



April 7, 2021

Re: SB60, sport fishing enhancement surcharge

Representative Foster, Representative Merrick, and Members of House Finance,

I am a lifelong Alaskan and second-generation sportfishing lodge owner. Thirty-four years ago my family built and continue to operate El Capitan Lodge in Southeast Alaska. During this time, I have always thought that one of the most successful and "fair to all user group" programs that the state has ever formed was its Salmon hatchery enhancement programs. These enhancement programs have been nothing other than 100% beneficial to every user group of Alaskan salmon fishing. Be it commercial, sport, or subsistence, EVERYONE benefits when there are more salmon in Alaskan waters. With fisheries being one of the top economic forces in Alaska we should be finding ways to better fund not only the current hatcheries but future hatcheries as well. It seems absurd that we are even considering stripping away one of the only funding mechanisms our hatchery programs have.

My Alaskan family, our business, and our employees depend heavily on our guest's opportunity to catch King and Coho salmon; Alaska's salmon enhancement programs play a key role in maintaining this opportunity. A quarter of the annual sport King salmon harvest in Southeast is from local hatchery origin.

Failure to reinstate the sportfishing license surcharge would be a big mistake and overtime will put all sectors of Alaska's salmon fisheries in jeopardy. We should be finding MORE ways to fund these extremely beneficial enhancement programs, not removing one of the few funding methods they currently have.

My family and I encourage you to pass Senate Bill 60 to protect our future and the future of Alaska's salmon fisheries.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Van Velin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

El Capitan Lodge- Prince of Wales Island, Southeast Alaska



Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc.

2697 Channel Drive • Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 463-5114 • www.dipac.net

Senator Joshua Revak, Chair
Senator Peter Miccichi, Vice Chair
Senate Resource Committee Alaska State Legislature

April 9, 2021

RE: Support of SB60, An act establishing the sport fishing hatchery facilities account; establishing the sport fishing facility surcharge; and providing for an effective date.

Dear Senator Revak, Senator Miccichi, and Members of Senate Resources.

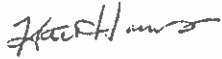
Douglas Island Pink and Chum (DIPAC) is a private nonprofit corporation with a mission to sustain and enhance valuable salmon resources of the State of Alaska for the economic, social, and cultural benefit of all citizens, and to promote public understanding of Alaska's salmon resources and salmon fisheries through research, education, and tourism.

DIPAC operates a Chinook program at Macaulay Salmon Hatchery (MSH) in Juneau primarily funded by the State to boost the local Juneau sport fishing opportunity for Chinook salmon. Prior to 1994, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game produced Chinook salmon to enhance the Juneau area recreational fisheries. These fish were raised at the State's Snettisham hatchery and released at selected sites in the Juneau area. In 1994, Snettisham was converted to a sockeye salmon production facility, and the Juneau Chinook program was transferred to MSH. For almost 30 years, DIPAC has received funding through a co-operative agreement with ADF&G to produce and release king salmon along the Juneau road system. Without these outside funds, the Chinook program would never have gotten off the ground at DIPAC. At this time, over 80% of the funds for this program are derived from the sportfish license fee surcharge. If funds are not secured into the future for the Chinook program, the DIPAC board will likely be forced to direct staff to greatly reduce the program due to budgetary constraints.

There is a critical need for legislative action this session so that state funded salmon enhancement programs can continue across the State of Alaska. With wild Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska returning in low numbers in recent years, hatchery programs are essential in this region 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. DIPAC supports the passage of SB60, and its companion bill HB80, for the future of fishing opportunities for all Alaskan's and for non-residents who come to Alaska to catch fish and boost Alaska's economy.

If SB60 and HB80 do not pass this legislative session, there will likely be a great reduction in Chinook produced by DIPAC and other hatchery facilities as there is no other long term funding available to support these critical programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important issue.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katie Harms", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Katie Harms
Executive Director
katie_harms@dipac.net

Betty Tangeman

From: russellt@aseresorts.com
Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 11:13 AM
To: Senate Resources
Cc: forrest@seagoalaska.org
Subject: Support For SB60

Senators:

I am writing to urge you to support SB60, which would reinstate the sport fishing license surcharge and provide much needed resources for enhancement and infrastructure projects vital to the SE Alaska sport fishery.

My understanding is that both sport and commercial industry groups are supporting this bill, fishermen have previously paid the surcharge with no apparent adverse effects on license sales, and the funds raised through this surcharge will ensure future opportunity for sport fishermen as they target hatchery-produced fish throughout the State.

Commercial fishermen pay a salmon enhancement tax on the ex-vessel value of their catch. With no similar "tax" in place for sport fishermen to cover the costs of the fish they are able to catch in the common property fishery, the license surcharge is a fair way for sport fishermen to participate in the costs associated with raising and releasing fish.

Delaying passage of this bill has the potential of not only costing the state much-needed resources in a time of austerity, but in forcing hatchery association boards to make difficult decisions regarding the types of fish and the numbers of fish raised and released. Without this funding source it is likely SSRAA will be forced to reduce its chinook release from Crystal Lake Hatchery. Those fish are caught in the sport fishery throughout SE Alaska and play a crucial role in our ability to market king salmon opportunity. Even a one-year delay in the passage of this bill could affect an entire brood year, which would then have long-term effects into the future.

Please pass this bill from committee as a way to continue to preserve sport fishing opportunity in the state.

Regards,

Russell Thomas
Alaska Sportfishing Expeditions
Ketchikan
www.ketchikanalaskafishing.com



April 10, 2021

Re: SB60, sport fishing enhancement surcharge

Chair Revak and Members of Senate Resources,

Southeast Alaska Guides Organization (SEAGO) is a non-profit trade group representing fishing lodge and charter businesses across the Southeast region that are stakeholders in the Alaska salmon fishery, and benefit from Alaska sport hatchery programs. Together these businesses make up roughly half of the marine charter fishing activity in the State and are the primary source of the 185 million saltwater anglers spend annually fishing in Southeast Alaska¹.

SEAGO supports SB60.

Our membership depends heavily on angler opportunity to catch king and coho salmon, and Alaska hatchery production plays a key role in maintaining that opportunity. A quarter of annual sport king harvest in Southeast is from local hatchery origin. For Southeast inside waters, nearly half of all sport Chinook harvest is hatchery produced. With current wild stock closures imposed on inside waters well into summer, terminal harvest areas fed by hatchery returns are the only access many anglers have to kings all year.

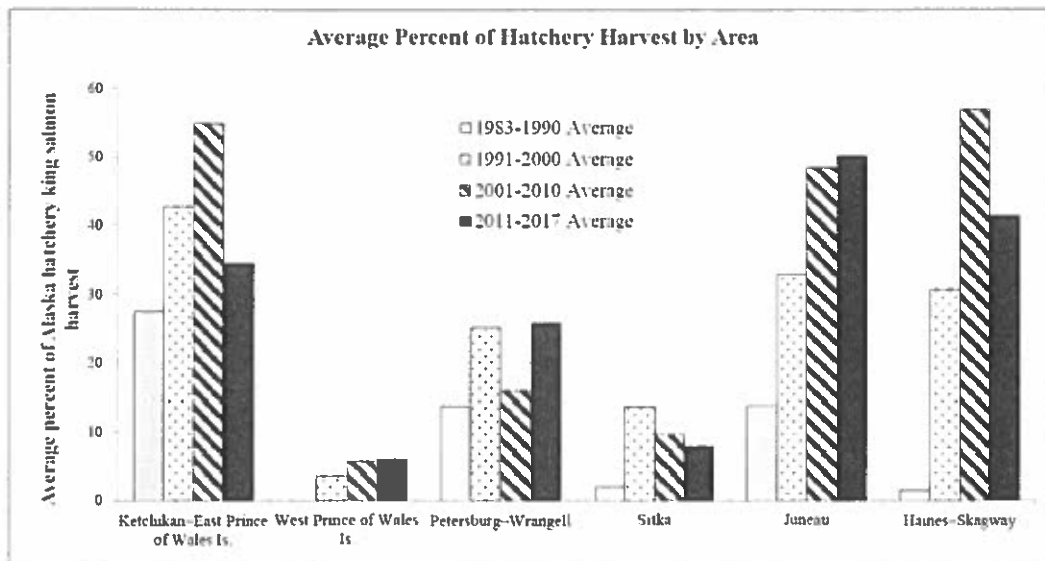


Figure 7.—Estimated percentages of Alaska hatchery king salmon in selected marine sport fishery areas in Southeast Alaska during 4 time periods.

(Overview of the Sport Fisheries for King Salmon in Southeast Alaska through 2017: A Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries, Southeast Region Division of Sport Fish Staff, Special Publication No. 17-15)

¹ *Economic Impacts and Contributions of Sportfishing in Alaska*, Southwick and Associates for ADF&G 2007/2009 Pg. 11 (corrected to 2021 values).

It's been suggested that between 25%-30% of previous surcharge funds were generated through Southeast Alaska fishing license sales during the period bonds were repaid for Ruth Burnett and Jack Hernandez construction projects. Part of that money returned to Southeast to help fund sport king salmon production directly benefiting anglers in the region. These long standing sport programs now face funding gaps for fiscal year 2022, and beyond. Additionally, over half of the 1.5 million Chinook smolts reared and released annually for sport in Southeast come from the State-owned Crystal Lake Hatchery in Petersburg which needs new raceways.

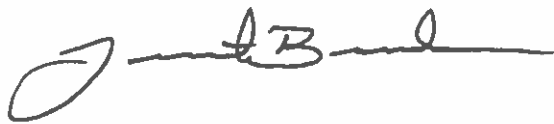
In the 1970s, the State undertook a significant hatchery infrastructure program to respond to dismally low wild stock returns to Alaska waters. The move was meant to supplement fishery harvest and relieve pressure on wild stocks while they rebuilt. Southeast (and much of the State) faces a 70's-type predicament today- particularly where wild Chinook populations are concerned. The Taku and Stikine systems that supply 75% of Southeast wild production have both been below escapement for years. This is a critical time to reinstate funding for sport hatchery programs to extend supplemental harvest opportunities for anglers while wild stocks regenerate.

SB60 opponents claim that surcharge money given to Southeast Alaska goes to subsidize the commercial fishery. With the exception of terminal harvest areas, Southeast marine fisheries are common property fisheries, so yes, some sport funded hatchery fish will be caught in the commercial fishery. But of the 60,000 hatchery Coho and Chinook salmon caught in 2019 by Southeast sport anglers, approximately 15% can be traced to sport hatchery production. A good portion of the balance comes from commercially funded hatchery fish covered by landing taxes. So, it goes both ways.

Sport enhancement programs through state and private non-profit associations fill an important niche in providing recreational and food gathering opportunities to residents, and to non-residents that fuel Alaska's economies. Failure to reestablish the sportfishing license surcharge puts these activities in jeopardy.

We encourage you to pass this bill and move it to House Resources.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Forrest Braden', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Forrest Braden
Executive Director, SEAGO
forrest@seagoalaska.org
(907) 723-1970

Betty Tangeman

From: Kain's Fishing Adventures <info@kainsfishing.com>
Sent: Saturday, April 10, 2021 8:27 AM
To: Senate Resources
Subject: SB HB60 Sport Fish enhancement Surcharge
BT

April 10, 2021

SB - BT
RE: HB 60 Sport Fishing Enhancement Surcharge

Representative Foster
Representative Merrick
Members of the House Finance

As a fishing lodge owner I recognize the value hatchery production salmon bring to SE Alaska and my business. Also additional fishing opportunities and economic importance to our communities that all fishermen gain from hatchery produced fish is invaluable.

I fully support HB60 for funding hatchery facilities through a Sport Fishing surcharge on license sales.

Hatchery raised salmon are an important role to SE Alaska's fishing communities. With robust hatchery programs out of state fishermen book fishing trips to lodges, reserve hotels, rent boats, etc. Also personal, subsistence and commercial fishermen all benefit from hatchery produced salmon. It is a win for everyone.

I encourage you to pass HB60 and move it to the House Resources.

Sincerely,

Greg Kain
Kain's Fishing Adventures
Sitka, Alaska