

**Brief for SB 177: NO REPEAL SPORT FISH GUIDE LICENSE  
(Reauthorization of Sport Fish-Guide Licensing Legislation)  
April 17, 2009**

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**Note:** The Senate Resources Committee amended SB177 on April 10, 2009 by adding a sunset date of January 1, 2015.

**Background:**

- Original legislation passed in May, 2004; effective January 1, 2005.
- Proposed by the Department for three main reasons:
  - Information on guide numbers and their fishing activities was either not available or limited in many parts of the state;
  - Establish minimum standards to operate a business or contract as a guide (safety, liability insurance, US Coast Guard license, etc.) as a means to increase professionalism and reduce speculative entry; and
  - Provide comprehensive and credible data on guided sport fishing activities to regulatory agencies: Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF), International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), and North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC).

**Participation Statistics:**

- An average of 1,670 sport fishing business licenses (including Owner/Operator combination) at a fee of \$100 dollars have been sold annually (**90% of owners are Alaska residents**).
- An average of 1,960 sport fishing guide licenses with a fee of \$50 dollars have been sold annually (**73% of guides are Alaska residents**).
- Over 1.8 million clients took 450,000 trips (2005-2008 combined) with 67% fishing in saltwater and 33% in fishing freshwater; **88% of all clients were nonresidents**.
- There were 2,061 vessels registered in freshwater and 1,628 in saltwater (2005-2008).

## **Present Use Compared to Legislative intent**

- A comprehensive list of all sport fishing guides working in salt water will allow Alaska to receive an exemption from participating in the National Saltwater Angler Registry (up to \$25/saltwater angler in 2011).
  - Without this exemption an additional fee of \$25 dollars would be required of all anglers fishing in salt water within the state.
- Guide and client statistics from this program were used for the 2007 Sport Fish Economic Impact study recently published: \$1.4 billion dollars in sport fishing expenditures.
- The logbook data for saltwater anglers has been used extensively within the IPHC and NPFMC for rule making on Pacific Halibut.
- Both freshwater and saltwater logbook harvest data has been presented and utilized by the Alaska Board of Fisheries, International Pacific Halibut Commission and North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.
  - During 2007-2009 the Alaska Board of Fisheries Meetings used log book data to address approximately 70 proposals.
  - ADF&G Area Management Biologists routinely review logbook data inseason.
  - Logbook data has been used extensively for catch sharing plans, bag limit analyses and identifying businesses involved by the NPFMC.
  - Harvest estimate verification studies (2006-2008) are being conducted comparing logbook, statewide sport fish harvest survey, and dock side creel programs. Preliminary results are favorable regarding accuracy of the harvest information. (Final report available October 2009).
  - Sport Fishing Guide clients in 2007 and 2008 were contacted independently (surveyed) for obtaining harvest information as part of verification program (germane to NPFMC request).

### **Program Revenue and Costs:**

#### **Guide License Revenue & Expenditures**

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Revenue</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>Shortage</b>
FY05	Actual	\$200.2	\$179.3	\$20.9
FY06	Actual	\$256.6	\$386.6	(\$130.0)

FY07	Actual	\$263.9	\$454.1	(\$190.2)
FY08	Actual	\$250.9	\$443.2	(\$192.3)
FY09	<b>Projection</b>	\$253.5	\$450.2	(\$196.7)
FY10	<b>Projection</b>	\$256.0	\$462.2	(\$206.2)

- For FY08, approximately \$37,000 (8% of total expenditures) was expended on the licensing portion of the program. Fish and Game fund (angler License receipts) subsidize the program shortfall.

Electronic logbook reporting is being worked on and will be in place by the 2011 season.