



Kingfisher Charters & Lodge, LLC

P.O. Box 1043, Craig Alaska 99921 • (907) 826-3350

April 7, 2021

RE: HB 80, Sport fishing Enhancement Surcharge

Dear Representative Foster, Representative Merrick, and members of the House Finance,

My wife and I own and run our family fishing lodge here on Prince of Wales Island since 1994. We support the passage of HB 80 to continue the collection of a fish surcharge for the purposes of Sport fish enhancement and maintaining fish enhancement facilities.

Many years ago I served on POWHA or Prince of Wales Hatchery Association board and was board chairman for 3 years. POWHA struggled for many years and at times I didn't think it would survive, but we wouldn't give up because it is such a critical hatchery for the Craig area both sport, commercial and personal use. Prince of Wales hatchery on the Klawock River is now ran by SSRAA and they do a wonderful job. It is imperative that sport fish continues doing its part supporting these critical hatcheries that support our small communities through sport, commercial, and personal use.

Please pass House Bill 80 and keep our hatcheries solvent for present and future generations.

Respectfully,

Charles Haydu

Charles Haydu

Owner Kingfisher Charters & Lodge, LLC

Craig, Alaska



April 5, 2021

Re: HB80, sport fishing enhancement surcharge

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

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 HB80.

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.

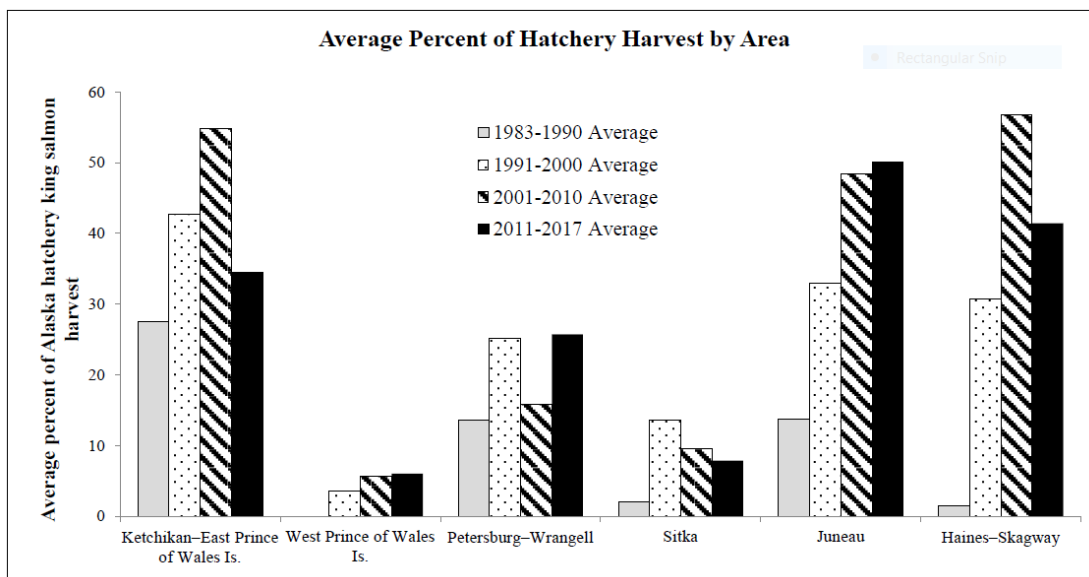


Figure 7.—Estimated percentages of Alaska hatchery king salmon in selected marine sport fishery areas in Southeast Alaska during 4 time periods.

(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.

HB80 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, flowing script.

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



April 7, 2021

Re: HB80, 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 House Bill 80 and move it to House Resources to protect our future and the future of Alaska’s salmon fisheries.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Scott Van Valin'.

El Capitan Lodge- Prince of Wales Island, Southeast Alaska

From: Stephen Giesbrecht <sgiesbrecht@petersburgak.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 1:18 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB 80

Co-Chair Representative Foster
Co-Chair Representative Merrick
Vice Chair Representative Ortiz
Members of the House Finance Committee

32nd Legislature

House Bill 80 - "An Act establishing the sport fishing hatchery facilities account; establishing the sport fishing facility surcharge; and providing for an effective date."

The Petersburg Borough Assembly thanks you for your service and encourages passage of HB 80. The Crystal Lake Salmon Hatchery is a State-owned hatchery on Mitkof Island in Petersburg. This Hatchery produces Chinook and Coho Salmon for primarily sport fish use in this region; with release goals of over 600,000 Chinook, and 135,000 Coho's into our waters. Fish produced in this Hatchery provide value to our community in the form of enhanced tourism, local recreation, and a high quality food source. This is especially important as we work to recover from the pandemic and encourage our community and visitors to return to a sense of normalcy.

Since July 1, 2000, Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) has contracted with the State of Alaska to manage this Hatchery, and provide salmon releases that benefit our community. HB 80, through the license surcharge, will continue the process of supporting ongoing maintenance and operation of the State's Hatchery infrastructure, allowing for continued success of this important program.

Here in SE Alaska, our economic vitality and quality of life are closely tied to the water, and nothing says this more than our world renowned Alaskan Salmon. Please help us by supporting this Bill, our community, and SE Alaska.

Stephen Giesbrecht
Borough Manager
Petersburg Borough

From: Kain's Fishing Adventures <info@kainsfishing.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 08, 2021 6:50 PM
To: House Finance
Subject: HB80 Sport Fishing Enhancement Surcharge

Kain's Fishing Adventures
Sitka, Alaska

April 6, 2021

RE: HB 80 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 HB80 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 HB80 and move it to the House Resources.

Sincerely,

Greg Kain
Kain's Fishing Adventures
Sitka, Alaska

From: Chuck & Jeanette Haydu [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2021 9:18 PM
To: Rep. Kelly Merrick; Rep. Daniel Ortiz; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Andi Story; Rep. Sara Hannan
Subject: HB80
Attachments: Housebill80.rtf

Dear Representative Foster, Representative Merrick, and members of the House Finance,

Attached is my letter in support of HB 80

Respectfully,
Charles Haydu
Kingfisher Charters & Lodge, LLC
Craig Alaska

From: russellt@aseresorts.com
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2021 5:40 PM
To: House Finance
Cc: forrest@seagoalaska.org
Subject: Support For HB 80

Representatives:

I am writing to urge you to support HB80, 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

From: forrest@seagoalaska.org
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 2021 9:42 AM
To: House Finance
Subject: El Capitan Lodge comment letter HB80
Attachments: HB80 support letter_El Capitan Lodge.pdf

House Finance,

I'm forwarding a comment letter from Scott Van Valin for public record on HB80 that he previously sent to individual committee members. He asked me to make sure it gets on record.

Thanks!

Forrest Braden
Executive Director, Southeast Alaska Guides Organization
(907) 723-1970