

Commenter ID	Comment
78	I feel that the time has come to stop all banning of PWC in Alaska. 4 stroke boats are clean and quiet and a form of water transport all over the state and should not be banned in any waterway.
79	>> The Alaska Quiet Rights Coalition (AQRC), a state-wide non-profit organization, considers natural sounds and natural quiet as resources of our public lands (and waters) that deserve the same type of protection as clean air and clean water. We advocate for separate areas and trails to enable the non-motorized user to enjoy quiet recreation.
79	AQRC was an active supporter of the jetski ban when originally proposed and takes this opportunity to reiterate our support for that ban. We argued then, and now, that the ban does not restrict public access but only one means of motorized access. It is not discrimination against an individual; merely against a means of transportation.
79	And, most importantly, we continue to argue that jetskis use is incompatible with the statutory purposes for which the CHAs were created. Accordingly, ADF & G may not permit their use in these two Critical Habitat Areas or, we suggest, in any CHA within the state. We believe the ban on jet skis has not only enhanced the habitat for wildlife and helped to increase the wildlife populations, but has served to help create Homer's reputation as a place of quiet natural beauty.
80	As a citizen of Alaska and a resident of Bear Cove, I have witnessed firsthand the steady decline of marine life in these areas. First the crab disappeared, then the shrimp, and now even the littleneck clams are all but gone. These occurrences have been precipitous and disastrous for the people and animals that frequent this beautiful and precious area. Now is not the time for decreased protection. It is a good time to fund research into the destruction that has happened over the last 50 years.
81	I'm in agreement with Cook Inletkeeper that we need to improve the directive for this Critical Habitat to protect wildlife and habitat here. So far, not so good, as usage has intensified without necessary restrictions.
81	1) Hunters are slaughtering literally tons of ducks in KBay with your agency approval: 18 duck limits per day over 100 days of hunting season puts rare or long-lived waterfowl at risk. 2) Hunters have decimated the black bear population over the past 5 years in Kachemak Bay. 5 years ago they were abundant, but with year-round hunting and bag limits of 3-5 bears per hunter per year populations have crashed. Despite this population crash, the bag limit remains at 3 bears per hunter per year, baiting encouraged. ADF&G has not done a bear population study for over a decade, so the slaughter continues in ignorance.
81	3) Livestock grazing literally eats up the new grass at the head of the bay which used to be primary feeding for brown bears early in the spring. Livestock managers are active in slaughtering wolves and bears to protect their cattle and horses. Wildlife is protected under the Critical Habitat law, cows are not; and yet because domestic animals are raised here, predators are shot, trapped and poisoned here.
81	4) ATV traffic has vastly increased, further reducing the space and quiet that wildlife needs to thrive.
81	5) Over-harvest of fish and shellfish continues at prodigious rates, despite the virtual turnover of those species recently. Clams, mussels, halibut, king crab, dungeness crab, herring, tanner crab and rockfish are all depressed populations, at a tiny fraction of their former levels.

82	First of all, I suggest ADFG revise the commenting questionnaire: I carefully drafted my comments, and then returned to one of the other links to check some information and my draft comments were deleted. It was discouraging to have to start all over again, and I felt that my efforts to be a constructive citizen were frustrated by the process you have created. Second, as a lay person, it is challenging to understand all the nuances of proposed changes without a document which compares the original and the proposed changes: I suggest that ADFG publish such a line-by-line comparison and extend the comment period so that ordinary citizens who care about these issues have an opportunity to respond intelligently and constructively. In other words, I believe the current process inappropriately limits citizen input.
82	Finally, in accordance with the department's constitutional mandate to assure sustained yields, the new plan should be developed in the context of precautionary principles, especially in the face of climate change, the impacts of which we are already experiencing and which will undoubtedly compound in coming years.
83	I write to submit scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. In these rapidly changing time, it is essential that we use the Precautionary Principle and protect critical habitat areas for fish and wildlife and I urge you to uphold the highest form of protection in any revised management plan.
83	I also ask that you do your best to ensure transparency in the process by clearly showing any changes, side-by-side, for the public to review.
83	The purpose of these CHA's is "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose." As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction.
84	First and foremost to make sure the purposes that established the CHA are protected and not infringed upon. • All goals, policies and standards must comply with the CHA's statutory purpose - i.e., "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose."
84	ADF&G must establish clear, enforceable standards to protect and preserve important habitat, and to restrict incompatible uses. ADF&G must use mandatory, non-discretionary language to promote predictability and ensure uniform protections throughout Kachemak Bay.
84	In light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADF&G should embrace the Precautionary Principle, and adopt a management plan which builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats CHA.
84	ADFG should address all the topics and issues covered in the current management plan's policies. In addition, it should address:--climate change & ocean acidification --large & small vessel mooring & storage --commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fishing --off-road & human-powered vehicles --sewage discharges --livestock grazing impacts at the head of bay --sonar usage --aesthetic impacts
84	ADF&G should provide a side-by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan.
84	ADF&G SHOULD NOT include jet skis and/or personal watercraft in the revised management plan, because these vehicles are already banned after a long public process (see 5 AAC 95.310).

85	I take it that this does NOT take harvest levels into consideration...is that correct? That is my biggest concern with the entire area, from clams, shrimp, crabs (3 species), salmon and halibut and other fish species, having seen so many of these species become so threatened or "gone" in the last 46 years of my residency.
85	As for usage, I believe that there are activities that are incompatible with a Critical habitat area, including but not limited to: • personal, motorized water craft like wave-runners and small submarines except when used for scientific investigation by recognized entities, • helicopters for recreational and other activities other than search and rescue that land on beaches and shorelines. These are activities that most often do not take in to consideration the presence of fragile migratory birds and other species that seek food and refuge in this CHA at specific times of the year, historically, but that data may be changing. . Activities like these should be required to be "permitted" before having any access.
86	ADFG should address the use of personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these boats were banned in the CHA's after a very short public process. They should be allowed back in the Bay. If you have ever road or even owned a PWC, you would understand that they are the safest and have the least amount of impact on the environment. I would like you to eliminate the ban and wording on IE Jetski and PWC from all the master plans. PWC's are considered boats and should not be treated any differently than any other boat. The only time I can see restrictions is when there is a horsepower limit imposed, such as the Kenai river. But then large boats are not allowed either.
86	Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas.

<p>86</p>	<p>This is right out of the Alaska Boater's Handbook. Personal Watercraft (PWC) If new to operating a personal watercraft (PWC), take both basic boating safety and PWC-specific courses and develop skills under the instruction of an experienced operator. Also read the owner's manual carefully—it provides important information specific to the model such as load capacity and fuel systems. PWCs are considered boats, and operators have the same responsibilities as other boaters. However, there are some important differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A PWC handles differently than boats with propellers. The jet drive and short overall length make the PWC extremely responsive to even a small movement of the handlebars. PWCs are steered by directing the water jet while powering forward. On many models, when the operator releases the throttle the ability to steer is eliminated. Inexperienced operators attempting to avoid a collision by powering down can find themselves steering directly toward the very thing they are trying to avoid! • The wrist lanyard, which is connected to the ignition, will shut off the engine if the rider falls off the boat, preventing the boat from continuing on an out-of-control journey. The cut-off switch should be checked for function, and the wrist lanyard should ALWAYS be worn when underway. Remove the lanyard when the PWC is unattended. • Most PWC fatalities are a result of collision. It is common for operators to develop tunnel vision. Constantly scan the water all around and check behind you before turning. Guidelines for PWC Operation: • Operators must have the skill and ability to reboard the boat in deep water. Even the best method of deep water reboarding, from the rear of the boat, can be difficult in rough water and/or if the operator is tired. • When righting an overturned PWC, rotate it according to the decal on the transom. • NEVER loan a PWC to an inexperienced person. Many PWC accidents involve operators who did not own the boat. <p>UNDERWAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear the right gear. Start with synthetic long underwear, a dry suit or a two to three millimeter wet suit, neoprene boots, neoprene or water-ski gloves, safety helmet, goggles and a snug fitting United States Coast Guard-approved PFD. In-atable PFDs are not appropriate for PWCs. • Slow to 10 mph when within 100 feet of another motorboat or a sailboat underway. • Slow to no-wake speed when within 100 feet of anchored boats or paddle craft, or when within 200 feet of the shoreline, a swimmer, diver's flag, dock or launch ramp. • Obey regulatory markers such as "No Wake" zones and speed limit signs. • Do not use alcohol before or during operation. • Avoid wake jumping. • Avoid operating in the same area for extended periods. <p>PWC operation may be restricted or prohibited on some waterways. Check with local land managers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry and use navigation lights if operating between sunset and sunrise or in conditions of limited visibility.
<p>87</p>	<p>I have been an Alaskan resident for 44 years living Kodiak and Anchorage. Please allow all watercraft usage in Kachemak Bay. The beautiful area is recreation for the entire State's citizens, not just the folks in Homer. We responsibly utilize the states waterways for recreation, transportation and fishing. Two members of our watercraft club are also Search and Rescue certified by AST's program. Closing off watercraft usage to and from Kachemak Bay could limit a unique, very valuable search and rescue resource from helping out in an emergency in low visibility situations. We take our watercraft safety and community responsibility very seriously. I've trained my kids and their friends to be excellent, respectful neighbors on the water whether ocean or lakes.</p>
<p>88</p>	<p>We do not need anything that enables toxic materials to get into our land and water (engine oils, gasses or whatever leaks out , wood preservers , paints, etc for docks, sewage from homes and storage of garbage and toxic compounds, and in case of floods, earthquakes (now more prevalent due to fracking) or natural disasters ..</p>

88	Not everyone needs their own dock. A communal dock would serve the purpose of both maintaining its integrity by those using it and causing less of a problem for the land which it serves. (Halibut Cove). Just look at what was found beneath the Seldovia harbor to see the absurdity of having yet another dock at Fox river
88	We do not need to stress the importance of using data already in existence for the unfavorable effects that jet skis and helicopters have on an area. (Pollution , sound, and habitat destruction). I am hoping you will do everything in your power (due to your intelligence in these matters) to refuse to even consider aspects of this plan, that we know in advance, will be detrimental to this area.
88	Perhaps it is time we stayed a mile away for the waters of Kachemack Bay and tried everything in our power to protect what is left instead of mitigating away what is left.
89	Personal watercraft need to be included for use in the 200,000 acres of Kachemak Bay. The Alaska Marine highway runs through the bay and it is complete discrimination to say someone who uses a personal watercraft for their mode of transportation and recreation are excluded from Kachemak Bay. The four stroke engines used in all new production personal watercraft are cleaner and quieter than any two stroke motor being used in the bay now. The Alaska Administrative Codes that were approved by past Governor Tony Knowles need to be repealed. There were no actual scientific studies done in the bay to prove personal watercraft harm anything in the bay. I sent a 200 page research analysis to both agency's commissioners as well as the Director of the Division of Habitat in 2014. I would be more than happy to provide more copies if you would like. Please repeal Alaska Administrative Codes 05AAC95.310, 11AAC20.115 and 11AAC20.215. Allow personal watercraft in Kachemak Bay.
90	I am a member of the personal watercraft club of Alaska. I am the Health, Safety, Environmental Director of a large construction company and I am also a designated Certified Safety Professional. In my profession I deal with protecting employees and the environment each and every day. Public officials in the past have arbitrarily and wrongly banned personal water crafts, "jetskis", from Kachemak Bay. You simply have one user group trying to ban another user group without any environmental impact studies to prove that they ever caused or created any damage or harm to the environment. This is unacceptable and needs to be rectified. Today's personal watercrafts are cleaner, quieter and more efficient than they ever have been before. Manufactures are only producing four stroke motors in watercraft now so there is no reason to justify continuing to ban these watercraft from the waters of Kachemak Bay. I urge you to do the right thing and lift the ban on personal watercraft use in Kachemak Bay.
91	The Planning Process should: Include staff from Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, preferably a local Kachemak Bay State Park staff member on the Planning Team. Include a representative from the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve on the Planning Team.
91	The Planning Process should: Integrate the KBRR "Ecological Characterization" and other KBRR research into the process.
91	The Planning Process should: Inventory and publish in a public database all structures placed in the CHA such as mooring lines and running lines, pilings, floating docks, mooring buoys, shellfish farm facilities, etc.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Acknowledge the importance of ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity of native fish and wildlife species as an indicator of ecosystem health and habitat functions.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Address the issue of non-native and invasive exotic species, including plans for monitoring and response.

91	The revised CHA plans should: Include analysis of the impacts of existing salmon hatcheries and enhancement programs. Address issues such as the chemical fertilization of Leisure Lake by CIAA, competition by hatchery fry for food sources, hatchery salmon straying, and the commercialization of the CHAs.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Address impacts of existing shellfish mariculture and maintain the prohibition of on-bottom shellfish culture. Look at negative impacts of mariculture including commercialization of the CHA, displacement of other uses (recreation, commercial fishing, wild and natural values, etc.) and non-native shellfish being a vector for invasive species.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Address shoreline alteration issues and clarify the need for habitat protection or mitigation.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Address human disturbances such as off-road vehicles, pollution, terrestrial development that affects the marine environment, etc
91	The revised CHA plans should: Acknowledge the dynamic nature of certain habitats, especially salmon rearing habitats. As river beds shift, salmon rearing habitats relocate to new areas and management measure to protect the new habitats will be needed.
91	The revised CHA plans should:Revise the concept of granting “general permits” which have failed to adequately protect habitat.
91	The revised CHA plans should:Include a monitoring and enforcement process for all motorized vehicle use in the Fox River CHA with no minimum weight limits.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Address the methods of enforcement for all CHA regulations and encourage educational components.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Maintain a priority for fish and wildlife in all aspects of plan administration.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Provide for realistic timelines for plan updates and a public process to ensure that happens.
91	The revised CHA plans should:Acknowledge that the Kachemak Bay CHA, while legally described to include areas below high tide line, is heavily impacted by terrestrial activities. Provide for collaborative processes with adjacent landowners (public and private) and upland stakeholders.
91	The revised CHA plans should:Provide for long term monitoring of fish and wildlife populations, harvest levels and all commercial uses.
91	The revised CHA plans should:Provide for most up to date oil spill response technology.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Use hind-casting methods to determine the success of protect fish and wildlife populations since the establishment of the CHAs.
91	The revised CHA plans should: Include management strategies to address increasing human populations and visitation to the CHAs and the surrounding watershed.

91	The revised CHA plans should: Incorporate data from Alaska State Parks on increased human use of the CHAs (trail register counts, water taxi drop-offs, etc.).
91	The revised CHA plans should: Methods to collaborate and cooperate with the Board of Fish and Board of Game to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations.
92	I duck and goose hunt from the head of the bay on a Fairly regular basis. I also look for black bear on the hills surrounding the head of the bay. If you want to do something for the head of the bay do something about the stolen and trashed cars that are leaking fuel and oil into the bay. These however are not located in the part of Kachemac bay that you are concerned with even though it has a direct impact on the part of the bay you are concerned with. [...] And do something about all the stolen cars and Russian joy ride vehicles at the head of the bay in the tidewaters.
92	The bridges that were installed seem to be keeping most of the traffic where you want it. And the other side of the bay is still pristine except for all the cowshit and bull stomp holes where they scent up the earth and claim that part of the bay for themselves. It seems to me you have done what you needed to do to slow erosion by installing access bridges again.If this project had been implemented much sooner this wouldn't be an issue. It would be wrong to restrict access beyond the silly as hell rule that states our vehicles must be under 1000 lbs . My new 6 wheeler is 76 lbs over this limit even though it's an atv style not a side by side . If you feel you must do something to improve the bay at least let us use our newer heavier machines (I miss my light one but they don't make them light anymore) and I can't afford to have a wheeler for the critical habit areas and one for every where else and I need the 6x6 capability for my cabin property . It's time to change the law that was written back when 3 wheelers weighed 350 lbs .
93	The watercraft of today is far different than the watercraft when this ban was put into effect. For one thing they are 4 stroke now and very low emissions and much quieter than boats that are allowed in Kachemak Bay currently. Here are just a few points to show that this ban in all of Kachemak Bay is not warranted. 1- Repeal the following administrative codes that were imposed in 2001 (with no local scientific studies done) 05AAC95.310, 11AAC20.115, 11AAC1120215 2-One statement in the management plan is to restrict all activities "not compatible" with the goals of the critical habitat area. You cannot truthfully say that a personal watercraft conflicts with any other activities already allowed in the bay. A personal watercraft is a boat and like other boats already used in the bay so should a personal watercraft be allowed. The only restrictions should apply to a personal watercraft would be where there are a specific distance to shallows or private property. If a personal watercraft isn't compatible then neither are other boats. Which we know is a ridiculous notion. 3-Navigable Waters Act states that all boats should be allowed in Alaska's waters. 4-The Alaska Marine Highway goes through Kachemak Bay. You can't keep any type of boat out of this marine highway. Its public waters for all user groups.
93	5-When writing management plans for critical habitat areas in Alaska, all plans should be area specific. If you place a ban or restriction in one critical habitat area doesn't mean it should automatically be placed in the management plan of other critical habitat area. Each area is unique and requires unique plans, that's why there is one written for each separate critical habitat area. Do not arbitrarily include things just because they are included in another plan.

94	Hi I would like you to consider lifting the ban on jet skis in kachemak bay. When they were originally banned there was no real study's or facts done on kachemak bay as fare as impacts they have. They used facts from like Lake Tahoe and other places. They are high tech 4 strokes that are fare cleaner then all the 2 stroke outboards and diesel boats. One user group was singled out because a bunch of lodge owners didn't like them and the cook inlet keepers. Please look hard at lifting the ban thanks
95	I write as a resident of Talkeetna who enjoys visiting Homer and recreating on Kachemak Bay and in the surrounding area. It's one of my favorite places to go to observe and photograph birds. I have great appreciation of the exceptional value of the natural and productive habitat of Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats. In reviewing the 1993 Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan ("Plan"), I find that it was developed within a sound organizational framework and inclusive participatory public process, yielding a result that represents an appropriate and reasonable balance between access/use on one hand and natural resource protection on the other. Central to this balance is the current Plan's requirements that permitting decisions and use/access regulation must be consistent with the Plan's goals and policy stipulations, which is necessary to ensure protection of the fish and wildlife, and their habitat. This management priority is also necessary to fulfill Purpose section of the enabling legislation. At minimum, in moving forward with this plan revision, the current balance should at least be maintained, although my preference would be to tip the balance somewhat to more strongly favor resource protection over access/use. In any event, protections of fish and wildlife and their habitat that exist in the 1993 Plan should not be weakened. The corollary to this is that access and use restrictions should not be relaxed nor permitting standards liberalized. The planning areas have been legislatively designated as Critical Habitat for a reason, and, accordingly, the management priority should continue to be protection of the fish and wildlife and their habitat.
95	Looking at the 1993 Plan, the make-up and collaborative function of the planning team seems good and should be replicated in the current planning effort, with the exception that I would recommend also including on the planning team any land trust organization having authority or an interest in any part of the planning area. In addition, in order to emphasize the collaborative function of the planning team, I would suggest explicitly stating in the new plan that this team represents a collaborative planning effort.
95	In the second to last paragraph on page 1 of the 1993 Plan, I am glad to see reference to the Public Trust Doctrine. That reference should be retained in the new plan.
95	The first paragraph on page 2, regarding implementation, states the authority of the Plan in guiding management decisions. I like the general thought behind the closing sentence of that paragraph, but it is a little squishy, and I think it should be strengthened in the new plan to clearly stipulate (at an appropriate place in the new plan) as follows: All use activities within the Critical Habitat Areas, including those proposed by private individuals, companies, or federal, local or state agencies, shall be approved, conditioned, or denied on the basis of their consistency with the goals and policies provided in this management plan and any applicable state statutes and regulations.
95	With respect to Goals, on page 5 of the 1993 Plan, I would like to see stronger protections of fish and wildlife habitat. For example, I suggest the first sentence under I. Fish and Wildlife Populations and Their Habitat be modified in the new plan to read "Manage the critical habitat areas to maintain the health and natural diversity of fish and wildlife populations and the natural, unimpaired quality of their habitat."

95	The scope of the 1993 Plan, with respect to the list of the policy statements on various uses and issues (pp 7-11), is comprehensive, and should be retained in the new Plan. Added to these policy uses and issues, the new plan should address the anticipated future impacts of climate change, and suggest potential mitigating measures.
95	Also added should be an assessment of the impacts of current levels of motorized ATV use within the planning area. The new plan should contain restrictions or management guidance necessary to avoid damage to the natural resources and the quality of the visitor experience of non-motorized user groups. Impacts of bicycle users should also be assessed and mitigated.
95	The prohibition on use of airboats and hovercraft when traversing areas of rooted vegetation should be retained. The new plan should not do anything to remove these prohibitions.
95	It is very important to retain the existing prohibition on the use of personal watercraft (e.g., jetskis). The new plan should not contain any recommendation or whatever to remove or weaken this prohibition.
95	I think the Resource Inventory contained in the 1993 Plan is very interesting, and I would like to see it updated and included in the new plan.
95	I like the 1993 Plan, and when you develop a new plan, I ask that you provide a red-lined version of the old plan so that any you changes you are proposing are clearly evident to the reader. You should present two versions: a red-line version and one with the changes "accepted".
96	I see no legitimate reason for excluding PWCs so long as other motor-powered watercraft are permitted. Any concerns with respect to PWCs apply equally, or more, to any other type of motorboat currently permitted. It stands to reason that the threat of habitat damage is far less with a PWC compared to any larger vessel. I also think that using a PWC in salt water in Alaska is such a niche activity that there is no threat of over-use.
97	PWCs should be legal everywhere. As long as they meet emissions and possibly noise restriction standards. I don't get what the big deal is. It's not like all of a sudden 500 people on PWCs are going to start zipping around K-Bay all of a sudden. They're legal almost everywhere in the lower 48 where the water is actually warm and more enjoyable and you rarely see them. This is just classic over-regulation by the government. Please reconsider legalizing Personal Water Craft in the Bay. I think it is quite possible that it would even bring business to Homer and Seldovia due to the price of PWC, more families can afford going on short trips down there. Boats are expensive and hauling them around is not easy for everyone. There are PWC rentals and tours in Whittier that drive way out and sight see the glaciers and whales and they seem to operate just fine. Again, please reconsider. Thank you.
98	I would like to see Kachemak Bay open to all users including jetski

99	<p>In 1963 when I first visited Kachemak Bay, Eiders still nested on Homer Spit and local residents gathered the down for its warmth. Shrimp, and three species of crabs could easily be harvested. Clams were abundant. Invertebrate intertidal life was so thick on the north side of Homer Spit that on a minus tide one could hardly step without treading on a living creature. Based on personal observations from summers since 1975 spent in Neptune Bay on the south shore of Kachemak Bay, and granted that climatic regime shift has since occurred and affected many of these species, many others are greatly diminished in numbers since 1963 including Beluga Whales, Sea Lions, Harbor Porpoise, Eiders, Common Murres, Red faced Cormorants, Plovers, and sea ducks in general. Additionally much scarcer now in south shore mid bay are traditional subsistence foods such as Chitons, Limpets , various snails and Sea Urchins. Some species such as Butter and Steamer Clams, Shrimp and King, Dungeness, and Tanner Crabs were greatly diminished by over harvesting. They have not yet rebounded from the 1980's and 1990's. Also Halibut are decreasing in size. In the light of these losses within the Kachemak Bay, Fox River Flats CHA and surrounding areas, it would be very positive if ADF&G could study these individual species and others in a whole ecosystem context similar to the Apex studies after the 1989 Oil Spill. Clearly the web of life in Kachemak Bay is fraying. The Critical "Habitat areas crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife." appear to need greater investigation and much stronger management practices to maintain the remnant of this formerly very rich Kachemak Bay and the vast resources it contained 50 years ago.</p>
99	<p>In 2011 ADF&G made the wise decision to ban personal watercraft (jet skis) from the Kachemak Bay Fox River Critical Habitat areas. Since then, there has been an increase in use of the area by kayakers, kayak fishing boaters, sail boaters, para-sail boarders and paddle boarders as well as an increase in trolling for King Salmon. Some of these are new ways for people to access the bay. Now there are more small slow moving vessels on the bay for which the wake of a high speed jet ski could be very dangerous or disruptive. The remaining sea mammals and birds would be at a high risk from collisions or use of energy exerted just to avoid them. Therefore it is essential to continue the ban of personal watercraft from all the waters of Kachemak Bay Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas. Despite the introduction of "quieter" personal watercraft, it is not just their presence but how they would be used, typically as a high speed thrill roar around the bay, threatening the wildlife as well as its human users.</p>
99	<p>The 1993 ADF&G Management plan was a very valuable document for its time. It is good that is being updated due to changing circumstances. I hope that the ADF&G personnel in charge of creating this new document will listen to those of us who visit here, live here seasonally and like myself, have lived here for many decades observing and documenting the wildlife from tiny intertidal invertebrates, to the shore birds to the largest of the whales.</p>
100	<p>Let personal watercraft play in the katchemak bay. It was completely silly to ban them in the first place!!</p>
101	<p>Management for Kachemak Bay has been inappropriately conducted based on woefully out of date perceptions. This update offers the chance to make Bay management reflective of current and verifiable facts and conditions as opposed to subjective perceptions from the last century.</p>

101	<p>The specific step for our membership should be repeal administrative codes 05AAC95.310, 11AAC20.115, 11AAC1120215 that were imposed a decade and a half ago without any objective foundation. The issue referred to above is access to Kachemak Bay by personal watercraft (PWC). One statement in the management plan is to restrict all activities "not compatible" with the goals of the critical habitat area. A personal watercraft is a boat and powered by modern 4 stroke engine just like those of modern outboard motors. The only restrictions should apply to a PWC should be the same with all powered vessels, where there are horse power limits or a specific distance to shallows, shoreline or private property. PWC operation is already subject to the same State and Federal boating safety and responsible operation regulations as every other motorized vessel. If a recreational boater wishes to experience Kachemak Bay, why should the shape of his boat determine compatibility? The Alaska Marine Highway goes through Kachemak Bay. You should not be able to keep any type of boat out of this marine highway based on the shape of its hull. This would be comparable to saying a specific model of automobile would be banned from a specific state highway based on prejudices of local residents. Its public waters for all user groups, not the exclusive domain of a local advisory council for example. The Navigable Waters Act states that all boats should be allowed in Alaska's waters. PWC owners pay the same registration fees and comply with the same boating regulations as all other motorized craft</p>
102	<p>We have fished in the Kachemak Bay area since the early 1970's. Everyone is allowed to recreate there except the PWC. I've never seen anything so biased and prejudice in all my life and how you ever got it passed to exclude PWC when you can have airboats, airplanes and every other motorized sea worthy vehicle is beyond me. All this stemmed from two neighbors arguing.</p>
103	<p>Please let there be someplace in this beautiful area to remain peaceful and free of mechanical, noisy toys! We have enough already with boat traffic for fishing. Jet skis will bring lots more traffic on the water at high speeds, and LOTS of noise. Not to mention the disturbance of whales, otters and other wildlife that both Alaskans and tourists come to Homer to see and photograph. Why can't we leave well enough alone for a change?</p>
104	<p>Kachemak Bay is a popular, easily accessible destination for 75% of Alaska's population living in the Cook Inlet drainage. Watercraft access on public waters in Kachemak Bay draws many Alaskans to the area annually. Since the first wave of human immigrants to Alaska access on waters has been a major form of public transportation, most often by individuals in their own personal watercraft. Until a conservation concern can be demonstrated by the use of regulated, motorized, personal watercraft activity within the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas ADF&G is violating the Common Use clause enshrined in the Alaska State Constitution, Article 8, Section 3, by prohibiting the use of motorized personal watercraft. AOC supports regulated, equal access to public resources by the public who choose to participate as individuals in an outdoor activity. AOC request that ADF&G submit a plan for regulated, sustainable use of personal watercraft in the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Plan update.</p>
105	<p>The Planning Process should: Include staff from Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, preferably a local Kachemak Bay State Park staff member on the Planning Team. Include a representative from the Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve on the Planning Team.</p>
105	<p>The Planning Process should: Integrate the KBRR "Ecological Characterization" and other KBRR research into the process.</p>
105	<p>The Planning Process should: Inventory and publish in a public database all structures placed in the CHA such as mooring lines and running lines, pilings, floating docks, mooring buoys, shellfish farm facilities, etc.</p>

105	The revised CHA plans should: Acknowledge the importance of ecosystem diversity, species diversity and genetic diversity of native fish and wildlife species as an indicator of ecosystem health and habitat functions.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Address the issue of non-native and invasive exotic species, including plans for monitoring and response.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Include analysis of the impacts of existing salmon hatcheries and enhancement programs. Address issues such as the chemical fertilization of Leisure Lake by CIAA, , and the commercialization of the CHAs.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Address impacts of existing shellfish mariculture and maintain the prohibition of on-bottom shellfish culture. Look at negative impacts of mariculture including commercialization of the CHA, displacement of other uses (recreation, commercial fishing, wild and natural values, etc.) and non-native shellfish being a vector for invasive species.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Address shoreline alteration issues and clarify the need for habitat protection or mitigation.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Address human disturbances such as off-road vehicles, pollution, terrestrial development that affects the marine environment, etc
105	The revised CHA plans should: Acknowledge the dynamic nature of certain habitats, especially salmon rearing habitats. As river beds shift, salmon rearing habitats relocate to new areas and management measure to protect the new habitats will be needed.
105	ADFG now allows "general permits" for things such as motorized use of critical habitat. That practice needs to be addressed and restricted.
105	The revised CHA plans should:Include a monitoring and enforcement process for all motorized vehicle use in the Fox River CHA with no minimum weight limits.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Address the methods of enforcement for all CHA regulations and encourage educational components.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Maintain a priority for fish and wildlife in all aspects of plan administration.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Provide for realistic timelines for plan updates and a public process to ensure that happens.
105	The revised CHA plans should:Acknowledge that the Kachemak Bay CHA, while legally described to include areas below high tide line, is heavily impacted by terrestrial activities. Provide for collaborative processes with adjacent landowners (public and private) and upland stakeholders.
105	The revised CHA plans should:Provide for long term monitoring of fish and wildlife populations, harvest levels and all commercial uses.
105	The revised CHA plans should:Provide for most up to date oil spill response technology.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Include management strategies to address increasing human populations and visitation to the CHAs and the surrounding watershed.
105	The revised CHA plans should: Incorporate data from Alaska State Parks on increased human use of the CHAs (trail register counts, water taxi drop-offs, etc.).
105	The revised CHA plans should: Methods to collaborate and cooperate with the Board of Fish and Board of Game to maintain healthy fish and wildlife populations.
105	As a former commercial and personal use fisher and current kayaker in KBay, oil and gas exploration / development, mariculture and salmon hatcheries are of particular concern.

106	I oppose the ban of PWC, JET SKI, or other names referring to. Years ago the use of personal watercraft (Jet Ski specifically) were banned for the reason of incompatible use in the bay. Basically the residence did not want PWC used in the ocean there. The PWC were proved to be 3 star emission compliant which is much cleaner than most all the fishing boats around or any other type vessel. The manufacturers have made the PWC quieter, safer (with brakes) and cleaner with closed loop cooling. As all of know the jet type unit is less disruptive to underwater sensitive areas than any other vessel. This discriminatory ruling to one user group is not fair for the reasons of being "not compatible". There are far worse BOATS dumping oil, gas, diesel, rusty hulls, load engines that impact the area more than CA Emission Compliant PWC's & JET SKI's. This closure is NOT FACTUAL...it is pure opinion of nay-sayers and should not be accepted as a reason for a ruling. I strongly oppose & as a life-long Alaska...I am OFFENDED.
107	Our bay is a treasure for all Alaskans. That it is suffering many stresses due to climate change, resource harvests, acidification, ec., seems obvious, and is evidenced by the dramatic changes is the shellfish, crustacean, and fish populations and distributions. I'll leave it to scientists to attribute causes and remedies.
107	As a boater and a responsible user of the area resources, I feel the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan of the critical habitat areas would be a huge setback. These watercraft are commonly used in a manner that is inconsistent with the protection of the area (see Big Lake for details.). An increase in the harassment of marine mammals and birds, as well as boat navigation, is guaranteed.
108	I oppose the ban of PWC, JET SKI, or other names referring to. Years ago the use of personal watercraft (Jet Ski specifically) were banned for the reason of incompatible use in the bay. Basically the residence did not want PWC used in the ocean there. The PWC were proved to be 3 star emissions compliant which are much cleaner than most all the fishing boats around or any other type vessel. The manufacturers have made the PWC quieter, safer (with brakes) and cleaner with closed loop cooling. As all of know the jet type unit is less disruptive to underwater sensitive areas than any other vessel. This discriminatory ruling to one user group is not fair for the reasons of being "not compatible". There are far worse BOATS dumping oil, gas, diesel, rusty hulls, load engines that impact the area more than CA Emission Compliant PWC's & JET SKI's. This closure is NOT FACTUAL...it is pure opinion of nay-sayers and should not be accepted as a reason for a ruling. I strongly oppose & as a life-long Alaskan..
109	If noise is a problem, to allow airboats and not 4 stroke pwc's is simply ignorance. If a person is going to establish a business in an area that is a playground for boaters, that person should establish said business with a better understanding of the demographics. A person who moves into a house next to the highway cannot complain about the sound of traffic and ban automobiles from use! Closing the area in kachemak bay for pwc sounds just as ignorant. Hopefully more intellegent people with a backbone will choose to keep this area open. I would hope that those who have control of this issue will be more concerned with keeping Alaska's waters open to all of the residents that use them. Don't make changes based on self centered business owners.
110	I dont think this ban was a thought out ban , The personal watercraft of today are far more quieter than most all boats in the water and are way cleaner. So the ban was more about a few operators than the actual product . EVERYBODY needs to enjoy Kachemak bay !!

<p>111</p>	<p>My Name is Brian McCarter I am a Service Adviser at TeamCC in Eagle River AK. I work directly with these type of craft on a daily basis. All of the unit's we sell are 3-4 star emission compliant PWCS. All of them have a engine that is covered and they are quieter than 95% of the boats engines on the water. The jet pumps create less disturbance to marine life than traditional prop type outboards or inboard/outboards. Plenty of people use these craft to fish off of I am one of them and to get from point a to point b they are nice for travel because they get significantly better fuel economy than a larger craft and are faster. They're talking about protecting marine life but all of these units have closed loop cooling systems now and most are four stroke so pollution is not a factor at all. It is totally discriminatory to ban PWCS every aspect of them are cleaner, quieter, and less invasive than every other type of boat on the water.</p>
<p>112</p>	<p>I have been watching Cook Inlet Aquaculture's activities closely within Kachemak Bay since 2011 after they released a hoard of Pink salmon coating the beaches of kachemak Bay with unharvested carcasses. I have been stunned at how fish and game works hand in glove with whatever CIAA wants. Upon reading their newsletters and executive directors reports they make it clear that it is to make money to fund their operations regardless of the questions of habitat and rehabilitating species. All they can do is push for mass production of an artificially produced mass of Pinks with special harvest rights to fund themselves. The fish and game biologist at a park meeting when confronted with oxygen issues of the ranched fish simply said "hey, I was just told to find a place to release them". sounds Like it has nothing to do with habitat but money in the pocket. I can understand why Fish and Game are so proud of their hatchery returns and congratulate themselves at how well the manage the fishery simply because without the Pink Ranch there is nothing left to manage! Everything that Has been "Managed" by Fish and game in the critical Habitat area has been wiped out! At what time is accountability going to come home to roost and When does the CHA start defending itself and begin to rebuild the abundance that was once here.</p>
<p>112</p>	<p>The CHA does not seem to being effective-When I read Lauren Flagg's (who was the F&G biologist) article in Alaska Magazine 1975 about Kachemak bay showing the baseline it saddens me and shows me the incompetence of ADF&G to manage our resources and the total lack of preserving the Habitants within the Critical Habitat area to even be a shadow of the abundance that once was in the bay. " The commercial fishery in 1973 produced 5.2 million pounds of shrimp of 5 species (pink, humpy, coonstripe, sidestripe, and spot), 3.8 million pounds of tanner crab (marketed as snow crab), 2.1 million pounds of king crab, and 300,000 pounds of dungeness crab. Also, 565,000 pounds of salmon and 407,500 pounds of herring. Thus, the 1973 total commercial harvest was more then 12 million pounds, this does not include an undetermined but substantial catch of halibut. More then 90 percent of the Kachemak Bay commercial catch is taken from an area of about 100 square miles, or 64,000 acres, and in 1973 the catch from this main fishing ground was nearly 200 pounds per acre. seafood produced from Kachemak bay helps to support five major processing plants that employ several hundred workers" ALL WIPED OUT in about 20 years. This does not include all of the subsistance and sport fishing takes." several species of clams are taken--basket cockle, butter clam, razor clam, and little neck clam. on good minus tides there are usually 100 or more clamers along the homer spit" All wiped out. Flagg continues " The full fishing potential of Kackemak bay has not been realized. Bottom fish such as sole, flounder, pollack and rockfish may one day help support commercial fisherman, there are also sea urchins, whelks, octopus and pacific scallops that may also one day provide food for a protein hungry world. We can expect to harvest all of these high quality seafoods into perpetuity--for the ARE renewable--provided we don't overharvest, and provided we protect the delicate environment of this now clean,scenic, and productive bay" Well Mr. Flagg, and ADF&G, and Kbay CHA, it seems as we failed, everything has been over-harvested to depletion, to the point we may never see a recovery.</p>

112	All that is left is CIAA working with ADF&G to release pink salmon as invasive hoards that out compete what wild stocks we have left and feed on the food that bring back some of the shell fish that used to thrive here. Mostly to make up for funds that Ted Stevens used to get for them from the feds to spend on their other projects that also seem to not bare fruit other then filling a few people's pockets. I hope you can establish a solid base line, Fish and Game seems to want to shift it, they refuse to acknowledge their utter failure to manage our resources. Maybe in this management plan revision you can address these issue's and work towards replenishing who lives within the CHA, without its inhabitants- all of them- there can be no CHA. It takes the diversity to make it healthy, they all live in a symbiotic balanced way. Fish and Game and CIAA's plan of a pink salmon mono-crop released in this bay can only continue to harm and destroy the CHA. WE HAVE SERIOUS PROBLEMS! I hope you can make a stronger plan to possibly work back to some sort of diversity. If you would like a copy of the full article in Feb,. 1975 in Alaska Magazine by Lauren Flagg to help establish a realistic baseline I will be happy to do so. We are in danger if ADF&G and CIAA saying see how great we are, if it wasn,t for us you wouldn't have any salmon at all, because of the regime shift, but now look at all these pinks we have.
113	The statutory purpose of this critical habitat is to: “protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” The revised plan should ensure that all the policies and standards should be compatible with the above statutory purpose.
113	The Department should clearly identify enforceable standards to protect the critical habitats and prohibit incompatible uses (including jet skis and personal watercraft).
113	The Department should incorporate all the points contained in the current plan plus address ATV and personal watercraft use, climate change, vessel moorage, and benthic disturbances.
114	I am writing to submit my comments during the scoping period for the upcoming revision to the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats CHAs Management Plan (Plan). Reference to CHA in my comments refers to both these units, together. As a Critical Habitat Area on the state road system, Kachemak Bay is experiencing increased pressures that are eroding its special values in the years since the current Management Plan was developed (1993). Therefore, it is critically important that all goals, policies and standards must continue to comply with the CHA’s statutory purpose - to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.
114	Enforcement seems to be an area that is weak or lacking in the current management Plan. The revised Plan should have concrete, enforceable provisions, not generalized and unenforceable guidelines. Making the policies more enforceable would go a long ways to improving management across the CHA.
114	Managing the CHA to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat must remain the primary goal of the revised Plan and capture the effects of activities occurring adjacent to, but beyond, the boundaries of the CHA.
114	The impacts from increasing human activities in and around the CHA must be considered and addressed, including their cumulative effects. These activities include, but are not limited to, resource development, especially mineral and materials extraction; commercial and sport fish industry expansion, including associated sonar usage, vessel mooring and storage; public and private docks and nearshore mooring lines; mariculture operations; and off-road vehicles.
114	Associated disturbances (habitat, sound, aesthetic, etc) and pollution (water, plastic, industrial, etc) should be managed to prevent negative impact on natural resources and the highly-valued wild nature experiences that support the local economy.

114	The use of Styrofoam floats should be strictly prohibited.
114	Current prohibitions on mineral and materials extraction, oil and gas drilling and oil rig storage should be maintained if not expanded, as this activity is increasing regionally and, with it, the risk of oil spills greatly increases. A spill in Cook Inlet could prove devastating to the CHA.
114	Updating trail and access plans is necessary in the updated Plan. Current restrictions on marine and terrestrial motorized activities should, at a minimum, be maintained and increased when the health of natural resources or their habitat are impacted by such activity. Very specifically, regulatory prohibitions on the use of jet skis, (personal watercraft) in Kachemak Bay (5 AAC 95.310) should be recognized and incorporated into the revision. Likewise, and proactively, the use of helicopters for heli-skiing, aerial touring and other recreational pursuits should be strictly prohibited.
114	The revised Plan should include effective tracking metrics of healthy fish and wildlife habitat and develop indicators to evaluate their successful management.
114	Maintaining high water quality to ensure the health of the fish and wildlife must be a priority goal of the revised Plan. Accordingly, discharge permits must be regulated at the highest protection levels.
114	Adaptive planning measures and vulnerability assessments need to be built into the revised Management Plan to enable successful response to impacts of climate change such as shifting sea and air temperatures, glacial melt, sediment transport, ocean acidification, nearshore species community shifts, etc.; as well as for the arrival of invasive species; expanding pollution, especially plastics; and the increasing risk of oil spills.
114	Protecting wild salmon stocks across the CHA must become a priority goal, including juvenile salmon habitat that is being impacted in the Fox River Flats.
114	It is critical to be working with the most current resource data, GIS layers and other mapping from Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, NOAA/Kasitsna Bay Lab, AOOS, and University of Alaska research scientists, as well as from the highly regarded Kachemak Bay Birders group, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, CIRCAC, and other sources that are increasing our knowledge, understanding and ability to manage natural resources under a changing climate.
114	Formally incorporating collaborative or cross-jurisdictional management, even establishing a council forum, would be a worthwhile Plan development for this CHA to help insure that resource development activity does not endanger fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. Accessing and using the most up-to-date information is crucial, especially considering our rapidly changing environmental conditions.
115	Kachemak Bay Birders recognizes the need to update the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area Management Plan, last written in December 1993. Although there has been some change in natural resource availability and use since this time, we would like to emphasize that the 1993 plan has worked well. Despite some minor discrepancies in detail, the management plan has provided “consistent long-range guidance to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and other agencies involved in managing the critical habitat areas.” Accordingly, there doesn’t appear to be any need for substantive change.

115	<p>One update the plan needs is to mention is that the Kachemak Bay CHA was designated earlier this year as an addition to the Kachemak Bay Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). This action recognizes the importance of many areas within Kachemak Bay that serve as stopovers to provide rest and feed for migrating shorebirds. Kachemak Bay Birders worked closely with ADF&G on this nomination and knows that ADF&G staff are familiar with the significance of a WHSRN designation and the Kachemak Bay Birders shorebird monitoring project. We will be pleased to assist ADF&G in adding data from our eight years of shorebird monitoring to the updated plan.</p>
115	<p>Also regarding birds, when updating the species list for the new management plan we recommend that you use <i>Checklist of Birds Kachemak Bay, Alaska 2011</i> , which is attached. This list is the most recent and comprehensive checklist for birds of this area,</p>
115	<p>Another area that needs updating is the description of ocean currents in Kachemak Bay. Considerable work has been accomplished since 1993 to better understand the physical oceanography of Kachemak Bay. We suggest that ADF&G work with local agencies, such as Kachemak Bay Research Reserve to include the latest data in the update.</p>
115	<p>The existing plan discusses access, stating that its policy is to “Improve public access with Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat consistent with the goals of the management plan.” This may need some review to be more specific. After the current plan was adopted there was an issue in Kachemak Bay about allowing the use of jet skis (AKA personal watercraft) which weren’t and still are not allowed by regulation (see attached newspaper articles). This became controversial because of the likely impact of jet skis on other types of recreation (such as kayaking which has become quite popular in Kachemak Bay) as well as disturbance to wildlife, particularly waterbirds. The industry says that the newer four-stroke models aren’t as noisy or polluting, which no one disputes. However, what isn’t being acknowledged is that unlike other watercraft, jet skis tend to be driven erratically, which waterbirds and marine mammals have a hard time adjusting to and avoiding. Hence, the higher speed of the newer models may contribute to more, not less, disturbance to other types of recreation as well as wildlife. Waterbirds forage over large areas of Kachemak Bay depending on the season. Allowing jet ski use in Kachemak Bay CHA would not be consistent with its purpose of protecting “habitat areas crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife.” Therefore, with respect to jet skis, the plan should continue “to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” Furthermore, it needs to be pointed out that restricting mode of access does not amount to restricting individual access. Any individual still has public access to Kachemak Bay if they use an appropriate means of transportation. To elaborate, attached is an explanation that we provided the Homer City Council when it was considering last year vehicle access on its beaches.</p>

116	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments on behalf of the Alaska Center as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) and the Walker Administration prepares to re-examine the regulations pertaining to the Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area (CHA) Management Plan. The Alaska Center works across the state to protect the resources that sustain our families, cultures, and communities, while ensuring that Alaskans have a voice in the decisions impacting our future. The Fox River Flats CHA was created by the Legislature in 1972 and the Kachemak Bay CHA was created by the Alaska State Legislature in 1974 to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose. A clear recognition of the biological and recreational importance of these areas drove the creation of a legal protective framework. Since the inception of the CHA designation for Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats, this area has become an important economic engine, supporting tourism businesses, sport and commercial fishing enterprises, a rapidly expanding marine trades industry, a sport hunting and hunting guide industry, cruise ship tourism, outfitting shops catering to recreational hiking, skiing, berry picking, kayaking, surfing, and stand-up paddle boarding. Designation of the CHA for tide and submerged land and water near Homer has helped the town and economy grow significantly. Citizen involvement in the process to establish allowable and prohibited activities has been at the heart of the success of the management plans for these CHAs. Under the previous administration, an attempt was made to significantly modify the process to determine allowable activities in the CHA. Under the Parnell Administration, a highly unpopular process was devised for revision of Critical Habitat Areas in Alaska, which would have repealed the mandatory, non-discretionary language in the CHA management plan, and replaced this with discretionary authority, authorizing the Habitat Division to approve activities by permit on a case-by-case basis. The public appreciated the move by the Walker Administration to withdraw this flawed policy. Openness and transparency is a fundamental tenant of the CHA management plan process. Citizen involvement in creating any new changes to a CHA management plan is critical. The Alaska Center strongly opposed the modifications proposed under the Parnell Administration and will closely watch any changes to a CHA in Alaska that stray from the principle of direct citizen participation in the formation of a CHA management plan. We are aware that there is interest in CHA management plans from all sectors of Alaska. In the case of the Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats CHA there have been numerous debates on issues ranging from Jet-Ski access, to subtidal clam farming which have created significant controversy on a local level. Each CHA has its own local issues, which should be considered in a local, citizen driven process.</p>
116	<p>Any new allowable activity must be reviewed in the context of rapidly advancing climate change and other stressors which are already causing marked impacts on or marine, tidal and subtidal environments.</p>
116	<p>Sound scientific and local knowledge should inform any modifications to a CHA, considering the special use designation. Any change must consider the guiding statutory principles of the special use area “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.”</p>
116	<p>1. Ensure current allowable uses are not causing increased degradation of the CHA considering the impact of rapidly advancing climate change.</p>
116	<p>2. Ensure any new allowable uses will not increase harm to fish and wildlife in the CHA which are currently being impacted by climate change and ocean acidification.</p>
116	<p>3. Apply latest science and mapping to CHA revisions.</p>

116	4. Ensure local knowledge is incorporated into CHA revisions through an open and transparent process driven by citizens.
116	5. Ensure the public is clearly aware of any changes under consideration and has adequate time to discuss and repeal or modify proposed changes.
116	6. Ensure staffing at ADF&G is adequate to monitor and enforce any activities which have a potential to increase impacts to the CHA.
116	7. Repeal the practice of authorizing certain activities in the CHA under a general permit. This permit lacks adequate protection and monitoring requirements which ADF&G should undertake in a CHA. A general permit is not appropriate for site-specific activities with a potential to degrade the CHA. Site-specific permits for all activities that impact the CHA should be utilized instead.
116	8. Maintain prohibition on use of jet-skis in Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats CHAs. The recreational use of jet-skis is allowed in nearly all waters of Alaska, and should not be authorized for use in a CHA. Should ADF&G revive the debate over jet-ski use in the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats CHA, they must closely review scientific literature on the impacts of jet-skis on aquatic environments, consider the proximity of these CHAs to the major population centers of Alaska, and assume a high degree of impact to the marine and riverine environments within the CHAs from widespread recreational jet-ski usage.
117	The statutory purpose of Critical Habitat Areas as stated in AS 16.20.500 is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” This should serve as the principle throughout the management plan review process.
117	I have lived within sight of Kachemak Bay since 1979 and remember well the oil lease buyback and legislative establishment of it as our first CHA. Over the years I have benefitted in many ways from the natural beauty and biological productivity of the bay and its surrounding watershed. This has included harvest of fish and wildlife, non consumptive recreation, and science and environmental education for countless children and adults through my work with Homer’s Pratt Museum. It is my firm conviction that CHA designation has made it possible to sustain such beneficial uses even in the face of a growing population and periodic demands for approval of incompatible activities. I do not want to see enforcement watered down.
117	While this management plan review and the resulting document will significantly affect the ability of local people and visitors to continue enjoying the richness of Kachemak Bay and it’s watershed, it will have a wider influence as well. The process, and outcome, will provide a template for Special Area Planning across the state. Consequently, the goal must be to eliminate loopholes which could invite political influence and eradicate policy ambiguity for all ADF&G staff. The review should result in removal of any language which waters down the statutory mandate to protect and preserve habitat and restrict incompatible uses. Enforcement language must clearly reflect AS 16.20.500 with little latitude for interpretation by permitting staff.
117	In discussing this issue with other interested stakeholders I discovered much common ground. Cook Inletkeeper submitted specific issues for consideration during the plan review process. Since they reflect my own, I quote them here from of that organization’s comments (Pages 2 & 3, Section B, Policies): As for specific elements to consider within the plan revision, Inletkeeper supports the inclusion of all the topics under the current plan, with an eye toward the statutory mandate referenced above.
117	<i>1. Off-Road Vehicles: The plan should contain strong provisions that prohibit ORV use in wetlands, tidelands and uplands because such uses invariably conflict with habitat protection statutory mandates.</i>

117	<i>2. Fish & Wildlife Enhancement/Aquatic Farming: While the current plan has sufficient language to manage hatcheries in line with statutory requirements, ADFG has not implemented the plan in accordance with the current plan's policies. Fish straying, genetic dilution, prey competition, benthic and water column disruptions and other factors must all be considered for fish enhancement within one of the state's relatively few Critical Habitat Areas.</i>
117	<i>3. Water Quality: Kachemak Bay is an estuary, and as a result, only the state's water quality standards for fresh and estuarine waters should be applied; marine water quality standards are inapplicable.</i>
117	<i>4. Mooring Buoys: The current plan fails to address large vessel moorage, specifically, the benthic habitat destruction that occurs when large vessels, including but not limited to tankers and barges, drag anchor and wire during high winds and large tides. These issues should be addressed and permanent mooring buoys should be required to meet statutory habitat mandates.</i>
117	<i>5. Docks: Despite the language in the current plan, ADFG's permitting arm has failed to prevent substantial Styrofoam pollution throughout the Bay due to recent dock replacement projects. As a result, closed-cell foam, Styrofoam and similar materials should be banned in the CHA's; existing facilities could be grandfathered in.</i>
117	<i>6. Shoreline Alteration: The current standard appears unambiguous. Nonetheless, ADFG's permitting arm has seen fit to ignore this standard at various times. Because the integrity of the CHA's rests firmly on intact shoreline habitat, the revised plan should double-down on this prohibition and make it clear individual permitting staff do not have the authority to circumvent the plan's clear intent to protect shoreline habitat.</i>
117	<i>7. Drill Rig Storage: ADFG staff ignored this standard and allowed Buccaneer to store a drill rig in the CHA several years ago; ultimately, the law was changed to carve out the Homer dock area from the CHA. Now that the Homer dock is available, the " revised plan should make clear that no area in the CHA is suitable for storing a drill" rig, regardless whether its legs are up or down.</i>
117	<i>8. Commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fishing: The impacts of these activities should be considered in the revised plan.</i>
117	<i>9. Nonpoint Source Pollution: The impacts of polluted runoff should be considered in the revised plan.</i>
117	<i>10. Sewage: Vessel- and shore-based sewage pollution should be considered in the revised plan; vessel-based sewage discharges should be prohibited, and shorebased discharges should be held to tertiary standards.</i>
117	<i>11." Sonar: sonar usage should be considered and restricted in the revised " plan.</i>
117	In addition, it will be important to retain a management policy that takes into account cumulative effects of all commercial, recreational, municipal, or other activities. Permitting within the critical habitats should take into account these cumulative effects. All resource development and shipping in Cook Inlet has the potential to affect Kachemak Bay and its watershed. The plan should recognize this and include project consultation or appropriate monitoring by ADF&G to help reduce negative effects to both critical habitats from outside their boundaries. This is especially important for preventing introduction of invasive species by vessel traffic and oil and gas drilling rig transport.
117	A robust, ongoing scientific data collection program for accurately evaluating the health of the Critical Habitats and their fish and wildlife over time should be required as part of the plan revision. This should involve collaboration between various state and federal resource management entities.

117	During my time living near Kachemak Bay I have experienced vast change in climate, flora and fauna, human population, and urbanization. Change seems to be the only constant and the rate of change seems to be accelerating. Good management of the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats CHAs can't alter that. It's my firm conviction, however, that we can protect the productivity of habitat as change occurs through management practices rooted in scientific study and through rigorous restriction of incompatible uses.
118	The Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plans have served this special area well and are a good template from which to work. It needs to remain a strong document to achieve its purpose "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose."
118	I adamantly oppose efforts to weaken protections on these two world class areas that are so key to the health and vitality of its local communities.
118	I wholeheartedly concur with the suggested list of issues Cook Inletkeeper recommends for consideration in revising these plans, which include: All goals, policies and standards must comply with the CHA's statutory purpose - i.e., "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.
118	ADFG must establish clear, enforceable standards to protect and preserve important habitat, and to restrict incompatible uses. ADFG must use mandatory, nondiscretionary language to promote predictability and ensure uniform protections throughout Kachemak Bay.
118	In light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should embrace the Precautionary Principle, and adopt a management plan which builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats bioregion.
118	ADFG should address all the topics and issues covered in the current management plan's policies.
118	climate change & ocean acidification
118	• large & small vessel mooring & storage
118	• commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fishing
118	• off-road & human-powered vehicles
118	• styrofoam floats & plastics pollution
118	• sewage discharges
118	• benthic disturbances
118	• sonar usage
118	• aesthetic impacts
118	ADFG should provide a side-by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan.
118	ADFG should use the latest mapping and other information from state, federal and local sources, including but not limited to NOAA multi-band bathymetry, Alaska Ocean Observing System data, and GIS layers available from the Kenai Borough, the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, ADFG, DNR and other sources.

<p>118</p>	<p>Although there is a regulation that bans jetskis from the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat areas, I believe it is still important to have use of this type of craft banned in the Management Plan because its use is incompatible with protection of fish and wildlife habitat and protection of nesting areas. The full public review that occurred for the development of the regulation left little doubt in the public mind that due to the way these craft are used they are incompatible with the goals and objectives of the Critical Habitat Management Plan and that enforcement of any zones or illegal uses would be too expensive and difficult to enforce. As an area with a long list of special designations beyond a critical habitat area deserves to be exempt from uses such as this which have proved so detrimental elsewhere in the country.</p>
<p>118</p>	<p>Furthermore, it is critical to work with local scientists to protect species that have been identified as depleted in Kachemak Bay. Local experts have identified more than 20 species that have either declined or been depleted over the years. Critical Habitats are designated for the purpose of protecting the wildlife and its habitat. The plan needs to be strengthened to keep this from happening to other species and to help declined or depleted species recover.</p>
<p>118</p>	<p>The current management plans have protected Kachemak Bay well for the most part. With changing climate, warming oceans, changing biological use patterns, more people, added pollution, and more, the job of taking care of these special areas requires a strong plan. These resources will sustain us into the future if we take care of them wisely and protect them properly with a good management plan redesigned to maintain mandated protections and additional means to address new problems.</p>
<p>119</p>	<p>As you know, Cook Inletkeeper has been intimately engaged in various Alaska habitat issues since its formation over 22 years ago. I'm writing now to offer some scoping comments on the revision process for the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Plan. With its headquarters in Homer, Inletkeeper has a close and familiar relationship with Kachemak Bay, its people and history, and its management. Just this past summer, we held a panel discussion to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the buyback of the oil and gas leases which had been let in Kachemak Bay in the early 1970's. That fight played a central role in the creation of the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas. Unfortunately, since then, a growing population and a veritable explosion in various uses has changed the complexion of the region. For example, in the 1980's we witnessed the crash of once-prolific shrimp and crab fisheries, along with the jobs and economies they supported. More recently, we have experienced similarly alarming changes, including massive die-offs of common murrelets, sea otters, little neck clams, butter clams and razor clams. Now, a massive spruce aphid infestation is taking over where the spruce beetle left off 20 years ago, marking radical changes to our forests and our watershed. While some of these changes can certainly be attributed to our rapidly changing climate, rising water temperatures and increased ocean acidification, others can be ascribed to elevated harvest pressures, competition for prey species and short-sighted resource management</p>

119	<p>In reviewing the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Plan, it’s important for ADFG to consider past efforts to rollback basic habitat protections in Alaska’s Special Areas under the previous Administration. Those proposed changes sparked a strong and united backlash from a broad spectrum of Alaskans, and revealed just how important our Special Areas are to residents and tourists alike. Now, despite other Special Area plans requiring updates and revisions, ADFG has chosen the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas as the first plan to revise under this Administration. While Inletkeeper does not know the precise process by which ADFG chose to revise the Kachemak Bay & Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Plan first, we have strong concerns that certain hold-over staff from the previous Administration may have influenced this process in an effort to dilute the enforceability of the plan and to eliminate clear and predictable policies that restrict uses incompatible with the purposes of the CHA’s. We truly hope this is not the case. Because this planning process – and the final plan it produces – will serve as important precedent across Alaska for Special Area plan revisions in the future, we strongly urge the Walker Administration to pursue a legacy that includes strong, clearly-defined policies that protect critical habitat against inconsistent and/or politically-influenced permitting and management decisions. Importantly, this approach provides a level playing field that increases predictability for businesses and the general public, and promotes consistency and even-handed management for local, state and federal governments.</p>
119	<p>As a threshold matter, the purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” AS 16.20.500. ADFG must adhere to this clear and unambiguous language to comply with the legislative intent behind it. For example, the plan cannot include the type of language contained in the current plan, which seeks merely to “[m]inimize the degradation and loss of habitat....”¹ Instead, the plan must “protect and preserve” habitat, and “restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.”</p>
119	<p>ADFG need not address jetskis or personal watercraft in the plan revision process because these vehicles are already banned under a separate regulation (5 AAC 95.310) which went through 3 public meetings and two formal hearings in 2001. The jetski ban received enormous public support in 2001, when over 70% of the 1850 Alaskans who spoke out supported the ban; a similar level of public support arose again in 2011 when State Parks considered – and rejected – changes to the ban.</p>
119	<p>As for specific elements to consider within the plan revision, Inletkeeper supports the inclusion of all the topics under the current plan, with an eye toward the statutory mandate referenced above.</p>
119	<p>1. Off-Road Vehicles: The plan should contain strong provisions that prohibit ORV use in wetlands, tidelands and uplands because such uses invariably conflict with habitat protection statutory mandates.</p>
119	<p>2. Fish & Wildlife Enhancement/Aquatic Farming: While the current plan has sufficient language to manage hatcheries in line with statutory requirements, ADFG has not implemented the plan in accordance with the current plan’s policies. Fish straying, genetic dilution, prey competition, benthic and water column disruptions and other factors must all be considered for fish enhancement within one of the state’s relatively few Critical Habitat Areas.</p>
119	<p>3. Water Quality: Kachemak Bay is an estuary, and as a result, only the state’s water quality standards for fresh and estuarine waters should be applied; marine water quality standards are inapplicable.</p>

119	4. Mooring Buoys: The current plan fails to address large vessel moorage, specifically, the benthic habitat destruction that occurs when large vessels, including but not limited to tankers and barges, drag anchor and wire during high winds and large tides. These issues should be addressed and permanent mooring buoys should be required to meet statutory habitat mandates.
119	5. Docks: Despite the language in the current plan, ADFG's permitting arm has failed to prevent substantial Styrofoam pollution throughout the Bay due to recent dock replacement projects. As a result, closed-cell foam, Styrofoam and similar materials should be banned in the CHA's; existing facilities could be grand-fathered in.
119	6. Shoreline Alteration: The current standard appears unambiguous. Nonetheless, ADFG's permitting arm has seen fit to ignore this standard at various times. Because the integrity of the CHA's rests firmly on intact shoreline habitat, the revised plan should double-down on this prohibition and make it clear individual permitting staff do not have the authority to circumvent the plan's clear intent to protect shoreline habitat.
119	7. Drill Rig Storage: ADFG staff ignored this standard and allowed Buccaneer to store a drill rig in the CHA several years ago; ultimately, the law was changed to carve out the Homer dock area from the CHA. Now that the Homer dock is available, the revised plan should make clear that no area in the CHA is suitable for storing a drill rig, regardless whether its legs are up or down.
119	8. Commercial, sport, personal use and subsistence fishing: The impacts of these activities should be considered in the revised plan.
119	9. Nonpoint Source Pollution: The impacts of polluted runoff should be considered in the revised plan.
119	10. Sewage: Vessel- and shore-based sewage pollution should be considered in the revised plan; vessel-based sewage discharges should be prohibited, and shore-based discharges should be held to tertiary standards.
119	11. Sonar: sonar usage should be considered and restricted in the revised plan.
119	Due to the challenges inherent in revising management plans, Inletkeeper strongly recommends ADFG produce a side-by-side comparison showing the current and proposed plan language.
119	Inletkeeper also recommends ADFG coordinate closely with NOAA as the implications of the Ninth Circuit's recent decision on the application of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in Cook Inlet become more clear.
119	Finally, during a time of rapid change, it's vital the revised plan build resiliency into Kachemak Bay by embracing a precautionary management approach. This means avoiding the death-by-thousand cuts permitting decisions we have seen in the past, and enacting fair and consistent enforcement language that leaves little or no ambiguity for permitting staff. It means erring on the side of protection, especially when data are limited, as required by statute. And it means taking a hard look at warming water temperatures (fresh and otherwise), ocean acidification, glacier melt/retreat and related consequences of a rapidly changing ecosystem.

<p>119</p>	<p>Please accept these supplemental comments on behalf of Cook Inletkeeper and its more than 2000 members and supporters in Southcentral Alaska on ADFG’s scoping process for the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas (CHA) Management Plan. The purpose of these comments is to urge you reject efforts now underway to re-open discussion around the ban on personal watercraft (PWC) in the CHA’s. As noted in our October 27, 2016, comments to ADFG, the ban on PWC’s is promulgated in separate and distinct rules from the CHA’s management plan, and those rules went through an extensive public process. For example, the rules at 5 AAC 95.310 went through three (3) public meetings and two (2) formal hearings in 2001. Importantly, over 70% of the more than 1850 Alaskans who commented on the issue supported the PWC ban in Kachemak Bay. A similar majority of Alaskans spoke-up again in 2011 to support the ban when Alaska State Parks considered the issue.</p>
<p>119</p>	<p>While the technology around PWC noise and pollution has improved over the years, there remain unique characteristics which make PWC’s inherently different from most boats. For example, boats generally traverse from point A to point B, and while PWC’s certainly can do that, they are often ridden as thrill craft, spinning donuts, jumping wakes, and running at high speeds close to shore.¹ Furthermore, PWC users often travel and maneuver in groups, creating an even-more distinct set of impacts compared to boats. As a result, PWC’s can and would have a unique impact on wildlife and recreational values in the CHA. Imagine if you were in the back of Halibut Cove or Tutka Bay in Kachemak Bay. A normal vessel traversing the area typically wouldn’t linger and do spins and join with other boats in wake jumping, etc. But with personal watercraft, that would be a normal course of operation, and as a result, it would completely change the recreational experience and create unique fish and wildlife impacts. (Footnote: We readily concede PWC’s CAN be operated in a manner that does not create impacts which are unique from ordinary boat impacts, and that they can be used for fishing and hunting. However, by virtue of their design and power systems, they are often prone to be ridden as thrill-craft at high speeds. In fact, at least one study has shown PWC’s have higher incidence rates than boats in violating nearshore speed restrictions. See JAY F. GORZELANY) ADFG need not look far in Alaska to see how other agencies and jurisdictions manage PWC’s, with dozens of lakes and/or rivers prohibiting their use.² On the other hand, if PWC users want to access marine waters, the options are virtually limitless – Prince William Sound, Resurrection Bay, and 95% of Cook Inlet are open and accessible for PWC use. We do not believe it is too much to ask that one relatively small area which supports magnificent fish, wildlife and recreational values should remain free from the unique impacts PWC’s present.</p>
<p>120</p>	<p>ADFG uses the Unified EcoRegions of Alaska, showing three separate ecoregions within the KBCHA. Gulf Coast of Alaska Ecoregion Chugach St Elias Mountains Ecoregion Cook Inlet Basin Ecoregion http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=ecosystems.ecoregions Another interesting paper, tho older, also depicts the ecoregions on page 11 The Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area is located within: 115 Cook Inlet Ecoregion, 119 Pacific Coastal Mountains Ecoregion, 120 Coastal Western Hemlock-Sitka Spruce Forest Ecoregion http://alaska.usgs.gov/products/pubs/2001/2001-OF2001-11.pdf The connection between these diverse habitats, the hydrology and terrain within these habitats driving the diversity and abundance of fish and wildlife resources requires connection. To perform accurate consistent habitat, wildlife and Fish management the complexity of this structure requires recognition. It is a missing component of management. I feel we can use this opportunity as a tool to help bring this Statute to closer consistency and compatibility with the other closely aligned statutes and regulations within this area. Presently it is way out of alignment.</p>

120	A scientifically based non paid Board is needed to oversee, cooperate, and coordinate research, monitoring, regulatory decisions and management actions towards conservation. Without this, the disjointed remote management approach will continue to lead to the opposite of perpetuation of fish and wildlife...depletion. Oversight by one or two people making decisions is not enough.
120	I am hoping this CHA can be a showcase of what the words "Critical Habitat" means in the State of Alaska and what the ADFG can accomplish including keeping "perpetuation of Fish and Wildlife" intact. While the habitat may still be relatively intact we have a disconnect between the habitat and the fruit of the habitat... "perpetuation of fish and wildlife" species. We have over 22 depleted species from overharvest in this CHA. I wonder how this perspective can be incorporated in the revision? Yes there was a climatic regime shift in 1977-78 but monitoring is almost non existent while full scale harvest continued and continues on depleted populations without the concept of ecosystem management incorporated into harvest regulations.
120	Some of the problems facing this Critical Habitat Area that require open honest discussion are: shifted baselines, over-harvest, generational amnesia by managers, the Boards, and the public; the industrial release of massive amounts of introduced populations of hatchery pinks outcompeting and eating indigenous populations in a known shellfish nursery, the unrecognized multiple Ecological Regions requiring separate management strategies, inadequate oversight requiring the precautionary principle. Please advise how these subjects can be incorporated to create a State of the Art Showcase that will be a model of superior management that serves all Alaskans and visitors in this astounding critical area recognized by the Kachemak Bay National Research Reserve, the NOAA Kachemak Bay Habitat Focus Area, the Kachemak Bay State Park, Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Network and the National Maritime Wildlife Refuge this area hosts. While some of the issues are contentious I feel we need to face hard truths, face the politics and keep the dialog open for consistency and compatibility of the multiple Statutes, Regulations, and Goals and Policies to fulfill "perpetuation of fish and wildlife" this area was designed for.
121	I'm attaching the publication and the report that I mentioned that came from the three years of research we conducted in the Fox River Flats (from 2009-2012). The public meeting in Homer reinforced to me how much people care about the Fox River Flats area from a wide variety of perspectives, and how important access is. On a recent field trip there, we noted how the river's main channel has shifted, which could mean that many of the small channels that we know are important rearing areas for juvenile coho and sockeye salmon could become potentially much closer to access vehicle traffic. We (KBNERR) would like to help in any way we can. If it would be helpful, I would be happy to assist by being on the planning team for revising the CHA management plan.

122	<p>Appreciate you taking the time to talk to me about the Personal Water Craft issue in Kachemak Bay. I know you had said it might be hard for you to add the PWC issue to the list at this point. The people running the meeting at Islands and Oceans really made it out to be just a time to hear ideas on what people use Kachemak Bay for. Mike Arno talked for 10 minutes to the entire room about the subject and unfair user access of the topic. I feel it gave the necessary opportunity for other users to give their opinion. I stayed for the entire meeting, I was actually the last one to leave. None of the topics brought up were any sort of debate with the state or other users. It was just individuals telling the state their opinion on a specific topic they wanted addressed for the re-write of the management plan. Our discussion on equal access had the same if not more time spent talking to the room on. There was actually a lot of people agreeing with our argument on equal access. I really hope you are able to help and get this brought up for the management plan. I have been working really hard on this for years with the state park. It seems like such a silly thing with the way the machines are now days. I think the compromise is the easiest way to make this happen, as far as only legalizing 4 stroke PWCs. Let me know if there is anything else I can do to help this happen</p>
123	<p>I am a 27 year Alaska resident and lived in Homer 20 of those years and will be retiring back to Homer next year. As a member of the Kachemak Bay Conservation Society and a long time Alaska resident, I have a strong interest in the future of this critical habitat area. The designation of critical habitat is essential to the conservation and protection of species within that region. Any and all activities that negatively impact the habitat and potentially damage the region and ultimately impact species dependent on an intact ecosystem should be restricted.</p>
123	<p>These activities include but should not be limited to include oil and gas exploration including fracking, logging and timber extraction, destructive fishing practices including dredging and trawling, mining, land based motor vehicles and roads, airboats, hovercrafts or jetskis.</p>
123	<p>Removing timer, rock, gravel and sand, pest and disease control, predator control in all its forms, wildlife introduction and wildlife habitat manipulation should not be permitted.</p>
123	<p>The impact of large numbers of people and their waste should not be permitted. This includes excessive number of tourists and visitors.</p>
123	<p>There may be opportunities for conservation and educational and research programs that strive to enhance the critical habitat areas. I support opportunities that strengthen the ecosystem and the stewardship of the region.</p>
124	<p>These scoping comments are on behalf of the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District. Our mission is <i>to provide education and leadership in the conservation and sustainable use of soil and water-related resources through cooperative programs that protect, restore and improve our environment.</i> It is in this spirit that the Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP) was created in 2010. This document was a collaborative effort between several agencies including the Fox River Cattlemen, the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, the Alaska State Department of Natural Resources, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. With the CRMP we have two benefits: 1.) With the experience and knowledge base that went into the CRMP, we have an accepted outline for continued work in the Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area. We would like to see a continuation of the directives it outlines. 2.) With our experience working with the team of different agencies involved, we would like to offer to assist mitigating any perceived or real conflicts in the Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area.</p>

125	I have lived in Homer for thirty-two years and enjoyed the benefits of Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats for recreation the entire time. I have ridden horses up on the Flats to experience the grandeur at the head of the bay. I have boated & kayaked on Kachemak Bay, to fish, enjoy the wildlife, and hike in Kachemak Bay State Park. I have retired from marine industry after sailing worldwide for forty-eight years and I can never get home fast enough. I have seen the worst possible marine and land degradation imaginable. The Kachemak Bay area deserves the upmost protection for future generations. Thank you for the opportunity to comment for this scoping process and please accept the following comments; The environment of the world is changing faster than politicians care to admit. It is no more evident than in Alaska and the Ice Fields around Kachemak Bay. The main culprit is Mankind. The worldwide growing population and its use of fossil fuels is producing carbon emissions that are causing extreme weather changes, including ocean acidification. The population of South-Central Alaska is growing and so is the stress on popular areas to hunt, recreate and fish. We must have the foresight to manage Critical Habitats in a manner that will ensure opportunities for future Alaskans to enjoy these wonderful areas.
125	My main interests are to protect the environment that I have enjoyed in the K-Bay Area. A management plan is exactly that, a plan that hopefully will ensure the health of the areas through regulation based on sound Scientific Information. As AS16.20.500 states, the purpose 16.20.690 is to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.
125	I have witnessed the changes in Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats over the years and want to point out that there have been profound changes that have not been explained. Marine life population has changed drastically with sharp decreases in shrimp, crab & herring.
125	On the Flats, the unregulated use and number of off-road vehicles has created a patchwork of disturbed mud-way very evident from the air.
125	These Management Plans must address the negative or positive impacts that we are creating. These include commercial harvest operations of shellfish, hatcheries, recreational use and pollution from the above. Today we should consider the permissible use that these areas can sustain. High-density fish hatcheries worldwide have been studied, and negative effects to the marine environment documented. I hope ADF&G will have a hard look at effects of these operations and parallels to Alaska and Kachemak Bay. It is also apparent that ADF&G is under staffed and unable at this time to provide oversight to this industry. The only choice ADF&G has is to limit this industry.
125	It is evident that the State of Alaska does not have the budget to study either area to understand and protect the environment and wildlife within. This is evident in the current degradation in areas such as Jackalof Bay, the head of the bay and generally the entire coast of the Kachemak Bay. The State needs to exhibit some grit and go after people who degrade these areas and develop a means to issue fines that do not require the expensive assets of the state to collect.

125	I have enjoyed kayaking and wildlife watching around the Bay for years. When the Jet Ski, (Personal Watercraft) issue flared up, I supported the banning. There is a push by industry and dealers to open the critical habitat to these crafts. I feel that opening will make the bay a destination for these craft that will increase due to the popularity and cost of the high-speed craft. There should be one area in the state where a kayaker or paddle boarder can go and enjoy the surroundings without thrill vessels about. Current restrictions on motorized activities on land and water should be maintained or further restricted if indicated by research discussed above. Further restriction of these activities should be considered if governing rules couldn't be enforced. Regulatory prohibitions on personal watercraft use in the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat should be recognized and incorporated in the revised Management Plans.
125	The Fox River Flats have endured cattle and horses for years and has experienced some degradation from grazing but it is nothing compared to the increase in All Terrain Vehicle, (ATV) use. If continued the way use is going the Flats will look like a mud park. Some traffic corridors should be developed.
125	I do not support any reduction of the prohibitions for mineral or oil exploration in these Critical Habitats.
126	KBCS strongly supports increasing the protections of the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitats. These Critical Habitats are experiencing drastic and dynamic environmental changes which have never been witnessed in recorded history. These special waters and areas deserve the stewardship and increased continued care that only an excellent management plan can provide. KBCS does not support any decreases in protection for these Critical Habitat areas. The increased pressures from population growth and development warrant equally increased protections for the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitat waters and wildlife. Kachemak Bay and the surrounding area have been the focus of Kachemak Bay Conservation Society (KBCS) for over 35 years, as our name depicts. We watch with trepidation as the cumulative human caused impacts on Kachemak Bay, and all oceans increase.
126	The increase in oil and gas development on the Kenai Peninsula is especially alarming, with climate change and ocean acidification knocking on our shores. The Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitat designations have provided much needed protection for these special areas, but the threat of a tanker oil spill or a blow out around the corner in Cook Inlet, since development continues to migrate further south, is always a possibility.
126	AS 16.20.500. The purpose of AS 16.20.500 - 16.20.690 is to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose. The goals of the current CHMP should be retained. The priority levels of the goals should be retained as well with public use goals being subordinate to fish and wildlife preservation goals. 1. The primary goal of the CHMP is currently, and should remain, to manage the critical habitat areas in a manner that maintains and enhances fish and wildlife populations and their habitat.

126	An objective under the primary goal listed above is to minimize harmful disturbance ¹ to fish and wildlife populations. This objective should be retained. Numerous factors and conditions, only some of which have been identified, are causing harmful disturbances to the fish and wildlife in Alaska generally and in the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat specifically. The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) must do some serious research into these conditions to formulate an effective management plan. Causes of massive seabird (Murre) die offs, dead whales in the gulf of AK, sea otter die-offs in Kachemak Bay, disruptions to bird nesting behavior, and reductions to stellar sea lion and clam population must be identified and addressed. ¹ The current Critical Habitat Management Plan (CHMP) defines "Harmful Disturbance" as "Activities which displace animals from their natural habitat or interrupt their seasonal activities at a frequency or duration which causes significant impact to fish and wildlife populations."
126	ADF&G noted that climate change factors were affecting commercial salmon fisheries in Cook Inlet. In 2016, ADF&G noted, "Elevated ocean temperatures and rapidly melting snowpack will likely continue having an effect on Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon fisheries with regards to run timing as well as freshwater migration patterns and success." ² If ocean temperatures are affecting Cook Inlet habitat, then certainly Kachemak Bay habitat is affected as well. ADF&G should collaborate with all state and federal agencies and organizations doing research in Kachemak Bay to ensure the revised CHMP contains policies that address these and future issues. The revised plan should include the research parameters and metrics needed to ensure continued collection of relevant data for monitoring these and future harmful disturbances. ² See ADF&G Inseason Commercial Salmon Catch Reports, Sept 23, 2016 and others
126	Another objective of the primary goal in the current CHMP is the recognition of cumulative impacts when considering effects of small incremental developments and action affecting critical habitat area resources. This policy should be retained in the revised plan. Collaboration with State and Federal agencies should be a requirement in the revised plan to ensure identification of activities in Kachemak Bay and greater Cook Inlet which contribute to cumulative impacts on the habitat. Policies may be needed to reduce the permitting of oil and gas drilling activities and to exert pressure on the DEC ³ in pending regulations modifications to prohibit release of toxins and warmed water into KBay and Cook Inlet from drilling, mining and other activities.
126	Importantly, current prohibitions in the CHMP on mineral and materials extraction, oil and gas drilling and oil rig storage should be maintained and even expanded to include areas adjacent to the critical habitats.
126	Goals regarding the maintenance of water quality for fish and wildlife are critical to the life and well-being of the habitat and should be retained in any revised CHMP.

<p>126</p>	<p>The current Alaska Wildlife Management Plan identifies data collection as a high priority: A high priority conservation action in Alaska is data acquisition. Alaska needs better and more monitoring to identify species that are potentially in trouble. For those species that are at risk or declining, research is required to understand why they are declining, and where conservation action is needed. A policy stressing methodologies for effective and meaningful data collection should be included in the revised CHMP. Much research and data collection is required to understand the current impacts on fish and wildlife described above. An effective plan, to include measurable criteria and stringent data collection procedures, must be developed to protect the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitat from the effects of climate change and human based activities. An example of the need for meaningful research metrics follows. Aquatic farming activities impact water quality and the current CHMP contains provisions for monitoring these activities. Specifically the plan states that permitting agencies must work together to evaluate existing aquatic farms as outlined in the aquatic farming policy and to consider establishing acreage and farm number limits in Kachemak Bay in the future. This implementation plan presumably requires monitoring of effects of fish hatcheries on water quality and on wild fish populations. However, the 2012 evaluation of the Tutka Bay Lagoon hatchery concluded that ADF&G had not identified the metrics for data collection and measurement, rendering ineffective the conditions placed on the permit. The revised CHMP must include research goals and metrics for meaningful, relevant data collection on fish and wildlife species numbers and health, water quality, general habitat quality, and the effects of human activities in the habitat. Numerous agencies and organizations, both State, Federal and nonprofit, collect data in the Critical Habitats and hopefully will be filing scoping comments.⁴ ADF&G should contact these organizations and agencies and review all data that pertains to the goals of the CHMP. If ADF&G does not plan to request such data from individual organizations, ADF&G should issue a general request for data submissions, in addition to initial scoping comments, so all pertinent data can be reviewed before a revised CHMP is issued. ADF&G should include scientists and organizations working in Kachemak Bay in the planning of the revised management plan</p>
<p>126</p>	<p>Public access is the second goal listed in the current CHMP. By statute, this goal is subordinate to the primary goal of managing the critical habitat areas to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat. This subordination should be retained in any revised plan. Public access levels must be evaluated after completion of the research into the factors listed above that are causing disturbance to habitat fish and wildlife populations. Revisions to public access policies must be made if implicated by the results of this research. In formulating policies on human activities in the habitat, the ADF&G should consider its ability to enforce rules and conditions related to these activities. Certain activities should not be permitted if enforcement of governing rules cannot be enforced.</p>
<p>126</p>	<p>Prohibitions on oil and gas development in the Critical Habitats should be maintained in the revised CHMP. Provisions that mandate coordination with Alaska DOG5 regarding development in areas adjacent to the Critical Habitats should be included. The current Plan language does not state a prohibition of oil drilling in the Fox River Critical Habitat. The revised plan should include a prohibition for this Habitat. Oil and Gas development permits for areas adjacent to the Critical Habitat should be examined for chemical and waste disposal, transportation issues, and spills and leaks that could potentially cause harmful disturbance to the Critical Habitat and its fish and wildlife.</p>

126	The policy on aquatic farming in the current CHMP should be retained and restrictions expanded if indicated by research on the effects of farming on water quality. As indicated in previous discussion, research on the impacts of fish hatcheries is inconclusive due to a lack of effective, relevant data collection. Naisch et. al. ⁶ note that it is unclear whether hatcheries are meeting conservation and fishery enhancement goals because they are not managed on a sound scientific basis. The authors conclude that coordinated research within existing hatchery systems using appropriate controls is needed along with active debate about the role of hatcheries in today's society. Information on fish hatchery impacts on Pacific Salmon that may prove beneficial in studying Alaska Salmon projects can be found in the book "Salmon Without Rivers." ⁷ ⁶ An Evaluation of the Effects of Conservation and Fishery Enhancement Hatcheries on Wild Populations of Salmon, Advances in Marine Biology vol.53, 2008. ⁷ Salmon Without Rivers, Jim Lichatowich, Island Press 1999, 2001. Until solid data is collected and analyzed from existing hatcheries in Kachemak Bay, new aquatic farming ventures should be prohibited. If data shows that salmon hatcheries have negative impacts on populations of wild fish, all hatchery activities should be terminated.
126	Current restrictions on motorized activities on land and water should be maintained or further restricted if indicated by research discussed above. Further restriction of these activities should be considered if governing rules cannot be enforced. Regulatory prohibitions on personal watercraft use in the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat should be recognized and incorporated in the revised CHMP. ⁸ 5 AAC 95.310 Personal watercraft use prohibited.
126	Allowances for sewage disposal in the Habitats should be re-examined in light of cumulative effects that contribute to the harmful disturbances to wildlife noted at the beginning of these comments. Sewage disposal methods may have evolved since the writing of the current CHMP but this human use of the Habitat should be reviewed and either prohibited or made subject to stricter conditions.
126	Education of the public regarding the purpose and value of the critical habitats should continue to be emphasized in the revised CHMP. Education should include proper respect and care of the environment when working or recreating in and near the Critical Habitat areas. It should be mandatory for businesses and recreational professionals to provide effective educational materials to workers and clients.

<p>127</p>	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the future management plan for the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitat Areas (CHAs). Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association’s (CIAA) interests are aligned with the goal of managing the critical habitat areas to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat—goal number one on page five of the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. We are also in support of the Fish and Wildlife Habitat and Population Enhancement and Rehabilitation Policy outlined on page seven. Our mission to provide and protect the salmon resource in the Cook Inlet watershed (including these CHAs) through fisheries enhancement and habitat protection activities is completely in support of and in line with the goal and policy mentioned above. Our current fisheries enhancement activities maintain or improve fishing opportunities within the Kachemak Bay CHA and these activities improve opportunities for photography, education, and the viewing and study of fish and wildlife. Users have enjoyed recreational, personal use, and commercial fisheries for decades in the Kachemak Bay CHA. Activities such as the China Poot sockeye dipnet fishery, the Halibut Cove king salmon sport fishery, and the commercial fishery for pink salmon in Tutka Bay provide opportunities for Alaskans and visitors to enjoy these resources. These opportunities are available through fisheries enhancement projects such as the stocking of Leisure and Hazel lakes by CIAA, the stocking of Halibut Cove Lagoon by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and the operation of the Tutka Bay Lagoon pink salmon hatchery by CIAA. We understand that integrating all the different stakeholder interests into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan is a challenging task. Fisheries enhancement programs are an integral part of the plan, offering CHA users valuable opportunities for fishing and other recreating activities. We support the existing language in the plan and the additional language as outlined above that addresses fish habitat and population enhancement and rehabilitation.</p>
<p>127</p>	<p>There are also indirect benefits to the enhancement programs because the salmon releases and subsequent adult returns become a food source for other predators such as eagles, whales, otters, seals, and bears. This thereby increases the wildlife viewing opportunities for CHA users. Fisheries enhancement activities carried out by CIAA increase salmon abundance and diversity within the CHAs and do not adversely impact the water quality. Enhancement activities are carried out in a coordinated way following regulatory approvals provided by agencies such as ADF&G, who carefully monitors salmon populations and genetic diversity to ensure our programs are not impacting wild salmon stocks in terms of diversity and abundance. We support and work on projects that protect natural salmon habitat in addition to our hatchery stocking projects, recognizing that without healthy salmon habitat, salmon populations (enhanced or natural) are not going to thrive.</p>

<p>127</p>	<p>We suggest that fisheries enhancement be recognized in the plan similar to other human uses such as “Aquatic Farming” by adding “Fisheries Enhancement” under “Existing Human Uses” in the resource inventory. Below is suggested language for this addition: Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery, located in Tutka Bay Lagoon, is operated by the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) and is owned by the State of Alaska. The facility was constructed in 1976 and was expanded in 1991 when CIAA took over operations. The primary salmon production is pink salmon, which have been released every year from 1976–2004, and then again starting in 2011 and continuing as of the writing of this plan revision. Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery is permitted by the State of Alaska to incubate 125 million pink salmon eggs and temporarily rear resulting pink salmon fry in net pens prior to release into Tutka Bay. On average the time spent in the net pens is two months. About three million adult pink salmon are expected to return to Tutka Bay each year. The pink salmon are available to for the commercial and sports fisheries, as well as for hatchery operations. Currently CIAA has a permit application to add a site in Tutka Bay for the temporary net pens. In addition to the pink salmon production at Tutka Bay Lagoon hatchery, CIAA operates the Trail Lakes Hatchery in Moose Pass, which rears sockeye salmon for release sites including Leisure and Hazel lakes, and Tutka Bay. Using Leisure Lake as a natural rearing system for hatchery-incubated sockeye salmon fry, ADF&G stocked the lakes from 1976 through 1992. The sockeye salmon are available for the commercial, sport, and personal use fisheries, as well as for hatchery operations. Since 1994, CIAA has been running the stocking program at Leisure and Hazel lakes, which are the source of the sockeye salmon returns. Two million sockeye fry are stocked annually to Leisure Lake and 1.25 million to Hazel Lake. The stocked fry leave the lake as smolt over the following two years and then return as adults over the next two to three years. Lake fertilization and monitoring programs are also in place to ensure that rearing conditions are ideal for the fry. To support sockeye salmon stocking into Leisure and Hazel lakes CIAA temporarily rears and releases sockeye salmon smolt at Tutka Bay Lagoon. About 500,000 smolt are temporarily reared in net pens prior to release into Tutka Bay. On average the time spent in the net pens is two months. The adult sockeye that return to Tutka Bay are harvested in the sport, commercial and cost recovery fisheries and serve as the brood source for future sockeye stocking at Leisure and Hazel lakes and Tutka Bay.</p>
<p>127</p>	<p><i>The following language would need to be run by ADF&G to ensure it is up to date. It was taken from the Recreational Fishing Series, Southcentral Region, Kachemak Bay (https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-sf/Region2/pdfpubs/kachemakbay.pdf), published in 2009 and the ADF&G Division of Sport Fish Region II Statewide Stocking Plan for Sport Fish 2016 (http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/fishing/pdfs/hatcheries/16region2.pdf). In 1984, ADF&G began stocking king salmon into the fishing lagoon on the Homer Spit to provide early-run king salmon angling opportunities for those fishing from shore or from small boats. Approximately 2,000 king salmon are harvested here annually. Coho salmon are also stocked by ADF&G on the Homer Spit. ADF&G began stocking king salmon in Seldovia Bay in 1987 to develop a king salmon sport fishery near Seldovia, a fishing village located about 20 miles southwest of the Homer Spit. A successful fishery was created with an annual harvest of approximately 1,000 king salmon. To increase the number of fish available to anglers, ADF&G stocks king salmon at Halibut Cove Lagoon in Kachemak Bay about 12 miles southeast of the Homer Spit. Annual sport catches here average about 1,000 king salmon</i></p>

<p>128</p>	<p>The current Plan does not mention the need to protect wetlands occurring within the boundaries of the CHAs. This is regardless of the fact that wetlands are key to protecting critical fish and wildlife habitat within the CHAs because wetlands play a critical role in regulating water movement through a watershed. Also, groups of wetlands work collectively as a system serving as “sponges” across the landscape, collecting water from precipitation or runoff until they become saturated, and then releasing it slowly. The amount of water a wetland can store depends on local conditions, wetland type, and soil permeability. The Plan Revisions, therefore, should include regulation of human related impacts such as dredge and fill, vehicle usage, draining, degradation of water quality that can significantly disrupt the beneficial effects of wetlands to fish and wildlife habitat within the CHAs. Much of the wetland area within the Mud River Flats area just below Kachemak Bay road, for example, has been eliminated from vehicle traffic from recreational related driving in the area. This damage could be eliminated and the wetlands and tidal lands could be restored in that area by prohibiting such driving within the boundaries of the Kachemak Bay CHA.</p>
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128	<p>In order to achieve the listed goals of the CHAs, the Plan Revisions should consider the goals of protecting these values using a watershed rather than the current jurisdictional perspective. This is because, natural ecosystems or the activities affecting them, generally, do not adhere to jurisdictional boundaries. By identifying the planning area in terms of jurisdictional standards – which wetlands are a protected and which agency is responsible, therefore, much of the critical habitat in the CHAs will remain un-protected, leading to flawed review of impacts on such habitat. For example, “the Kenai Peninsula has 1,800 miles of anadromous streams and rivers that flow into our surrounding salt waters from 374 outlets”. <i>Peninsula Clarion, Refuge Notebook: Where salmon streams get their water matters (September 22, 2016)</i>. http://peninsulaclarion.com/outdoors/2016-09-22/refuge-notebook-where-salmon-streams-get-their-water-matters . (<i>Salmon Streams</i>). As in the case of Kachemak Bay, some of these rivers “are fed by meltwater from glaciers and persistent snow fields high in the Kenai Mountains.” <i>Ibid</i>. The jurisdictional limitations of the CHAs, therefore, leave out the interconnections between above and below ground waters; and the flood reduction, groundwater recharge, and other services provided by “non-jurisdictional” wetlands, rivers, streams, lakes and ground water. Similarly, nonglacial streams on the peninsula receives their input from precipitation, groundwater and surrounding peatlands. “Peat stores water well and so buffers against dry seasons and drought.” <i>Ibid</i>. In Alaska we are blessed with an abundance of pristine and biologically diverse rivers and streams and marine environments such as the CHAs. In contrast, many watershed systems in the lower 48 are referred to as “impacted” or “non-supporting”, meaning that, due to human activities, they do not retain their original hydrologic functions, channel stability, habitat, water quality, or biodiversity. These water bodies, therefore, are degraded to the point where it may no longer be possible to restore them to their predevelopment conditions. It would not take much, therefore, for Alaska watersheds, that include cities and towns such as the ones within which the CHAs, to start the steady decline into the condition of many lower 48 watershed systems. Most studies, for example, find that storm water drainage affects water quality even at very low impervious cover percentages, depending on the overall watershed condition. An entire subbasin zoned for land use that exceeds 10 percent impervious cover is likely to change the quality of the stream that drains it. Implications of the Impervious Cover Model: Stream Classification, Urban Sub-Watershed Management and Permitting,” Chesapeake Stormwater Network, CSN Technical Bulletin no. 3 (2008). Therefore, at 10 percent impervious cover, stream health is impaired; by 25 percent, streams are degraded and can no longer support aquatic organisms that were originally present. <i>Ibid</i>. Some sensitive species like fish species, therefore, may have trouble surviving in watersheds where impervious cover is below 10 percent. Similarly, water contaminants fall into two broad categories, depending on their source. Point-source pollution originates at an identifiable location (such as a pipe carrying waste from a chemical manufacturing plant, or a boat leaking oil). Non-point-source pollution, carried by storm water runoff, comprises contaminants that are washed from land surfaces in to the water. Multiple sources of contamination, along with weather conditions, can combine to produce dramatic changes in lakes, wetlands, or rivers—especially those that receive water from a large watershed. The causes of degraded fresh water</p>
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<p>128</p>	<p>Oil and gas drilling activity taking place in Cook Inlet has the potential directly affect fish and wildlife habitat within the boundaries of the CHAs, particularly due to the potential for oil and gas blow-outs or spill as a result of such activity. The extreme difficulties, however, of responding to the 2010 <i>Deepwater Horizon</i> oil and gas blowout in the easily accessible and warm water climate of the Gulf of Mexico during the summer of 2010 highlights the challenges and inadequacy of responding to such incidents in the more harsh, less temperate climate and unfavorable conditions found on waters off the coast of Alaska. Given the experience gained from the Gulf oil spill disaster, application of proven BAT to prevent blow-outs is warranted. Yet, oil and gas companies, together with state agencies in Alaska, are baulking at stronger blowout prevention standards. They argue that “the circumstances for such an event are unlikely” even as human communities and fish and wildlife populations attempt to recover from the tragedy in the Gulf after similar rationalizations were adopted by industry and government managers just prior to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In fact, as in the case of Alaska officials today, the Department of the Interior (DOI) failed to impose a full review of potential environmental impacts of the drilling operation in the Gulf, based on the conclusion from preliminary reviews of the area that a massive oil spill was “unlikely.” http://www.care2.com/causes/doi-concluded-massive-spill-unlikely.html (May 7, 2010). The marine waters of Cook Inlet are dominated by extreme tides and temperatures, where high winds, fog and winter ice can make oil spill clean-up impossible for significant portions of the year. Contrary to claims that such incidents are rare in Alaska, several oil well blowouts have occurred on Cook Inlet rigs since 1962. <i>A Fair Warning: Diminished State Oversight Of Oil Spill Contingency Plans</i>, p. 4-5 (February, 2006)(Author Unknown), and there is an average of one oil spill in the Inlet per month resulting from poor oversight of the industry and outdated pipelines. Hal Shepherd, <i>BP Gulf Disaster Taught Lessons We Knew</i>, Homer Tribune (May 11, 2011)(Shepherd, <i>BP Gulf Disaster</i>). The threat from such incidents to the unique natural resources of Cook Inlet and the CHAs was, recently, higher than ever, after the industry announced plans to expand exploratory drilling in the Inlet. In addition, based on the fact that proposed drilling anticipates sinking wells into previously untapped pre-Tertiary formations containing unknown pressures, <i>Ibid</i>, BAT standards should be properly applied to ensure that the state’s response measures are sufficient to handle a blowout in the Inlet from new wells. In fact, a Report by the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling (Deepwater Commission) states that: ...neither the industry’s nor the federal government’s approaches to managing and overseeing the leasing and development of offshore resources have kept pace with rapid changes in the technology, practices, and risks associated with the different geological and ocean environments being explored and developed for oil and gas production. Nor do these approaches reflect the significant changes that have occurred in the structure of the oil and gas industry itself—especially the rise of specialized service contractors and the general trend toward outsourcing multiple functions. <i>National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, Report to the President, Deep Water, The Gulf Oil Disaster and the Future of Offshore Drilling</i>, p. 55-56 (January 11, 2011). The risks posed to the CHAs by increased oil and gas exploration and development in Cook Inlet</p>
<p>128</p>	<p>Similarly, jack-up rigs are regularly stationed within the CHAs and sometimes (in direct violation of CHA regulations), allowed to put down their legs while so stationed which can have direct impacts on fish and wildlife habitat found within Kachemak Bay. While oil and gas development in Cook Inlet, can have direct impacts on fish and wildlife habitat within the CHAs, neither of the CHA Regulatory Agencies has jurisdiction over such development. Instead the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has jurisdiction over jack-up rig transport and the Department of Environmental Quality has jurisdiction over oil and gas drilling and contingency plan development. The Plan Revisions should, therefore, incorporate collaboration between the ADF&G and DEC and USCG on prevention of oil spill contingency planning whenever jack-up rig transportation and operation of such rigs could potentially impact the goals and objectives of the CHAs.</p>

<p>128</p>	<p>The current plan does not even mention the impacts of climate change on “protection of fish and wildlife, their habitats and public use of the critical habitat areas.” This is regardless of the fact that Common Murres died off all over the Kenai Peninsula including Kachemak Bay in unprecedented numbers during the winter of 2015-16 and that scientists believed that the most likely cause of the die-off was the inability of the birds to access prey species that were impacted by a dramatic ocean warming anomaly in the Gulf of Alaska. <i>ADN, Dozens of starving seabirds grounded inland in Southcentral Alaska (December 30, 2015); https://www.adn.com/wildlife/article/dozens-starving-seabirds-grounded-n-mat-su-inundate-wild-bird-rehab/2015/12/31/</i> In fact, the Murre die-off is reflective of the broader impacts of climate change on sea bird populations throughout the Gulf of Alaska including the CHAs. In recent years, for example, the number of seabirds, including gulls, puffins and auklets, dropped significantly in the Gulf, a possible consequence of less food availability due to warmer waters, according to a preliminary federal analysis of nearly 40 years of surveys. ADN, USGS analysis documents seabird loss in Alaska's North Pacific waters (March 19, 2015), https://www.adn.com/wildlife/article/feds-document-seabird-loss-north-pacific-waters/2015/03/19/. Also, the U.S. Geological Survey found the seabird population density declined 2 percent annually from 1975 to 2012 in the northeast North Pacific. Ibid.</p>
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128	<p>Climate change is also, having impacts on the broader Kachemak Bay watershed. Due to a rapidly warming climate, for example, since 1968, available water, which accounts for precipitation and evapotranspiration, has declined by 60 percent on the western Kenai Peninsula. <i>Salmon Streams</i>. It is estimated that roughly one-third of the decline is due to increasing temperatures and two-thirds due to decreasing precipitation. <i>Ibid</i>. Last year, in fact, the Seldovia Village Tribe reported that hundreds of fish attempting to spawn in Jakolof Creek died after the creek dried up entirely during the late summer as a result of inadequate snow pack in the Kenai Mountain Range. For non-glacial streams, increasing air temperatures directly corresponds with water temperatures. In fact, 47 of 48 such streams monitored on the Kenai Peninsula and in the Mat-Su experienced temperatures last July that cause sub-lethal stress in salmon. <i>Ibid</i>. Based on the fact that salmon spawning is impacted at 55 degrees and this past summer, the highest temperature recorded in the Anchor River reached 70 degrees and 77 degrees on the Deshka River, these temperatures don't bode well for salmon. <i>Ibid</i>. In contrast, glacially-fed rivers provide a partial buffer against varying air temperatures. Water temperatures at the Kenai Lake outlet in Cooper Landing, for example, tend to remain in the low 50s and lower Kenai River temperatures may exceed 60 degrees during short periods of calm weather, but will quickly drop again when winds pick up, presumably from mixing strata in Kenai and Skilak lakes. <i>Ibid</i>. However, when glaciers suffer, salmon suffer. It is expected for example, that salmon will eventually, go extinct in the Nooksack river of Washington state due to loss of glacier melt that results in reduced stream flows and increased temperatures late in the summer when salmon are most vulnerable,. <i>Alexandra Harden, Glaciers Help Explain Suffering Salmon Populations (Oct 27, 2016). http://glacierhub.org/2016/10/27/glaciers-help-explain-suffering-salmon-populations/ (Glaciers Help Salmon)</i>. But more glacial meltwater is not necessarily a good thing either. A long-term study by the ADF&G showed that sockeye recruitment in Skilak Lake was depressed by the additional input of glacial meltwater during the 1990s due to more water, more silt, higher turbidity, reduced light penetration, reduced phytoplankton abundance, reduced copepod biomass and, finally, reduced salmon recruitment. <i>Salmon Streams</i>. Either way, it appears that a faster rate of melting of glaciers on the Kenai including those feeding into the CHAs will continue to have negative effects on glacially-fed streams.</p>
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<p>128</p>	<p>Another climate change related concern both within and outside of the CHAs are the dramatic increase, over the past couple of years, in spruce trees killed by spruce bark beetles and aphids and thin-leaf alder defoliated by exotic green alder sawflies. Not only, is this an eyesore and, therefore, “not compatible with...public use” and enjoyment of the CHAs, Plan at 1, but it could result in less canopy cover and more solar radiation for rivers and streams feeding into the CHAs thereby further impacting fish and wildlife habitat. Also, peatlands, which buffer streams during dry seasons, are drying up. As a result, many Sphagnum peatlands, which have persisted on the Kenai landscape for more than 8,000 years, are being invaded by woody shrubs such as dwarf birch in just the past 40 years. <i>Salmon Streams</i>. Finally, Wetlands in the Kenai Lowlands have lost 6-11 percent of their surface area per decade over the same period. <i>Ibid</i>. Regardless of the Plan’s jurisdiction limits, therefore, the Plan Revisions should incorporate means that ASDF&G may use to collaborate with federal, state, local and tribal governments, conservation organizations, research facilities, land trusts and other stakeholder entities to protect the CHAs’ goals and objectives in face of a rapidly changing climate. Examples of such coordinate may include accessing data or research related to: 1) mapping to identify areas with cold seeps in rivers and streams that feed into the CHAs and land that can be used as a source of “refrigeration” to prevent warming waters; 2) restoring and maintaining riparian vegetation as way of providing shade to reduce solar input into streams; and 3) maintain high genetic diversity in salmon populations that will help protect small native salmon stocks in smaller streams and increase resiliency of salmon.</p>
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128	<p>In fact, in contrast to the jurisdictional limits of the Plan, the best means of meeting the it's goals and objectives of protecting fish and wildlife habitat and public uses of such habitat within the CHA's is through an "Inter-grated Water Resource Management" strategy. IWRM is "a process that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources, in order to maximize the resultant economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems." <i>Global Water Partnership Technical Advisory Committee (2000)</i>. IWRM helps to protect watersheds, foster economic growth and sustainable agricultural development, promote democratic participation in governance, and improve human health. Worldwide, water policy and management are beginning to reflect the fundamentally interconnected nature of hydrological resources, and, IWRM is emerging as an accepted alternative to the sector-by-sector, top-down management style that has dominated in the past, including the current CHAs Plan. In an attempt to reduce vulnerability of salmon to climate change, for example, the Nooksack Tribe adaptation measures have sought to create a landscape that will help cool the river. These efforts include lining the rivers with trees to shade exposed waters from abundant sunlight. Additionally, the tribe has been creating log jams, which will help provide sites of colder water for the fish. This habitat restoration program, with its emphasis on the effects of climate change, gives the tribe a fighting chance to improve salmon survival in the face of climate change," <i>Glaciers Help Salmon</i>. The basis of IWRM is that the many different uses of finite water resources are interdependent. High water demands and polluted drainage flows from land based mining and oil and gas drilling, mean less freshwater for drinking or industrial use, contaminated municipal and industrial wastewater pollutes rivers and threatens ecosystems. If water has to be left in a river and therefore, the CHAs to protect fisheries and ecosystems, less can be diverted for industrial development uses. There are plenty more examples of the basic theme that unregulated use of scarce water resources is wasteful and inherently unsustainable. <i>Global Working Group</i>, http://www.gwp.org/en/The-Challenge/What-is-IWRM/ _ As the best means of achieving the goals and objectives for establishing the CHAs in the face of climate change, the Plan Revisions, therefore, should collaborate with other federal, state, tribal, local, research, conservation and other stake holders to apply IWRM criteria including to consider: 1) Manage water sustainably; 2) Balance economics, social equity, environment; Coordination and integration; Participation from all water sectors; 3) Holistic management of connected resources; 4) Process oriented adaptive management; 5) Enabling environment of policies and resources; and 6) Institutional roles and capacity. <i>American Water Resources Association</i>, www.awra.org</p>
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129	<p>Rich and protected habitats like Kachemak Bay are thinly scattered along the Alaskan coast. Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats are especially rich and diverse, because the inner bay is a huge estuary where river and ocean waters mix, and habitats range from shallow to deep water. Therefore the bay is critical for water bird populations migrating from breeding grounds in Alaska and northwest Canada, which stop to rest and gather energy. Many species continue south down the Pacific Coast to other states and countries; some overwinter in the bay, and a few reside there year-round. Our bird populations face many threats, from disturbance and pollution to a changing climate and ocean acidification. For some bird species that depend on the CHAs, such as sea ducks, populations are now declining.</p>
129	<p>We urgently request that you continue rigorous protection of this CHA, and improve its protection from recent threats. The purpose of the CHAs is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose” (AS 16.20.500; our emphasis). It is vital that the revised plan include clear policies that protect the CHAs from disturbance, pollution, and habitat destruction. And you should specify no-tolerance enforcement of these policies.</p>
129	<p>Along with their ecological importance, the CHAs are a stellar resource for the enjoyment of wildlife by the public. This is because of their accessibility by road, which is rare for a major bird habitat in Alaska. Thousands of Alaskans and tourists visit the bay to watch birds throughout the year. Unique viewing opportunities include shorebirds on the Spit and Fox River Flats, wintering species from remote areas, and cliff-nesting seabirds on Gull Island (plus even the Homer ferry dock). Eagles, sea otters, and seals are also a big draw. The CHAs are also important for research and international cooperation. The waters of Kachemak Bay have been designated a Globally Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society and BirdLife International. <u>This listing is based on the bay’s support of up to 5 per cent of the world population of five species.</u></p>
129	<p>Major threats that especially concern us are disturbance, habitat destruction, and industrial development.</p>
129	<p>The 1993 plan prohibits “Activities which displace animals from their natural habitat or interrupt their seasonal activities at a frequency or duration which causes significant impact to. . . populations.” A particular concern is water vehicles that are fast and noisy, or that approach nesting birds too closely. When birds escape from these machines, they waste time and energy that should be used for feeding their nestlings or fueling their migration. If birds flee from their nests, the young may die from exposure or predation. Please continue to prohibit jet skis (5 AAC 95.310), include other fast-moving watercraft in areas where birds congregate, and establish limits on boats approaching seabird colonies. We do not oppose properly managed viewing or legal harvesting of wildlife.</p>
129	<p>Shoreline development such as jetties and solid-fill docks degrade the marine habitat, through direct impacts to the substrate and alteration of nearshore currents, erosion, and sediment deposition. The 1993 policies on docks, boat ramps, and other shoreline alterations should be continued.</p>
129	<p>The 1993 plan also has good policies that prohibit surface entry for oil and gas exploration or development, and anchoring of drilling rigs. These policies should be retained and updated.</p>

129	In addition, pollution should be minimized by expanding the policy on hazardous materials. Furthermore, protection from pollution should be updated , with prohibitions on small-scale oil and fuel discharges from vessels, lost or abandoned fishing gear, release of personal and industrial trash (from food wastes to plastic pellets), and other waste that is known to injure wildlife.
130	As far as we can determine, this is the first revision of the plan in 23 years. Seldovia Village Tribe believes it is well past time for the plan to be evaluated and changes made so that work can be done to actively help our resources.
130	The Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area Plan (KBCHAP) states on page 7 that one of its policies is to <i>“As appropriate, allow enhancement and rehabilitation of habitat of indigenous wildlife or fish species and enhancement of fish and wildlife populations where it furthers the management goals of Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats critical habitat areas, in not at the expense of existing resource values (including diversity and abundance) and doesn’t interfere with public use and enjoyment. Priority should be given to encouraging rehabilitation of depleted indigenous fish and wildlife populations.”</i> This management plan came into effect around the time that many fisheries within the CHA were seeing significant declines and/or crashes. King crab, tanner crab, Dungeness crab, halibut, shrimp (all species), herring, and salmon (all five species) have all suffered from overharvesting. Clams were at healthy population levels when the plan was implemented, but local resource users started noting a decline in 2002, Finally in 2009, some seven years after the decline started, ADF&G acknowledged that something was happening to the clam populations of Kachemak Bay. The harvest limits during this time were 700 butter clams and 1000 littleneck clams per person. A reduction was finally put on these numbers in 2011 but it appears to be too little, too late. There is also no enforcement of clam harvest numbers in Kachemak as is seen at Ninilchik and Clam Gulch for razor clams. There have been many fishery declines and collapses that should be researched with a goal of restoring populations back to sustainable levels.
130	The Kachemak Bay Estuarine Research Reserve was and is doing good research in Kachemak Bay with many of its partner organizations. The Tribes are also collecting good data and doing good research on resources in Kachemak Bay. Unfortunately, we have been prevented from actively helping these resources, apparently due to what we feel is a misinterpretation of the CHAMP. As an example, SVT has tried to do two clam restoration projects within Seldovia Bay within the time frame of the current CHAMP. These were efforts to restore populations of native species by seeding and recruitment through transplantation from healthy populations. The first project, in the 1990s, was denied by ADF&G, citing the Critical Habitat Area, and the other was halted in 2006 when the Homer ADF&G office asked our project partner, the Kachemak Bay Research Reserve (KBRR) staff to pull their proposal.

<p>130</p>	<p>Seldovia Village Tribe would like to see ADF&G put a new emphasis on the statement in the Critical Habitat Area Monitoring Plan that <i>“Priority should be given to encouraging rehabilitation of depleted indigenous fish and wildlife populations.”</i> Real work needs to be done to help resources come back to sustainable numbers. The waters of Kachemak Bay are the lifeblood in the heart of this region. Traditional use of marine resources goes back thousands of years, but contemporary life on the shores of the Bay is just as dependent on the fisheries and wildlife resources the Bay provides. Seldovia Village Tribe is in full support of continued research into the causes of resource declines, but wants to see a strong emphasis put on active management that is in compliance with the very first goal described in the 1993 plan: “Manage the critical habitat areas to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitat.” We also want to see ADF&G support research and restoration projects by organizations such as the KBRR, SVT, and other groups that have good track records of doing solid science and which do not operate under the same set of budgetary constraints that can sometimes hamper ADF&G. We share the same goal of maintaining a healthy ecosystem and should be partners in its protection and restoration.</p>
<p>131</p>	<p>These scoping comments are on behalf of the Kachemak Bay Water Trail (http://www.kachemakbaywatertrail.org/). The vision of KBWT is to develop and promote a water trail that inspires “exploration, understanding, and stewardship of the natural treasure that is Kachemak Bay.” Our key goals are to promote: Economic Vitality: Support the economic vitality and creativity of local communities, and draw people from around the world to its unique environmental richness and stunning scenic beauty. Safety: Offer user-friendly tools to help users find just the right route and guidance for their own safe and stimulating journey of "Adventure Beyond the End of the Road." Stewardship: Promote awareness and stewardship of the sensitive habitats on which many plants and animals depend, including the thousands of birds that stop over in the bay as they migrate to and from their breeding areas. Science, Cultural, and Archeological Education: Promote learning about ecosystems, heritage sites, stewardship, and coastal communities. Fun! Connect individuals and places along its length – from Homer to Seldovia – in understanding and celebrating what they share. Active Kids and Families and Healthy Communities: Help families and kids be active outdoors and promote healthy communities. Diversity of Recreational Opportunities: Enable people of all abilities to experience the wild and scenic places around Kachemak Bay, now and for generations to come. Respect: Promote an ethic of respect for public, private, and Alaska Native Lands and traditional sites. Given our vision and goals, our principal concern is that plans for both Critical Habitat Areas (CHAs) reflect long-term ecological sustainability as the top management priority. If the CHAs are managed to protect ecological processes and functions, then the fullest possible range of recreational, educational, and scientific opportunities can be maintained.</p>
<p>131</p>	<p>We hope that during the planning process, the many entities that have ties to and concerns for the areas encompassed in the CHAs can be kept fully apprised of the planning process and that the process itself be kept as transparent and inclusive as possible. We look forward to being on distribution list(s) of those who will be notified of opportunities to review and comment on interim drafts. We recommend that a comprehensive list of CHA managers and user groups (including their websites and/or contact information) be included in final management plans.</p>
<p>131</p>	<p>What we value most are the diversity and health of the natural habitats and environmental processes and features encompassed within the CHAs, as well as the accessibility of the CHAs to a wide range of users and visitors. In some locations, these values are being degraded by inherently damaging methods of access or trail use (e.g., ATVs). We support anything that can be done to provide ALL kinds of access—including ATVs—in long-term, sustainable ways. This may involve identifying, improving, and more actively managing particular access routes.</p>

131	We also support facilitating access by water to Kachemak Bay State Park through additional mooring buoys and public docks if they are developed so as to prevent significant adverse impact to subtidal and shoreline habitats.
132	Our bay is a treasure for all Alaskans. That it is suffering many stresses due to climate change, resource harvests, acidification, ec., seems obvious, and is evidenced by the dramatic changes in the shellfish, crustacean, and fish populations and distributions. I'll leave it to scientists to attribute causes and remedies.
132	As a boater and a responsible user of the area resources, I feel the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan of the critical habitat areas would be a huge setback. These watercraft are commonly used in a manner that is inconsistent with the protection of the area (see Big Lake for details.). An increase in the harassment of marine mammals and birds, as well as boat navigation, is guaranteed.
133	Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA's is "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose." As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.
134	Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA's is "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose." As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.

134	As a sportsman who has visited Alaska dozens of times, and enjoyed many days recreating on Kachemak Bay, I am thankful for the opportunity to wiegh in here.
135	As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.
135	This in particular is important: ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. These recreational vehicles are clearly NOT compatible with critical habitat!
136	Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA's is "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose." As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.

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<p>138</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
<p>138</p>	<p>It's good to see the scoping is open to comments, however it seems very discriminatory to close the comments to one user group (PWC). Jet ski is a term from one manufacturer and specifically a stand up style watercraft. Since way before the ban was put into place the sit down style PWC manufacturers have responded to enviromental concern with noise, pollution and impact on underwater disturbance. The PWC are the safest boats on the water with closed loop cooling, brakes, 3 star ratings on emmissions. It's time this ban is lifted and equal use is given to this group of users. Please allow discussion for this topic to be recognized.</p>

<p>139</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
<p>139</p>	<p>I am a year round resident in Homer and feel strongly about the health of the Bay. Kachemak Bay's economic and spiritual value are in its unspoiled serenity and generous nurturing of biodiversity. It's greatest value is not in extraction of underground and surface resources, especially fossil fuels and timber.</p>
<p>140</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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141	<p>This is a unique letter and one that I have put time and energy in crafting. I would appreciate it if you took the time to read and consider my remarks.</p>
142	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
142	<p>Furthermore, these critical habitat areas contribute significantly to the quality of life for area residents, from Native descendants of the region’s earliest residents to more recent transplants, the Critical Habitat Area designation preserves a special place for wildlife, natural habitat, and human residents.</p>

<p>143</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
<p>143</p>	<p>I'm sending these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan because I'm a commercial fisherman. I want the Critical Habitat areas protected. Protecting these waters and uplands protects salmon and protects livelihoods. Don't mess up the Bay.</p>
<p>144</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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<p>146</p>	<p>I am a long-time resident of Naknek who has been depending subsistence and commercial fishing in Bristol Bay for over 40 years. With the changes we are seeing in our climate, I believe it is more important than ever to err on the side of caution when protecting our waters.</p>

<p>147</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
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<p>156</p>	<p>Alaska is one of the last areas of the world where wild salmon are abundant. this is such a precious commodity for Alaskans and people around the world. It should take precendence over all other considerations when devising a plan for Katchemak Bay.</p>

<p>157</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
<p>157</p>	<p>Though I may not currently live in Homer, I was there for many, many years, and call it my true home. ADFG needs to do everything in it's power to keep Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats as pristine as possible! It's one of the very few areas in Alaska that isn't deeply impacted by development and the Oil Industry, and just as the small area of ANWR needs to remain undeveloped, and protected, so does Kachemak Bay and the Flats..I cannot urge ADFG strongly enough to protect this area in it's entirety...</p>
<p>158</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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<p>166</p>	<p>As a resident of the Kachemak Bay area for over 37 years, our opinions and concerns regarding this place we call home should be respected and honored.</p>

<p>167</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
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<p>169</p>	<p>My family has a place on Kachemak Bay, so I know firsthand what a spectacular area it is. I have also observed changes over recent years that emphasize the vulnerability of the ecosystem and the importance of protection. Sea otter, kelp, and sea urchin population explosions, spruce beetle and spruce aphid infestations, and very few halibut in "the halibut capital of the world" are signs of an ecosystem out of balance and in distress. This area is worthy of protection from increased motorized recreation and pollution.</p>
<p>170</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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<p>176</p>	<p>I have noticed that early in the Spring there are still seals with young ones on the beaches at the head of the bay. And they are quite skittish when they hear or see motor powered boats. I now distance myself away from that area. Please don’t allow special interest groups to influence the slackening of critical habitat rules in Kachemak Bay.</p>
<p>176</p>	<p>There was a good reason we rose up with the Kachemak Bay defense fund. And there was a good reason to form the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Critical Habitat Areas. And there was a lot of good reasons to take action against people wanting to use jet skis in the Bay. There are even better reasons for the rewrite of the ADF&G management plan to become more restrictive to human affects on the Bay, not less. With massive problems associated with polar ice melting, invasive marine species, and acidification I would think ADF&G could pick the low hanging fruit and limit human interaction with the Bay, not increase it.</p>

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<p>199</p>	<p>Kachemak bay is an extremely important area for a variety of wildlife that would be disturbed by the presence of jet skis. These loud machines would also disturb campers, and other recreational users of the critical habitat area. There is not a traditional use of jet skis in the area, so continuing to forbid them takes nothing away. Please continue to maintain the peace of this truly remarkable area.</p>
<p>200</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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203	<p>I am a resident of Homer and have lived in the Kachemak Bay Area for 37 years. This is my home.</p>
204	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
204	<p>Bill and I are opposed to the use of jetskis on Kachemak Bay.</p>

<p>205</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
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209	<p>The impact that noise has on wildlife has been a current trend in aquatic sciences and personal watercraft could disrupt sensitive species. Maintain the ban and honor the purpose of CHA's "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose."</p>
210	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>
210	<p>I write you as a 23-year (of 64) Alaskan hunter and fisherman, wildlife biologist, and outdoor writer, living on the toe of Lazy Mountain just outside Palmer, AK.</p>

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<p>221</p>	<p>As a Naturalist Guide working in the Kachemak Bay area, I am greatly concerned about protecting the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area. I believe that the possibility of changes that would include jetski/personal watercraft usage is irresponsible, unwise, and goes against already established public input on the issue.</p>
<p>222</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA's is "to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose." As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA's after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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<p>223</p>	<p>PS. I as a kayaker of 35 years of paddling in PWS have now have the horror of Jet Skis in Blackstone Bay. I've watched them run through shallow waters disturbing nesting birds while completely incased in helmet and dry suits unaware of the environment as they speed along. For gods sake, just say NO!</p>
<p>224</p>	<p>Please accept these scoping comments on the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Areas Management Plan. These areas are important for fish and wildlife habitat, and I write to emphasize the significant value of these critical habitat areas. There are many concerns to address, from large and small vessel mooring and styrofoam floats and plastics pollution, to sewage discharges and sonar usage. Because of these numerous concerns, ADFG should provide a side- by-side comparison showing where and how the new draft management plan differs from the current management plan. The purpose of these CHA’s is “to protect and preserve habitat areas especially crucial to the perpetuation of fish and wildlife, and to restrict all other uses not compatible with that primary purpose.” As a result, ADFG should include clear and enforceable policies that restrict activities that do not protect and preserve habitat, and should avoid vague, permissive language which opens the door to piecemeal habitat destruction. ADFG should not address the use of jetskis/personal watercraft in the revised management plan because these vehicles were already banned in the CHA’s after a long public process which determined they were incompatible with the purposes of the critical habitat areas. Finally, in light of rapid changes in our climate and the increasing acidification of our ocean, ADFG should adopt a management plan that builds resiliency into the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats bioregion so the incredible resources they encompass can be enjoyed for generations to come.</p>

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225	<p>Kachemak Bay is no place for jetskis any more than they are appropriate for the Kenai River or other prized habitats in Alaska.</p>
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<p>227</p>	<p>I currently live in King Salmon but my wife and I were married in Homer and spent years living in the Kachemak Bay area. We own land there and plan to return there to retire. I agree with the comments from Cook Inlet Keeper placed below, but especially want to emphasize that I agree with the banning of jet skis in Kachemak Bay. I can see no good that their presence will do either for the vast majority of people who live or recreate on or by the bay, nor for the wildlife. The area already has enough problems with increasing motorized recreation as it is.</p>
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<p>230</p>	<p>These are designated as critical habitat areas, not critical jetski areas! Wildlife is the most valuable and sustainable natural resources we have in Alaska and we should protect it at all times. Keep the animals safe, protect our fisheries and protect our tourism industry by teaching out visitors that our wild spaces are valuable and we protect them from multiple forms of human stupidity.</p>

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<p>231</p>	<p>No jet skis in Kachemak Bay, please. I am a kayaker, hiker, and birdwatcher. I have lived elsewhere where jet skis have diminished the solitude of experiencing nature through quiet sports and activities, negatively affected fragile marine and estuarine environments, and expanded an intensive sport needlessly into yet more bodies of water than is necessary for the enjoyment of jet ski enthusiasts.</p>
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<p>240</p>	<p>concerned about over-regulation and loss of liberties, lives in Halibut Cove in pile supported structure and has running line, just involved in fight over vehicle use on Bishops Beach supports use to collect coal, and is concerned that that debate will open up again. Concerned that rabid environmentalists will push to have humans restricted at the expense of wildlife (example: too many sea otters eating all the clams and crabs limits human harvest) Went over kinds of activities addressed in plan, and sideboards to what can be addressed in plan.</p>
<p>241</p>	<p>Had heard that a designated corridor for jet-ski use had been brought up at the public scoping meeting, and was curious if it was correct. He had also done some research of his own and the Coast Guard in Homer did not claim authority in that area. Historically, (from SW Pilots Association) conflicts between tankers tugs, and pot fishing gear and resulted in a voluntary corridor (free of fishing gear) for large boats from Pt. Pogi to the Harbor and then from the pilot station back out N along the bluff. Pot gear isn't a problem anymore, but maybe where rumor started.</p>

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