

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

**Kevin C. Duffy, Commissioner**



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## **Commissioner Welcomes Governor's Signature on Sport Fish Guide Bill**

(Juneau) – Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Commissioner Kevin C. Duffy today welcomed the prompt action taken by Governor Frank H. Murkowski to sign H.B. 452 into law.

“Alaska is a world class destination for sport fishing. Alaska’s sport fishing guide industry provides access to fishery resources for those who might not otherwise be able to access them. This industry provides significant economic benefits to Alaskans by creating jobs and bringing tourism dollars into Alaska’s communities,” Duffy said. “This bill will enhance this industry and increase the benefits that it provides to Alaskans, tourists, and the state’s economy.”

H.B. 452, sponsored by Representative Cheryl Heinze of Anchorage, establishes minimum professional standards that both fresh and saltwater sport fish guides must meet before obtaining a license. “ADF&G is grateful to Representative Heinze for introducing this important legislation. By establishing these standards, this legislation protects consumers, while further professionalizing and legitimizing the sport fish guide industry, thereby assuring its continued viability,” said Duffy.

The bill also establishes flexible reporting requirements for all fresh and saltwater guides across Alaska. “With better information on where, when, and to what extent sport fish guides operate, ADF&G will be better able to effectively and efficiently manage Alaska’s resources for sustained yield and ensure that the industry is regulated fairly,” said ADF&G Director of Sport Fish Kelly Hepler. “This information will be used to adopt regulations based on accurate information on guiding activities and to ensure that stocks are managed for sustained yield.” Provisions in the bill assure that proprietary business information will remain confidential.

According to Hepler, ADF&G staff has been busy drafting an agenda change request, which will be submitted to the Board of Fisheries for its consideration. If the request is accepted, the Board will develop new reporting program regulations in November. The regulations will be effective in January 2005.

H.B. 452 includes a sunset provision for January 1, 2010. This provision will give the Legislature an opportunity to review the benefits of the program to both the industry and the state.

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