

**Boards Support Section
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**Alaska Department of Fish and Game
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MEETING UPDATE

For Immediate Release: January 11, 2022

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Alaska Board of Fisheries Rescheduled Southeast and Yakutat Shellfish and Finfish Meeting, March 10-22, 2022 in Anchorage *Hatchery Committee meeting to follow, March 23, 2022*

Following the postponement of its Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish meeting, the Board of Fisheries rescheduled the meeting to the Anchorage Egan Civic and Convention Center, 555 W. 5th Avenue, from March 10-22, 2022. During this 13-day public meeting, the board will consider 157 proposals on Southeast and Yakutat finfish and shellfish issues submitted by the public, fishing organizations, local fish and game advisory committees, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G).

Holding the meeting in Anchorage is not a preferred choice of the board, but part of a balancing act between allowing the current COVID-19 surge to peak, limited budget, logistics, fishery timing, other board meetings, and COVID-19 testing and hospital capacity. To support strong public participation by impacted Southeast Alaska residents, the board is allowing remote public testimony for this meeting at select ADF&G Southeast offices. All committee work at the meeting will be held in-person.

This meeting time was previously held for the board's Statewide Shellfish meeting. Given the urgency to handle proposals related to upcoming Southeast fisheries, the Statewide Shellfish meeting will be held shortly following the Southeast meeting. A final time may be dependent on the status of the Alaska Board of Game's January 21-29, 2022, Central/Southwest meeting to be held in Wasilla. If that meeting is similarly postponed, the Board of Game may also schedule its meeting in synch with the Board of Fisheries. Final schedules for both boards will be set by the end of January.

To minimize costs for the public and agencies, the board will take up the proposals in two separate sessions. Session 1 includes all salmon, herring, and non-groundfish finfish proposals, and is anticipated to run from March 10-18. In order to accommodate the fast-approaching herring season, the board will handle herring proposals first. Groundfish and shellfish proposals will run in Session 2 tentatively scheduled from March 19-22. For each session, the board will conduct ethics disclosures, staff reports, oral public testimony, committees, and deliberations. Attendees interested only in groundfish and shellfish are strongly encouraged to join the meeting for Session 2. Session 2 attendees are advised the board will begin Session 2 immediately following the completion of Session 1, which may be prior to March 19.

In an effort to fully conduct this meeting the department is enacting a number of temporary COVID-19 mitigation measures including requiring registration. Registration is taken mainly to ask for contact information which is used to communicate meeting updates to attendees and, in the event of a COVID-19 outbreak at the meeting, made available to contact tracers. The registration also allows attendees to indicate their intention to provide oral public testimony, selecting from multiple time slots on a first-

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come, first-serve basis for in-person testimony, or to provide remote public testimony. To register, go to the meeting website at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.meetinginfo&date=03-10-2022&meeting=anchorage>. Given the severity of the current COVID-19 surge, other mitigation measures will be enacted and provided in a meeting specific plan currently under development.

The board invites the public to give oral public testimony, including remote public testimony at select Southeast ADF&G offices. Available offices will be announced through the registration. For Session 1 public testimony begins March 10. For Session 2 this is tentatively scheduled to begin March 19. Persons signing up for remote testimony must do so online by March 3. No remote public testimony sign-ups will occur after March 3. Persons intending to testify in-person are strongly encouraged to use the registration platform prior to the meeting. Individuals who register at the meeting may sign up for public testimony at that time. The tentative deadline for signing up for either session is 2:00 pm on the starting day of each session. Public testimony will continue until members of the public who signed up before the deadline and are present have been given an opportunity to testify.

All portions of the meeting are open to the public and a live audio and video stream is intended to be available on the Board of Fisheries website at www.boardoffisheries.adfg.alaska.gov. Documents submitted to the board are intended to be posted online throughout the meeting. Copies of advanced meeting materials, including the agenda and roadmap, are available from Boards Support Section, 907-465-4110, or online at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.meetinginfo>. The board encourages the public to submit written comments on specific proposals. See <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.comments> for details on public comment.

The board has extended the deadline for additional public comments to February 23, 2022. Those wishing to submit new public comments will be held to the board's 100- page limit, including any comments previously submitted under the December 22 deadline. Additional public comments submitted by February 23, 2022, will be included in the board's workbook before the meeting. After February 23, written public comments are limited to 10 single-sided or 5 double-sided pages in length from any one individual or group. These comments are recorded as record copies and inserted in board member workbooks at the beginning of the meeting, and accepted throughout the board meeting.

During the meeting, written public comments from any one individual or group may be submitted through email at dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov. Once proposal deliberations begin, the board will ONLY accept written public comments not more than five single-sided pages, or the equivalent double-sided pages. The board may relax this requirement if specific information is requested by the board requiring more pages than allowed under this standard.

Individuals not in attendance may submit written comments by fax to (907) 465-6094 or email dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov.

Training opportunity: Boards Support Section is hosting a training course, How to Navigate the Board Process, during the noon break on the first meeting day, March 10, and the first day of the second session, tentatively scheduled for March 19, in the main meeting area at the Center. The

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training will occur roughly ten minutes after the noon break and last approximately one hour. While the training is designed for individuals new to the board process, all are welcome to join. Call Boards Support, 907-465-4110, for more information.