



## **North Pacific Fisheries Association**

**P.O. Box 796 · Homer, AK · 99603**

**npfahomer@gmail.com**

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State of Alaska House of Representatives  
House Fisheries Committee  
[House.Fisheries@akleg.gov](mailto: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 That plan was rescinded.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

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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](#)

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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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Kachemak Bay Conservation Society  
Homer, Alaska

[kbayconservation@gmail.com](mailto:kbayconservation@gmail.com)

<http://www.kbayconservation.org>

[alaskansknowclimatechange.com](http://alaskansknowclimatechange.com)

Representative Tarr – Chair  
Representative Stutes – Vice Chair  
House Fisheries Committee Alaska State Legislature

May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**RE: Support for HB 52 "An Act providing that operation of the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery in Kachemak Bay is compatible with the functions of Kachemak Bay State Park; and providing for an effective date."**

Dear Representative Tarr, Representative Stutes and Members of House Fisheries;

The associations authorizing this letter represent hatchery programs large and small from Ketchikan to Kodiak. Collectively, our fisheries enhancement programs generate over \$600 million dollars in annual economic impact and create an estimated 4,700 jobs statewide. Salmon produced by these hatcheries provide renewable fisheries resources for sport, commercial, subsistence, and personal use harvesters throughout Alaska; improving the lives of many Alaskans and the coastal communities in which they live.

The model for Alaska's hatcheries began with the Fisheries Rehabilitation Enhancement and Development (FRED) Division within the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG). Through ADF&G, the State developed and managed many hatcheries, including the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery. Over time, Alaska's PNP hatcheries forged strong partnerships with ADF&G, and transitioned to operating state-owned hatcheries under contract in Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Prince William Sound and Southeast. The operation of these facilities have been the cornerstone of Alaska salmon sustainability. Our State Constitution encourages the development of natural resources for "maximum use" with a "sustained yield" to benefit all Alaskans. Hatcheries play a significant role in maintaining our constitutional mandate by efficiently operating state facilities through these private – public partnerships.

The Tutka Bay Hatchery, owned by the State of Alaska and operated under a cooperative agreement between ADF&G and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA), provides vital fisheries enhancement programs for the Cook Inlet region. The impacts of closing the Tutka Bay Hatchery would have an immediate effect on CIAA's ability to generate cost recovery revenue for its other operations. This loss of essential funding places many enhancement projects, including personal use sockeye dip net fisheries in the park (China Poot Personal Use) and sport fisheries in Cook Inlet, the Mat Su Valley and Resurrection Bay, at risk of closure. Thousands of Alaskans participating in these fisheries will no longer have a source for salmon.

Alaska hatchery programs within state parks in Prince William Sound, Kodiak and Southeast Alaska have concerns with the precedent that would be set by closing the Tutka Bay Hatchery. Will the State of Alaska continue to finance hatchery improvement and development of hatcheries within State parks? Will fishermen and/or hatchery associations be willing to continuing investing in hatcheries which may be closed by the State through an incompatibility determination? Finally, we have concern that if this precedent is set within state parks it will be viewed as a standard for consideration in federal parks and other lands within Alaska as well and may result in adverse impacts to additional Alaska hatcheries.

Alaska's Private Non-Profit (PNP) Salmon Hatchery Operators urge all related state departments work collaboratively to reach a solution to this matter as quickly as possible. We support the efforts of Representative Vance, Representative Carpenter and Representative Gillham to advance the discussion

on the land use concerns of Kachemak Bay State Park as they pertain to the permitting and operation of the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery.

HB52 will create within state statute a formal land transaction that will permit this important fisheries enhancement hatchery program to continue. This bill will further clarify, that the intent of the State of Alaska is to include hatcheries within state park areas, as a compatible use of these lands to sustainably increase Alaska's salmon resources for all users.

Alaska's hatchery associations support the passage of House Bill 52. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

Dean Day – Executive Director  
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association

Tina Fairbanks – Executive Director  
Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association

Mike H. Wells – Executive Director  
Valdez Fisheries Development Association Inc.

Geoff Clark – General Manager  
Prince William Sound Aquaculture Association

Katie Harms – Executive Director  
Douglas Island Pink & Chum

Scott Wagner – General Manager  
Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Assoc.

David Landis – General Manager  
Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Assoc.

**From:**



**Cc:**

**Subject:**

**Date:**

HB 52 comments

Wednesday, May 05, 2021 2:09:27 PM

Hello and thank you for taking the time to read my written testimony on HB 52. My name is Dan Miotke and I am a resident of Homer and a commercial fisherman that harvests the resource that Tutka Hatchery provides. Also, I represent the City of Homer on the CIAA board that manages the hatchery. First, I would like to touch on the opportunity that Tutka directly and indirectly provides. One of our communities favorite summer activities is the China Poot personal use fisheries, Sockeye salmon eggs that are collected at Tutka are taken to Trail Lakes Hatchery outside Seward, raised and then brought back down and released in both China Poot Lake and the lagoon at the hatchery. These fish are harvested by both sportfish and commercial fisherman. I've heard testimony that these fish come from Trail Lakes, what they are not including is that ADFG only allows fish harvested at Tutka to be released in the adjacent waters.

Also, I have heard testimony about the small number of vessels that get the opportunity to harvest the returns to the Hatchery. I would like to point out that the Board of Directors is made up commercial permit holders from all of Cook Inlet including; seiners, gillnetters, set netters, and other stakeholders. As a board we have decided to use the cost recovery efforts from Tutka to help fund most of programs that we are involved in throughout the Cook Inlet drainage. These include smolt enumerations on the Kasilof River, Pike mitigation in the watershed of the Upper Inlet, elodea/ invasive species monitoring, and the numerous public outreach education programs. Without the revenue generated from Pink Salmon harvest at Tutka we would not be able to fund these activities.

As a commercial fisherman I can ensure you the entire Lower Cook Inlet Fleet targets salmon that have returned from Tutka. Lower Cook Inlet is an entry point for young and new fishermen to get into the seining. Limited Entry permits are affordable and the fishery doesn't require large expensive vessels, if you were to ask many of the very success Homer and Seward Fishermen most started in the Lower Cook Inlet Areas. The last rebutte to the testimony I would like to touch on is the negative impacts that large numbers of salmon carcasses left over in the area when these fish return. I cant think of a better thing to be happening. Salmon have been returning to areas in large numbers for hundreds of thousands of years and the nutrients these carcasses are fundamental to marine ecosystems. Many studies have been done and these nutrients end up being the cornerstone of healthy natural environment. Areas along the entire west coast would be thrilled to have this problem.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. I hope you can support this bill to ensure we can continue operating and providing the many opportunities and programs Tutka creates. I have attached one of our recent CIAA news letters that highlight some of the history of Tutka Bay Hatchery in Kachemak State Park along with the numerous programs we provide to all of Cook Inlet. I hope you have a moment to take a look at our organization.

<https://www.ciaa.net.org/index.php?gf-download=2020%2F07%2FIssue-85-Final-for-Web.pdf&form-id=6&field-id=4&hash=618a0fd0ee2bc1e2308ff151d50f46272040a61d56c22407c79987f6fc06a704>



-Dan Miotke

CIAA Board Member

Lower Cook Inlet Commercial Fisherman

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [House Fisheries](#)  
**Subject:** HB 52. Tutka Hatchery  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 05, 2021 9:00:11 PM

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Members of the committee:

I support HB 52 which features a land trade and a ruling that Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery has the right to conduct its operations within Kachemak Bay State Park.

The land trade as proposed would be in the best interests of both TBLH and KBSP. KBSP would gain valuable recreational acreage for access to the Cottonwood Creek area and TBLH would be freed the constant land use conflicts with Parks.

The Hatchery needs legislative reassurance that Hatchery operations involving the use of Park waters and land for fish releases, cost recovery operations, lake fertilization and associated activities are compatible with Park management plans.

The Hatchery is a significant asset to the Park by providing fish for sport, subsistence, personal use and commercial fisheries. The fish returning to Tutka are a major tourist attraction and contributes to the yearly ever-increasing flow of visitors to the Tutka Bay Area.

Beaver Nelson

Park Advisory Board member  
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Board member  
Commercial fisherman  
Homer AK

Sent from my iPad

Representative Geran Tarr, Chair  
Members of House Fisheries Committee  
HB52 Tutka Bay Hatchery Testimony  
May 6, 2021

Good morning Representative Tarr, Representative Vance and other members of the committee. I testified at last week's meeting and have prepared this secondary testimony. My name is Cristen San Roman, I am a filleter and fish processor from Homer, Alaska. I am opposed to house bill 52.

I believe this land swap is a rash and premature decision that does not account for future impact. Without this bill, Tutka hatchery still has 10 years to operate, there is time to figure out alternative solutions and I do not understand why we are rushing into this without considering all factors around the hatchery. I wish it wasn't so but hatcheries are not ideal and I believe that we could do better.

The Alaska hatchery research project has been studying the effects of hatchery-wild interactions and have found that hatchery salmon produce about half the number of returning adult offspring than their natural counterparts do. When they stray and spawn with wild fish, they reduce the fitness of our natural salmon.

Reports from ADFG show unexpectedly high numbers of Prince William Sound hatchery salmon spawning in Lower Cook Inlet streams, in some areas the proportions are exceeding 50%. This was unforeseen as their natal hatcheries are 150-300 miles away. Are the hatchery fish from Tutka also straying far off and contaminating distant streams that are home to natural stocks?

Regardless of straying, in 2018, 2/3 of Lower Cook Inlet hatchery fish were harvested for cost recovery by the hatchery itself to continue operations. Is this really an effective operation if it is so expensive to run? Are we also considering the cost to wild fish? The cost to future generations? Can we afford to be ignorant to what is going on with our fisheries? What happens if this land swap is approved and then down the road we have to close the hatchery anyway due to an unconstitutional disregard to conservation? Do we know the answers to these questions?

It seems that this hatchery is a rather expensive problem that will only be more costly as time goes on. Tutka should not be displaced from Kachemak bay state park without consideration to what it means in the long term. The hatchery should close as planned so the lagoon and surrounding areas can be allowed to return to their former state and balance to the ecosystem restored.

Even if we put hatchery politics to the side, I do not think the land of off East End road is a suitable replacement for the majesty of the land across the bay. Even if it is twice the size, it does not hold near the same value. People flock to the state park for the whimsy of the boat ride across the water to the novelty bays and coves that make our state park so unique. It would be very bizarre to split the park up and have a strange area on the Homer side affiliated with the glory across the bay. Thank you for your time and consideration of my thoughts.

Cristen San Roman

**From:**

**Subject:**

**Date:**

HB52. Tutka Hatchery

Wednesday, May 05, 2021 7:27:04 PM

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Members of the committee:

I fully support the land trade that removes the land that houses the Tutka Lagoon hatchery from the boundaries of the Park.

At the time the State constructed the hatchery, fishery enhancement was fully compatible with the Park purposes. The designers of the Park did not want to limit its use to a select few.

It is not fair to now punish the thousands of beneficiaries of the hatchery.

I also fully support hatcheries as being compatible in Parks. Tourists love looking at fish up close and most have never seen so many. This is an experience they will never forget!

Jessie Nelson  
Commercial fishermen  
Homer, AK

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [House Fisheries](#)  
**Subject:** HB 52  
**Date:** Thursday, May 06, 2021 10:30:02 AM

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My name is Len Fabich I'm a homer resident and have fish the waters of Kachemak Bay since 19 87. Both commercially and sport. In 2013 I became commercial salmon seiner in lower Cook Inlet.

I am here today to voice my opinion in support of the efforts to keep the tutka bay hatchery open. Kachemak Bay State Park management plan that has decided the tutka BayHatchery is not compatible to the use of our state park. I beg to differ. There are many views on the tutka bay hatchery and I'm going to share mine.

Why is it that a hatchery that has operated since 1978 although not consecutively. Deemed incompatible now. Honestly because of the hidden personal agenda of a few to be blunt!! It is my opinion that there are very few people with an agenda that are creating this travesty. There are many benefits, from my point of view the fact that I fished my entire salmon season this past commercial season on tutka bay hatchery fish returns is one of them. On even years When our wild pinks do not generally return in big numbers on the outer coast the hatchery is a huge bright spot in our local seine Fishermans summer fishery. The returning reds especially, and pinks returning to the hatchery or hatchery release sites are by far our target fish. It really is a big part of my lively hood. So the argument that it is largely only benefiting the hatchery is false. As far as being an intrusion on the state park I can attest to the fact that my boat and all others that commercial fish here bring a great amount of pleasure to park visitors each summer. A favorite opportunity for them is to observe us in action. Many a tourist go home with photos of us catching Tutka Bay hatchery fish. Seems very compatible with the many users. I personally know of commercial operators in within the park that depend on this fishery to take spirt fishing clients to fish there all through the season. The benefits to the city with taxes collected from fish sales across the docs is no small number. A benefit to our cities treasury. Another loss.

The spinoffs of this Hatchery affects thousands of people. One of the largest positive benefits is the China poot dip net and snag fishery. As well as the Tutka bay lagoon sports fishery for reds and pinks. All funded by hatchery cost recovery measures. This will go away if the Tutka bay hatchery is closed down. The hatchery is responsible for collecting the eggs that eventually end up as red salmon on the tables and in the freezers around Homer and the Peninsula from these two sites. My family and I love to partake in this fishery. Gone it will be if the state park gets its way.

When I mention this to local people they get very upset.

I urge you to pass HB 52 that will secure the land trade and continued operation of the hatchery.

Len Fabich