

# GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL AREA MANAGEMENT PLANS

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Sport Fish

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## ***What are Local Area Management Plans— and why are they under discussion?***

At their February 1998 meetings, the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) jointly adopted a protocol for developing local area management plans (LAMPs). The inspiration for development of this protocol was the Sitka LAMP, parts of which were adopted by both the Board and the Council. In adopting the protocol, the Board and the Council hoped that LAMPs would become a useful step in resolving user conflicts and addressing issues of local depletion in marine waters adjacent to coastal communities around Alaska.

## ***What is the Sitka LAMP?***

The Sitka LAMP was developed by a Task Force appointed by the Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee. This LAMP was developed over a three-year period to address the issue of halibut depletion in local marine waters near Sitka, and the associated user conflicts for that species. The adopted plan is based on seasonal closures of waters to commercial longline vessels larger than 35 feet and to charter vessels/guided anglers. At the request of charter and commercial operators, the Sitka LAMP allows chartered anglers and commercial operators to fish for salmon in waters closed to halibut fishing.

## ***Why are the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council both involved?***

Realizing the multi-species nature of the affected fisheries and the potential impact to state-managed fisheries, the Board agreed to assume primary responsibility in developing LAMPs. Those parts of the plans that address halibut or any other species covered by one of the Council's fishery management plans in federal waters of the EEZ (3–200 miles offshore) would be forwarded to the Council for their review and action.

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***What's the process and timeline for developing LAMPs?***

The Board opted to utilize their regular meeting cycle to consider LAMP proposals. Under this timeline, LAMPs for Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Lower Cook Inlet will be considered by the Board during their 1998/1999 cycle; for Southeast Alaska and Prince William Sound during the 1999/2000 cycle; and for the remainder of Alaska during the 2000/2001 cycle.

***What should be in a LAMP?***

The Board requested that LAMP proposals submitted for their review be well thought-out and reflect a high degree of consensus from user representatives of fishery resources in the covered areas. Given the allocative nature of LAMPs, the Board tasked local users with the primary burden of plan development and suggested assembling a local Advisory Committee or Task Force for this purpose. The Board further stated that LAMPs should encompass fisheries for all shared fish stocks in the local area for which conflict exists, and should include, as appropriate, catch and possession limits, gear types, effort limitation, closed areas, seasons, and overall boundaries of the local area plan. Because of legal questions regarding residency, the Board requests that proposals not include provisions based on residency.

To guide local Advisory Committees or Task Forces in the development of LAMPs, the department offers the following recommendations modeled after the experiences of the Sitka Task Force.

- 1) ***Identify the problem to be solved:*** The first, and certainly the most important, step in the development of a LAMP is the construction of a problem statement, including an identification of issues and a listing of related fisheries. Failure to reach consensus on the problem statement will make it difficult to reach consensus on a solution.
- 2) ***Gather available information:*** At this step, staff from the Department of Fish and Game, the Council, the International Pacific Halibut Commission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service can be called upon to provide useful data and analyses for constructing the problem statement. Other data sources can and should be consulted as well.

- 3) ***Develop consensus on management strategies to solve the problem:*** Based on the experiences of the Sitka Task Force, solutions should be as simple as possible. The more complex the solution, the more difficult it becomes to reach consensus. Department of Fish and Game staff may be involved in this step as consultants; however, the primary responsibility for development of a solution lies with the Task Force.

***What is the department's role in this process?***

The Department of Fish and Game supports the concept of developing LAMPs and will work with local groups seeking to develop plans. However, because every LAMP contains allocative elements, the Department's role is necessarily limited to support rather than directing. Even though the department is fully committed to participating with a local Advisory Committee and/or Task Force in the development of its LAMP, the department may not be able to support the final version of the LAMP. It is foreseeable that conflicts of interest will arise if certain provisions in the final version of a LAMP raise conservation or management concerns for stocks of fish included within the LAMP area. In those cases, the department will make every attempt to work with the Task Force to rectify these concerns.