



CSHB 52 (FSH) – Sponsor Statement

“An Act adding state land to Kachemak Bay State Park; removing the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery and Tutka Bay Lagoon from Kachemak Bay State Park; and providing for an effective date.”

House Bill 52 seeks to cure a legal land disposal issue within Kachemak Bay State Park (KBSP) by providing a boundary adjustment that benefits both the park and Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery (TBLH). This proposal adds additional land parcels north of Kachemak Bay and excludes the hatchery and lagoon from the park lands.

The Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery is owned by the State of Alaska and has been in operation since 1976 and privately operated on behalf of the state since 1995. Emerging caselaw regarding what constitutes an “impermissible disposal of park lands” has made it clear that this is a legal issue that must be resolved.

This bill adds three parcels (A-C on the map) totaling approximately 267 acres to KBSP in the Cottonwood-Eastland unit, on the north side of Kachemak Bay, and removes approximately 123 acres from the park that includes uplands surrounding the TBLH and portions of Tutka Bay Lagoon. Parcel A would provide much needed access from East End Road to the underutilized Cottonwood Eastland unit about 17 miles northeast of Homer; offering enhanced recreational opportunities. Parcels B and C would connect adjacent portions within the Cottonwood-Eastland unit, harmonizing long-term park management objectives.

The indirect benefit of curing this legal land disposal issue within KBSP, is securing the success of the China Poot Dipnet Fishery that is stocked with eggs from TBLH. This dipnet salmon fishery is a source of food security for the community and to many across the state.

By legislatively removing the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery from Kachemak Bay State Park, HB 52 cures the legal disposal issue of these legislatively designated lands.