

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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## ***Representative Mark Neuman***

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### **Sponsor Statement HB 98**

#### **"An Act relating to escapement thresholds and escapement goals for certain salmon stocks"**

Salmon stocks are critically important to all Alaskans. So much so that we have adopted an escapement based approach to management of this resource. Since statehood we've stipulated these spawning escapements goals are a primary management target to ensure sustainable yields into the future.

Escapement goals are important as they can precipitate actions that greatly curtail, even cease the harvesting of stocks during times of low productivity or likewise increase harvest during abundance.

This legislation addresses an area of concern in the use of and the setting of these goals. Currently salmon manage policies do not require an increase in the lower end of "sustainable escapement goal (SEG) or the biological escapement goal (BEG) to enhance the rapid replenishment of a stock of concern.

In managing a stock of concern, reducing the time to rehabilitate that stock would be a valuable tool for Alaska's Department of Fish & Game.

HB 98 directs the Board of Fisheries to adopt in regulation specific management objective for a salmon stock that has been identified as a stock of concern. The department, in consultation with the board, would set the management objective for that stock. The objective must include a sustained escapement threshold (SET) and optimal escapement goal (OEG).

I would appreciate your support