



Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance

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March 20, 2019

Alaska State Legislature
Senate Resources Committee
Senator Chris Birch, Chair
State Capitol, Rm #205
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Birch, Chair and Resource Committee Members,

RE: SB 51 SUPPORT – Tier III Waters DESIGNATION PROCESS

Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (SEAFARMER'S ALLIANCE) supports SB 51 for developing a process for designating Tier III waters under the Federal EPA Clean Waters Act. Tier III designation is for protection of the most outstanding and special waters in a state. The State of Alaska Tier II designation is very strict and protective of maintaining our high-quality water, providing protection for our fishery resources.

We have followed the multi-year process and hearings to develop a process for designation of Tier III waters and believe that the process described in SB 51 provides a good path forward. DEC is the lead agency, consultation with DNR and ADF&G and if all three agencies agree that a designation is warranted it is submitted to the legislature to hold the public hearing process. In this process the agencies can look at the qualitative aspects of the nomination, allowing the legislature to hold the public hearing portion of a good process and to wade through the emotional testimony for and against a nomination and decide in a transparent process.

The commercial fishing industry opposed the option considered that left out the agencies and had the legislature responsible for the whole decision-making process. SB51 allows the agencies to make the first determination based on science and the legislature to deal with the public.

SEAFA is a multi-species/multi-gear fishing association representing our 330+ members involved in the salmon, crab, shrimp and longline fisheries of Southeast Alaska and the Gulf of Alaska. Thank you for your consideration of our comments about the process for designating Tier III waters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kathy Hansen", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Kathy Hansen
Executive Director