

Dear Members of the House Fisheries Committee,

More than ever before, it is time for people to speak out. Our country has suffered so many natural resource disasters. It is only a matter of time for Alaska unless we proactively take a stance now. I want my family and their future families to know the Alaska that I know, far into the future. I support HB199 for this very reason.

I want Alaskans to have a say in how we protect our precious resources. We must update current language in our laws so we can avoid mismanagement that may lead to destructive salmon runs. If we don't protect our fish now, it will only become more difficult in the future.

Please support HB199.

Regards,

Johanna Grasso

Dear Representative Stutes,

I wanted to write to voice my support for HB 199 and updates that protect our rivers and waterways.

Thank you for your hard work

Sincerely,

Marc Lewis
Anchorage, AK 99502

Dear Representative Stutes,

Thanks for the courage you show in introducing HB 199.

I totally support needed updates to Title 16 and am hopeful it will pass.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Terry Cummings
Anchorage, AK 99504

Dear Representative Stutes,

Protection of our wild salmon habitat and our water resources is vital to all the people of the upper Susitna valley. I homesteaded, raised my children on wild foods and had no access to grocery stores on a regular basis. The river brought our dinner and we carefully preserved it for the long winter months. We must preserve that for the future generations. Clean water will become more and more precious.

Sincerely,

Nancy Larson
Talkeetna, AK 99676

Dear Representative Stutes,

Dear Representative Stutes

I support your bill which will protect the rivers and waterways in your beautiful state. I have visited Alaska and the Mat-su valley but as you see, I am not a resident. I do hope that my not being Alaskan will not be held against me. However, I do support Greenpeace in that organization's endeavor to save our environment in different parts of the world.

Sincerely,

Elaine Olsson
Helsingborg, Skane 25655

HB 199 updates Alaska's fish habitat permitting law by expanding Alaska Department of Fish and Game's authority to protect fish habitat; creating enforceable protection standards; and giving Alaskans a voice in the permitting process.

Please support HB 199 for the future of Alaska's fisheries. Our economies and heritage depend on it. I have fished all my working life, I am now retired.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Tanner
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Rep. Stutes:

I am writing in support of HB 199 and wish to thank Louise Stutes for introducing it. Since a foundation of our Alaska constitution is that the resources of the state belong to the people, defining more clearly the permitting for development in fish habitat areas is an excellent idea. Presently, the wording in the law is vague and we, the people of Alaska, do not have a say in the granting of permits. Wild salmon are central to all Alaskans. They are a major source of protein for me, are the source of income to many of my friends and are important culturally. One could even say that we are a salmon state.

I am grateful for the work ADF&G does managing and protecting Alaska's fisheries, but the law as written does not provide them with scientific clarity or certainty in determining whether or not to grant a particular permit. HB 199 not only sets clear standards for ADF&G to protect Alaska's fisheries, but will give Alaskans a chance to weigh in on decisions impacting our salmon rivers. I urge you to support HB 199.

Sincerely,

Marian Allen

Sitka, AK 99835

Dear Members of the House Fisheries Committee,

My name is Eric Jordan and I've been fishing in Southeast Alaska since 1950. I have been trolling salmon on my own vessels since 1974. I have been involved in conserving salmon since I read "Return To The River" by Roderick Haig-Brown when I was 10 years old. I have been involved in salmon conservation, enhancement, and sustainability ever since. I have served on our local fish & game advisory committee for decades now. I have helped found several groups involved in salmon conservation or enhancement including the Northern SE Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA), the Alaska Marine Conservation Council, and the Chum Trollers Association. I have served on numerous Boards involved in Salmon and Salmon Habitat Conservation including the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the Alaska Trollers Association, and the Sitka Conservation Society (20 years). I am presently elected to represent Trollers on the NSRAA Board.

I am writing to express my personal support for House Bill 199 which proposes important changes to Alaska's fish habitat permitting law and ensures greater public participation in decisions that could impact the future of our wild salmon.

I appreciate the work ADF&G does to manage and protect Alaska's fisheries. Nevertheless I concerned that the law as written does not provide scientific clarity or certainty to stand up to development efforts that often put Alaska's salmon fisheries in jeopardy. HB 199 sets clear standards for protection of Alaska's fisheries. It provides the public necessary opportunity to weigh in on decisions affecting Alaska's wild salmon.

I am a third generation Alaska fisherman and my sons are both fishermen. I am optimistic my grandchildren and their grandchildren will want to continue the legacy. Please pass HB 199 to protect our salmon for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Eric Jordan

Sitka, AK 99835

F/V I Gotta

Dear Representative Stutes,

Thank you for your attention to HB 199. As a commercial fisherman vessel owner who has been fishing Alaska since 1985 I am very glad to see you folks getting some clarity on managing salmon and resource development together without mutual harm. The vague references to protecting salmon in the existing statutes leave much too much room for foul play or accidental damage to Alaska's most reliable and long term employment and subsistence resource, our salmon.

I hope you and your colleagues will usher this legislation through the processes and we will have clear guidelines for developers and safe passage for our food and the food of future generations.

Thank you.

Spencer Severson

Sitka, Alaska, 99835

Hello,

Years ago, I played a small role in litigation support on a major National and Alaskan environmental case. I never got to visit Alaska, but my involvement made me feel a part of your great state. It was very clear how much most of the people in Alaska care for at least their own parts of nature on which their livelihoods depend. It was also clear how various groups of people there were at odds in how best to utilize Alaskan resources.

To the rest of us Americans, Alaska symbolizes a wildness that can't be found elsewhere, but that is as fragile as the next state or federal legislative decision.

Please support HB 199, and the fisheries. Please give a damn and don't dam. Damming is playing god with river habitats. People are not God, and any "habitat" you create will not work as the original.

Thank you.

Martha Michels

Dear House Fisheries Committee Members,

The purpose of this letter is to express my support for House Bill 199, and to request that you support this important legislation. This bill provides critical and timely updates to Title 16.

For me, Alaska's wild salmon are among our most valuable treasures. I am so thankful that our state has made protecting our wild salmon a priority in the past. HB199 will help Alaska Department of Fish and Game continue to make decisions that will best ensure continued healthy salmon populations, and to prevent harm to Alaska's salmon rivers and anadromous fish habitat in the future. These updates would also mean that Alaska's citizens have the opportunity to weigh in on decisions impacting our salmon rivers.

Thank you to Representative Stutes for introducing this legislation. Now is the time for updating Alaska's fish habitat law.

Thank you for considering my comments, and please support HB 199.

Sincerely,

Ellen Wolf

Members of the House Fisheries Committee:

I support HB 199 and I want you to as well. I am a park ranger in Talkeetna. The health of this river is very important to myself and the visitors that I guide on my river walks during the summer months in Talkeetna.

Wild salmon are a free resource that returns to us year after year. This is truly the most important renewable resource that Alaska has. We should be doing everything we can to keep are fish populations healthy, plentiful and returning.

This bill would ensure that this happens. I was surprised to learn that there really is nothing protecting our wild salmon... mines, dams, roads, culverts... have already degraded some salmon runs in Alaska. This cannot go on.

It is time for protection with teeth and HB 199 is a well thought out piece of legislation than can truly make difference for the future of healthy salmon.

Thank you,

Laura Wright

Talkeetna, AK

Dear Members of the House Fisheries Committee,

My name is Brad Kirr owner and head guide of Alaska Kenai Fishing for Fun in Soldotna, AK. I am also a board member of the nonprofit group Kenai Peninsula Conservancy.

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 199. HB 199 proposes important changes to Alaska's fish habitat permitting law and will ensure that Alaskans will have a voice in decisions that could impact the future of our wild salmon.

I am grateful for the work ADF&G does to manage and protect Alaska's fisheries. However, I am concerned that the law as written does not provide the agency with scientific clarity or certainty to stand up to development efforts that put Alaska's fisheries at risk. HB 199 not only sets clear standards for ADF&G to protect Alaska's fisheries, but will give Alaskans a chance to weigh in on decisions impacting our salmon rivers.

There is a growing need to update Alaska's outdated fish habitat law. Alaska now has the opportunity and responsibility to protect our wild salmon by updating our fish habitat law. If passed, HB 199 could finally set clear standards to protect our salmon for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Brad Kirr

Owner/Head guide

Alaska Kenai Fishing for Fun

Soldotna, AK

www.akkenaiff.com

406-581-5567

Dear Legislators:

I have been an Alaskan resident for 45 years, since the age of 2.

I am a female.

I am a physician, graduate of the WWAMI program.

I fish for recreation.

I eat salmon for health and enjoyment.

I love the Alaska wilderness.

In summary, I am an average resident.

I ASSUMED the State laws regarding our salmon and habitat were:

- 1) Current
- 2) Comprehensive
- 3) Fair

I ASSUMED WRONGLY:

- 1) Please UPDATE our laws, outdated for decades.
- 2) Please include ALL of the pertinent waters.
- 3) Please INFORM AND ALLOW the residents to participate in these decisions that affect all of us!

Thank you!

Chung Mea Ha, MD

Wild salmon put food on the table, provide recreation, and create tens of thousands of jobs for Alaskans. Our truly unique Alaskan way of life depends on wild salmon, which also generate hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity each year.

While Alaska's constitution outlines strong protections for our state's unmatched fish and game resources, our current system fails to provide clear and reliable protections for our fisheries and often leaves Alaskans out of the process. HB 199 updates Alaska's fish habitat permitting law by

expanding Alaska Department of Fish and Game's authority to protect fish habitat; creating enforceable protection standards; and giving Alaskans a voice in the permitting process.

Please support HB 199 for the future of Alaska's fisheries. Our economies and heritage depend on it.

Sincerely,

Victoria Kirr
5565 N Bonnie Drive
Palmer AK, 99645

Dear Members of the House Fisheries Committee,

My name is James Walker and I am a fishing guide for Alaska Kenai Fishing for Fun in Soldotna, Alaska. I am a strong advocate for conservation and our Alaska waterways.

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 199. HB 199 proposes important changes to Alaska's fish habitat permitting law and will ensure that Alaskans will have a voice in decisions that could impact the future of our wild salmon.

I am grateful for the work ADF&G does to manage and protect Alaska's fisheries. However, I/we am/are concerned that the law as written does not provide the agency with scientific clarity or certainty to stand up to development efforts that put Alaska's fisheries at risk. HB 199 not only sets clear standards for ADF&G to protect Alaska's fisheries, but will give Alaskans a chance to weigh in on decisions impacting our salmon rivers.

There is a growing need to update Alaska's outdated fish habitat law. Alaska now has the opportunity and responsibility to protect our wild salmon by updating our fish habitat law. If passed, HB 199 could finally set clear standards to protect our salmon for generations to come.

Sincerely,

James Walker
Guide
Alaska Kenai Fishing for Fun
765-418-1133
Soldotna, AK
www.akkenaifff.com

Dear Representative Stutes,

I have enjoyed living in Talkeetna for the past 43 years.
I would like you for introducing HB 199, which I support wholeheartedly.

My husband and 2 adult children & their spouses support HB 199 as well.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kaso
Talkeetna, Alaska

My name is Herbert Harrison. I live in Willow, Alaska. I have lived in Alaska since 1971 and have raised my family here. My family has sport fished in the streams of Alaska during that time. We also have commercially fished for salmon in Northern Cook Inlet since 1981. The health and vitality of Alaskan streams is extremely important to my children and grandchildren.

I fully support HB 199 since it gives Alaskans a voice in the permitting process, which does not currently mandate public input and involvement. The current permitting process ignores the value of Alaskan streams and the fish and wildlife dependent on them. HB 199 would help protect Alaskan streams and the fish and wildlife dependent on them.

Sincerely,

Herbert S Harrison
Willow, Alaska 99688
steveh@mtaonline.net

Dear Representative Stutes,

I am writing in support of HB199.

I believe it to be an imperative piece of legislation. While we have one of the best State Constitutions ever written, sometimes laws are needed to clarify the original intent and to allow it to meet the current needs of the citizenry.

HB199 is such a bill and it addresses many of the protections that are warranted to guarantee not only the survival of United States last wild salmon runs, but also the ability of future citizens to reap the bounty of our rivers.

The bounty being not only the harvest of salmon, but also the beauty of untamed, unpolluted scenic rivers and the flora and fauna that populate it's shores.

My job takes me to many parts of the world and I am blessed with getting to see many sights. Some of those places are industrial areas and I have watched people celebrate with pride the opening of a new industrial complex and the jobs it creates. I have also seen the ramifications of under-regulated industry and the mess it leaves behind for future generations, thus negating the original economic benefit.

I have also travelled to places of tremendous natural beauty and seen the joy of spirit and comfort of the soul that those places generate in ones heart and mind. Alaska is one those places, if not thee place of untrammeled natural beauty!

So in closing please support the passage of HB199.

Sincerely,

James Graupmann
Talkeetna, AK 99676

Dear Rep. Stutes.

Thank you for introducing HB199 and opening this important topic for debate with Alaska's leaders and the public. I support this bill because I think title 16 is vital to our state interests and it deserves an update from it's current, dated from statehood capacity. As the former Chair of the Talkeetna Community Council Inc., I facilitated comments regarding numerous projects in the Mat Su which required title 16 permitting - there was little to go on regarding tangible impact assessment etc. Communities in Alaska which depend on healthy anadromous waters need a quantified system of assessment which will allow responsible development to prevail, and substandard projects to reevaluate and invest in mitigation of impacts.

HB 199 is a positive step toward clarifying our existing state over site to work more effectively. Thank you again for your support,

Whitney Wolff
Talkeetna, AK 99676

Dear House Fisheries Committee,

I am writing to express my support for HB 199 that will be introduced today, April 11th, and will seek to provide clearer means for protecting our state's salmon resources. HB 199 will add language to Title 16 of our state's constitution to provide a definition for what qualifies as salmon habitat. Currently, there are no definitions or parameters. The current lack of clear definition leaves too much room for interpretation and, therefore, not enough protection of our salmon fisheries.

House Bill 199 will also give the public a voice in the permitting process for any developments that impact salmon habitat.

For as much as Alaskans (and tourists) value our salmon resources, we should give them clearer protective measures. The time has come to revisit our nearly 60 year old state constitution and add language to reflect our values for salmon fisheries today.

I urge you to pass HB 199, and I thank Representative Louise Stutes for introducing this legislation.

Sincerely,
Emily Davenport
Anchorage, AK

Dear members of the House Fisheries Committee:

I am writing in support of House Bill 199 which proposes important and necessary changes to our existing fish habitat permitting law.

The current permitting law was written in 1959 and has not been updated since our state's constitution was written. Since that time, technology has advanced so much. We are able to see the risks that certain development projects pose to our waterways, thus affecting the salmon in those water ways. HB sets those standards high for Alaska Fisheries while providing those who live off the land a voice in those decisions.

Wild Alaskan salmon need our help. They need to be protected for the countless Native communities who live off the land and for the amount of money generated from tourists who come to Alaska specifically to fish for wild AK salmon.

It is our right and our responsibility to do all that we can to protect our salmon habitats and those who live off the land and for our economy.

I urge you to please support HB 199. Our future depends on it.

With sincere appreciation,

William Manuel

Anchorage, AK

I support HB 199 & your efforts to protect fish & game habitat. Our waters provide us with the bounty for a healthy & sustainable food supply. Our family supports Alaska's fishing industry. Healthy food is a basic need. Thank you!

Christine Niemi

Juneau, Alaska

April 9, 2017

BY EMAIL:

Representative.Louise.Stutes@akleg.gov

Representative Louise Stutes

Chair, House Fisheries Committee

State Capitol Room 406

Juneau AK, 99801

Re: Comments on HB 199.

Dear Representative Stutes and Fisheries Committee Members:

I am a retired biologist for the US Army Corps of Engineers and assisted with the adjudication of many permit applications concerning the use of anadromous waters. I am also an avid fly fisher. I understand well the value of the good statutes that create permitting systems involving resources such as anadromous fish and their habitats.

HB 199 does not pass muster. It deletes coverage of the beds and the fish and covers only water and an undefined amount of riparian land. It creates a method to determine anadromous waters "not important" and therefore not covered by the Act. By not covering the bed and the fish themselves, it creates other ways for activities to avoid the permitting process.

It has many other problems, but all you need to know at this point is that you should hold the bill and not pass it out of committee. It should never become the basis of an initiative, because then the legislature will weaken the law further. For that reason, the bill should never have been introduced, and you should all publically back away from it in order to diminish the chances of it becoming an initiative.

Sincerely,

Val Glooschenko

Hello,

I just wanted to express my support for HB 199 regarding an update to fish habitat permit regulations. I am excited that the board of fish put forth the ideas for this bill, and that it is being heard tomorrow on April 12.

I am a researcher who studies salmon habitat and climate change. If I have understood one thing on this subject, it is that maintaining an intact landscape is the one, sole, incontrovertible thing that salmon populations require to thrive in an unpredictable world. This is true both over the course of our lifetime and over thousands of years. A question asked in the book, "King of Fish" by David Montgomery comes to mind:

“If salmon are resilient enough to withstand extreme events like massive landslides, volcanic mudflows, and glaciations, then why are they going extinct across much of their ranges today?”

The answer, is that people have been unable or unwilling to perceive the small changes that accumulate that harm salmon populations. Alaska has the opportunity to make different choices.

Salmon are able to adapt and thrive to changing conditions, as long as we allow them to do it at their own pace and as part of a natural processes. This requires the kind of long-term habitat management regulations proposed in HB 199. As a lifelong Alaskan, I have begun having day-mares of sorts lately imagining the last, final salmon to swim up Rhine river to mountains of Switzerland centuries ago. It was an extinction that happened not because people decided they didn't want salmon around anymore, but because the proper protections to sustain this resource were not enforced. The same story has played out on the East coast of North America, then the West coast. Let's make a different choice in Alaska.

Again, Alaska has the opportunity to make different choices. HB 199 will allow us to better understand the pros and cons of different development proposals that may affect anadramous habitat.

Thanks you for your time.

Benjamin Meyer

Graduate Research Assistant

Alaska Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit

College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences

University of Alaska Fairbanks

Hello Representative, my name is Phillip Moser and I'm from Juneau, Alaska. I was able to attend the Salmon Policy tonight in Juneau. I wanted to say, thank you for introducing HB 199. Thank you for taking steps to protect the integrity of Alaskan land and waters. I was born and raised here, and I want to spend the rest of my life here. Without salmon in our waters, Alaska will fundamentally change, culturally, economically, and physically. Here in Southeast Alaska, our forests rely on salmon runs to return nutrients upland. The trees need them, and the animals in turn. Without them, even the underlying nonliving soil is in danger of eroding without the flora to hold it in place. So, protecting salmon protects much more than just an industry. Thank you.

Phillip Moser

Juneau, Alaska

I would like to add my voice to the loud crowd that supports HB-199. Thank you.

James Kenshalo

Clam Gulch, Alaska.

Dear Legislator Stutes,

Hurrah for an extremely well-written bill that, if passed, will address the concerns of most especially long term Alaska residents--those of us who cherish their home land for its beauty and wild life and the fact that many of us make our living as a result of the protection of these attributes. The text of this bill says it all.

"The bill creates a balanced and efficient permitting system that protects Alaska's wild salmon runs, promotes responsible development and gives Alaskans a greater voice in major permitting decisions that impact wild salmon streams. HB 199 provides regulatory certainty for resource development companies while ensuring protection of salmon habitat.

Wild salmon are a major part of our culture, economy and identity in Alaska. Alaska is the last state with healthy populations of wild salmon and this bill protects the interests of Alaskans who rely on wild salmon for food, income and recreation."

Given the importance of Alaska's salmon fisheries, the state must ensure that related laws are balanced, predictable and fair in both protecting salmon habitat and encouraging responsible

development. HB 199 will create enforceable standards, provide for public input and expand the Department of Fish and Game's authority to protect fish habitat and will safeguard Alaska's salmon fisheries into the future."

I, along with many of my neighbors are grateful for your efforts. THANK YOU!!

Erin Aulman

Talkeetna, AK 99676

Please allow these living creatures some protection & allow a voice to the people & commonsense standards.

Thank you,

Donna Shellabarger

Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274

Dear Representative Stutes,

As a 20-year resident of Talkeetna and the owner of Alaska Nature Guides I would like to express my support for House Bill 199. It would provide much-needed updates to Alaska's law protecting waters important to salmon.

Salmon are a vital part of the economy and way of life of my family and for all of Alaska. Our family depends on salmon for food and recreation, but our business depends on it for survival. Visitors come to Alaska to see unspoiled nature and the bounty of wildlife that are supported by salmon runs. Our guests get the experience of seeing healthy wild-run salmon returning to spawn. This is memorable for them, but also is great for our business and the tourism economy. These runs need protection for the benefit of all Alaskans.

One way House Bill 199 would protect salmon is to improve public participation in management decisions. This would give land managers a more complete view of an issue, thereby arriving at better solutions and avoiding costly mistakes. It would also help to protect salmon streams that are not listed in the anadromous catalog.

Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Howard Carbone

Alaska Nature Guides
