



Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT)

July 19, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

The ABRT is established for the purpose of exploring the issue of bycatch and providing recommendations to policy makers with the goal of improving the health and sustainability of Alaska's fisheries and protecting Alaska's record as a leader of fisheries' conservation and sustainability. ABRT website:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=bycatchtaskforce.main>

1. Call to order

Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT) meeting called to order at 9:00 AM by Chair John Jensen.

2. Roll call: acknowledge Task Force participants

Task Force Members present: John Jensen, Tommy Sheridan, Ragnar Alstrom, Brian Gabriel, Linda Kozak, Stephanie Madsen, Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang, Director Jim Anderson (delegate for Commissioner Sande), Representative Edgemon, Senator Micciche.

Other attendees: Karla Bush (Department of Fish and Game), Kari Winkel (Department of Fish and Game), Amory Lelake for Rep. Edgemon.

3. Approve Agenda: July 19, 2022, approved.

4. Approve minutes: June 21, 2022, approved.

5. Committee Reports

- a.) Science, Innovation and Technology (STI) Committee: Chair **Sheridan** reported that the committee recently met on July 7 where information was heard by the committee on a proposed Basin Scale Events to Coastal Impact (BECI) project. Sheridan believes that the development of technologies and programs suggested by this presentation could potentially help with bycatch in Alaska if promoted and utilized by Alaskan stake holders. Next committee meeting will take place on July 28th. Commissioner made sure to ask if the committee is getting everything they need from agencies.
- b.) Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska Crab Committee: Chair **Kozak** stated committee has not met since the last update to the ABRT due to fishing conflicts but has two upcoming meetings. Currently focused on Bering Sea crab and there will be two reports given in the upcoming meeting on July 26, and others on August 9. Kozak is requesting that industry to come forward with recommendations and presentations. The August 9 meeting is intended to finalize reports to forward to STI Committee for final preparations before presentation to the ABRT. Planning for a

second meeting in August and one final meeting in September to finalize information to be presented to ABRT.

- c.) Western Alaska Salmon Committee: Co-Chair **Madsen** stated that the committee did not meet during June to accommodate summer fishing and subsistence activities. Met on July 8th and heard overview of several reports from NPFMC and a presentation by Dr. Stram. A meeting is scheduled for July 29th and will include some additional reports from Dr. Howard and Ed Farley. Plan to finish information presentations and discuss possible recommendations in early August and a second one in later August. No recommendations yet as the committee is still gathering information. Commissioner asked if the members are getting support from staff (Dr. Howard) and if Co-Chair Madsen has had committee members review information online so they can come prepared to ask questions during Dr. Howard's presentation next week.
- d.) Gulf of Alaska Halibut and Salmon Committee: Chair **Gabriel** stated they should have a presentation from IPHC staff put together for next week, hopefully trying to have other ABRT member(s) jump in while most of this committee is out fishing. Member Kozak is going to fill in on one of those seats.

6. Old Business

- a) Revisit work plan and timeline (set September and October meetings)

The work plan and timeline were generally agreed upon by ABRT members. Discussion was had on when the October meeting should be had with October 12 in Anchorage being most likely. If the ABRT and committees follow the timeline this should be feasible, and they should be able to provide the public with a draft to discuss prior to the October meeting. Recommended that another October date be chosen following the public hearing meeting. September 20th was set as a future ABRT meeting date.

- b) Discuss report template and subcommittee template

Member **Madsen** is working on a draft subcommittee report template for the group. **Karla** noted where she pulled general information from to develop an outline of a template. Member **Madsen** noted changes can be made as they use the outline as things fill in it should become clearer. It was generally agreed this outline is a good starting point for the ABRT.

7. Public Comment

Jim Martin, Executive Director at Alaska Charter Association: Wants to know if essential fish habitat has been looked at as part of working on a bycatch issue. Member **Madsen** noted this process is underway to update this report as there is a 5-year review required to update the report with useful data. Mr. Martin is looking for info on existing trawl footprint as presented to the Council. Member **Madsen** pointed Jim to attend Crab Committee meetings.

Rebecca Skinner, Executive Director at Alaska Whitefish Trawlers Association: Likes the idea of getting a report out to folks before the in-person meeting so the public can comment on it. Noted that the draft outline may not allow for the different formats of committees to get information across

in a clear and cohesive manner. Likes that a template will help to make that not an issue. Provided hyperlink to recent Alaska Public Media article regarding the Area M commercial salmon fishery.

8. Task Force Comments

Commissioner Vincent-Lang thanked the ABRT members for their work and wanted to make sure they are getting all the help that they need from the department. Commissioner noted that Eastern Bering Sea has about 18% bottom disturbance and 2% in GOA going down over time.

Member Kozak thanked the members of the public and industry that have participated in these meetings.

Vice Chair Sheridan noted that we do have an email to submit comments and requests for notification.

9. Next Meeting Date: August 16, 2022, at 9:00 am.

10. Adjournment at 9:50 am.