

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE**  
**HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES**

February 15, 2011

5:04 p.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Steve Thompson, Chair  
Representative Craig Johnson, Vice Chair  
Representative Alan Austerman  
Representative Bob Herron  
Representative Lance Pruitt  
Representative Scott Kawasaki

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Bob Miller

**OTHER MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative Bill Stoltze

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

OVERVIEW(S): SPORTFISH SECTOR

- HEARD

HOUSE BILL NO. 60

"An Act relating to aquatic farm permitting involving geoducks and to geoduck seed transfers between certified hatcheries and aquatic farms."

- MOVED OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 60

SHORT TITLE: GEODUCK AQUATIC FARMING/SEED TRANSFER

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) SEATON

01/18/11	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED 1/7/11
01/18/11	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/18/11	(H)	FSH, RES
02/15/11	(H)	FSH AT 5:00 PM CAPITOL 120

**WITNESS REGISTER**

RICKY GEASE, Executive Director  
Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA)  
Kenai, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Provided an overview of the Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA)

REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SEATON  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented HB 60, as the sponsor.

SUE ASPELUND, Acting Director  
Division of Commercial Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified officially neutral on HB 60, on behalf of the department.

JEFF HETRICK, Director  
Alutiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery  
Seward, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 60.

RODGER PAINTER, President  
Alaskan Shellfish Growers Association  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 60.

WILLARD DUNNAM, Mayor  
City of Seward  
Seward, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 60.

PAUL FUHS  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 60.

DAVID OTTNESS  
Cordova, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 60.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[5:04:05 PM](#)

**CHAIR STEVE THOMPSON** called the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. Representatives Thompson, Austerman, Johnson, and Herron were present at the call to order. Representatives Pruitt and Kawasaki arrived as the meeting was in progress.

**OVERVIEW(S): Sportfish Sector**

[5:04:32 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON announced that the first order of business would be an overview from the sportfish sector.

[5:05:12 PM](#)

RICKY GEASE, Executive Director, Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA), Kenai, Alaska, outlined his slide presentation of the Kenai River Sportfishing Association (KRSA), and began by stating that the 25 year old association is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit, with over 300 members. Fundraising events held throughout the summer include: the Kenai River Classic, Kenai River Junior Classic, and the Kenai River Women's Event. During the last 15 years, over \$10 million has been raised and contributed to activities, which include: river based conservation programs; habitat restoration and access programs; ADF&G cost share program for habitat restoration; angler access; fisheries management through the Board of Fisheries (BOF) and related agencies; habitat, fisheries and economic research; and angler education. He said that sportfishing is significant in Alaska, underscoring the point by establishing: the Kenai River is considered a world class fishing destination, fishing supports a quality of life for many Alaskans, angling effort represents an important aspect of the tourism industry, and sportfishing represents a major economic engine. The most recent Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) report, released in 2007, demonstrates the economic scope of sportfishing in Alaska. He projected slide 7 to read the statistics, which include:

\$1.4 Billion Total Sportfishing Expenditures, All Anglers

\$733 Million from Residents (53 percent)

\$652 Million from Nonresidents (47 percent)

\$123 Million Generated in State & Local Tax Revenues

Supported 15,879 Full & Part-time Jobs

475,534 Licensed Anglers  
Resident: 190,644  
Nonresident: 284,890

2.5 Million angler days  
Resident: 1.4 Million days (56 percent)  
Guided: 9 percent  
Unguided: 91 percent

Nonresident: 1.1 Million days (44 percent)  
Guided: 43 percent  
Unguided: 57 percent

MR. GEASE continued to expand on the initial statistics with charts to indicate the days of sportfishing in Alaska by regions and residency, expenditures by region, angler spending by category, and average per day expenditures for trip-related items only, including package trips by residents, non-residents, and with fresh and saltwater effort distinguished. He pointed out that the guided trips, in all categories generate significantly higher daily spending, which will be addressed further regarding the development of a professional services board.

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CHAIR THOMPSON asked whether the trip expense totals include airfare.

MR. GEASE answered no, the figures do not include airfare to and from Alaska; only expenses incurred while in the state.

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MR. GEASE said the KRSA was included as part of the governor's transition, along with other entities involved with fish and game interest. The team was asked to provide consensus recommendations, and seven primary points, for better integration of business intelligence, were agreed upon, which he outlined [original punctuation provided]:

- Smart Management - Involve Stakeholders
- Strategic Planning
- Program Evaluation
- Identify Bottlenecks
- Customer Service

Access & Infrastructure - Prioritize & Invest  
Ensure Public Access to Fish, Game & Recreational Resources  
Strategic Planning Process with ADF&G, DNR, DOT & Stakeholders - Prioritized Projects List  
Capital Budget - Like STIP, create a State Public Access Improvement Program (SPAIP)

Human Resources - Prioritize & Invest  
Recruitment & Retention of Key Permitting & Scientific Staff is an Ever-Increasing Concern in ADF&G, DNR & DEC  
Competition from Feds & Private Sector  
Recognize Serious Nature of Issue  
Formulate Management Strategies

Digital Age - Prioritize & Invest  
Go Digital - Fisheries Data Collection Systems  
Engage Private Sector Technological Expertise

Wherever Possible:

Incorporate Visual Learning Systems  
Invest in Fisheries Modeling Systems

Economic Data & Analysis - Prioritize & Invest  
Comprehensive, real-time data collection & analysis systems are lacking for recreational, social & economic values for sport, personal use, subsistence & commercial fisheries  
Difficult to regulate & manage for optimal yields of fishery resources without such data

Compensated Reallocation - Halibut  
Train wreck for SE Alaska coastal economy  
Negative impacts commercial & guided sport  
Feds: minimal guided sport stakeholder input  
Limited Entry Program & Catch Share Plan - good intentions, poor implementation  
State Management Options?

Professional Sportfishing Guide Services Board  
Assure Alaska's guided sport industry competes favorably as a world class destination  
Diligent oversight for sport fishing services industry - like any prudent investment

Benefits of Industry Recognition & Regulation  
Logbook program - permanent, vital tool

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MR. GEASE elaborated on the individual points. Smart management of Alaska's fish and game resources needs stakeholder involvement, which allows strategic planning to be inclusive of, and benefit from, experienced entities representing state divisions, federal agencies, and private interests. Program evaluation, by these stakeholders, is important to identify the management aspects users have found to be helpful, meaningful, useful, and effective. Additionally, bottlenecks caused by regulatory compliance can be identified, through this process, and government can be made more efficient and effective in its framework. The customer service component should also be considered a priority, and not be lost in the governance of the resources. Mr. Gease addressed the topic of access and infrastructure to stress the need for prioritizing and ensuring access to the public lands. Over time, encroachment has hampered access to many areas. It was recommended that a strategic planning process be established with the government agencies to create prioritized project lists, which could then be handled similar to the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) and State Public Access Improvement Program (SPAIP); as established by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The legislature can then receive capital budget recommendations assured that the proposed projects have been thoroughly vetted, prioritized, and represent a strategic access investment. Continuing to the next major topic, human resources, he underscored the need for recruitment and retention of key permitting and scientific staff, with the state agencies; Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The state no longer holds the competitive edge, for filling these important positions, that it once enjoyed, but the need for qualified individuals has risen with the increased sporting effort.

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MR. GEASE moved on to address the digital age and the recommendations for converting the fisheries data collection systems from paper based to technologically oriented. His points included: determine how to thoroughly embed digital technology, particularly in terms of fisheries data collection systems; adopt mentality of paperless data collection; engage

private sector technological expertise whenever possible; incorporate visual learning systems; and invest in fisheries modeling systems in order to crunch large volumes of data.

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MR. GEASE said a key theme emerged based on the importance of economic data and analysis. There are twin constitutional mandates for Alaska's resources: conservation and long-term sustainability of resources, and the optimization of recreational, social, and economic values. In order to meet these mandates comprehensive data collection and analysis is required; a deficit in the current system. The implementation of the digital e-landings system and the \$.5 million dollar investment in the sportfishing survey, are steps in the right direction which need to be expanded and built upon. When data is lacking, a default occurs in the decision making process, he warned.

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MR. GEASE continued to the halibut issue, pointing out that this species is governed by federal regulation. He opined that recent actions were a response to the harvest pressure from sportfishing activity. A compensated reallocation program is recommended to provide a healthy economy for both the commercial and sportfishing industries. A train wreck has occurred in the Southeast Alaska coastal economy and both sport and commercial fisheries are struggling. The limited entry and catch share programs represented good ideas, but were poorly implemented. State management options were discussed, including the development of a professional sportfishing guide services board; under consideration as SB 24. The concept is to ensure that Alaska's guided sportfishing industry competes favorably worldwide. The state invests funds and resources and a board would provide oversight of that investment, and assure that the industry is benefiting from the standards and regulations being established. The log book program has proven to be a vital tool for collection of data, and it was recommended to remove the sunset clause from the source statute. He said that consensus was brought to these recommendations, now being considered in the governor's office.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN asked for a fuller vision of the proposed professional sportfishing guide services board, and what to expect from the passage of SB 24.

MR. GEASE offered his understanding that SB 24 promotes two concepts for industry recognition and accountability. The intent is not to change how the guiding industry works, but to provide minimum standards of operation.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN agreed that industry accountability is important. Further, he acknowledged the difficulty of addressing the combined sport and commercial fishing allocations to meet both entities needs and not damage the resource.

MR. GEASE opined that the state has management authority and needs to remember that the resources are to be managed for optimized yield. Therefore, it is crucial to have a comprehensive, all encompassing, understanding of the actual numbers. He compared the state resources to a stock portfolio, which is diversified and changes over time. An investment is not made in only one area, and, as the population and tourism has grown, more use of the resource occurs. The guided sportfishing effort is a value-added industry, which should work in concert with the commercial industry for smart, optimal economic gains. He said one of the confusing aspects of the BOF process is that a full, comprehensive picture of both industries is not required, when presenting a proposal, and he questioned the wisdom behind economic decisions made by the board; save subsistence, which, in his opinion, is well managed.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN expressed frustration with the way in which the legislature is limited in its ability to allocate funding to the divisions. He expressed interest in passing legislation to solve the problem and provide sustainability of the resource. The proposed board may be the place to start, he said.

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CHAIR THOMPSON acknowledged and thanked the associations involved in the wounded warriors program.

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REPRESENTATIVE HERRON noted that KRSA has stated that the sport fishing industry is not recognized by the state, making it subject to harmful laws and regulations. He asked for two examples to qualify this statement.

MR. GEASE described what occurred at a recent BOF meeting in Kodiak. Nearly half of Kodiak's sport fleet will be affected, with the recent change in the halibut regulation, and thus, to remain in business, these fishermen will gear up to target salmon or other species. The BOF routinely uses time allotment, area restrictions, and fishing methods and means to regulate harvest levels. One of the fisheries that will be targeted, as the fleet readjusts, is the slow growing rock fish. Expecting this, the BOF reduced the bag and possession limits of rock fish in the Kodiak area. He said that it may have been a conservation concern, but the only tool that the BOF used was bag limits. He offered that a professional services board might have provided options. Lacking a system that deals with the guided fishing component, resident interests are affected by the same sportfishing restrictions. The Kenai River is the most heavily sport fished river in the state. The largest majority of sportfishing licenses are sold in the Kenai area. He said that it's important for anglers to have the option to fish the saltwater, and have a comparable experience. These components all affect one another, like a balloon being pushed. If saltwater fishing opportunities crater, more pressure will be exerted on the already overcrowded freshwater areas of the Kenai.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON asked if the sportfishing industry considers itself to be an orphan.

MR. GEASE responded yes, and stressed the need to appropriately address the effect that commercial fisheries have on sportfishing, particularly regarding conservation and bycatch issues. The North Pacific Management Council (NPMC) has 11 members, one of which is a public seat, but there is not a seat for subsistence.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN interjected that fishery councils, in the southeastern United States, have seats specifically designated for sport fishing representation, and asked whether these models have been discussed.

MR. GEASE said the issue of council management has been discussed, most recently at the NOAA (National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration) recreational sportfishing summit, held in Washington, D.C., April 2010. The sticking point appears to be a lack of economic data. He opined that without a thorough understanding of the economic contributions from each sector, councils are asked to make decisions and it becomes a game of math. One concept brought forward at the summit was that the allocation set point be based on economics, from which variations may be allowed in order to optimize the economies. It could be considered that conservation builds healthy communities and economies, but, he opined, in Alaska, a healthy economy creates healthy communities and is the bedrock to great conservation. Finishing, he said, economies must be built on sportfishing effort, as well as the commercial sector.

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN clarified that the NPMC is a federal council, but 6 of the 11 members are appointed by the Alaskan governor and, thus, control the process. If action is taken to change the council, it will come from the governor's office or the federal government; not the legislature.

The committee took an at-ease from 5:56 p.m. to 5:58 p.m.

#### **HB 60-GEODUCK AQUATIC FARMING/SEED TRANSFER**

[5:58:33 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 60, "An Act relating to aquatic farm permitting involving geoducks and to geoduck seed transfers between certified hatcheries and aquatic farms."

[5:58:38 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SEATON, Alaska State Legislature, established that the premise of HB 60 is to prevent the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) from citing the absence of wild geoducks as a basis to deny a geoduck farming permit. He then provided a three minute video; illustrating the geoduck species.

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REPRESENTATIVE SEATON said HB 60 upholds all existing mariculture farming conditions regarding health, safety, and transfer. Additionally, the bill permits sub tidal farming in

areas north of Alaska's southeastern region. Sub tidal farming will eliminate the concerns for interfering with existing uses, such as subsistence, sport fisheries, and boat landings. Questions have also arisen specifically related to shellfish farming that occurs in Kachemak Bay, however, as a designated critical habitat area, restrictions would prohibit geoduck cultivation. Another point of concern has to do with the esthetic of an area being used as a geoduck farm; oyster farms, for instance require a myriad of buoys. He explained that the sub tidal geoduck farm is not visible on the surface. Thus, the areas where these farms are developed will receive an economic benefit, with no visual impact. Further, because of the water temperature, the geoduck will not spawn in the cold northern waters, which will be helpful with marketing, producing no spawning stage bitter taste, as well as dispel introduced species concerns. Mature, native geoduck will be collected in the southeast region, transported to the Seward hatchery for spawning purposes, and reared to seed in preparation for introduction to a subtitle bed in waters north of Yakutat. Currently, geoducks are only allowed to be farmed where they naturally occur, which generates concern for management of wild and farmed stocks in proximity to each other. Locating the farms north of Yakutat will eliminate these concerns. Genetic contamination has been discussed, as well as the need to maintain stocks only in larval drift zones where the species is indigenous. However, there will not be genetic contamination given the described scenario. He provided specific, salient points regarding this species, to wit: the geoduck industry relies on clean water; geoducks dig down one inch a year to a depth of three feet where they reside to maturity; these are not mobile animals; as filter feeders, geoducks feed on plankton and algae; no reportable disease of transport significance has been found; a muddy/silt landscape is the animals preferable habitat, resulting in minimal disruption of habitat for other species; and studies indicate the primary species that shares the same habitat are polychaetes, a segmented worm whose numbers appear to increase with the introduction of geoducks. Representative Seaton reviewed the farming method and said it's good for Native communities as harvest time is variable and would not interfere with other activities/industry of a local coastal economy. When the geoduck is marketed, the farmer can expect to receive \$12-\$15 per pound. The bill retains the current regulatory protections regarding mariculture farming, and testing for paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) is required.

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CHAIR THOMPSON inquired about the timeframe for rearing a marketable geoduck.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON responded five to seven years, depending on the water temperature; it may be longer in colder climates. He elaborated that, unlike oysters which are reared in hanging bags requiring pull-out three times a year to perform various cleaning tasks, geoducks seeds are not disturbed until maturity. To a follow-up question, he stated his belief that geoducks will not reproduce in the colder climate, but it would not necessarily be a negative impact should that occur.

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REPRESENTATIVE HERRON inquired why geoducks are not found in regions of the state outside of southeast, and asked if there is a possibility that a natural population would eventually occur.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON suggested that ocean currents, as well as water temperature, appear to restrict geoducks populations. The natural range is from Puget Sound, through British Columbia, and into the southern aspect of Southeast Alaska.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN commented that HB 60 represents good economic development.

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REPRESENTATIVE PRUITT asked whether controversy might arise regarding the introduction of a non-native species into various areas of the state.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON assured the committee that introduction of a species is of great concern. A thorough investigation has indicated that this species will not prove to be problematic; the rearing substrate does not conflict with other clam species, and the restriction for importing geoduck seed from outside of state waters is not being overturned by HB 60.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN interjected that ADF&G has opposed this concept, and may continue to object, based on the invasive species concern.

6:20:00 PM

SUE ASPELUND, Acting Director, Division of Commercial Fisheries, stated that the division is neutral on HB 60, and noted that precautionary policies are in place. Although the department has limited knowledge regarding this species, she said due to the lack of wild stocks and the minimal likelihood of reproduction, the passage of HB 60 appears to pose no significant risks.

CHAIR THOMPSON commented that the possibility of geoducks becoming an invasive species is perhaps the biggest concern.

6:21:11 PM

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI asked what scientific background would be required in the permitting process, particularly regarding the invasive species aspect.

MS. ASPELUND replied that there is an existing process model that would be used, and deferred comment on the particular details.

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI cited how various, costly, invasive species situations have occurred, even when assurances were given that it would be an impossibility. He said that, although reproduction is not expected to occur, he maintains concerns that introducing a species could present unforeseeable problems. Noting the speaker's previous statement that ADF&G lacks in-depth science/research to answer questions surrounding geoduck introduction, he said asked for further comment on introducing this possibly invasive species.

MS. ASPELUND offered the theory that, due to an unidentifiable reason, there is an ecological block keeping geoducks from naturalizing in the Southcentral Gulf of Alaska. She indicated that a research project was begun, but not completed, in Washington State, and maintained that the division is comfortable that geoduck will not represent an invasive species.

6:25:02 PM

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI began to ask a question, acquainting the placement of Wood bison, in the Fairbanks area, with the introduction of geoducks on the Seward Peninsula, but retracted the question stating that perhaps it would be better directed to the Department of Law (DOL).

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN raised the possibility that geoducks haven't always been resident to Southeast Alaska.

MS. ASPELUND concurred with the possibility, and pointed out how climatic changes have allowed pink salmon runs to expand to the North Slope. She said further geoduck history can be provided to the committee.

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN stated his assumption that geoducks did migrate to Alaska, and thus doesn't believe it will become an invasive species.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN asked whether there have been issues in Southeast Alaska regarding the presence of geoduck.

MS. ASPELUND said none has been reported.

[6:28:09 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE PRUITT presented a theoretical scenario of an area, introduced with geoduck, and then becoming a protected area, to ask how this type of situation would be handled; would the removal of geoduck be required, at what cost, and would other measures be required.

MS. ASPELUND deferred.

[6:30:33 PM](#)

JEFF HETRICK, Director, Alutiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery, stated support for HB 60, and indicated that this provides an opportunity for the hatchery to expand the customer base and allow alternative revenue streams; rearing geoduck seed will be lucrative. How geoducks will behave in Southcentral waters is not known, but he stated his belief that they will prove to be a species that can be grown, won't reproduce, and will be easy to manage.

[6:32:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN recalled that the hatchery warms the sea water to encourage the geoducks to spawn and hatch.

MR. HETRICK said it's necessary to maintain a higher temperature for prolonged periods. He opined that it is not plausible that the bottom temperatures, of the Southcentral waters, could stimulate natural reproduction of geoduck.

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RODGER PAINTER, President, Alaskan Shellfish Growers Association, stated support for HB 60, noting that this is the third time this legislation has been brought forward and the reasons for not passing it remain nebulous. He agreed with Representative Austerman's statement that geoducks migrated to Southeast Alaska, and cited the fluctuation in the various Alaskan fisheries to illustrate how dynamic the ocean environment has been in recent decades. The currents of the Gulf of Alaska (GOF) could be the reason that geoducks have not populated Southcentral. He pointed out that Prince William Sound once supported an abundance of razor clams; prior to the 1964 earthquake. Following the tremors, the razor clams were wiped out and he suggested it would be good to reintroduce clams to the substrate that still exists.

[6:38:47 PM](#)

WILLARD DUNNAM, Mayor, City of Seward, stated support for HB 60, indicating that it may provide stabilization for the hatchery, which has struggled through ups and downs. He reported that he has dug horse clams, referred to today as geoducks, in two areas of Resurrection Bay, out of Seward, in the 1940s and 1950s. The earthquake affected many changes in the clam populations and the shrimp, which at one time supported five canneries around Seward. He said he views the geoduck industry as a plus for Alaska, and he urged passage of HB 60, without further holdup.

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PAUL FUHS stated support for HB 60, reported that the first harvest of farmed geoducks in Southeast has occurred, and passed around market sized clams; one and one half to two pound animals. He reviewed the complete process: purchase of seed from the Seward hatchery; air shipment to Southeast; hiring of commercial divers to plant and harvest; contract with boat to support divers; and finally delivery of product to the local processing plant - in this case, the Ketchikan Trident facility. The clamming activity allows Trident to keep workers for longer periods of the year. Following processing, the product is flown

to Anchorage for packaging, and then sent to the markets of China and Japan. He reported that, thus far, the company has planted about 250,000 seed, but next year that will be doubled; perhaps as many as one million will be planted. The farming situation seems similar to oysters, and should not pose any problems.

[6:46:23 PM](#)

DAVID OTTNESS stated support for HB 60, and said he has been involved in the shellfish industry on a number of occasions. He applauded the efforts of the sponsor for bringing this opportunity to Alaska. Geoduck production represents a good food source to have close at hand, as well as providing coastal communities economic diversity.

CHAIR THOMPSON closed public testimony.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN stated support for passage of the bill.

[6:49:24 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI expressed concerns that science is not available to back up introduction of this species. The proposed legislation states that the commissioner can't use the absence of geoduck stock as a reason for disallowing the introduction of seed, and, recalling that a previous version used the term "sole reason," asked the sponsor to comment.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON opined that the reference could be considered insignificant, and pointed out that five permitting requirements/conditions remain in the bill.

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REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI noted the comment that the proposed farmer hatchery may not significantly affect the fishery, and there's appropriate science to back up it up, and asked for elaboration.

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON explained that the substrate inhabitants and associated species of Southeast are similar, to those of Southcentral. It is difficult to determine why with similar habitats, geoducks would somehow become invasive in one region and not the other. Geoducks appear in concert with the species

mix of Southeast and it is fully expected that similar cohabitation will occur further north. Neither will geoduck become competitors with other clam species, which reside on high energy beaches in alternative habitat. There is no real indication that this animal will become invasive, he finished.

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REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN moved to report HB 60, 27-LS0318\A, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying two zero fiscal notes. There being no objection, it was so ordered.

[6:54:24 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON announced the agenda for the next meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.