

HOUSE BILL NO. 191

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES HIMSCHOOT, Bynum, Hannan, Gray

Introduced: 4/14/25

Referred: Resources, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act establishing the Alaska Invasive Species Council in the Department of Fish and**
2 **Game; relating to management of invasive species; and providing for an effective date."**

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 16.20 is amended by adding new sections to read:

5 **Article 6. Management of Invasive Species.**

6 **Sec. 16.20.800. Alaska Invasive Species Council.** (a) The Alaska Invasive
7 Species Council is an advisory council established in the department to facilitate
8 efforts by the department, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of
9 Environmental Conservation, the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities,
10 and other natural-resource-related governmental entities operating in the state to
11 manage invasive species in the state by

12 (1) facilitating cooperation between state, federal, tribal, and local
13 agencies and nongovernmental organizations;

14 (2) assisting in coordination of activities to manage invasive species,

1 including those undertaken by local governments and nongovernmental organizations;

2 (3) recommending coordinated interagency strategies and policies
3 related to management of invasive species, including

4 (A) importation, possession, and use of invasive species;

5 (B) classification and listing of non-native species; and

6 (C) management of pathways associated with transfer of
7 invasive species;

8 (4) upon request of a state agency, providing guidance on prioritizing
9 the state agency's responses to occurrences of invasive species and how funds made
10 available under AS 16.20.820 may be best used;

11 (5) recommending expenditures from the invasive species response
12 fund;

13 (6) providing technical information and assistance to persons engaged
14 in regional and national invasive species management efforts.

15 (b) Except as provided in (c) of this section, the council consists of

16 (1) the following members appointed by the governor to three-year
17 terms:

18 (A) a representative of the University of Alaska who is
19 involved in research relating to, or management of, invasive species;

20 (B) a representative of an Alaska tribal entity who is involved
21 in management of invasive species;

22 (C) a representative of a statewide organization focused on
23 prevention, detection, and management of invasive species;

24 (D) a representative of an organization involved with
25 prevention, detection, and management of marine invasive species in the state;

26 (E) a representative involved in invasive species management
27 through a soil and water conservation district established under AS 41.10.130,
28 a conservation district established by an Alaska Native organization, or an
29 organization concerned with the health of watersheds in the state;

30 (2) one member of the house of representatives appointed by the
31 speaker of the house of representatives;

1 (3) one member of the senate appointed by the president of the senate;
 2 (4) the commissioner of each of the following departments or the
 3 commissioner's designee:

- 4 (A) the Department of Fish and Game;
- 5 (B) the Department of Natural Resources;
- 6 (C) the Department of Environmental Conservation;
- 7 (D) the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

8 (c) The council may, as the council finds necessary, invite additional persons
 9 to be nonvoting advisory members of the council. The council may invite
 10 representatives or members of federal entities, local government organizations, tribal
 11 governments, institutions of higher learning in the state, and other organizations with
 12 expertise relating to invasive species to join the council under this subsection. The
 13 council may prescribe procedures for the participation of persons added to the council
 14 under this subsection.

15 (d) The council shall adopt bylaws to govern its operation. The bylaws must
 16 provide procedures for

- 17 (1) decision making; and
- 18 (2) establishing subcommittees and advisory committees.

19 (e) The council shall elect a chair and vice chair from among the members
 20 appointed under (b)(1) of this section. The council shall meet at least quarterly at the
 21 call of the chair. A majority of the council constitutes a quorum. Meetings and council
 22 votes may be held by audio or video teleconference.

23 (f) Members of the council serve without compensation and are not entitled to
 24 per diem and travel expenses. However, a member appointed under (b)(4) of this
 25 section is entitled to per diem and travel expenses as a state employee.

26 (g) By January 15 of each odd-numbered year, the council shall prepare and
 27 present to the legislature an updated five-year strategic plan that addresses the effects
 28 of invasive species on the state's natural resources and economy, states the council's
 29 suggested priorities for addressing invasive species, and recommends legislation and
 30 funding required to implement the council's priorities. The council shall transmit the
 31 strategic plan to the senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives

1 and notify the legislature that the plan is available.

2 (h) By January 15 of each year, the council shall prepare and present an
3 annual report on invasive species active in the state, the effects of the activity, and any
4 measures taken to manage invasive species. The report must include other issues and
5 concerns related to invasive species that the council determines are of value to
6 policymakers. The council shall submit the report to the governor, the department, the
7 Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the
8 Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, and the senate secretary and chief
9 clerk of the house of representatives, and notify the legislature that the report is
10 available.

11 (i) Council members appointed under (b)(1) of this section serve staggered
12 three-year terms and until a successor is appointed. A vacancy on the council shall be
13 filled in the same manner as the original appointment. If a vacancy occurs, the
14 governor shall appoint a member for the unexpired portion of the term within 60 days
15 after the occurrence of the vacancy.

16 **Sec. 16.20.810. Invasive species response fund.** The invasive species
17 response fund is established as an account in the general fund. The fund consists of
18 appropriations made to the fund. Money appropriated to the fund does not lapse. The
19 department may use money appropriated to the fund to manage invasive species,
20 without further appropriation.

21 **Sec. 16.20.850. Definitions.** In AS 16.20.800 - 16.20.850,

22 (1) "council" means the Alaska Invasive Species Council;

23 (2) "department" means the Department of Fish and Game;

24 (3) "invasive species" means a non-native species the introduction of
25 which causes or is likely to cause economic harm, environmental harm, or harm to
26 human health;

27 (4) "manage invasive species" means to take actions to prevent or
28 minimize harmful effects of invasive species on the economy, the environment, public
29 health, infrastructure, and cultural heritage;

30 (5) "non-native species" includes any biological material capable of
31 propagating a species that is not native to the state or an ecosystem in the state.

1 * **Sec. 2.** AS 16.20.800, 16.20.810, and 16.20.850 are repealed July 1, 2035.

2 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
3 read:

4 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AND CHAIR AND TIMING AND NUMBER OF
5 MEETINGS REQUIRED IN INITIAL YEAR. (a) Notwithstanding AS 16.20.810(i), added
6 by sec. 1 of this Act, the governor shall appoint the initial members of the Alaska Invasive
7 Species Council required under AS 16.20.800(b)(1) within 60 days after the effective date of
8 this Act. The governor shall appoint the members to staggered terms as follows:

9 (1) two members shall be appointed to three-year terms;

10 (2) two members shall be appointed to two-year terms; and

11 (3) one member shall be appointed to a one-year term.

12 (b) Notwithstanding AS 16.20.800(e), added by sec. 1 of this Act, the Alaska Invasive
13 Species Council shall

14 (1) hold its first meeting within 90 days after the appointment of members
15 under (a) of this section; and

16 (2) meet at least four times in the 12 months following the appointment of
17 members under (a) of this section.

18 * **Sec. 4.** This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).