

Representative Rebecca Himschoot

Angoon, Craig, Edna Bay, Elfin Cove, Hollis, Hoonah, Hydaburg, Kake, Kasaan, Klawock, Kupreanof, Naukati, Pelican, Petersburg, Port Alexander, Point Baker, Port Protection, Sitka, Tenakee Springs, Thorne Bay & Yakutat

Session

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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 1

“Establishing the Joint Legislative Task Force on Sport Fishing Service Providers in Southeast Alaska.”

SPONSOR STATEMENT

House Concurrent Resolution 1 establishes a Joint Legislative Task Force to evaluate the sport fishing service industry in Southeast Alaska. The task force will be responsible for evaluating the industry, and if it is warranted, providing recommendations on managing the sector in the future to ensure economic viability for businesses and continued access to our fisheries resources for all user groups. Resident and non-resident sport and commercial fishermen throughout Southeast Alaska recognize the increased pressure on our finite fisheries resources. As fishermen from all sectors become more efficient and sport fishing effort increases, user groups have asked for the legislature to evaluate the sport fishing service sector in Southeast Alaska.

In addition to increased efficiencies, and more sport fishing effort, there is also less opportunity for certain species like king salmon. Since 2014, the king salmon quota for all users in Southeast Alaska, set through the Pacific Salmon Treaty process, has trended down from nearly 500,000 king salmon in 2014 to less than 250,000 king salmon in recent years. With fewer fish, better fishermen, and more effort, it is becoming increasingly difficult for fishermen to make ends meet. Furthermore, with a fully allocated species like king salmon, anytime one user group exceeds their allocation, it must come out of another user group’s allocation.

Establishing a task force on the sport fishing service sector is the first step in evaluating the industry and determining if it makes sense to establish some form of managed entry for the sport fishing service sector. House Concurrent Resolution 1 will create a task force of stakeholders and legislators who will ultimately be responsible for making recommendations to the legislature on the best way to manage the sport fishing service industry going forward.

Based on the task force’s recommendations, the legislature may take future actions to manage the sport fishing service sector in Southeast Alaska to meet the goal shared by fishermen of maintaining the economic viability for operators in the industry and preserving sustainable access to our limited fishery resources for all user groups.

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