



RC #45

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

Planning and Land Use Department Planning Division

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RE: Comparison of the Economics of Sportfishing in the Mat-Su Borough in 2007 and 2017, in light of MSB salmon habitat investments.

Habitat Investments in the Mat-Su Borough

During the last 20 years the Mat-Su Borough has made significant investments in salmon habitat in valley. We've invested in habitat as our commitment to the salmon resource, knowing that without that commitment our salmon are doomed.

Our Mat-Su citizens and their political representatives have rallied around and supported these significant investments in habitat because it is a priority. Indeed, the concern over salmon and the importance of their return to local culture has united our many political entities behind supporting quality habitat.

Over the last 20 years, the Mat-Su Borough, working with partners like the US Fish and Wildlife Service, ADF&G, Great Land Trust, and the Mat-Su Basin Salmon Habitat Partnership, has invested millions of dollars in salmon habitat projects. Our fish passage culvert program has been nationally recognized, and has resulted in 107 culvert replacements and has opened up over 30 miles of spawning streams. We have invested money in control of invasives, and the Borough's Fish and Wildlife Commission has been a driving force in many of these efforts. We have more salmon habitat enhancement projects planned for 2020.

In June of 2019 the Mat-Su Borough hosted the Principal Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Margaret Everson. She visited the borough because of the work we had done in enhancing salmon habitat. Director Everson was very interested how the borough's work illustrated "conservation without controversy." We are proud of these efforts, and we hope the BOF will take actions that allow our habitat investments to pay off by having more Mat-Su salmon return to their natal habitats and generate a return on that investment.

*Providing Outstanding Borough Services to the Matanuska-Susitna Community
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Economics of Sportfishing in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough

- Two economic studies using comparable techniques, published in 2009 and 2019, examined the economic impact of sportfishing in the Mat-Su Borough during 2007 and 2017, respectively.
- This document summarizes the results of these two studies, using 2017 dollars in the comparisons. The “current study” is the 2017 research, and the “ISER” study shows the 2007 data. All figures shown are in 2017 dollars.

Table 11. Summary results: Current study and previous ISER study

	Results from current study	ISER study scenarios		
		Low	Medium	High
Mat-Su angler days (thousands)	155.4	296.0	296.0	296.0
Direct spending (millions)	\$57.4	\$74.7	\$140.6	\$193.6
Average spending				
\$ per angler day	\$369	\$252	\$474	\$654
Total economic contributions				
Employment	474	904	1,180	1,900
Income (million)	\$14.3	\$37.3	\$47.7	\$75.8
Local & state taxes (millions)	\$5.9	\$7.3	\$9.2	\$17.8

Definitions

MSB = Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

\$ = 2017 dollars

Key Points (using the “medium” scenarios from the 2007 study compared to the 2017 study):

1. In 2007 there were 296,000 angler days, which dropped in 2017 to 155,400 angler days in the MSB; in just a decade angler days/participation in the MSB fell 47.5%. This had a negative economic impact on MSB.
2. Total direct spending on sportfishing in the MSB from 2007 to 2017 fell from \$141 million to \$57 million, a decrease of 59%.
3. Employment supported by sportfishing in the MSB fell 60%, from 1,180 jobs in 2007 to 474 jobs in 2017 (includes full- and part-time jobs).
4. Local, state, and federal tax revenue tied to sportfishing in the MSB fell 36%, from \$9.2 million to \$5.9 million.

Take Aways:

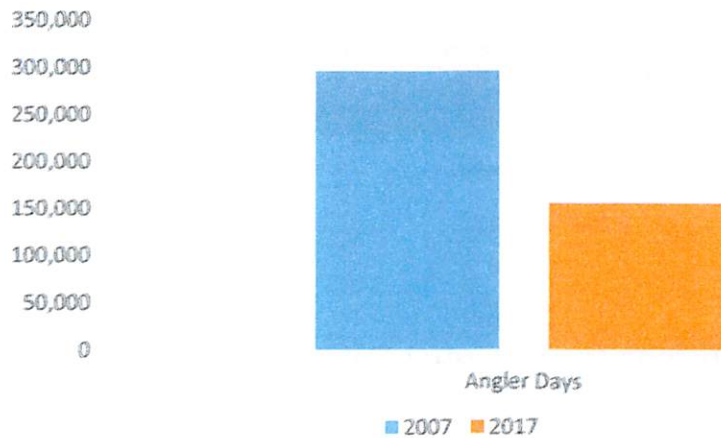
1. The economic impact of sportfishing in the MSB is significant in terms of direct economic impact, jobs, and tax revenues.
2. As salmon returns to the MSB have fallen from 2007 to 2017, so has angling effort in the MSB and the consequent economic infusion of money to the local economy.
3. The solution: Have the state Board of Fisheries adopt salmon management plans that return more fish to Upper Cook Inlet streams so the full historic economic impacts of sportfishing can be realized again, here in the Mat-Su as well as other UCI locations like the Anchorage Municipality..
4. It takes a fish to make a fish, and it takes fish returning to natal streams to support local sportfishing economies.
5. Most importantly, sportfishing dollars stay in the Mat-Su, and multiply as they change hands locally. These monies are more than numbers, but are the glue that help create the vibrant communities that are hiding behind the numbers. These dollars support local commerce, local families, voters, taxpayers, kids, our elders. These dollars support our communities, our neighbors, our lives in the Mat-Su. As these sportfishing dollars decline, so does the vibrancy of our Mat-Su communities and the quality of life that sportfishing supports in the Mat-Su. We're your neighbors – remember that. Thank you.

References:

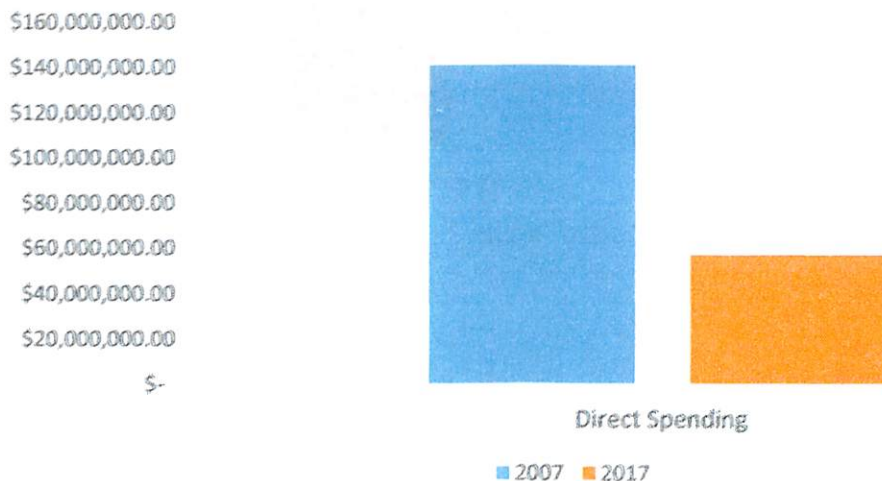
1. Southwick Associates. 2019. Contribution of Recreational Fishing in the Mat-Su Borough to the Local Economy. Prepared for the Mat-Su Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission.
2. Colt, S. and T. Schwoerer. 2009. Economic Importance of Sportfishing in the Mat-Su Borough. Prepared for the Mat-Su Borough Economic Development Dept. UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research.

Graphical representation of Sportfishing Economic trends in the MSB, 2007 and 2017 data points (see references above) - Note: All figures shown in 2017 dollars.

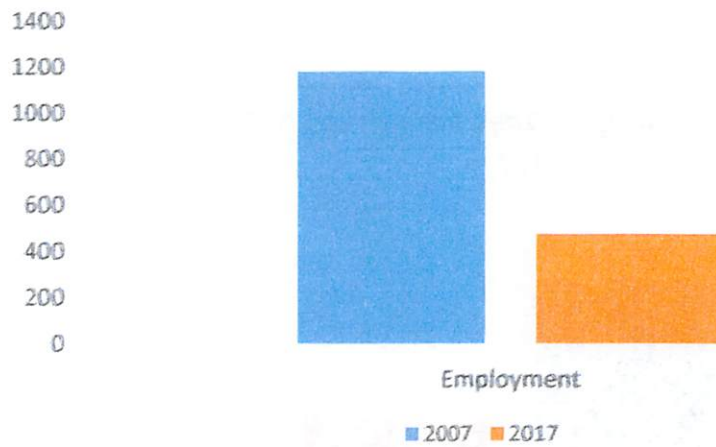
**MSB Sportfishing Angler Days decreased 48%,
2007-2017**



**Direct Spending in MSB Sportfishing decreased 59%,
2007-2017**



**MSB sportfishing employment decreased 60%,
2007-2017**



**MSB sportfishing Tax Revenues fell 36%,
2007-2017**

