

Statewide Hatchery (1 proposal)

PROPOSAL 59

5 AAC 40.820. Basic Management Plans .

Amend Basic Management Plans as follows:

Reduce hatchery production to 25% of the year 2000 production as promised in 2000.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There is an over-production of hatchery pink salmon that threatens wild Alaska stocks.

In 1996 Elfin Cove Advisory Committee put in a proposal to restrict hatchery production according to the original intent of rehabilitating wild salmon runs. They wanted a substantial reduction in current hatchery production. The hatchery managers complained the Board did not have the authority to set their production. After a thorough examination (approximately one year), the Attorney General ruled the Board does have the authority to regulate the number of eggs taken for production. The Board deferred the proposal and formed a hatchery committee to gather information. This committee was comprised of Board members Dan Coffey, Virgil Umphenour and Grant Miller. It took three years, a full Board cycle, with meetings in every region of the state, to complete the report.

The proposal was scheduled for the January- February 2000, a super meeting of Bristol Bay, AYK and Area M. The hatchery management met with the Governor and proffered that if the Board would not take up the proposal they would reduce their production by 25%. The Board meeting lasted 26 days, 10-16 hours a day, accepting the promise from the hatchery managers in the interest of time.

The marine productivity is currently in a very low cycle. The wild salmon are starving, many small systems are extirpated. Most of AYK stocks are not meeting escapement goals and have very little or no harvest of Chinook, chum and coho salmon. Hundreds of science papers indicate over production of hatchery pink salmon as a potential cause of declines in run strength and size for Alaska wild salmon stocks.

The purpose of this proposal is strictly conservation, to hold the hatcheries to their 2000 promise. The Board should require a substantial reduction in hatchery production so wild fish don't have to compete with hatchery fish for food.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(EF-F23-152)
