainable fisheries and thriving fishing communities.

"Alaskans Own is deeply grateful for the opportunity to be part of The Wave's food program. With support from Catch Together and The Wave, our fishermen are able to keep working and provide nutritious, sustainably harvested Alaska seafood to our fellow Americans," said Linda Behnken, Founder and Director of Alaskans Own.

That fish was distributed both as frozen filets and as hot meals via Koi Fusion food truck who provided free teriyaki lingcod rice bowls to those facing food insecurity. The addition of the hot meals to the event was the brainchild of Food Fleet, The Wave's managing partner, through which we can reach remote locations with its food truck network. Food Fleet is integral in The Wave food program's growth with its vast restaurant and food service experience, along with its advisory services in large scale feeding and logistics, healthy food systems and disaster relief efforts.

The impact from the day's events included:

- 157 households representing 611 individuals fed during the distribution event
- 600 additional families served with The Wave Foundation's truck deliveries direct to Tribal Nation Columbia River Basin communities
- 140 food boxes distributed by The Wave Foundation truck from the Columbia Gorge Food Bank to Tribal Nation fishing communities
- More than 400 hot meals served using the lingcod and prepared by Koi Fusion's food truck
- 150 pounds of fish served in hot meals and 850 pounds served via delivery direct to Tribal Nation communities

Additional distribution events are planned throughout the year and feature collaborations that focus on BIPOC communities, including with Feed the Mass and Equitable Giving Circle in Portland, OR. These collaborations are ongoing, as needed, and provide both hot meals and frozen fish distribution.

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### **About The Wave Foundation & The Wave**

To learn more about The Wave and its food program visit: [thewavenw.org/food-program](http://thewavenw.org/food-program).

Current supporting partners of the Food Program include: Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), Alaska Longline Fisherman's Association (ALFA), Alaskans Own, Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust, Alpine Foods, B-Line, Catch Together, Charlie's Produce, Climate Solutions, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), Ecotrust, Fare Start, Fish People, Food Fleet, Forever Wild Seafood, Lineage Logistics, Marine Fish Conservation Network, ReFED, Salmon-Safe, Seafood Producers Cooperative (SPC), nutritionist Dr. Bethany Tennant, local chefs and restaurants, and more.

The Wave is a coalition of the most culturally significant and iconic stakeholders collaborating to accelerate environmental programs that address climate change, environmental justice, and youth engagement. Our partnerships with community leaders allow us to rely on their support and knowledge of local needs. Our food program is designed to transition to sourcing and producing food in a manner that is healthier for people and the long-term health of the planet. Learn more at [thewavenw.org](http://thewavenw.org)