

**PETERSBURG BOROUGH
RESOLUTION #2021-02**

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING SENATE BILL NO. 60: AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE SPORT FISHING HATCHERY FACILITIES ACCOUNT; ESTABLISHING THE SPORT FISHING FACILITY SURCHARGE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the Petersburg Borough is home to Crystal Lake Salmon Hatchery, a State-owned hatchery that raises and releases Chinook and Coho salmon primarily for sport fish use; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska has contracted with Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association to manage Crystal Lake Salmon Hatchery since July 1, 2000 using funds from the Department of Fish & Game Sport Fish Division; and

WHEREAS, the legislation approving the funding to manage Crystal Lake Salmon Hatchery expires on June 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS, from the Chinook and Coho salmon raised at Crystal Lake Salmon Hatchery, recent annual release goals are as follows:

600,000 Chinook salmon released in Blind Slough (Crystal Creek stock)
500,000 Chinook salmon released in Anita Bay (Andrew Creek stock)
100,000 Chinook salmon released at City Creek (Andrew Creek stock)
300,000 Chinook salmon released at Neets Bay (Chickamin River stock)
200,000 Chinook salmon released at Port St. Nick – POW (Chickamin River stock)
135,000 Coho salmon released in Blind Slough (Crystal Creek stock); and

WHEREAS, these salmon releases are relied upon for sport fishing by the residents and visitors of Petersburg, Wrangell, Ketchikan and Prince of Wales Island, supplying healthy food for locals and visitors and supporting a livelihood for tourist lodges and sport fishing charter businesses; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill No. 60 has been introduced in the first session of the Thirty-Second Legislature which will establish a sport fishing hatchery facilities account within the State of Alaska Fish and Game fund, and a sport fishing facility surcharge; and

WHEREAS, money accrued from the sport fishing facility surcharge shall be allocated to ongoing maintenance and operation of the Department's sport fish hatchery facilities, including Crystal Lake Hatchery and DIPAC Chinook enhancement in the Juneau area.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Petersburg Borough Assembly hereby supports Senate Bill No. 60: An Act Establishing the Sport Fishing Hatchery Facilities Account; Establishing the Sport Fishing Facility Surcharge; and Providing for an Effective Date; and encourages passage of the legislation during the Thirty-Second Legislature.

Passed and approved by the Petersburg Borough Assembly, Petersburg, Alaska this 8th day of February 2021.

Attest:


Mark Jeneen, Mayor


Debra K. Thompson, Borough Clerk



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 20229, Juneau AK 99802-0229

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E-mail: ufa@ufa-fish.org **Website:** www.ufa-fish.org

February 22, 2021

Sent Electronically:

Alaska Senate Finance Committee
Alaska Senate Resource Committee
Alaska House Fisheries Committee
Alaska House Resource Committee
Alaska House Finance Committee

Re: HB 80/SB 60- Support for Salmon Enhancement Funding

Dear Committee Members,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) is the statewide commercial fishing trade association, representing 37 commercial fishing organizations participating in fisheries throughout the state, and the federal fisheries off Alaska's coast.

United Fishermen of Alaska recognizes the economic value of the Alaska's salmon hatchery program and supports immediate and continued State funding for the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) operated Crystal Lake Hatchery (CLH) and the Chinook salmon enhancement projects conducted by Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC).

In September 2020, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced it was discontinuing its Southeast salmon enhancement programs. This included operational funding for the CLH in Petersburg operated by the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) and Chinook salmon enhancement projects conducted by Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC) in Juneau. This notice was unexpected.

ADF&G's reasoning for the decision was that a portion of the funding supporting the CLH and DIPAC Chinook salmon enhancement projects was derived from a sport fishing license surcharge. This surcharge, which expired December 31, 2020, was not renewed by the Alaska Legislature in 2020 when the Legislature adjourned suddenly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and SB 247 and HB189 were not passed. No alternative funding is currently available to replace the \$500,000 needed to continue the Southeast salmon enhancement programs.

Important issues to consider:

- CLH, located in Petersburg, is owned by the State of Alaska, with SSRAA as the operator of the facility under a service contract with ADF&G Sport Fish Division. SSRAA has operated CLH with 4 full-time employees since 2000.
- CLH produces Chinook and coho that are released in the Petersburg, Wrangell, Ketchikan, and Craig areas.
- Averaged over the past 10 years, returning adult CLH Chinook have represented about 40% of the catch of Alaska hatchery-produced salmon in SE.
- SSRAA's service contract with ADF&G Sport Fish Division for operating CLH is for \$517,300 of which \$200,000 is derived from the Sport Fish license surcharge fund. The remaining \$317,300 of the contract is derived from federal funds (Dingell-Johnson) and a required state 25% match and is expected to continue into FY 22.
- DIPAC in Juneau operates a Chinook program primarily funded by the State to boost the local Juneau sport opportunity for Chinook Salmon. For almost 30 years, DIPAC has received \$346,400 for the Chinook program through a co-operative agreement with ADF&G. At the time, \$311,600 of the funds received by DIPAC through the State is derived from the Sportfish License fee surcharge revenues, and the remaining \$34,800 are federal (Dingell-Johnson) funds.
- DIPAC produced adult Chinook salmon returning to the Juneau area have provided significant benefits to the recreational fishery. On average, recreational marine boat fishery harvested about 41% of the Chinook salmon produced by DIPAC, and the DIPAC production has contributed approximately 37% of all the marine boat harvest of Chinook salmon in the Juneau area. The shore side sport fishery also benefits from DIPAC's Chinook program, but those harvest percentages have yet to be evaluated.
- If the surcharge is restored during this legislative session, funds would not be available until the following calendar year, i.e., 2022, and a short-term "gap" in funding of at least one year is expected.

There is a critical need for legislative action for the Southeast salmon enhancement programs to continue. If State funds are not appropriated to cover the current short-term "gap" and a long-term State source such as the sportfish license surcharge, the Southeast Sport Fish salmon enhancement programs will be reduced. Short-term "gap" funding is needed to assure the uninterrupted rearing and release of the salmon currently being reared, and there is an even greater need for a long-term solution to be crafted within a renewed license surcharge.

Sincerely,



Matt Alward
President



Frances H. Leach
Executive Director

CC: Governor Mike Dunleavy
Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang

February 21, 2021

To: Alaska Senate Resources Committee Membership

RE: Support for Salmon Enhancement Funding House Bill 80 and Senate Bill 60

Dear Chairman Revak and Committee Members,

The Alaska Salmon Hatchery Operators, a group of all Executive Directors/General Managers of the Private Non-Profit (PNP) hatcheries in Alaska, support the passage of HB80 and SB60 this legislative session for the continuation of sportfish fisheries enhancement around the State of Alaska.

In September 2020, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced it was discontinuing its Southeast salmon enhancement programs. This included operational funding for the State-owned Crystal Lake Hatchery (CLH) in Petersburg operated by the Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) and Chinook salmon enhancement projects conducted by Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC) in Juneau.

ADF&G's reasoning for the decision was that a portion of the funding supporting the CLH and DIPAC Chinook salmon enhancement projects was derived from a sport fishing license surcharge. This surcharge, which expired December 31, 2020, was not renewed by the Alaska Legislature with SB 247/HB189 in 2020 prior to their sudden adjournment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No alternative funding is currently available to replace the \$500,000 needed to continue both Southeast salmon enhancement programs. Since HB80/SB60 have been introduced this legislative session, we now have another vehicle for reinstitution of the sportfish license surcharge, which would provide a remedy for these important and highly effective programs.

Important issues to consider:

- CLH, located in Petersburg, is owned by the State of Alaska, with SSRAA as the operator of the facility under a service contract with ADF&G Sport Fish Division. SSRAA has operated CLH with 4 full-time employees since 2000.
- CLH produces Chinook and coho that are released in the Petersburg, Wrangell, Ketchikan, and Craig areas.
- Averaged over the past 10 years, returning adult CLH Chinook have represented about 40% of the catch of Alaska hatchery-produced salmon in Southeast.
- SSRAA's service contract with ADF&G Sport Fish Division for operating CLH is for \$517,300 of which \$200,000 is derived from the Sport Fish license surcharge fund. The remaining \$317,300 of the contract is derived from federal funds (Dingell-Johnson) and a required state 25% match and is expected to continue into FY 22.
- DIPAC in Juneau operates a Chinook program at Macaulay Salmon Hatchery (MSH) primarily funded by the State to boost the local Juneau sport opportunity for Chinook Salmon. For almost 30 years, DIPAC has received \$346,400 for the Chinook program through a co-operative agreement with ADF&G. At this time, \$300,000 of the funds received by DIPAC through the State is derived from the Sportfish license fee surcharge revenues, and the remaining \$46,400 are federal (Dingell-Johnson) funds.
- DIPAC produced adult Chinook salmon returning to the Juneau area have provided significant benefits to the recreational fishery. On average, recreational marine boat fishery harvested about 41% of the Chinook salmon produced by DIPAC, and the DIPAC production has contributed approximately 37% of all the marine boat harvest of Chinook salmon in the Juneau area. The

shore side sport fishery also benefits from DIPAC's Chinook program, but those harvest percentages have yet to be evaluated.

There is a critical need for legislative action so that these Southeast salmon enhancement programs continue. With wild Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska returning in low numbers in recent years, these hatchery programs are essential to continue attracting fishermen from out of state for fishing related tourism, for locals who value the sport, subsistence and personal use-caught Chinook salmon, and for commercial fishermen alike.

Please support the passage of HB80/SB60 this legislative session in order to guarantee the continuation of these important programs.

Sincerely,

Tina Fairbanks
Executive Director
Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association (KRAA), Kodiak

Dean Day
Executive Director
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA), Cook Inlet

Mike Wells
Executive Director
Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA), Valdez

Geoff Clark
General Manager
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC), Cordova

Scott Wagner
General Manager
Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA), Sitka

Katie Harms
Executive Director
Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. (DIPAC), Juneau

David Landis
General Manager
Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA), Ketchikan