

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 21
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 3/31/08
Referred: Resources

A RESOLUTION

1 **Establishing the Cook Inlet Salmon Task Force as a joint legislative task force.**

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

3 **WHEREAS** art. VIII, sec. 2, Constitution of the State of Alaska, mandates that
4 Alaska's resources be managed for the maximum benefit of its people; and

5 **WHEREAS** Southcentral Alaska has the highest concentration of population in the
6 state and Cook Inlet is located in Southcentral Alaska; and

7 **WHEREAS** the sport fishing community is a vital part of the local and statewide
8 tourism industry and the Cook Inlet region sustains 55 percent of the statewide sport and
9 personal use fishing effort; and

10 **WHEREAS** the economic contribution to the state of the in-river sport and personal
11 use fisheries in Cook Inlet far exceed the ex-vessel value of the Cook Inlet commercial fishing
12 harvests; and

13 **WHEREAS** the Department of Fish and Game has repeatedly failed to successfully
14 manage the competing goals of maximizing the commercial fishing harvest of Central District
15 salmon stocks and meeting minimum escapement goals in the Northern District; and

16 **WHEREAS** the Yentna River has failed to achieve the minimum escapement goal

1 during six of the last nine years, despite the Department of Fish and Game's and the Board of
2 Fisheries' lowering the minimum escapement goals on two separate occasions; and

3 **WHEREAS** the Board of Fisheries, in accordance with the sustainable salmon
4 management policy, declared Susitna drainage sockeye salmon a yield stock of concern, but
5 failed to take action to reduce the commercial harvest of those stocks; and

6 **WHEREAS** the Department of Fish and Game has failed to provide a comprehensive
7 management and research strategy to reduce allocative conflict within Cook Inlet;

8 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Twenty-Fifth Alaska State Legislature forms the Cook
9 Inlet Salmon Task Force composed of 10 legislators: five members from the senate appointed
10 by the president of the senate and five members from the house of representatives appointed
11 by the speaker of the house of representatives; and be it

12 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the president of the senate and the speaker of the house
13 of representatives shall jointly appoint the chair and vice-chair of the task force; and be it

14 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall examine the conservation and
15 allocation issues within fisheries management of Cook Inlet; and be it

16 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall examine the economic effect of
17 Cook Inlet salmon and the maximum benefit of those salmon to the people of Alaska; and be
18 it

19 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force shall examine the legal and
20 constitutional issues of a buy-back program, reducing the number of commercial fishing
21 permits in Cook Inlet; and be it

22 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Cook Inlet Salmon Task Force shall submit a
23 report of its findings to the legislature on the first day of the First Regular Session of the
24 Twenty-Sixth Alaska State Legislature, which must include

25 (1) the short term and long term uses of Cook Inlet salmon consistent with the
26 maximum benefit principle contained within art. VIII, sec. 2, Constitution of the State of
27 Alaska;

28 (2) specific proposals to address the conservation issues in the Northern
29 District; and

30 (3) options to reduce allocative conflict in Cook Inlet, which may include a
31 buy-back program; and be it

1 **FURTHER RESOLVED** that the task force is terminated on February 1, 2009.