



North Pacific Fisheries Association
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State of Alaska House of Representatives
House Fisheries Committee
House.Fisheries@akleg.gov

May 4, 2021

Dear Chair Tarr and members of the House Fisheries Committee,

The North Pacific Fisheries Association (NPFA) is a commercial fishing organization based in Homer, Alaska, representing more than sixty family fishing operations utilizing a variety of gear and vessel types. Many of our members hold Lower Cook Inlet Seine permits and some actively participate in the fishery. As a regional fishery association, NPFA holds two seats on the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association board of directors. NPFA is very familiar with the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery as well as Kachemak Bay State Park Management Plan. Recent proposed changes to that plan have exposed the need for the Hatchery to be protected by legislation.

NPFA supports HB52 Tutka Bay Hatchery

The Public Review Draft of the Management Plan that was released in September, 2018 identified Fisheries Enhancement – Hatchery as a conditionally compatible use. On December 2, 2018 the Commissioner of the State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources adopted the Kachemak Bay State Park Management Plan which identified Fisheries Enhancement – Hatchery as a conditionally compatible use. That plan was rescinded. The 1995 Kachemak Bay State Park Management Plan also identified the Hatchery as a compatible use. After 40 plus years of operating within the Park, NPFA sees no justification as to why the compatibility of the TBL Hatchery should suddenly change. The proposed legislation offers a solution, please move it forward.

Finally, in terms of the science of salmon hatcheries in Alaska, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has thorough oversight of all hatchery activities. In October 2018, ADF&G released Special Publication 18-12 *“Salmon Hatcheries in Alaska – A Review of the Implementation of Plans, Permits, and Policies Designed to Provide Protection for Wild Stocks”*. This document explains how robust the Alaska hatchery program is. <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-f/regulations/regprocess/fisheriesboard/pdfs/2018-2019/ws/SP18-12.pdf>

Again, the North Pacific Fisheries Association supports HB52 and appreciate the sponsors for bringing it forward.

Respectfully,

G Malcolm Milne
President, North Pacific Fisheries Association
npfahomer@gmail.com

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Fisheries](#); [REDACTED]
Subject: Tutka Bay Hatchery
Date: Monday, April 26, 2021 9:45:22 AM

The Tutka Bay Hatchery is an expensive, money losing, polluting operation that benefits a very small portion of the Cook Inlet fishermen.

Only about a dozen fishermen make money from cost recovery from the hatchery, with several hundred members that must pay into the association to cover losses from the operation.

From the 2019 CIAA annual report (most recent report on line), the Tutka Hatchery was forecast to raise 945k pinks, but only actually raised 180k pinks, 19%, a huge loss.

The Tutka Hatchery was forecast to earn \$1.3 million in the annual report, but actually saw a revenue of only \$0.2 million, a loss of over 1,000,000 dollars, realizing only 15% of the forecast revenue. Local fishermen had to make up this difference.

Turn the hatchery buildings over to the park to use as directed by park officials. If **scientifically and financially beneficial**, rebuild the hatchery outside the park where there is a sufficient supply of fresh water to support a hatchery.

Kevin Walker
Homer, Alaska
Former employee of CIAA

Representative Geran Tarr, Chair
Members of House Fisheries Committee
HB52 Tutka Bay Hatchery
April 29, 2021

Good morning Representative Tarr and members of the fisheries committee. My name is Cristen San Roman, I am a filleter and fish processor from Homer, Alaska and I am representing myself. I am opposed to house bill 52.

As a lifelong Alaskan I have always enjoyed fishing for wild salmon with my family. It has been an absolute privilege to grow up with the opportunity to harvest my own meals, and now that I work in an industry dependent on other's success in harvesting fish, the salmon provide much more than food for me. As is true for many Alaskans, my livelihood is dependent on healthy fish stocks.

It is my understanding that hatcheries were founded with the idea of bolstering wild salmon numbers, and when I first heard of them I thought what a great idea! It seemed like a fantastic solution to taking the heat off of our true wild fish so they could have a chance at a comeback. But as I have further researched into the impacts of hatcheries, I have found that this salmon ranching has had unintended consequences.

I am sure you're all well aware of the science but I will briefly touch on a couple of points. Young salmon are voracious eaters, and when they are manufactured and released into the ecosystem by the millions, the wild fish are forced to compete with them for food. Hatchery salmon are also known to stray and when they spawn with wild fish they degrade their bloodlines and productivity. With this knowledge that we are hindering wild fish populations it is impossible to say that the focus of hatcheries is to help wild fish stocks. If we are to continue to run this hatchery it is clear the focus has become solely for economic gains. We all need to make money and it seems like pumping out manufactured salmon is a rather profitable endeavor for some. But all gains to some group means loss to another, and in this case the wild fish and other sea life are absolutely losing. Our future generations are also losing. Our greed now is undoubtedly leading to genetically weak salmon that are unable to adapt to changes in the ocean environment or even produce enough offspring to keep their populations up on their own.

I often hear Homer's old timers telling stories of fishing king crab out of the harbor, and the massive pots of Dungeness crab that they would pull up from the bay. If we continue on this path we are on now, we will soon be the old timers talking about the good old days when you could actually catch real, wild salmon in the bay. Perhaps without the hatchery, Tutka Bay and surrounding waters could also see a return in shellfish populations.

I am only 22 years old, I have a lifetime ahead of me to see the consequences of the decisions you make. I urge you vote against house bill 52, and to keep in mind and trust the science and what it means for the future of my generation and that of my children, I want them to grow up with the same opportunities to enjoy harvesting wild seafood the way I grew up doing. Thank you for your time and this opportunity to speak.

Cristen San Roman

From: [REDACTED]
To: [House Fisheries](#)
Subject: HB52
Date: Monday, April 26, 2021 2:11:37 PM
Attachments: [FriendsKBCS Comments Draft Final .pdf](#)
[K-Bay Public MTG 10.29.18 Sign-In Sheets.pdf](#)
[RC 10061 DPOR CIAA Denial letter 2.11.19.pdf](#)
[5.11.2020 CIAA Net Pen Appeal Decision 19-005 \(2\).pdf](#)
[DNR Carcass Dump Director Determination.pdf](#)
[Tutka Hatchery Net Pen Move2.docx](#)

Dear House Fisheries Committee--

Kachemak Bay Conservation Society is writing in strong opposition to HB52. This bill is an attempt by a very small interest group to circumvent a robust public process around DNR's revision of the Kachemak Bay State Park Management Plan. The Management Plan revision process has involved the engagement, comments, and participation of many hundreds--probably thousands--of stakeholders over many years. Kachemak Bay Conservation Society does not support any action that undermines this public process. We do not support legislation stamped by favoritism for any special interest group. We do not support top-down intervention into what has been a fundamentally sound public process.

Please find attached comments submitted by the Kachemak Bay Conservation Society and Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park to DNR during the State Park Management Plan revision process supporting the removal of the Hatchery from Tutka Bay Lagoon, and from State Park lands and waters entirely--Hatcheries are discussed on page 18. Please be advised that these comments were the product of over 10 public stakeholder meetings, and that a large number of local residents submitted independent comments to DNR supporting the removal of the Hatchery from Tutka Bay. See attached sign in sheet from one of our public meetings.

For some context, please also find DNR's recent permitting decisions on carcass dumping in the waters of Kachemak Bay State Park, as well as the relocation of the net pens from their current location in Tutka Bay Lagoon to the head of Tutka Bay. We have also attached some public comments submitted by the Friends of Kachemak Bay State Park during the public comment period on one of those permit applications. Note that the issues raised by DNR here are broader than leasing rights in a state park: they include impacts of carcasses to Tutka Bay, as well as concerns around commercial hatcheries in a park that is designated as a scenic park.

Note that a Scenic Park "means relatively spacious areas of outstanding natural significance, where major values are in their natural geological, faunal or floral characteristics, the purpose of which is directed primarily toward the preservation of its outstanding natural features and where development is minimal and only for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment in a manner consistent with the preservation of the natural values such as camping, picnicking, sightseeing, nature study, hiking, riding and related activities which involve no major modification of the land, forests or waters, and without extensive introduction of artificial features or forms of recreational development that are primarily of urban character..." (Alaska Statute 41.21.990).

Cutting the commercial hatchery out of the State Park is not a solution. It is entirely inappropriate and undermines the purpose of the park. It is not the place of the legislature to cut up protected lands and waters to allow industry to take over. This approach to management will destroy our protected lands and waters, and it will destroy the healthy

tourism industries that they support. Do not be fooled by the lobbying of one very small interest group--cutting the Tutka Bay Hatchery out of Kachemak Bay State Park is against the will of your constituents, and it is against your constitutional mandate to manage state resources for the maximum benefit of all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Roberta Highland,
President, Kachemak Bay Conservation Society

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alaskansknowclimatechange.com