

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1995

Source
CSSSHJR 25(RES)

Legislative
Resolve No.
32



Relating to a ban on trawling in the eastern Gulf of Alaska east of 140 degrees west longitude.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

WHEREAS the eastern Gulf of Alaska has been a significant hook and line fishing area for almost 100 years and most of the high value fisheries in the area are fully utilized by the hook and line fishing fleet; and

WHEREAS the level of trawl fishing effort in the eastern Gulf of Alaska is expected to exert undue fishing pressure on fish stocks in the area and displace traditional hook and line fisheries; and

WHEREAS foreign trawl fishing in the Gulf of Alaska resulted in depressed populations of several species of rockfish; and

WHEREAS the eastern Gulf of Alaska contains a unique assemblage of valuable rockfish species in amounts small enough that the rockfish stocks could be easily damaged by large vessel activity; and

WHEREAS, under federal fishing regulations, if any single species in the rockfish complex reaches its overfishing level, the entire rockfish complex and any other fishery that might take any of the overfished rockfish species are closed; and

WHEREAS the trawl fishery in the eastern Gulf of Alaska can significantly disrupt the

traditional fisheries on which 3,000 Southeast Alaska hook and line fishermen depend; and

WHEREAS the narrowness of the continental shelf and continental slope in the eastern Gulf of Alaska concentrates trawl fishing effort in a small area and as a result prevents recovery of trawl fishing areas and may permanently impoverish the ecosystem of the eastern Gulf of Alaska; and

WHEREAS the Southeast Alaska area contains limited smooth bottom areas suitable for trawls, but many rocky areas that support an abundant, diverse, but fragile deep water habitat; and

WHEREAS the impact of trawl roller gear and trawl doors could significantly affect corals and associated hard bottom species; and

WHEREAS, only by closing the eastern Gulf of Alaska east of 140 degrees west longitude to trawl fishing, will the unique assemblage of local marine resources be protected;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council through the United States Secretary of Commerce is respectfully requested to immediately implement permanent regulations closing the eastern Gulf of Alaska east of 140 degrees west longitude to pelagic and bottom trawling.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Ron Brown, Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce; the Honorable Richard B. Lauber, chair of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.