

Louie Flora

From: District Manager <distmgr@wasillaswcd.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 26, 2013 11:39 AM
Cc: Rep Bill Stoltze; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Mark Neuman;
Rep.Lynn.Gattis@ak.leg.gov
Subject: HB 89

Chuck Kaucic
District Manager
Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation District
(907) 357-4563, ext. 103

Greetings from sunny Wasilla!

The Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District (WSWCD) Board of Supervisors wish to inform you of their unanimous support for HB 89 Aquatic Invasive Species Control. WSWCD has worked with various Federal, State, and local agencies and other partners to survey 25 lakes within the 1+million acre district boundaries .WE are well aware of the potential negative impact that aquatic invasives can have on salmon and other fishery stocks.

Thanks for sponsoring this legislation.

Cheers! CK

Loule Flora

From: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: FW: HB89 - Please Pass with Funding!

From: Michele Hartline [<mailto:hartlines@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, March 18, 2013 2:18 PM

To: Rep. Alan Austerman; Rep. Mia Costello; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. Les Gara; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Bill Stoltze; Rep. Steve Thompson; Rep. Tammie Wilson

Cc: Rep. Mike Chenault; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins; Rep. Eric Felge; Rep. Mike Hawker; Rep. Lindsey Holmes; Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux; Rep. Benjamin Nageak; Rep. Paul Seaton

Subject: HB89 - Please Pass with Funding!

Dear House Finance Committee Representatives,

Please vote to pass HB89 and provide funding to attack these invasive threats to our precious Alaska water bodies now.

I am a fiscally conservative and responsible Alaskan that believes in living within our means. I can identify numerous state expenditures that albeit, I benefit from, but certainly can live without. This HB89 does not fall into that category.

This issue absolutely must be funded to protect our precious resources.

I live in the Daniels Lake area on the Kenai Peninsula that was recently discovered to be infected with Elodea. Elodea asphyxiates the lake floor as a carpet weed that sucks the oxygen out of the water, suffocating the land-locked fish species as well as anadromous salmon species that spawn there. It spreads rapidly, reproduces asexually and thrives in cold water. If Daniels and Stormy Lakes are not treated immediately, they will infect the rest of the Kenai Peninsula and other State of Alaska waters quickly and relentlessly.

We cannot do politics-as-usual on this issue. HB89 needs to be passed now! AND Liberally funded! Please, please act NOW!

Michele Hartline

PO Box 7933

Nikiski, Alaska 99635

hartlines@hotmail.com

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ALASKA COMMITTEE FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

January 15th, 2014
28th Legislature (2013-2014)

Representatives Bill Stoltze and Alan Austerman
Finance Committee Co-chairs
State of Alaska Legislative Offices
State Capitol Rooms 515, 505
Juneau, Alaska 99801

RE: CSHB89 - An Act relating to the rapid response to, and control of, aquatic invasive species and establishing the aquatic invasive species response fund - Referred to Finance on May 14th, 2013

Dear Representatives Stoltze and Austerman,

On behalf of the Alaska Committee for Noxious and Invasive Plant Management (CNIPM) I write to encourage the passage of House Bill 89.

House Bill 89, which would mandate a response coordinated by the Alaska Departments of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Environmental Conservation (ADEC) and Natural Resources (DNR) to aquatic invasive species, represents an important step toward developing rapid response capabilities for priority invasive species in Alaska. The CNIPM board commends the introduction of this bill by Representative Paul Seaton and its subsequent reference to Finance. We urge the House Finance Committee to hear this bill and vote to move it forward – remembering that its predecessor, HB365, was passed by the House with 37 “Yeas” on April 11, 2012.

Alaska is at a critical point with respect to aquatic invasive species. Currently, two species, the colonial tunicate *Didemnum vexillum* and the perennial waterweed, *Elodea* sp. pose considerable threat to our state's marine and freshwater systems. *Didemnum vexillum* encrusts marine infrastructure and resident biota to drastically alter benthic habitats and potentially impact mariculture as well as shell and ground fisheries. The single known infestation discovered offshore from Sitka represents a dramatic and concerning 1,000 km range extension along the western coastline of North America.

While less than 20 non-native marine species have been documented in Alaskan waters, *Elodea* is the first non-native, submerged freshwater plant to be recorded in state. Through its aggressive growth, this perennial plant modifies flow and sedimentation rates in freshwater habitats, thus degrading the quality of spawning habitat for anadromous fish. The known distribution of *Elodea* is currently restricted to approximately 16 lakes and rivers in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Cordova and the Kenai Peninsula. However, several of the infested lakes accommodate float planes, which are potential vectors of introduction for *Elodea* to pristine waterbodies across the state, and with the exception of the Anchorage-area lakes, all infestations fall within the watersheds of the world-class Copper, Kenai or Yukon River fisheries.

Alaska's commitment to invasive species funding is disproportionately low relative to federal levels. A recent study by UAA's Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) showed that from 2007-2011, 84% of invasive species funding for Alaska was provided by the federal government; the State of Alaska provided only 5%. Of an average annual expenditure of \$5.8 million for this same time period, only 10% of funding was directed towards the management of invasive marine species and freshwater plants. Based on this distribution of funding in the context of recent invasive species introductions, the study recommends that state government adopt a larger role in invasive species management.

It is our professional opinion that the type and level of response to aquatic invasive species in Alaska taken over the next few years holds high-stake implications for the ecological health of our waters and the manifold subsistence, commercial and recreational activities they support. House Bill 89 would



ALASKA COMMITTEE FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT

facilltate the type of rapid, strategic and coordinated response necessary for the extirpation of *Didemnum vexillum* and *Elodea* from Alaska. As stewards of our Great Land, we urge you to support this crucial natural resource protection.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

Lindsey Flagstad

Vice Chair, Alaska Committee for Noxious & Invasive Plant Management
7344 Potter Heights Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99516
lindseyflagstad@gmail.com
907.433.9882



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Lindsey Flagstad

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Cordova District Fishermen United
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web. www.cdfu.org | email. cdfu@ak.net

February 8, 2013

Rep. Paul Seaton
House Fisheries Committee
State Capitol Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801
f. 465.3472

RE: HB 89 "Aquatic Invasive Species"

Dear Chairman Seaton and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Cordova District Fishermen United Board of Directors and our membership to express our support of the intent of House Bill 89, as it would be a valuable addition to the Department's arsenal for the management of Aquatic Nuisance Species.

As was evidenced in the Pacific NW, marine debris associated with the 2011 Japanese tsunami poses increased opportunity for the introduction and transmission of invasive species into Alaskan waters. The outside beaches in the Gulf of Alaska and the PWS area, where the majority of debris washes ashore, are remote, uninhabited and yet hold some of our most productive salmon streams. Having a rapid response system in place gives the Department the tools to quickly implement eradication efforts and prevent the spread of ANS.

I would also like to acknowledge the concerns expressed by the Alaska Shellfish Growers Association, although in our region we currently don't have the same ANS complications, we can recognize their concern and request for amended language.

Thank you for your thorough consideration of HB 89.

Sincerely,

Alexis Cooper
Executive Director



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH

144 North Binkley St., Soldotna, Alaska 99669-7520
1-800-478-4441, Ext. 2150 • 907-714-2150 • Fax 907-714-2377
www.borough.kenai.ak.us • mayor@borough.kenai.ak.us



April 7, 2015

Representative Paul Seaton
State Capitol-Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801

MIKE NAVARRE
BOROUGH MAYOR

Representative Seaton,

I am writing to offer my strong support for HB 38, which relates to the response to and control of aquatic invasive species in Alaska.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough — with its economic foundation of tourism, commercial fishing and sport fishing — is a district defined by the health of its waters. Invasive marine organisms have the potential to be a threat on Peninsula beaches as well as to oyster farms, hatchery operations, fishing equipment, and sport, subsistence and commercially harvestable species.

This Act will allow the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to swiftly respond to outbreaks of aquatic invasives that threaten Alaskan waters. It includes provisions that require noticing of affected private property owners, while also streamlining the process by which monies can be appropriated to eradication efforts.

Responding to invasive species in the waters becomes much more expensive as species establish; rapid response capabilities allow actions to be more quickly directed and cost effective. Often, experts in a scientific field recognize invasive species and their potential impacts long before public concerns grow to a level which initiates response. It is imperative to have solid science and consistent management to determine the appropriate actions to protect Alaskan waters and to avoid consequences that could bring about economic distress to those who depend upon the seas and rivers for their livelihoods.

I wholeheartedly support the establishment of legislation and fund allocation mechanisms which allow rapid response to provide for containment, eradication, and monitoring activities of high priority aquatic invasive species.

Sincerely,

Mike Navarre
Mayor



United Cook Inlet Drift Association

43961 K-Beach Road, Suite E • Soldotna, Alaska 99669 • (907) 260-9436 • fax (907) 260-9438
• info@ucida.org •

April 6, 2015

Representative Paul Seaton
State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau AK, 99801
Representative.Paul.Seaton@akleg.gov

RE: HOUSE BILL 38 – AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES

Dear Representative Seaton,

The United Cook Inlet Drift Association represents the 585 drift permit holders in Cook Inlet. Our members and their families would like to express our support for House Bill 38 - Aquatic Invasive Species.

Invasive species often have specific traits that allow them to outcompete or overwhelm native species. We have all heard stories about the negative effects from invasives that have occurred across America. Alaska is not immune from this problem and the lesson learned is that a rapid response is essential to the control or eradication of non-native species.

Our businesses and our industry depend on healthy and well managed salmon runs. We are quite familiar with the deleterious effect that invasive Northern Pike have had on salmon populations in the Susitna river system. Salmon production has been eliminated or greatly reduced in 14 out of 24 sockeye producing lakes in the Susitna watershed by Northern Pike and their population is increasing and spreading. It's not just sockeye salmon production that has been impacted, king and coho salmon populations as well as trout species are affected in a similar way due to the amount of time they spend in fresh water, where invasive Pike are now the top predator.

The economic impacts of invasive Northern Pike on the commercial fishing industry in Cook Inlet have not been specifically quantified but some industry experts estimate the dollar loss in the tens of millions of dollars. The economic loss is not just to the fishing industry but to the economies of the Kenai Peninsula and Mat-Su Boroughs and the State of Alaska.

Northern Pike are just one example of how an aquatic invasive specie can affect resident species populations and harm the economies that are developed from the harvest of those resident species.

We support HB-38 as it will help the Alaska Department of Fish & Game focus on the primary cause of declining salmon runs in the Mat-Su Basin and facilitate the prevention of similar situations in the future.

Sincerely,

Original Signed Document

David Martin
UCIDA President



Alaska SeaLife Center
w i n d o w s t o t h e s e a

April 6, 2015

Representatives Benjamin Nageak and David Talerico
House Resources Committee Co-Chairs
State of Alaska Legislative Offices
State Capitol Rooms 126 and 104
Juneau AK 99801

RE: CSHB 38 – An act relating to the response to, and control of, aquatic invasive species and establishing the aquatic invasive species response fund

Dear Representatives Nageak and Talerico:

I write to encourage the passage of House Bill 38 to allow rapid response and coordination in the event of an outbreak of an aquatic invasive species in Alaska.

The mission of the Alaska SeaLife Center is to generate and share scientific knowledge to promote understanding and stewardship of Alaska's marine ecosystems. Within this mission, the Center has taken a strong interest in marine invasive species, taking a scientific approach to monitoring for potential "invaders." We monitor for several invasive species in the nearshore waters of Resurrection Bay near Seward, and are relieved that none have been identified to date.

However, the aggressive tunicate *Didemnum vexillum* (DVex) has been found in Whiting Harbor near Sitka, and could spread rapidly, becoming a threat to fisheries and the greater ecosystem. Marine debris from the 2011 Japanese tsunami has reached U.S. shores containing live organisms native to Japan but unseen in American waters. The invasive potential of these species is unknown. While Alaska's waters appear to be pristine, we cannot ignore that very real threats may have already reached our remote beaches.

HB 38 would provide the authority and the tools needed for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to react quickly in the event of an outbreak to protect Alaska's marine ecosystems. In this case, where prevention is not really an option, being prepared for rapid response is of utmost importance.

Thank you for your attention to this issue, and your support of HB 38.

Sincerely,

Tara L. Riemer, Ph.D.
President and CEO

cc: Representative Paul Seaton