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# ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

## Work Session

Anchorage | October 29-30, 2024

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### On-Time Advisory Committee Comments

Anchorage Advisory Committee (10.8.24).....	AC01
Cooper Landing Advisory Committee (10.14.24).....	AC02
Fairbanks Advisory Committee (Oct 7, 2024 & Oct 14, 2024) .....	AC03
Prince William Sound/Valdez Advisory Committee (10.12.24) .....	AC04
Seward Advisory Committee (10.13.24) .....	AC05
Sitka Advisory Committee (10.2.24 & 10.9.24).....	AC06

**Anchorage Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**October 8, 2024**  
**William J Hernandez**

I. Call to Order: 6:03pm by Chair, Kevin Taylor

II. Roll Call:

No	First Name	Last Name	Profile	Terms	Present/ Excused/ Unexcused
1	Kevin	Taylor	Chair	June 30, 2025	Present
2	Martin	Weiser	Vice Chair- Chair Fish	June 30, 2025	Present
3	Willow	Hetrick	Secretary	June 30, 2025	Present
4	Bryce	Eckroth		June 30, 2025	Unexcused
5	Neil	DeWitt		June 30, 2025	Present
6	Matt	Moore	Chair Game	June 30, 2026	Present
7	Ernie	Weiss		June 30, 2026	Excused
8	Nicole	Schmitt		June 30, 2026	Present
9	Kneeland	Taylor		June 30, 2026	Present (online)
10	Joni	Earp		June 30, 2026	Present
11	Michelle	Bittner		June 30, 2027	Present
12	Ed	Horton		June 30, 2027	Excused
13	Scott	Crowther		June 30, 2027	Present
14	Tom	Vania		June 30, 2027	Present
15	Lynette	Moreno Hinz		June 30, 2027	Present
16	J R	Gates	Alternate	June 30, 2025	Unexcused
17	Vacant		Alternate	June 30, 2025	N/A

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 8

III. Fish and Game Staff Present: Leila Williams (Board Support), Brittany Blaine (Area Management Biologist, Anchorage/Prince William Sound/North Gulf Coast), and Fari Fernandez (Information Officer).

IV. Guests Present: Ryan Astalos, Aaron Elliot, Jeffrey Gruenke, and Nathaniel Kurk.

V. Approval of Agenda: Neil DeWitt moved to approve the agenda as written, Scott Crowther seconded, and it carried unanimously.

VI. Reports:

a. Chair's report: Tonight, the Anchorage AC will be identifying the subcommittees

and vote on ACRs.

- b. ADF&G: Introduction to Leila Williams.
- c. Others: None.

VII. Public Comment

- Ryan Astalos-Brought up the Board of Fish proposals upcoming at the Cordova meeting, specifically proposals 14-17 which are related to the PWS trawl fishery. Proposal 16 would close the fishery all together and Mr. Astalos supports this proposal. This is a state managed fishery but the same boats that fish in the Gulf of Alaska also fish in the PWS. There is too much bycatch in the PWS, and the nets are fishing too close to the bottom. Wanted the Anchorage AC to address these proposals with real consideration for the bycatch. If the fishery is not completely closed, then would like the AC to support proposals that ensure an observer on the vessels.

Response from Brittany Blaine – the Department will not have a rockfish management plan developed for the Board. She did mention that the sport fishery catches more rockfish than the commercial fishery and there is no directed commercial rockfish fishery in PWS. The commercial fleet has been exceeding the allotted 150,000 pounds of rockfish bycatch the last few years, including 2024.

VIII. Old Business: None.

IX. New Business:

- Prepare comments for AK Board of Fisheries 2024/2025 Agenda Change Requests.

ACR 2 - There was discussion about the ACRs that the Department was bringing forward to discuss. The Anchorage AC is unhappy with the timing of the Susitna River proposal and thinks that immediate action must be taken by the Department to protect this fishery, regardless of the ACR being out of cycle. The Anchorage AC discussed the declining Chinook escapement counts for the Deshka which reflects the Anchorage AC's concern that the Chinook escapement for the entire Susitna River is declining.

ACR 3- same comment as above.

ACR 4, 5 and 6 (are similar) – Department is going to take these up. Suggested handling these as a group as they don't differ too much. There was an experimental dip net fishery for sockeye in Cook Inlet this past summer. There were not many fish caught because the fishery is limited to the weather and whether the fish were

present at the time of the opening. This fishery claims 100% king release with 0 mortality. Those in support were for reasons stated; would allow the test fishery to continue and is important to continue to gather data. Those opposed think that these proposals do not meet the criteria to review the proposal out of board cycle. Voted on the batch of proposals being heard out of cycle as follows – 8 in support and 2 in opposition.

ACR 7 – does not meet the criteria by the Board.

ACR 8 – This proposal is asking to add seines as a gear type in the fishery. Those in support of this ACR cited the gear types were supported. Also, if they Department takes up this proposal, more data will be brought to understand the fishery. More opportunity needs to be provided to the seine fishery. There could also be more Commissioner tags issued. Those opposed think that these proposals do not meet the criteria to review the proposal out of board cycle. Voted on this proposal being heard out of cycle as follows – 6 in support and 6 in opposition.

ACR 11 – Creating a Kvichak Special Harvest Area. For the first time in a while, the Naknek River fell behind the Kvichak River, and this proposal would set up an area similar to that of the Naknek. The commercial fishermen fish in the river as to not accidentally catch fish that are headed elsewhere. The Kvichak is a difficult fishery because it is tidal. There is already a precedent for this proposal and think that in the next Board cycle (which is Bristol Bay) this proposal would be successful and is not pressing enough to be heard out of cycle. This could be a good management tool for the future but may not be an emergency. Voted on this proposal being heard out of cycle as follows – 1 in support and 11 in opposition.

ACR 14 – The Kodiak cycle would be in another two years. There was a regulation that was changed during the 2023/2024 meeting that didn't consider 'joint ventures' who were left out of the consideration, which was an unforeseen effect of the regulatory change. Voted on this proposal being heard out of cycle as follows – 12 in support and 0 in opposition.

- Confirm subcommittee assignments.

#### **Game**

1. Willow Hetrick
2. Matt Moore
3. Nicole Schmitt
4. Kneeland Taylor
5. Joni Earp
6. Michelle Bittner
7. Ed (Harold) Horton
8. JR Gates

## 9. Neil DeWitt

**Fish**

1. Kevin Taylor
2. Martin Weiser
3. Bryce Eckroth
4. Ernie Weiss
5. Scott Crowther
6. Tom Vania
7. Lynette Moreno Hinz

- Discuss comment deadlines and schedule subcommittee meetings:

Martin Weiser, Fish Subcommittee Chair, will email the Fish Subcommittee to set meeting dates.

--PWS and Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Finfish and Shellfish (except shrimp) proposal comments must be brought to the Anchorage AC at the November 12, 2024, meeting of the full committee. 103 proposals will be discussed in subcommittee meetings.

--The Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish proposal comments must be brought to the Anchorage AC at the December 3, 2024, meeting of the full committee.

--The Statewide Shellfish, PWS Shrimp and Supplemental Issues proposal comments must be brought to the Anchorage AC at the January 7, 2024, meeting of the full committee.

Matt Moore, Game Subcommittee Chair, will email the Game Subcommittee to set meeting dates.

--The Central/Southwest region proposal comments must be brought to the Anchorage AC at the December 3, 2024, meeting of the full committee.

--The Statewide regulations meeting, proposal comments must be brought to the Anchorage AC at the February 4, 2024, meeting of the full committee.

BOF Meeting			
Meeting	Location	Comment Deadline	Meeting Dates
Work Session	Anchorage	Tuesday, October 15, 2024	October 29-30, 2024
PWS and Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Finfish and Shellfish (except shrimp)	Cordova	Tuesday, November 26, 2024	December 10-16, 2024
Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish	Ketchikan	Tuesday, January 14, 2025	January 28-February 9, 2025
Statewide Shellfish, PWS Shrimp and Supplemental Issues	Anchorage	Tuesday, February 25, 2025	March 11-16, 2025

BOG meeting			
Meeting	Location	Comment Deadline	Meeting Dates
Work Session	Wasilla	TBD	January 9, 2025
Central and Southwest Region	Wasilla	Friday, December 27, 2024	January 10-17, 2025
Statewide Regulations	Anchorage	Friday, March 7, 2025	March 21-28, 2025

- X. Set next meeting date: the first Tuesday in November is election day so the Anchorage AC will meet November 12, 2024.
- XI. Other: None.
- XII. Adjourn: 7:07pm.

Minutes Recorded By: Willow Hetrick  
 Minutes Approved By: Kevin Taylor  
 Date: October 8, 2024

## Cooper Landing AC Meeting

Call to order 7:02pm October 14, 2024

Members Present:

Josh Hayes  
Mike Adams  
Jason Lesmeister  
John Pearson  
Todd Donahue  
Jeremy Lewis  
Lorraine Temple  
Tom Lessard  
Vince Beltrami  
Jeff Bryden  
JJ Brown

Absent Members:

Billy Coulliette  
Jason Aigeldinger  
Adam Swaine

Fish And Game Present:

Phil Stacey  
Leila Williams

Agenda Approved

ACR 4. Yes- 6. No-5. Dip netting in August doesn't target the king salmon at the peak of the run. The no votes. Concerns for the release methods of non targeted species(king salmon, silver salmon;mon). Also concerns with the "may" being replaced with "will" as this could reduce the range of available in season conservation management tools.

ACR 5. No Comment (Due to action on ACR 4.

ACR 6. No Comment (Due to action on ACR 4.

ACR 7. No- Unanimous. Basically a fish trap.

ACR 8. NO- 10. Yes-1. The King salmon re still potentially caught. No proper data or plan to show there will be no lethal by catch to king salmon. Yes vote was to help out the commercial set netters who havent been able to fish other than commercial dip net in 2024.

ACR 9. No-10. Yes-1. No data to showe that an increase in limits for rainbow trout will have a positive effect on the Kenai River. The limits that exist now are for managment puporses that create a healthy eco system with good bio mass. The only Yes vote was because 3 fish over 20 inches didn't seem unreasonable.

ACR 10. No-9. Yes-1. Abstain-1. No votes were on the side of cosveration for a species of salmon that have been unstaible in numbers historically in the Kenai, and to protect them when in spawning areas. Yes Vote was because Tom would like to see a clause for the elderly in the law. Abstain vote was due to not fully understanding the issues.

Good of the Order:  
Next Meeting November 18.  
Meeting Adjourned 7:55 pm

Recorded by Jason Lesmeister, Secretary  
Approved by Josh Hayes, Chair  
October 15, 2024

# Alaska Board of Fisheries 2024/2025 Agenda Change Requests

## FAIRBANKS FISH AND GAME ADVISORY FISHERIES SUBCOMMITTEE (FAC FSC) RECOMMENDATIONS:

**October 7, 2024**

**FAC FSC members present:**

Gale K. Vick  
Mark Richards  
Mike Tinker

Virgil Umphenour  
John Wisniewski  
Chuck Derrick

**FAC October 9, 2024**

These recommendations were supported unanimously by the full Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee on October 9, 2024 with a full quorum, with the exception of ACR#2 that was changed to support. Motion to adopt all the ACR recommendations was made by Virgil Umphenour and seconded by Chuck Derrick. Minutes to follow.

**ACR 1.....**

Remove restrictions on gillnet mesh-size and length in the subsistence fishery for non-salmon fish in non-flowing waters of the Yukon Area (5 AAC 01.220).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: Has merit for a conservation issue to reflect in comments  
Author would have to amend

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#1**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria

**ACR 2.....**

Designate Susitna River king salmon a Stock of Yield Concern and adopt a regulatory action plan (5 AAC 61.XXX)

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: Recognizing this is a high priority conservation issue that should be considered by the Board of Fish despite the Department comment.

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR#2**

Motion: Mike Kramer, Second: Virgil Umphenour

Passed by unanimous consent by the full FAC as a revision of the Fisheries SC motion.

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 3.....**

Designate Little Susitna River coho salmon a Stock of Yield Concern and adopt a regulatory action plan (5 AAC 61.XXX).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: Recognizing that this is a conservation issue that might be a legislative action and would be better considered by the Board of Fish

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) ACR#3**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.



**ACR 4.....**

Increase the season dates and weekly fishing periods for dip net gear under the *Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan* (5AAC 21.382).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: Recognizing a need that should be addressed in Statewide proposal cycle and through the current ADF&G assessment of Stocks of Concern

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR#4 assuming the Department still has in-season closure options**

Mark Richards made the motion, Virgil Umphenour second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 5.....**

Increase the season dates in which dip nets may be used under the *Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan* (5 AAC 21.382). .....

**FAC FSC:** Discussion:

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR#5**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 6.....**

Increase the number of days per week that dip nets could be utilized under the *Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan* (5 AAC 21.382).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: helping to give more opportunity under dip net gear

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR#6**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 7.....**

Allow the use of leads during dip net fishing periods described in the *Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan* (5AAC 21.382).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: not enough information

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#7**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 8.....**

Add set beach seine nets as legal gear under the *Kenai River late-run king salmon stock of concern management plan* (5AAC 21.382).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: concern over increased pressure on king conservation

**Motion to OPPOSE ACR#8**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 9.....**

Increase the bag, possession, and size limits for rainbow trout in the Kenai River (5 AAC 57.120).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: concern over increased pressure on king conservation

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#9**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 10.....**

Expand time and area in waters of the lower section of the Kenai River that bait is allowed (5 AAC 57.121)

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: would need to see analyses

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#10**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 11.....**

Create a Kvichak River Special Harvest Area to allow harvest of Kvichak River sockeye salmon while conserving Naknek River sockeye salmon (5 AAC 06.XXX).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: providing for more surgical local option

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR#11**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 12.....**

Create a new herring food and bait fishery in the Alaska Peninsula-Aleutian Islands Area (5 AAC 27.610)

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: not enough information

**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#12**

Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 13.....**

Reduce maximum depth of hand and purse seines, maximum length of leads, eliminate minimum length of leads, and allow leads to be attached to either end of a seine in the Alaska Peninsula Area commercial salmon fishery (5 AAC 09.332)

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: This might help mitigate bycatch and needs consideration

**Motion to SUPPORT ACR #13**

Mark Richards made the motion, Virgil Umphenour second

Passed by unanimous consent

ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 14.....**

Allow CFEC salmon set gillnet permit holders who form a joint venture in the Central Section of the Northwest Kodiak District to operate 25 fathoms additional set gillnet gear (5 AAC 18.331).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: not enough information  
**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#14**  
Mark Richards made the motion, Mike Tinker second  
Passed by unanimous consent  
ADF&G Staff comment: **Does** meet ACR criteria.

**ACR 15.....**

Define the term ‘unit of gear’ (5 AAC 39.130).

**FAC FSC:** Discussion: This needs more analyses  
**Motion to Take No Action (TNA) on ACR#15**  
Mark Richards made the motion, Chuck Derrick second  
Passed by unanimous consent  
ADF&G Staff comment: Does **not** meet ACR criteria.

**Prince William Sound/Valdez  
Fish & Game Advisory Committee**

***Southcentral Region  
Fish & Game Advisory Committees***

*Nicholas Crump*  
*Chairperson*  
*nicholaswcrump@gmail.com*

Anchorage	Mt. Yenlo
Central Peninsula	Paxson
Cooper Landing	PWS/Valdez
Copper Basin	Seldovia
Copper River/PSW	Seward
Denali	Susitna Valley
Homer	Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road
Kenai/Soldotna	Tyonek
Matanuska Valley	Whittier

10/15/2024

Board of Fish and Game,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Valdez PWS Advisory committee to seek your assistance with a matter submitted as a proposal for this cycle regarding the PWS shrimp fishery that was not accepted. The proposal submitted was not given a reference number or title so I will direct your attention to the PWS finfish and shellfish proposal requesting a user/enhancement fee for PWS sport shrimp permits. It is our understanding that the application of fees is not within your abilities, but we ask that you take the concept into consideration during this work session. Please consider the intent and rationale of said proposal and the supporting statements to follow. We hope you recognize the benefit of dedicated funding for this fishery's health and welfare. We request the board help support this initiative by formally approaching the legislature to consider such a fee. If the board cannot directly support the implementation of a user fee we request the board forward our request to the legislature with some degree of department support.

This is an extremely unique fishery.  
It is highly coveted and participated in both commercially and recreationally.  
It is anticipated to expand and consistently serve more participants.  
Management can be expected to require more resources and tools to support this fishery.  
Funding is the key to providing the solutions needed to preserve this fishery.

I personally helped craft the proposal submitted with this in mind, and as a response to the extensive conversations I have had with this fisheries management for last 14 years, where it seems the solutions to problems falter repeatedly, because there is no funding. I have spent many hours collecting information and vetting a user fee concept with all varieties of stakeholders. I have yet to have a single individual object to a nominal (\$10.00) fee that is dedicated to support the successful management of this resource.

I have been involved in this fishery commercially and as a sport/personal use/subsistence user. During that time, I have taken every opportunity to participate in this fishery's regulatory development, access the knowledge and opinions of department staff regarding the multitudes of aspects in need of attention, and seek strong relationships to develop solutions to problems alongside fellow fisherpeople both recreationally and professionally. The proposal submitted was considered and developed concurrently with the PWS Whittier Advisory Committee and PWS Valdez Advisory Committee and in both cases was approved by a unanimous vote. It was submitted jointly by both ACs.

The submitted proposal presents 4 key points.

1. ADFG Managers Martin Schuster and Brittany Blaine, as well as other staff have indicated that additional survey sites are warranted, and funding is the impediment to inclusion of any additional survey sites.
2. It is acknowledged that the MSY equation is unresponsive and relies heavy on survey data, the current survey data available is limited and not representative of the entire PWS management area. Management will benefit by establishing additional survey sites.
3. Current survey locations do not provide an accurate indication of Sound wide resource abundance, particularly within the areas accessible to sport fishing only. The areas restricted to sport only fishing harvest a substantial portion, maybe even a majority, of the Sport allocation (60% of the GHL). A lack of funding input from the sport fishery allows continued fishing pressure with no specific preseason biomass assessment data to model for the management of the geographic areas for which they are directed. The sport fishery's harvest is consequently "managed" by way of a preseason determination (pot limit) and fails to reconcile itself until one month after the season closure. = no in season management.
4. The sport division of this fishery provides no contribution financially nor in the generation of data to assist in management, despite being the majority user group (60% allocation of the TAH and approx. 4000+ participants). All the while, the Commercial fishery bears the fiscal responsibility to generate the needed data and manage the fishery (as a whole) despite the minority allocation (40% of the TAH and approx. 100 operators).

We strongly believe a funding source needs to be identified as the first step in securing a stable future for this fishery. A user fee on sport permits would accomplish this in an equitable manner, distributing the burden of protecting the fishery and ensuring its preservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruce Bowman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce Bowman  
Secretary  
PWS Valdez AC

**Seward  
Fish & Game Advisory Committee**

***Southcentral Region  
Fish & Game Advisory Committees***

Jim McCracken  
*Chairperson*

Anchorage	Mt. Yenlo
Central Peninsula	Paxson
Cooper Landing	PWS/Valdez
Copper Basin	Seldovia
Copper River/PSW	Seward
Denali	Susitna Valley
Homer	Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road
Kenai/Soldotna	Tyonek
Matanuska Valley	Whittier

OCTOBER 13, 2024

CHAIR MARIT CARLSON-VAN DORT  
[HTTPS://BOARDOFFISHERIES@ADFG.ALASKA.GOV](mailto:HTTPS://BOARDOFFISHERIES@ADFG.ALASKA.GOV)

DEAR CHAIR CARLSON-VANDORT & MEMBERS OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES.

THE SEWARD FISH & GAME ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CITY OF SEWARD, THE SEWARD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND THE ALASKA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND AN INVITATION TO THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES TO CONSIDER SEWARD AS A VENUE FOR THE 2026 LOWER COOK INLET FINFISH MEETING.

SEWARD DID HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HOST ITS FIRST BOF MEETING IN THE HISTORY OF THE BOARD IN 2019. ALL THE FEEDBACK WE GOT WAS POSITIVE. THE SEWARD AC AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY BELIEVE THAT SEWARD HAS ALL OF THE AMENITIES NEEDED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS ENTERPRISE. PLEASE NOTE THE ATTACHMENT FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THE SEWARD AC FEELS IT WOULD BE A GREAT SERVICE TO THE CITIZENS OF SEWARD TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS FIRSTHAND HOW THE BOARD PROCESS IS ACCOMPLISHED. THE MAJORITY OF OUR POPULATION HAS NEVER ATTENDED A BOF OR A BOG MEETING.

ALASKA VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER HAS DEMONSTRATED THEIR CAPABILITY TO HOST SUCH AN EVENT. THE SIZE OF THE MEETING SPACE AS WELL AS AVAILABLE CONNECTIVITY FOR STAFF WERE BOTH ADEQUATE.

SEWARD HAS AMPLE LODGING AND DINING VENUES AVAILABLE YEAR-ROUND. ALL FACILITIES ARE WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE. SHUTTLE SERVICE CAN BE PROVIDED BETWEEN LODGING AND THE MEETING SITE IF DESIRED.

WE HOPE THE BOARD WILL TAKE OUR RECOMMENDATION UNDER ADVISEMENT AND ALLOW SEWARD TO HOST THE 2026 LOWER COOK INLET FINFISH MEETING.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND CONSIDERATION IN THIS MATTER.

SINCERELY,

DIANNE M. DUBUC

## SEWARD FISH &amp; GAME ADVISORY COMMITTEE

PARKING IS TIGHTLY REGULATED IN SEWARD. WE SUGGEST YOU PARK IN THE DAY LOT TO THE NORTH OF THE CHEVRON STATION. A TEN DOLLAR A DAY PARKING FEE IS IN REQUIRED. THE F/V FLORETTE C IS LOCATED IN STALL # E28 IN THE SEWARD BOAT HARBOR. YOU CAN FIND US AS BY PROCEEDING DOWN THE COVERED RAMP LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE KENAI FJORDS BUILDING. YOU ARE NOW ON E DOCK. WE ARE LOCATED TWO-THIRDS OF THE WAY DOWN ON THE RIGHTHAND SIDE

WE WOULD LIKE TO DEPART THE SEWARD HARBOR AT 0700 MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 6. **YOU WILL BE FREE TO BOARD ANY TIME AFTER 0645.** IT IS HARD TO DETERMINE WHAT THE WEATHER WILL BE LIKE. WE SUGGEST THAT YOU DRESS IN LAYERS SO YOU CAN ADD OR SUBTRACT AS THE WEATHER DICTATES. ANYTIME IN AK, RAINGEAR IS ALWAYS A GOOD IDEA. RUBBER BOOTS ARE NOT USUALLY REQUIRED.

WE PROVIDE NO FOOD SERVICE AND SUGGEST YOU PURCHASE A BOAT LUNCH. IF YOU DESIRE ANY COFFEE, TEA, COCOA, POP, ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR BOTTLED WATER YOU MUST PROVIDE THEM YOURSELF. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE WE SELL ALASKA SPORTS FISHING LICENSES AND KING SALMON STAMPS ON BOARD. FISH FILLETING & PROCESSING IS AVAILABLE LOCALLY AT J-DOCK SEAFOODS.

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO FISHING WITH YOU ON THE 6<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER. IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR REQUIRE MORE INFORMATION PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL. **PLEASE CHECK IN BY PHONE A DAY OR TWO PRIOR TO YOUR CHARTER!** HAVE A GREAT TRIP NORTH AND THANK-YOU FOR CHOOSING ALASKA SALTWATER CHARTERS FOR YOUR FISHING NEEDS!

SINCERELY,

CAPTAIN DIANNE M. DUBUC

P.S. SAVE TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING ISSUES BY STAYING AT THE LOCALLY OWNED BREEZE INN. THEY OFFER A SPECIAL DISCOUNT FOR GUESTS OF ALASKA SALTWATER CHARTERS! CALL THEM DIRECT AT 907-224-5237.







[Seward.com](http://Seward.com) is a great resource to share in a letter of invitation! I've also attached a copy of our "one sheets" that lists who is open this time of year, by category and with hours! These get updated monthly, so we can share a November one, as well.

Hotels:

[Breeze Inn](#)  
[Harbor 360 Hotel](#)  
[Hotel Seward](#)

Restaurants:

[The Cookery](#)  
[The Flamingo Lounge](#)  
[Apollo's](#)  
[Tidewater TapHouse](#)  
[Breeze Inn](#)

Transportation:

[Red Eye Rides](#)  
[Red Taxi](#)

# THINGS TO DO

## SEWARD OCEAN EXCURSIONS

**Every day, book at [sewardoceanexcursions.com](http://sewardoceanexcursions.com)**  
Seward Boat Harbor Slip M-3 • (907) 599-0499

## ALASKA SEALIFE CENTER

**Thur - Mon, 12p - 5p**  
301 Railway Ave • (907) 224-6300

## SEWARD COMMUNITY LIBRARY & MUSEUM

**Library Hours: Tue - Fri 10a-6p, Sat 10a-6p**  
239 6th Ave • (907) 224-4082

## KERAMIikka CERAMICS STUDIO

**Members have 24/7 access**  
[keramiikkaceramics.com](http://keramiikkaceramics.com)

## SEWARD MURAL WALKING TOUR

*Self-guided tour of the Mural Capital of Alaska*

## ALASKA WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CENTER

**Sun - Sat, 10a - 5p**  
Mile 79 - Seward Hwy • (907) 783-2025

## MYALASKAGUIDE

**Download the app on your phone! App: MyAlaskaGuide**  
(907) 529-6969  
*Tour Alaska on your own schedule, GPS activated audio narration*  
**ADVENTURE 60 NORTH**  
**Every day, 10a - 6p**  
31872 Herman Leirer Rd • (907) 224-2600

## KENAI BACKCOUNTRY ADVENTURES

**Every day, 8a - 6p**  
11724 Seward Highway # A • (907) 331-4912

## SEWARD GUIDED HIKES

**Every day**  
Call (907) 362-7723 to book

## MARATHON HELICOPTERS

**Every day, 9a - 6p**  
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## Minutes Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee October 2, 2024

### NSRAA Meeting Room and Zoom Began 6 PM

#### AC members (present unless otherwise noted):

Spencer Chute Charter-Absent excused

Eric Jordan At Large -Absent excused

Aaron Prussian conservation-Absent Excused

Dick Curran Longline

Steve Ramp Resident Sport Fish

John Murray Power Troll -vice chair

Woody Cyr Trapping

Moe Johnson Seine

Karen Johnson At Large

Schuyler Mace Hand troll

Tad Fujioka Processor- secretary

Joel Martin Alternate

Stacey Wayne Shellfish

Scott Wagner Alternate

Luke Bastian Guide

Kent Barkau Hunting

Josh Chevalier Subsistence Absent not excused

Dick Curran Longline

Agency representatives: Lauren Sill ADFG Subsistence, Troy Tydingco-ADFG Sportfish, Patrick Fowler-ADFG Sportfish, Annie Bartholomew- ADFG Board Support

**Public:** Forrest Braden -SEAGO, Kim Landeen-SEAGO, Patrick Baum, Matt Donohoe-ATA, Mike (last name not given), Mary Jo (last name not given), Lauren Howard- ALFA, Jeff Farvour- troll, Lance McCullen, Brooks Olesek- resident, Emily Scott- ALFA, troll, Aspen Knight-troll, Devon Calven-subsistence, Gary Mulligan- troll, Phyllis Mulligan-deckhand, Ceri Malin-troll, Tyler Green-troll, Lean Cyr-longline, troll, gillnet, subsistence, Jacquie Foss- troll king salmon, Chris Carroll- troll/longline, Spencer Severson-troll, Doug Jenny-troll, Nancy Behnken-longline/troll, Paulette Moreno- subsistence, Forest Dotson-troll, Tyrun Moffitt- troll, Angela Whitfield-troll, Dave Richey-troll, Terry Perensovich troll/longline

**M/S to approve agenda;** approved without objection

**M/S to approve previous minutes;** approved without objection

### **Proposal Procedure explained:**

Chair explained the procedure that would be used for discussing proposals: The sponsor, if present has up to 6 minutes to explain their proposal. Agency representatives speak next, then members of the public take turns up to 3 minutes each. AC discussion is last. Once the AC discussion begins, the members of the public may only speak again if an AC member asks for more information of them.

### **Update on Rental Boat proposal:**

The AC submitted a BoF proposal last spring addressing rental boats. The proposal was received by the department and was the subject of a subsequent Zoom session arranged by ADFG Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang between the AC chair Stacey Wayne, AC Secretary Tad Fujioka, AC member Steve Ramp and the commissioner. The commissioner had some questions/concerns that the three AC members intended to address via a draft amendment to the proposal. However, the proposal was not included in the proposal book, so at present there is no vehicle by which to get the issue of the amendments before the BoF. Steve has asked the Dept why it was not included and if he receives a response, intends to have the AC address whatever the concerns are via a letter to be discussed at the next meeting with the intent of bringing the issue to the BoF Worksession later this month.

### **Proposals:**

#### **104- Saltwater Subsistence hook-and-line King fishery M/S**

- AC member indicated that Grant Hagerman of ADFG had said that under the current Treaty Agreement, the State of AK does not have the authority to unilaterally open a new Chinook fishery in SE, so even if the BoF supported the proposal, it would have to go before the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC).
- AC member took issue with the proposer's description of subsistence fishermen as an under-represented user group- stated that he thought that at least in Sitka they are well represented
- Why don't we already have a marine king salmon subsistence fishery?
  - Because subsistence fisheries have historically been primarily conducted with nets. There aren't many places in SE marine waters where nets would be effective to catch kings.
- This proposal is unusual in that it is specifically asking for a rod-and-reel subsistence fishery. The only local area open to subsistence fishing with rod and reel is a small portion of Redoubt Bay.
- Are trollers concerned about a new Chinook user group?
  - (Jacquie Foss-troller- public) 85% of troller are residents- mostly rural residents, so while this would decrease the troll quota, it is important to support the subsistence needs of our neighbors.
  - (Tyler Green-troller -public) Agree; those fish should have gone to local residents from the beginning. Shouldn't have been allocated to "sport".
- Would this proposal exclude Juneau and Ketchikan?
  - Residents of Juneau, Ketchikan, and for that matter Anchorage, would be allowed to participate in the fishery, but not in the waters that have been designated as non-subsistence areas around those communities. They would have to come to places like Sitka.

- There is a conflict in the language. The last paragraph says that “only areas open to sport fishing for king salmon will be open to subsistence harvest.” But the previous paragraph implied that the subsistence fishery would remain open should the sport fishery close.
- (Paulette Moreno)- Favors the proposal; current regulations can be too restrictive. (In response to the previous comment): The intent is clearly to allow continued resident access in the event that the sport fishery is closed. Perhaps the proposer’s language was sloppy, but the intent is clear. This proposal is about respect for subsistence users.
- (Tyler Green-troller -public) How would this fishery differ from the resident sport fishery?
  - It would only matter if the resident sport fishery were to be shot down- as it has been for the past two months
  - If resident sport doesn’t shut down there wouldn’t be any effect
- **M/S to Table** on the grounds that this is a subsistence proposal and none of the SE RAC members are present to speak to the proposal. **Motion to Table passes unanimously**, P104 will be placed on the agenda for Oct 23

**105: To modify sport regulations to treat non-residents and residents fishing in the EEZ equally as required by Magnuson-Stevens Act. M/S**

- (Troy) ADFG agrees that we need to be in compliance with Magnuson-Stevens. Most of the state doesn’t have resident/non-resident distinctions, so SE is unusual in this regard. The department considered several ways of coming into compliance and recommends that all anglers regardless of residency status be held to non-resident regulations if they are fishing in the EEZ.
- Is this about bag limits?
  - (Troy) Bag. Size, and Annual limits would be affected
- (Paulette Moreno) I oppose this proposal as it would limit resident opportunity. The residents should have priority.
- (Jaquie Foss)-ok with imposing non-resident restrictions on residents as long as those restrictions were limited to only when they were fishing in the EEZ. The EEZ is hard to access for small boats, so this wouldn’t have much effect on the users that are otherwise most vulnerable. They don’t fish in the EEZ anyway.
- (Troy) only about 1% of the sport-caught king salmon come from the EEZ waters, so such restrictions would have minimal impact on king salmon fishing; but might be more significant for blackcod.
- (Matt Donohoe) I question ADFG’s assumption that the proposer’s legal argument is sound. King salmon management is delegated to the state of Alaska to manage. Does that delegation of authority override Magnuson-Stevens?
- The proposer wants non-residents to get the same liberal limits as residents, but that would result in excessive harvest. Trollers already lost 17,000 kings last season because the existing regulations allowed non-residents to catch them first.
- If state law is subordinate to federal law, perhaps kings caught in the EEZ shouldn’t come off of Alaska’s quota. If it isn’t our water to manage, why are we responsible for how many fish are caught there?
- Magnuson-Stevens provides protections for fishing communities like Sitka. Perhaps there is a way to utilize this language to carve out a loophole

- (Troy) ADFG considered a couple of alternative means of complying with Magnuson-Stevens including
  - Differentiating on the basis of charter/non-charter as is done with halibut
  - The landing prohibitions of Proposals 106 & 107
 But thinks that restricting residents fishing in the EEZ to non-resident limits is the least invasive way to come into compliance
- I think that the state ought to lawyer up and fight this. We've been fishing under these regulations for a long time. If there was a legitimate problem it would have been pointed out a long time ago. (Many others agreed with this comment)
- If the Department's assessment of the legal situation is accurate, I agree with that the department's preferred solution is the best alternative.

#### **Proposal fails 1-12**

##### **106 prohibit non-residents fishing from charter boats in the EEZ that catch fish that they would not be allowed to catch in state waters from landing those fish in SEAK. M/S**

- (Troy) ADFG does not believe that they have the legal authority to enforce this proposal.
- (Dave) Resident sports are already seeing problems with the current management plan. If addition harvest is allowed in the EEZ, that will just make things worse.
- (Ceri) All commercial salmon fisheries are already limited entry. There needs to be limited entry for charter boats. The more fish that non-residents catch, the fewer the residents are allowed to catch. Ted Stevens was famous for sticking up for the rights of Alaskans. He wouldn't want to see legislation with his name on it being used against Alaskans.
- Charter boats would still be allowed to land fish up to the non-resident limits.
- Charter halibut licenses are limited and some are non-transferable, so the fleet will get smaller. This becomes a defacto limit on salmon charter too because if your clients aren't allowed to keep halibut it is hard to attract enough clients.
- This proposal isn't needed if ADFG's preferred alternative to proposal 105 is adopted
- Comparing 106 vs 107: 107 applies to all non-residents, while 106 only applies to non-residents fishing from charter boats. In light of the bare boat rental loophole on halibut, I prefer 107 to 106 since 106 would further increase the incentives to rent a boat.
- Both 106 and 107 were submitted in response to 105. 105 is a nut that we have to crack. 106 and 107 are two possible solutions, but it is unclear whether or not the state has the authority to implement either of them.
  - Neither 106 nor 107 are the right solution. They aren't manageable, and probably not legal.

#### **Proposal fails 0-13**

##### **107 prohibit non-residents fishing in the EEZ that catch fish that they would not be allowed to catch in state waters from landing those fish in SEAK. M/S**

See discussion under proposal 106

#### **Proposal fails 2-11**

**108: Change KSMP to establish hard cap on sport fishery at 25% of hook-and-line allocation and close the non-resident sport season in mid-July if the 9-yr average has been above 22% for 2 consecutive years M/S**

- (Forrest- speaking for SEAGO as proposer) In recent years there have been modeling issues with the Pacific Salmon Commission model that is responsible for setting Alaska's quota. The model has underpredicted, resulting in a quota much lower than the actual abundance warranted. This meant that the sport share was lower than it should have been, so the sport harvest was a higher proportion of the quota. This proposal would allow for the sport fishery to take up to 25% of the combined sport-troll allocation in some years with the intent that the sport share would average 20% in the long run.
- Why the 9-yr average?
  - (Forrest) We noticed that over the ten-year treaty agreements of the past the sport share has come out to right about 20%. But you need both high abundance and low abundance years to average out to 20%. We went with 9 years instead of 10 because that would keep the things in line with the BoF cycle.
- This past season was a middle abundance year, not a low abundance year. Yet the sport catch was way over 20%. If that's what happens in a middle abundance year, without some change in the current plan, the sport catch will be over by even more in a low abundance year.
- Under the new treaty agreement, Alaska's share of the fish was reduced. We won't have high quota years like we did in the past, so if the sports go over their 20% allocation in low abundance years, there won't be any more years when they are under 20% to average things out.
- (Dave) We shouldn't accept the premise that Alaska is catching other people's fish; Also, trollers shouldn't be penalized in the event that a gear group is under their allocation and trollers are allowed to catch the remainder. We recognize that trollers are the only gear group with the catching power to do this, but those fish shouldn't be held against trollers the following year.
- Charters have fished for two decades when sports were allowed to go over their allocation and it didn't matter too much since there were other years when they were under their allocation and things balanced out, but under the new Treaty agreement, Alaska isn't allowed any overages.
  - Sport and troll could \*both\* go over under the prior Treaty terms in 1999-2018, and some years they both did. This new Treaty isn't just a problem for sports. It is a problem for trollers too.
- Is it SEAGO's intent that the 25% is a hard cap?
  - (Forrest)- Yes, we need to be able to go over 20% sometimes, but we won't go over 25%.
- I appreciate, the hard cap, but I think that it will be hit most every year with the increased sport catches.
  - If sports were shut off anytime they hit 20% there wouldn't be any way to balance out the low years. So, sport needs to be allowed to go over 20% in some years in order to average 20% in the long term
- If the sport catch is approaching the hard cap, is it SEAGO's intent that the non-resident fishery would be closed with enough quota remaining so that the resident fishery can continue though the remainder of the season?



- (Forrest) Yes, the resident season should stay open. We were surprised when it closed this year. That's not what we want to see.
- The closure after mid-July in the event that the 9-yr average is over 22% probably affects the guides on the inside waters more than the guides on the outside. Under Stock of Concern management, the inside waters are closed in the early season. They would barely reopen before this would close them again- at least for non-residents.
- I also appreciate the hard cap, and like one of the previous speakers, I also think that 25% is too high since it is likely to be hit often. Hence, I propose the following **Amendment**:
  - **Change the hardcap from 25% to 23% and the trigger from 22% to 21-1/2%.**
    - Amendment was seconded
  - I like this concept. Let's agree on a framework, then negotiate the numbers.
- Does ADFG agree that the 2024 abundance was higher than the pre-season forecast?
  - (Troy) Yes
- (Woody) When do trollers get the 17,000 kings that we lost this year back?
  - (Forrest) The model was the reason that we went over this year. Trollers didn't take advantage of the high quota a few years ago. They could have had those fish back then.

**Amendment passes 12-1; Proposal as amended passes 10-3**

*(4) allow for inseason transfer from the troll fishery to the sport fishery, not to exceed [5] 3 percent of the troll/sport allocation for the year;*

*(5) allow for the transfer of any projected unused balance in sport allocation to the troll fishery at a date determined by the department.*

*(n) The department shall implement the following reductions for nonresident anglers in waters not subject to wild stock closures in that year if the nine-year rolling average of the sport fishery harvest exceeds [22] 21-1/2 percent on consecutive years; reductions will lift when the nine-year rolling average reduces to 20 percent or below;*

**109: Modify KSMP to take 70% of the sport allocation prior to July 1 and the remaining 30% after July 1; Resident bag limit to be 2/day under all circumstances; M/S**

- (Jacquie Foss-proposer) This would restore inseason management and would make sure that at least 30% of the sport allocation would be available after the inside waters open up. It greatly simplifies the management plan by getting rid of all of the references to different tiers that didn't actually make much difference to the management. When abundance is high, we should all get an increased share. As a troller, I don't feel good about taking more than my share just because quotas are high. Also, please note that there is a typo on the bottom of page 114. It should read: One sector should NOT be allowed to flourish to the detriment of another.
- (Troy) ADFG data collections lag by a week or so. To manage an inseason closure to hit a particular number would be challenging, but do-able.
- Seems to be an answer searching for a problem.
- I like that this is much simpler than the current plan!

- Is it the proposer's intent that the department set the limits such that the harvest rate would allow the sport fishery to remain open all year?
  - Jacquie- Yes
  - Thanks for the clarification. Otherwise, the limits could be set very liberally early with the expectation that the season would close well before July when the first 70% had been taken and then would reopen for just a short period of time with high limits again.
- (Steve- resident sport representative): I don't like that proposal would constrain residents to 2 fish/day instead of allowing 3/day in the higher abundance levels
  - It also doesn't drop to 1/day in the low quota years. I think that is a good trade for residents. We are likely to see more low quota years than high quota years in the future.
  - Agree with above. The 3 fish/day is fairly recent change. It used to be 2/day all the time. This would restore the resident limit to what it used to be. It was fine back then. It is more important to have adequate access all the time than to get bonus fish sometimes, but be short other times.
- This protects the residents who live disproportionately on the inside by reserving 30% of the quota until after July 1.
- Charter operators don't like the possibility of inseason closures.
- There was a long discussion about the 70/30 split. Initially, some thought that historically only 60% of the catch had occurred prior to July 1, so the proposal would be moving more fish to early in the season. The department representative eventually clarified that in recent years 65-70% of the catch has occurred by July 1. The committee seemed satisfied that the 70% required by the proposal was close enough to this recent pattern so this discussion abruptly ended.
- **M/S Amendment to change the fixed 2 fish resident bag limit to 1-3/day depending upon abundance.**
  - **Amendment passed 12-1**
- **M/S Amendment** to change the language in
  - (c)(1) the department shall manage the sport fishery **with a goal**
  - (2) to take 70% of the sport fishery allocation between January 1 and July 1;
  - (3) to take the remaining 30% of the port fishery allocation between July1 and December 31;

**Amendment passes 13-0**

**Proposal as twice amended passes 12-1**

**110 Replace the KSMP with the agreement from the 2022 BoF meeting: Sport fishery to be managed to 20% under all tiers M/S**

- (Matt Donohoe- speaking for ATA as proposer): This would reinstate the agreement between SEAGO, Territorial Sportsmen Inc and Ak Trollers Association that was subsequently changed by the department after it was passed by the BoF in 2022.
- (Patrick- ADFG)- One should be aware that the original KSMP wasn't expected to result in a 20% sport harvest in all tiers. It was anticipated that the sport catch would be more than 20% in the low years and less than 20% in the high years. The annual limits provided on low tiers are too aggressive if you want to restrict the sport catch to 20%.

- I care most about protecting resident sports and letting trollers have their 80%. Non-residents have to accept what it left. The problem is that the non-resident fishery is exploding and they are fishing on stocks of concern when nobody else does.
  - There were 228 charter boats in Sitka back in 2006. There aren't that many now. There probably won't ever be that many again because NOAA previously allowed some non-transferable halibut charter permits to be leased out
  - (Matt Donohoe) The number of charter boats may not have gone up, but the proportion of the sport harvest caught by non-residents has gone up.
- (Ceri) The point of this proposal is to not allow the "borrowing" of past years.
  - Sports won't average 20% in the long run if they aren't allowed to go over 20% in the low years since they will be under 20% in the high years.
  - (Ceri) We can't allow sports to go over 20% under the new agreement because that means someone else has to be restricted to less than their allocation or we face a penalty.
- If a good manager is aiming to hit 20%, then the long-term average ought to be 20%. There will be management error- both high and low, but those errors should be reasonably small and should cancel out over time.
- Is it the proposer's intent that if the sport harvest is approaching the 20% allocation, that the non-resident fishery be closed with enough of the sport allocation remaining to allow the resident fishery to remain open the rest of the season?
  - (Ceri) Yes, residents have priority. Resident sport would stay open even if non-resident closes.
- (Patrick) The all-gear harvest for 2024 looks like it will come in about 4,000 fish under the all-gear allotment.
- (Steve- resident sport rep)- In tiers (c) and (d) the resident bag limit is 3, but in tiers (e) and (f) it drops to 2. Yet the non-resident limits don't change. How come the resident limit goes down as the quota drops, but the non-resident limits don't?

#### **Proposal passes 7-6**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30

Minutes Recorded By: Tad Fujioka  
 Minutes Approved By: Sitka AC  
 Date: 10/9/2024 Meeting

**Minutes Sitka Fish & Game Advisory Committee October 9, 2024****Sitka Sound Science Center and Zoom Began 6 PM****AC members (present unless otherwise noted):**

Spencer Chute Charter-Absent not excused  
 Eric Jordan At Large  
 Aaron Prussian Conservation-Absent Excused  
 Dick Curran Longline  
 Steve Ramp Resident Sport Fish  
 John Murray Power Troll -vice chair  
 Woody Cyr Trapping  
 Moe Johnson Seine  
 Karen Johnson At Large  
 Schuyler Mace Hand troll  
 Tad Fujioka Processor- secretary  
 Joel Martin Alternate  
 Stacey Wayne Shellfish  
 Scott Wagner Alternate  
 Luke Bastian Guide  
 Kent Barkau Hunting  
 Josh Chevalier Subsistence-Absent not excused  
 Dick Curran Longline

Agency representatives: Troy Tydingco-ADFG Sportfish, Patrick Fowler-ADFG Sportfish, Grant Hagerman-ADFG Comfish troll

**Public:** Patrick Baum- Elfin Cove AC, troller, Matt Donohoe-ATA president, Mary Jo Lord-Wild- Elfin Cove AC, Lauren Howard- ALFA, Jeff Farvour- troll, Lance McCullen- troller/diver, Brooks Olesek- Sitka resident, Emily Scott- ALFA, troll, Aspen Knight-troll, Devon Calven-subsistence, Ceri Malin-troll, Jacquie Foss- troll king salmon, Dave Richey-troll, Michael (last name not given), Peter Bradley, Bill Coltharp - Sitka Sound Science Center Hatchery, Ken Wilkenson-troller

**M/S to approve previous minutes;** Oct 2 minutes approved as written without objection

**Election Announcement:**

Review of seats up for reelection at next weeks' meeting; charter and at-large do not have incumbents interesting in continuing.

**Reconsideration of Action taken last week on Proposal 108 (Amendment to SEAGO proposal on King Salmon management plan):**

SEAGO Executive Direction and Assistant ED had both been online last week, but no SEAGO representative currently present. Chair opened the floor for a motion to reconsider. After some time, none was offered, so business continued.

**Update on allocating funding for BoF members to travel to SE**

The AC had previously sent a letter asking that BoF members get funding to travel to SE to learn about the fisheries ahead of the SE BoF meeting since none of the current board members live/fish here. We have not received a response. John suggested that we try to get this added to the BoF's Work session agenda and volunteers to make this effort on our behalf. No objections from AC.

**Redoubt Weir Funding:**

Chair has drafted letter to BIA in support of STA receiving Tribal Climate Resistance funding to count sockeye returning to Redoubt Lake remotely by AI-video. After some minor changes were made AC unanimously supported sending the letter.

**Update on Rental Boat proposal:**

Steve reported that he finally received a very brief explanation of why the AC's rental boat proposal had not been included in the BoF proposal book. Boat Support apparently thought our proposal was asking for actions beyond the BoF's jurisdiction and/or non-regulatory actions. Steve has drafted a short request that the BoF take action at the upcoming Worksession to put the topic on the agenda at the upcoming SE meeting anyway. We feel that the BoF should hear the public's concerns in this topic so that they can take action, even if the initial actions don't involve regulations. Unanimous support for sending this letter after some minor edits. Letter is attached to the end of these minutes.

**Proposals:****111- Modify King Salmon Management Plan to let ADFG set Non-Resident Annual sport king salmon limits to target 19-22% (on sliding scale) of hook-and-line allocation M/S**

Matt Donohoe – points out that the AC was inconsistent last week in that we supported multiple proposals, including some that were incompatible with one another. Views potential support of this proposal as sending an even more conflicting message. 2024 sport catch far exceeded the 20% benchmark- cites preliminary ADFG figure of around 28%.

Kent: In response to Matt's comment re: support for incompatible proposals sending a confusing message: We have approved various strategies but haven't yet identified a preferred alternative.

Steve: (also addressing Matt's concern): The way the BoF deals with this, I'm willing to support conflicting proposals because that will let the BoF know the limits of what we consider acceptable. They can look the vote count and see how much support a proposal has.

Kent: At some point we should identify the elements of a solution that are most important to us.

Stacey: When speaking to the BoF, our representative needs to be careful to only present positions that we have supported. Agrees that a summary explaining out positions would be a good idea.

Tad: Supports identifying importance characteristics of a solution. This would guide not only the BoF but also give our representative some latitude.

Dave Richey- Disappointed that AC chose not reconsider our previous position on proposal 108. Says that his priorities are protecting year-round resident sport access and the 80% troll allocation.

Ceri Malin-This proposal will only achieve the goal of the 20% average if the low and high years balance out. The Columbia River is expected to be going into a down cycle; thus, quotas are likely to be lower than higher in next several years. Trollers lost 30,000 kings the last couple of years and are likely to lose more unless action is taken to change the current management plan.

Lauren Howard- This is similar to what the charter industry had asked for in halibut management with a larger proportion of the quota in years of low abundance, but the NPFMC didn't agree. I don't think that the BoF should either. As an alternative, the charter halibut industry is now in the process of buying commercial quota to augment their allocation rather than having extra fish given to them. While the charter industry wants to have stability, stability is important to the troll industry too.

Jaquie Foss- this looks similar to the SEAGO proposal from last cycle. The BoF didn't support that one, and shouldn't support this one either. Points out that without inseason management, this proposal is relying on the PSC pre-season forecast to be accurate. In recent years the model has been highly inconsistent and it would be a mistake to rely on it going forward. Fundamentally is ok with a plan that would allow the sport sector to intentionally exceed 20% in some years, but only if there is a structure in place to *assure* that the overage will be returned to the troll sector without relying on historic abundance patterns to continue or relying on the computer model to provide high quotas. This proposal doesn't provide that assurance.

Jeff Farvour- AC should revisit proposal 108; States that it is unlikely under the current Treaty Agreement that we will see high quotas, so shouldn't rely on those years to make the trollers whole. The reallocation of king salmon has cost the troll fleet \$2 million in the last two years.

John (To Troy): How would ADFG manage the fishery under this proposal?

Troy: Right now, we don't manage to the 20%. If we were asked to go to inseason management we can get right up to, or at least pretty close to whatever number the target is. We would liberalize or restrict inseason as needed. We would have to rely on the creel sampling program which is about a week behind, so it wouldn't be perfect, but it would be pretty close.

John: (Restates question): Would you use inseason management if this proposal were approved?

Troy: If we were directed to manage inseason, we would.

Stacey: Do you view this proposal as directing you to manage inseason?

Patrick: Yes, we would manage inseason to the target numbers. Section (b)(2) says that we are not to exceed the target figures, so we would use inseason management to achieve that.

Steve (to Jacquie): DO you support this proposal?

Jacquie: This has a hardcap and inseason management, so that's good, but I don't support it because it relies on the PSC quota being high enough in enough years to balance the low years.

Steve: I have an issue with the sliding scale.

John: I have a problem with specific percentages at specific tiers. The only tiers that the trollers would get compensation for are c) and d). That's only happened once or twice in the past decade. Trollers will lose fish in many years and won't be able to recoup them because there won't be enough high quota years.

Kent: I agree that high abundance years are unlikely going forward.

Eric: We have two really big problems: a) The Treaty doesn't allow for inseason adjustment of our quota and ADFG has done away with inseason management for the sport sector, but inseason management is an essential tool. b) There are big changes to the ecosystem going on. Kings are not adapting well. Pinks, chum and herring are doing well, but not kings. We need inseason management in order to account for these changes. Things are changing faster now than at any point in my lifetime. Historically the department's great reputation was built on inseason management.

Tad: Points out that this proposal uses tiers based on quota, not directly on abundance. Alaska's share has gotten smaller every treaty cycle. Even if we have a high abundance year, and even if the computer model correctly forecasts that high abundance, (both unlikely given recent track record) we still won't have as high of a quota as we have historically had.

Woody: M/S: **Amendment** to lower the percentages: Tier e) [20%] **19%**; Tier f) [21%] **20%**; Tier g) [22%] **20%**; Tier h) [22%] **21%**; Tier i) [22%] **21%**;

Schuyler: M/S Further **amendment** to **change resident sport bag limit in tiers g) and h) from 1 to 2**;  
Accepted as friendly

John: If you use the recent past years as a guide, 5 of the last 10 years, including the last two years have been tier f). There have also been two g) years, two d) years and one e) year. If this pattern holds, the target will be 20% most of the time.

Vote on **amendment: Passes 11-1-2** (reasons for abstentions: Not well enough informed on the issue; Waste of time to comment on this topic because BoF already has their mind made up)

Vote on proposal **as amended with more moderate sliding scale and 2 fish bag limit for residents Passes 7-6-1** (abstention: Waste of time to comment on this topic because BoF already has their mind made up)

**112: Modify King Salmon Management Plan so that ADFG in conjunction with Charter industry will set Non-Resident sport king salmon limits to target 20% hook-and-line allocation based on year-ahead projected quota adjusted for average deviation from target over historic 6 year rolling average without inseason management M/S**

Tad: The charter industry has been very resistant to inseason management as it can be seen by some of their clients as a bait-and-switch. This proposal was submitted to introduce another alternative to inseason management. Every April the Pacific Salmon Commission produces a forecast of the Chinook abundance in SE for not just the season about to begin, but also for the following season that is over a year away. In the charter halibut fishery, the managers sit down with charter representatives ahead of each season and come up with a combination of regulations that the managers expect will produce the target harvest. This proposal would use that same procedure to set the regulations for the non-resident king salmon fishery over a year ahead of time. Management error and forecast error would be expected, but compensated for in future years by adjusting the target based on the six-year trailing average.

Troy: Might have concerns with forecast error being large

Matt Donohoe: How accurate is the 1 year ahead forecast

Tad: It isn't perfect, but it is accurate enough that when ADFG developed the multi-variate model, the 1 year ahead prediction was one of the three inputs, and it was given the same weight as the regular pre-season forecast.

Grant: Don't know how it compares to the regular pre-season forecast. We can look up that information and will have it for the board, but I don't have it now.

Lauren Howard: I don't like that it doesn't have inseason management. Halibut is managed this way because inseason management isn't allowed under the federal process, but it is an option under state management, so we ought to use it.

Dave Richey: ADFG has a great reputation and that reputation was built on inseason management. It is unprecedented to not have inseason management. I don't like this proposal because it doesn't have inseason management.

Jeff Farvour: I like the idea of copying a system that we already know works- like the halibut management. Asks Grant how this would affect troll management

Grant: We can manage the troll fishery to any number. In the past we knew the target for the August fishery as soon as we had the July fishery catch tallied up. That would still be the case if we knew that the sport fishery would be closed once they hit their target, but if the sport fishery isn't obligated to close- such as under this proposal, then we have to estimate what their catch will be. That takes a little more time but we can still do it. Without a hardcap, the possibility of the August opener getting cancelled will always remain.

Steve; What if there was a big forecast error in the year-away projection

Tad: There would be a large overage or underage that year, but over time the forecast errors should balance each other out, and even if they don't, the rolling average provision will force a balance.

Troy: If there was a hardcap and a bad forecast error there might be a long non-retention period



Tad: There is no hard cap in this proposal.

Eric: Why did you give up on inseason management?

Tad: I would prefer inseason management, but the charter industry is pretty strongly against it. I am confident that this will attain an 80/20 average, even without inseason management.

John: I don't see any descriptions of annual limits in the proposal. How would those be determined?

Tad: Similar to how the charter halibut regulations are established. Once the harvest target is known, the ADFG staff and the charter industry sit down and develop a suite of regulations that the managers think will hit the target. There is the potential for a lot of give and take. Certain restrictions can be made more liberal if others are made more restrictive, etc. Times (days of the week), areas, sizes, annual limits, etc. could all be on the table if the industry prefers.

John: How does the average provision work?

Tad: The six-year average is supposed to come out to 20%. The first four years are the known actual harvest, the fifth year is an estimated harvest based on the regulations established the previous year applied to the new pre-season forecast for the year that is just starting. The percentage for the 6<sup>th</sup> year is whatever it needs to be to make the 6-year average come out to 20%.

Stacey: We want to stop these big overages like we had this year. There is too much room for volatility. We need inseason management.

Luke (to Troy): How often is the 1 year ahead forecast way off?

Troy: Don't have those numbers available right now. We will have them for the BoF, but don't have them now.

Luke: Are any other local sport fish managed inseason?

Patrick: No other recreational fishery is managed inseason to an allocation. It is hard for us to communicate to 130,000 anglers, so we try to achieve our targets by making adjustment the next year. The Treaty payback provision is what makes SE king salmon unique. No other sport fishery has this restriction.

John: How would you manage to a given target without inseason management?

Troy: This proposal doesn't change the resident regulations. For non-residents we would get direction from industry on how to set the limits. There will be some management error that will have to be cleaned up in the 6-year average.

**Proposal fails 4-9-1** (abstention: Protest vote-I don't think that this BoF is going to listen to us on this issue anyway!)

Eric: We need a subsistence king salmon fishery! Maybe the Sitka Salmon derby boundaries would be a good place to start with that. We need subsistence priority. Model it off of the Halibut LAMP. We need to insist on inseason management. We had it in the sport fishery for a few years. When ADFG abandoned inseason management it was a failure of leadership.

**113: Modify King Salmon Management Plan to change sport allocation from 80%:20% troll:sport to 75%:25%; M/S**

Troy: This proposal doesn't call for any management changes.

Jacquie Foss: So, the tiers would stay the same?

Troy: Yes

Jacquie: This is the worst of both worlds! It keeps the shortcomings of the existing management plan and gets rid of the long-standing 80:20 split.

Dave Richey: This is a non-starter. It is not helpful in any way.

Matt Donohoe: This wouldn't stop the problem. This year the sport take was about 28%, so there would still be an overage. The problem is the Alaska isn't getting our fair share of fish out of the treaty process. These king salmon spend most of their lives in Alaskan waters and put on most of their weight in Alaskan waters. Alaskans deserve a bigger share of the catch. Without inseason management, it doesn't matter what the number is. Inseason management is in the Sustainable Salmon Policy. It doesn't look like management is interested in managing for sustainability. Charter boats are bigger and more efficient than in the past. They are continuing to fish on Stocks of Concern when other gear groups don't. Even though they are doing catch and release, there is still significant mortality.

Dave: What distinguishes residents sport from non-resident is the Constitutional priority. What I would like to see is a directive to charters to get their house in order. They shouldn't be fishing on the Stocks of Concern when others aren't.

Ceri Malein: Before 1992 the sport allocation was 16%. Then it went to 17%. Then 18%, 19%, then 20%. When will this reallocation end? Every fishery needs to be managed. Growth is not sustainable.

John: This is flat out reallocation. This proposal doesn't make any attempt to balance the high and low years. The Charter and Bare Boat Rental boats are getting bigger and more efficient. I am totally opposed to this proposal.

Proposal fails 0-13

**113: Modify King Salmon Management Plan to change the period of time when the non-resident annual limit in tier f) is 2 fish from July 1-15 to July 1-7 and to reduce the early season non-resident annual limit in tiers g) and h) from 3 kings to 2 kings and the reduce the resident bag limit from 2 to 1 in those tiers; M/S**

Troy: This retains the current overall management method-i.e. there still is no inseason management.

Jacquie Foss: The reductions are a good start but does it go far enough to achieve the 20% goal?

Jeff Farvour: Any proposal that is going to work and get to 20% will require inseason management.

Dave Richey: I think that there are other proposals that are better.

Steve: I don't like that the resident bag limit drops from 2 to 1.

John: in recent years there haven't been enough high years to balance out the low years. I agree with the previous comments.

Matt Donohoe: There has been quite a bit of difference between the projected abundance and the actual abundance recently.

Tad (to staff): How would this have changed the catch in the last two years? What proportion of the hook-and-line allocation would the sport sector have caught under these regulations?

Patrick: We are still working on updating our matrix. We don't know yet.

### **Proposal fails 0-13**

#### **115: Modify King Salmon Management Plan to change the non-resident annual limit to 1 in all tiers; M/S**

Ceri Malein: This is a little aggressive, but the proposer is from Ketchikan. It is a reflection of how upset the people in Ketchikan are! They aren't allowed to fish in the spring due to Unuk River SoC status, then they weren't allowed to fish in the latter part of the summer or fall because non-residents have caught too many fish. No wonder they are upset! Charter clients feel entitled. Why do they need a lot of fish?

Steve: This is too extreme. My philosophy is that we have a great resource.

Luke: This is too aggressive. The reason that the charter industry pushed for an annual limit of 3 is that most clients book a three-day trip. They wouldn't be able to sell trips with only a 1 fish limit. Charters are commercial businesses. They need to make a profit.

Tad: I'm not convinced that the charter industry couldn't find clients even with a 1 fish limit. The Juneau charter fleet averages 9 kings per boat per year. They do fine in Juneau on way less than 1 fish per client. But I would be concerned about the incidental mortality (IM) from the extra fish that get released. The treaty imposes limits on Alaska's IM. I think that we might be in danger of exceeding our IM limit if the same number of fish were caught but more of them were released.

Patrick: Yes, we are already pretty close to our IM cap.

Tad: We have a Treaty quota for landed catch and a separate quota for IM. While it is counter-intuitive, if we reduce one number we don't get any additional fish on the other quota.

### **Proposal fails 1-12**

#### **116 & 117: Both proposals modify the King Salmon Management Plan by reducing the nonresident annual limit prior to July 1 from 3 kings to 2 kings; M/S**

Matt Donohoe: The Juneau-Douglas AC, Territorial Sportsmen Inc, ATA and folks from Ketchikan are all looking to reduce the annual limit for nonresidents. The EEZ issue will only make overages worse if nonresidents are allowed to catch resident limits in federal waters. The stocks of concern are most abundant before July 1, so this proposal would help to reduce harvest on these local wild fish too. This is an alternative to inseason management.

Troy: This is a simple reduction in annual limit in all tiers. No new management requirements. No inseason management

Dave Richey: This was born of frustration with the lack of inseason management. If ADFG administration was a fair arbiter of fish, we wouldn't have this problem. Resident sport gets aced out because charter operators on the outer coast can access good fishing early in the season when the inside residents- and most SE residents live in the inside communities- have the waters that they can access closed under the Stock of Concern plans. The AC should support this plan to give the BoF another option. I understand that the charter operators would like a three fish limit in the early season, but that hasn't been working in recent years. I could support 3 fish in the high abundance years, but the charter industry as expressed a preference for stability, so a consistent two fish limit gives them that.

Steve (to Troy): What would the sport catch have been under these regulations the last couple of years?

Troy: It would still have been over 20%, but not over by as much as.

Steve: This proposal should be on the table. The way to deal with the shortage is with nonresidents, not by pinching residents. (Turns to the AC members who run businesses catering to non-resident anglers)- How would this affect your businesses?

Luke: It wouldn't affect my business

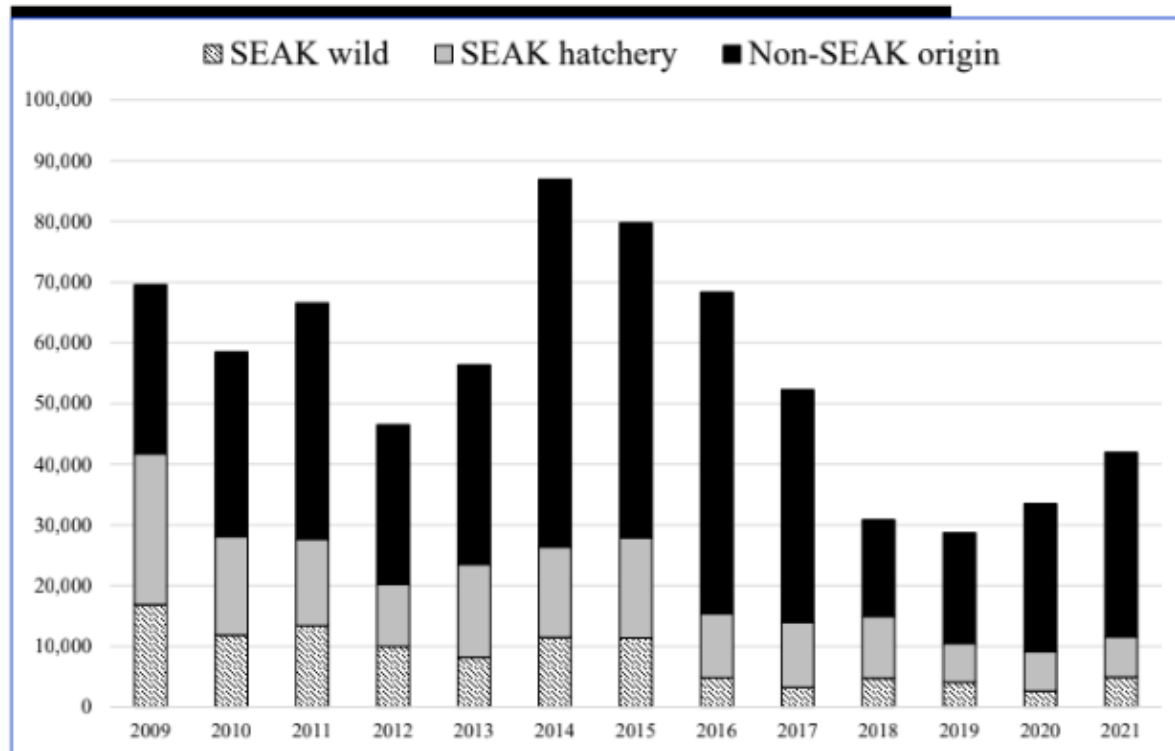
Joel: It wouldn't affect me either. When a client asks me what the king salmon limits are going to be next year. I always tell them that I don't know. They don't have a problem with that- they usual sign up for a trip next year anyway.

Schuyler - Plenty of clients sign up for a five-day trip even with only a three fish limit as it is.

Joel: This still won't stem demand. There will still be lots of clients. Limited entry is the only way you are going to get a handle on things.

Tad: In the graph from this handout that was provided to the AC (from Patrick Fowler's presentation to the BoF in Homer November 2023) you can see that even with the inside closed down in the spring, the sport sector has caught 3,000-5,000 SE wild kings in recent years. That's a pretty big impact on stocks of concern. Reducing the annual limit during the time of year when these fish make up the highest proportion of the catch would help to lower that number.

# King Salmon Harvest by Stock Origin



RC Tab Southeast Alaska Sport Fisheries

13

Patrick: The 2017-2023 average was 4,231 SE wild Chinook.

John: I would like to the 20% get caught, seems like this might leave the sport catch short in some years.

Steve offers **Amendment to change the 1 fish annual limit after July 1st to 1 or 2 fish depending on harvest to date relative to 20% target;** seconded

Matt Donohoe: 2024 was not a year of low abundance. Abundance was actually above average. Yet the sport harvest was 29%. We need to do something!

Troy: The sport harvest won't hit 20% in the high quota years under this proposal.

Tad: The sport harvest will still be over 20% in many years even with a 2 fish limit.

Steve: I don't think so.

John: This is a big reduction for early in the season, but I support it. The second fish later in the season isn't as important.

**The amendment passes 7-6**

**The proposal as amended to allow the 2 fish annual limit to remain in effect later than July 1 depending on the sport harvest relative to the 20% target passes 9-4**

Skipping ahead to Hatchery proposals because Scott Wagner (NSRAA) and Bill Coltharp (Sitka Sound Science Center Hatchery) are present today but we don't expect them next week.

**156: Reduce pink and chum egg take permits levels by 25% M/S**

Scott: This isn't based on science.

Bill: I agree. The SSSC hatchery is a small educational facility. This would drastically affect our program. We only release 3 million of each species, so that would cut us down to 2.25M

Dave: Who is the proposer?

Scott: Virgil Umephnour is a long-time member of the Fairbanks AC. He and the Fairbanks AC have been submitting anti-hatchery proposals for decades. He used to buy fish in the Interior, but he lost his market and he blames hatcheries for the poor returns in the Interior.

Lauren: There is a lot of chum bycatch in the trawl fisheries that is attracting attention, but they are mostly Asian chum. Hatcheries have kept fishing families in SE going in times of low abundance.

Steve: The author is talking about problems in the Yukon, Nushagak and Kenai, but not SE. I don't see why he is picking on SE hatcheries.

Mo: What is history of pink releases in SSSC?

Bill Coltharp: In the 1990s we released about 10m/yr. The hatchery was allowed a total of 15M between the two species. The pink release has been reduced to 3m over the years. Our budget is entirely funded on cost recovery. About 50% of it is from pinks in recent years. We have been seeing 9-11% marine survival. Those are very good returns. We are the only SE hatchery beside Armstrong that releases any significant number of pinks. DIPAC used to, but they don't any more.

Mo: The number of fish returning seems to have increased. That's what I see on the water and in Indian River.

Bill: Yes, because marine survival is way up.

Mo: I mention this because there are lots of pinks in Indian River- probably quite a few of them are SSSC fish. Chum too. Some folks might get concerned about excessive returns. That situation might be pointed to as an example of a problem for all hatcheries. There is a lot of straying when the wild system is just a few hundred yards away.

Scott: Besides Armstrong, NSRAA stocks 300,000 at Medvejie.

**Proposal fails 0-13**

**158: Housekeeping proposal to redefine outer boundary line at Hidden Falls THA; M/S**

Dave: Will this proposal accomplish what it is says it will do?

Scott: Yes, this is already being done by EO on a regular basis. The proposal will just mean that ADFG doesn't have to include this language in their announcements every time.

Mo: This is just housekeeping.

Proposal passes 13-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:50

The following letter was approved for submission to the BOF for consideration at the upcoming Work Session:

*The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee was very disappointed to learn that the Board Support Section declined to accept the Proposal we submitted concerning Unguided Rental Vessels. While we can understand the reasons for this action (centering around who has the authority to act on the Proposal), we still feel strongly that the Board of Fisheries needs to hear from the public and other ACs concerning this growing user group of our fishery resources at January's Southeast BOF Meetings. We look at this as an opportunity for the public and other ACs to comment on and share other potential solutions to this expanding problem.*

*Accordingly, we ask that the Board reconsider the decision that was made to decline acceptance of this Proposal.*

*If the Board does decide to add it to the Proposal Book, our AC is planning to submit written comments that include several amendments to the Proposal.*

*These amendments were developed after meeting with the ADF&G Commissioner and finding out he had some concerns with a few aspects of the Proposal.*

*Hopefully these amendments address those concerns. We have attached the original version of the Proposal, which was submitted on time in May of this*

Minutes Recorded By: Tad Fujioka  
Minutes Approved By: Stacey Wayne (Chair)  
Date: 10/15/2024 by email

**Submitted By:** Steven Ramp

**Organization:** Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (Resident Sport Fishing Seat)

**Community of Residence:** Sitka

**Comment:**

The following comments were approved for submission to the Board by the Sitka AC at a properly advertised meeting on Wednesday, October 9th.

The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee was very disappointed to learn that the Board Support Section declined to accept the Proposal we submitted concerning Unguided Rental Vessels. While we can understand the reasons for this action (centering around who has the authority to act on the Proposal), we still feel strongly that the Board of Fisheries needs to hear from the public and other ACs concerning this growing user group of our fishery resources at January's Southeast BOF Meetings. We look at this as an opportunity for the public and other ACs to comment on and share other potential solutions to this expanding problem.

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## ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

## Regulation Proposal Form 2020-2021

Proposals must be received Friday, April 10, 2020

PO BOX 115526, JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-5526 or FAX (907) 465-6094 or E-MAIL

[dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov](mailto:dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov) or online<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=process.proposal&board=fisheries>**BOARD OF FISHERIES REGULATIONS**☐ Subsistence☐ Personal Use☒ Sport☐ Commercial**\*Which meeting would you like to submit your proposal to?**☐ Prince William Sound Finfish & Shellfish☒ Southeast & Yakutat Finfish & Shellfish☐ Statewide Other Shellfish (excluding Southeast, Yakutat, and Prince William Sound)

**Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. All answers will be printed in the proposal book along with the proposer's name (address and phone numbers will not be published). Use separate forms for each proposal. Address only one issue per proposal. State the issue clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing items.**

**1. Alaska Administrative Code Number:****\*2. What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (AC) has been working for over the last three years to convince fisheries managers at both the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (the Council), the Alaska Board of Fisheries (the Board) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (the Department), to take some action regarding a fairly new, large and rapidly expanding user group of Halibut harvesters, the Unguided Rental Boat/Bare Boat Charter Anglers within Halibut Management Area 2C. We submitted two proposals for the Board's last Southeast & Yakutat Finfish & Shellfish cycle of meetings and no action was taken. Members of our AC submitted written comments and testified at both the Council's 2023 meetings and at the October & December meetings of the Council's Charter Halibut Committee. Again, no action has been taken or promised on this issue. The issue at hand is this rapidly growing user group is taking advantage of the more generous daily Halibut bag limit of two fish of any size per day versus the more restrictive Guided Angler bag limit of one fish per day that falls within a strict "reverse slot limit".

We have asked both the Department and the Council to break out harvest data for the user group in question but have been told by both that neither group has been able to come up with an acceptable definition of "Rental Vessel" in order to provide the requested data. We were also told that there are basically insurmountable challenges in breaking out the harvest data for this particular user group of anglers.

Within just a short two week period in the fall of 2023, Sitka's State House Representative's staff was able to obtain and evaluate data from the Alaska Department of Motor Vehicles on how many vessel registrations in Alaska State House District 2 using the number of vessel registrations listing "Rental" as their primary use. Her staff's analysis of this data shows that the number of these vessels has nearly doubled between 2001 and 2023. District 2 includes all the communities of Southeast Alaska with the exception of Ketchikan, Juneau, Haines, Skagway and Gustavus. If vessels from these communities were added, it would likely show even greater growth in the Rental Vessel sector within Federal Management Area 2C.

In times of low abundance for our Halibut resources (like we are now experiencing), our AC would prefer to lower the harvest of the Unguided Rental Vessel/Bareboat Charter Anglers (who are primarily non-residents) rather than lowering the bag limit for the remainder of the Unguided Anglers in Area 2C (who are primarily Alaska residents). If this action is approved, but fails over a reasonable timeframe to have a meaningful impact to increase the health of our Halibut resources, then our AC would likely support a reduction in sport bag limits for all Unguided Anglers.

In our discussions with the Council, we have been informed that the Council is unlikely to take any action to quantify and/or reduce harvest of the Unguided Rental Vessel/Bareboat Charter user group unless they receive a request to do so from the State of Alaska.

Our AC fully understands the challenges the Board faces when dealing with Proposals that deal with a federally managed species like Halibut. We are also very confident that a serious problem exists and that it is time to engage on efforts to both quantify the Harvest by Unguided Rental Vessel/Bareboat Charter Anglers and to create parity in bag limits between them and Guided Anglers.

**\*3. What solution do you recommend? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say? (Please provide draft regulatory language, if possible.)**

The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee respectfully and firmly requests the Board take positive action on as many of the following actions as possible:

1. Require the Department to accept vessels whose Alaska State DMV registration lists "Rental" as their Primary Use as satisfactory evidence of that particular use. For Documented vessels, accept the presence of a "Bareboat Charter" agreement as such evidence.
2. Require the Department to amend both their dockside creel census and off-season mail out survey processes to provide a "Rental Vessel/Bareboat Charter" category so that the harvest data for this group can be broken out and shared with the NPFMC.
3. Make a formal request to the NPFMC asking them to:
  - A) Start treating Unguided Anglers fishing from a Rental Vessel as a separate user group when making management decisions for Sport Halibut Harvest.
  - B) Start requiring log keeping for Halibut harvests from Unguided Rental Vessels similar to the logs required of Charter Vessels.
  - C) Start registering Rental Vessels used for Unguided Anglers targeting Halibut, similar to the registration requirements for Charter Vessels.
  - D) Require anglers sport fishing for Halibut from Unguided Rental Vessels to follow the same daily bag/possession/size limits and day closures as those prescribed for Guided Anglers.

**\*Submitted By:** The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee, Stacy Wayne, Chair

**Individual or Group**

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