

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

March 1, 2012

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  
Representative Bob Miller

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

All members present

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 25

Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

- MOVED CSHCR 25(FSH) OUT OF COMMITTEE

HOUSE BILL NO. 332

"An Act establishing the Alaska Chinook research and restoration endowment fund and relating to grants from the fund."

- MOVED CSHB 332(FSH) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HCR 25

SHORT TITLE: WILDLIFE & SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAM

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) NEUMAN

02/22/12 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS

02/22/12 (H) FSH

03/01/12 (H) FSH AT 5:00 PM CAPITOL 120

BILL: HB 332

SHORT TITLE: CHINOOK RESEARCH & RESTORATION ENDOWMENT

SPONSOR(S): REPRESENTATIVE(S) HERRON

02/20/12 (H) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS  
02/20/12 (H) FSH, FIN  
03/01/12 (H) FSH AT 5:00 PM CAPITOL 120

**WITNESS REGISTER**

REPRESENTATIVE MARK NEUMAN  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented HCR 25, as the prime sponsor of the resolution.

LISA EVANS, Assistant Director  
Division of Sport Fish  
Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G)  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HCR 25.

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Presented HB 332 as the prime sponsor of the bill.

KAREN GILLIS, Executive Director  
Bering Sea Fishermen's Association  
Anchorage, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

JOHN STARKY  
Association of Village Council Presidents  
Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified during discussion of HB 332.

ROSE FOSDICK, Vice President  
Natural Resources  
Kawerak Incorporated  
Nome, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

STAN ZURAY  
Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association  
Tanana, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

FRITZ JOHNSON, Regional Fisheries Coordinator  
Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation

Dillingham, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

JOSEPH FAITH

Dillingham, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

TIM ANDREWS

Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP)

Bethel, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

GERRY MCCUNE, Lobbyist

Cordova District Fishermen United

Cordova, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified in support of HB 332.

ERIC VOLK, Chief of Research for Anadromous Fisheries

Division of Commercial Fisheries

Alaska Department of Fish & Game

Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** Testified during discussion of HB 332.

#### **ACTION NARRATIVE**

[5:04:08 PM](#)

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

#### **HCR 25-WILDLIFE & SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROGRAM**

[5:04:31 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON announced that the first order of business would be HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 25, Celebrating the 75th anniversary of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program.

[5:04:57 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MARK NEUMAN, Alaska State Legislature, presented HCR 25 as the prime sponsor. He said that the wildlife and sport fish restoration program was being commemorated on its 75th anniversary with recognition to sportsmen, industry, and

state and federal agencies that have been active in preserving this heritage. He reported that wildlife restoration began with the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937, which established funding for restoration of wildlife and the acquisition, development, and management of habitats. He noted that this act was amended in 1970 to provide funding for hunter training programs and public shooting ranges. He noted that in 1950 the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act used a federal excise tax on fishing gear and motor boat fuel to fund grant money for fishery conservation, boating access, and aquatic education. He declared that these all created an effective "user pay - user benefit system." He declared that, since 1939, the contributions to state fish and wildlife agencies from wildlife and sport fish restoration programs had exceeded \$13 billion. He emphasized that this was "a model of conservation unique to the rest of the world" and:

it is my hope that the Alaska State Legislature, on the 75th Anniversary of the nation's greatest conservation story, recognizes the leading roles that hunters, anglers, boaters, recreational shooters, and industry, and state and federal wildlife agencies all have played in restoring healthy populations of fish and wildlife and other natural resources by passing this resolution.

5:09:00 PM

LISA EVANS, Assistant Director, Division of Sport Fish, Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), testified that the Alaska Department of Fish & Game supported HCR 25 and its recognition of the most successful fish and wildlife restoration and management program in the world. She stated that the unique "user pay - user benefit system" had allowed the ADF&G to actively manage the state fish and wildlife resources to ensure opportunities for the present and the future. She reported that the wildlife and sport fish restoration program had paid nearly \$666 million to ADF&G since 1942, which had been essential to the operation and management for research, education, and public access to the resources.

5:10:33 PM

MS. EVANS reported that Whittier was the only natural, ice free, deep water port in Southcentral Alaska, was close to Anchorage, and was the gateway to Prince William Sound and its numerous sport fishing and recreational boating opportunities. She

stated that the sport fish restoration and angler license dollars had been used to rehabilitate and improve the old boat launch ramp facilities and mooring dock. She said that a significant amount of wildlife restoration dollars had been spent on monitoring the population size, calf production and survival, adult mortality, health and body conditions, and meat assessment for human consumption of the Western Arctic Caribou herd.

[5:12:33 PM](#)

MS. EVANS offered a final example of combined wildlife and sport fish restoration dollars, which were leveraged with private donations and volunteer efforts, to sponsor introductory events to encourage anglers and hunters to enjoy the abundance in Alaska. These skills-oriented programs, including Becoming an Outdoorswoman, hunter education, outdoor youth days, and Alaska Conservation camp, ensured the future of the "user pay - user benefit system." She summarized that the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program was an American legacy that was beneficial to everyone, and she expressed her gratitude to the user groups which provided the funding.

[5:14:52 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE NEUMAN, in response to Representative Johnson, said that an amendment to add others to the list of those receiving copies of the resolution would be welcomed.

[5:16:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON moved to adopt Conceptual Amendment 1, as follows:

Page 2, line 27, after "sent to the"

Insert "Safari Club International (SCI) Alaska,  
National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses,"

There being no objection, it was so ordered.

[5:16:43 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON moved to report HCR 25, Version 27-LS1350\M, as amended, out of committee with the accompanying individual recommendations and zero fiscal note. There being no

objection, CSHCR 25(FSH) was reported from the House Special Committee on Fisheries.

[5:17:05 PM](#)

The committee took an at-ease from 5:17 p.m. to 5:19 p.m.

**HB 332-CHINOOK RESEARCH & RESTORATION ENDOWMENT**

[5:19:35 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON announced that the final order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 332, "An Act establishing the Alaska Chinook research and restoration endowment fund and relating to grants from the fund."

[5:19:54 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE JOHNSON moved to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 332, Version 27-LS1395\M, Kirsch, 2/23/12, as the working document.

CHAIR THOMPSON objected for discussion.

[5:20:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE BOB HERRON, Alaska State Legislature, presented HB 332 and paraphrased from the sponsor statement [Included in members' packets]. He explained that the proposed bill created an Alaska Chinook salmon research and restoration fund in the Department of Revenue (DOR), with grants only being issued to qualifying organizations. He announced that the Chinook salmon was the state fish of Alaska, and was an important staple food, economically important for commercial fisheries, and a prized sport fish resource. He declared that, as shifts in Chinook salmon populations predicated the shifts in other salmon species, the proposed legislation could support research to eliminate any declines in its abundance. He reported that "eight of the fourteen currently listed stocks of concern are Chinook salmon stocks," and that most of the major Chinook stocks were in a decline. He declared that the fund would not be a dedicated fund, would establish a grant account within the general fund, and would seek a 5 percent real rate of return. He explained that the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game would identify the available appropriations, and the legislature would determine what to appropriate to the grant account from the fund. He said that the grant account would be

used for research and restoration for Chinook salmon, as well as reimbursement to the departments for costs associated with the fund. He expressed his hope that there would be matching private and federal grants to the fund. He explained that the administrative board, consisting of the commissioner of ADF&G, as well as six public members with experience harvesting Chinook salmon, would be appointed by the governor. He pointed out that the rules for the board would be outlined in the proposed legislation. He read from the sponsor statement:

This legislation would create a stable, long-term source of funding to support high quality interdisciplinary research. ... With this legislation, Alaska can increase its understanding of Chinook salmon and hopefully learn how to best target remediation efforts in order to begin restoring this vital resource.

[5:24:13 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN asked if the stocks of concern would have priority over other research or restoration projects.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON offered his belief that the board should be involved in the project decisions.

[5:24:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN directed attention to page 6, line 15, of Version M, and asked if experience was necessary for both research and restoration.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON expressed his agreement that this was a good point and suggested that the committee discuss this further.

[5:26:05 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if these efforts were confined to Chinook salmon.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON replied that the intent was to target Chinook salmon, but deferred to other testifiers for more definition.

[5:27:36 PM](#)

KAREN GILLIS, Executive Director, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association, said that the organization had been active in research and restoration projects in the Arctic Yukon-Kuskokwim areas. Referring to a handout [Included in members' packets] titled "Comprehensive Defense for House Bill 332," she directed attention to the graph on page 3, which showed the overall decline in Chinook salmon harvest since 1982. She declared that research became increasingly more important as fish populations declined, and the impact became greater on ocean eco systems. She noted that research allowed policy makers to determine policies and courses of action. She emphasized that the establishment of an effective program to address the causes of the Chinook decline would require multi-disciplinary research across the full salmon life cycle.

[5:29:48 PM](#)

MS. GILLIS listed some of the highlights from programs associated with Bering Sea Fishermen's Association. She stated that the Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative (AYKSSI) had spent \$22 million funding research projects to better understand the causes for the variability of all five salmon species and to support the development of improved fisheries management tools. She talked about the development of a research action plan for the Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim region Chinook salmon, to identify which variables and processes were the most likely causative factors of recent declines and to produce a detailed set of research priorities and questions which would target the key drivers of Chinook salmon abundance. She shared that an expert panel was working to identify research questions, and hypotheses, and to draft example summaries of proposed research to guide future research efforts. She identified that the next project was for escapement goals to ensure sustainable fisheries, and would offer advice on the most appropriate management efforts. After consideration of a broad range of approaches and analytical frameworks, such as the best methods for dealing with limited data situations, it would decide the best methods for determining escapement goals in different drainage systems, and the best model for establishment of escapement goals in subsistence dominated fisheries. She went on to explain that techniques would be developed to incorporate uncertainty and risk into management evaluation. She declared that some changes in salmon production were a result of natural causes and were inevitable; however, there were situations that could be addressed through policy and decision making. She pointed out that there were several endowment funded programs in Alaska, which conducted high

quality, long term, and interdisciplinary research necessary to advance their missions. She mentioned the Pacific Salmon Commission's Northern Boundary and Trans Boundary Rivers restoration enhancement fund and the North Pacific Research Board. She said that some other examples of endowment funding included the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council and the Prince William Sound Oil Spill Recovery Institute.

MS. GILLIS summarized by stating that research was necessary to manage resources. She offered the option to either continue to seek annual funding for an issue that demanded millions of dollars over several years, or to set aside money to prevent the further decline of these stocks. She offered her belief that there were serious future problems for Chinook salmon in Alaska, and declared that it was necessary to immediately research prevention from further declines.

[5:35:16 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON asked about if there was any research being conducted on ocean acidification in the Bering Sea.

MS. GILLIS said that ocean acidification was one of the priorities for the North Pacific Research Board, but that she was not aware of specific plans for a research program.

[5:36:02 PM](#)

JOHN STARKY, Association of Village Council Presidents, reported that Chinook salmon were annually the first run in the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers, and he detailed their commercial, cultural, nutritional, economic, and social value. He declared that the declining Chinook populations were barely replacing themselves, even without any harvest. He stated that a \$25 million endowment fund was a great investment for research and a way for the state to fulfill its constitutional mandate for sustained yield and common use of a resource. He offered his belief that the Community Development Quota (CDQ) programs in Western Alaska would also help endow the fund and would encourage investment. He named several other possible sources, including the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. He declared that the endowment fund was a great partnership with ADF&G.

[5:41:00 PM](#)

MR. STARKY, responding to an earlier question by Representative Austerman, directed attention to page 6 of the proposed bill

which listed the priorities for grant funding. He then responded to an earlier question whether this legislation was only directed towards Chinook salmon, explaining that all the other salmon stocks would benefit from any research.

[5:42:29 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER inquired about any expectations for the duration of the research project prior to having reliable data to take any action.

MR. STARKY, in response, stated that, although there was not a specific time frame, the AYKSSI had formed a Chinook expert panel to develop a research plan, which included the setting of escapement goals.

[5:44:33 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if there were Chinook salmon elsewhere in the world, and if there was any other research to help solve the puzzle in Alaska.

MR. STARKY replied that the Chinook panel had accumulated all the research from across the state, and that the one-time strong Chinook salmon runs along the western United States seaboard were now endangered or in decline.

[5:46:13 PM](#)

ROSE FOSDICK, Vice President, Natural Resources, Kawerak Incorporated, testified in support of proposed HB 332 and directed attention to the submitted letter of support. [Included in members' packets] She pointed to the attached spreadsheet, which outlined the failure to attain the escapement goals for salmon returning to the Norton Sound rivers over the prior nine years. She declared that subsistence fishermen were no longer able to harvest. She noted that many changes were happening in the Bering Sea, but that the impacts were still unknown.

[5:48:42 PM](#)

STAN ZURAY, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, testified in support of HB 332, and mentioned his background as a subsistence and commercial fisherman for 40 years, as well as his work on Chinook monitoring projects in the area. He paraphrased from a prepared statement, which read as follows [original punctuation provided] [Included in members' packets]:

The Chinook salmon which are such a critical foundation for cultures, communities and economies along the Yukon River have declined dramatically in recent years. Yukon River Chinook salmon runs declined to disaster levels from 1998 to 2002. After a brief improvement from 2003 to 2006, runs have declined since, with escapement goals to Canada not met in 2007, 2008, or 2010, and subsistence harvest restricted. Overall, "mean run size of Canadian-origin Chinook for the period 1998-2010 declined 45% compared to the period 1982-1997."

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MR. ZURAY declared that more studies were necessary as it was unknown, at this time, what was a quality Chinook salmon run. He declared that various monitoring projects to study the Chinook were start and stop efforts, and did not provide adequate data. He said that the average subsistence Chinook size in 2010 was about 10.2 pounds, and that, during the last year, the Chinook runs were minimal and many fish camps were not being attended. He pointed out that, although the runs had been restricted from commercial use, the subsistence fishing was now to a critical point.

[5:54:59 PM](#)

FRITZ JOHNSON, Regional Fisheries Coordinator, Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, urged passage of proposed HB 332 as there were enhanced restrictions on commercial and sport fishing of Chinook salmon.

[5:55:56 PM](#)

JOSEPH FAITH testified in support of proposed HB 332, and said that Chinook fishing defined Alaska to the rest of the world and were important to subsistence and commercial fishermen. He expressed concern for the escapement goals for Chinook and sockeye salmon.

[5:57:26 PM](#)

TIM ANDREWS, Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), testified in support of proposed HB 332. He stated that the decline in Chinook salmon was particularly hard on the subsistence and commercial fishermen on the Yukon River. He

reported that, although the annual area per capita consumption of salmon was about 320 pounds, between 2008 and 2010, the subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon on the Yukon River had fallen "near or below the minimum amount necessary for subsistence." He declared that, as these same problems were now appearing on the Kuskokwim River, the necessary subsistence levels for both rivers might not be attainable this year. He declared that the value of the Lower Yukon River commercial Chinook fishery had plunged from \$10 million in 1992 to \$6500 in 2011, with a corresponding decline of use, value, and income from commercial fishing permits. He listed the subsistence restrictions on the Kuskokwim River in 2011.

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MR. ANDREWS said that it would be impossible to express the cultural, economic, and social importance of the Chinook fishery in the Lower Kuskokwim River. The salmon were not returning and it was necessary to find out the reasons.

[6:04:36 PM](#)

GERRY MCCUNE, Lobbyist, Cordova District Fishermen United, testified in support of HB 332, and stated that the proposed bill would be a good approach for obtaining research. Directing attention to page 6, lines 12 and 13, of the proposed bill, he expressed his concern that "based on the number of Alaska residents dependent on the stocks" was not a good baseline for research as it could be interpreted in many ways.

[6:06:36 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON, indicating that there had been a request for the study of ocean acidification, asked if there was any more information available.

[6:07:23 PM](#)

ERIC VOLK, Chief of Research for Anadromous Fisheries, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Alaska Department of Fish & Game, replied that he did not have any specific information for ocean acidification. He acknowledged that there was concern for the Chinook salmon. He said that the projected Sacramento River and Klamath River Chinook salmon runs in California were good, after years of being depressed. He noted that the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon runs had also been doing "pretty good." He clarified that there were still concerns for the Western Alaska

Chinook salmon runs, specifically the Yukon, the Kuskokwim, and the Unalakleet Rivers.

[6:09:39 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI asked if enough money had been allocated for Yukon Chinook salmon studies.

MR. VOLK replied that the problems were complex, and the AYKSSI had made some progress. He mentioned the complexity for understanding the origins of wild stocks captured in distant water fisheries, and understanding where the problems existed: in fresh water, near shore marine, or in the open ocean. He allowed that ocean acidification could enter into the problem, though it was still unknown.

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI asked how the department established its target priorities for study.

MR. VOLK, in response to Representative Kawasaki, said that the priority was often an attempt to address issues that were most central to the management regime, although he acknowledged the importance for the gathering of knowledge. Specifically, he suggested that it was necessary to gather fundamental information, beginning with juvenile escapement numbers, and including near shore marine research to understand the abundance, distribution, and survival of juvenile fish in their first year of marine life. He declared that this knowledge could often increase forecasting capabilities, citing the NOAA pink salmon forecasting program. He also recommended an expanded baseline for Chinook genetic studies, with investments in marker development to identify their origin, as genetics was an important aspect for future fisheries management.

[6:15:42 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON asked if Mr. Volk was involved with monitoring the by-catch and the origins of those fish.

MR. VOLK replied that he was not directly involved with the by-catch monitoring; however, he did work toward scientifically sampling the pollock industry by-catch in order to determine its origins.

[6:17:04 PM](#)

MR. VOLK, in response to Representative Austerman, said that he would include a study of the out migration rate for the salmon smolt as part of his basic information package. He declared that these could be difficult projects.

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN asked what the ADF&G position was on the proposed bill, and if they felt it would be a collaborative effort.

MR. VOLK deferred his response.

[6:18:39 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON asked if the creation of an endowment fund would be helpful.

MR. VOLK replied that the fund was one possible solution to generate revenue.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON suggested that it would be "extremely beneficial" to the ADF&G constitutional mandate to participate in this collaborative research.

MR. VOLK replied that collaborative projects were always sought, as interdisciplinary research approaches were often valuable. He opined that a study should be for the salmon eco-system, and not limited to salmon-centric.

[6:20:42 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON asked if the endowment fund was needed for salmon research.

MR. VOLK replied that there were many gaps in the knowledge regarding Chinook, and that it would require funding to address those gaps in a logical, organized way.

[6:21:18 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI, noting that the proposed legislation appointed six board members, asked if they would agree with ADF&G to areas for research funding.

MR. VOLK replied that he did not know, as there were many points of view.

[6:22:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if Chinook salmon lived in areas other than the North Pacific.

MR. VOLK replied that Chinook salmon were located all along the Pacific Rim, primarily between the Sacramento River and Western Alaska, with additional populations in Russia. He reported that Chinook salmon had been introduced into the Southern Hemisphere, as there were no native salmonids.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if there were salmon in the North Atlantic, and was there any information to be gained from those stocks.

MR. VOLK replied that there was one species of salmon in the Atlantic, known as the Atlantic Salmon, and most of that population had been overfished, although some still existed in Iceland.

[6:23:56 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked whether sea lice were an environmental condition that plagued wild salmon populations.

MR. VOLK replied that there was concern for sea lice as it proliferated in the farmed salmon in British Columbia. He opined that some wild fish that migrated near the farmed fish net pens were affected.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked how long would Mr. Volk suggest for the study.

MR. VOLK replied that it was important to have continuity to a study, and that it would be premature to make a time prediction. He pointed to the value in a long term solution for funding.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if the studies relied on local knowledge of the people who had been observing the runs.

MR. VOLK replied that one of the biggest challenges he faced in earlier studies was the inability to capture this traditional knowledge and incorporate it into the studies.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if traditional knowledge would be considered a long term study.

MR. VOLK expressed his agreement.

[6:26:54 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON recommended that the committee read a book titled King Of Fish, which detailed the history of fishing in early Europe and in the Americas.

[6:27:51 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON closed public testimony. [The committee treated Chair Thompson's prior objection to the motion to adopt the proposed committee substitute (CS) for HB 332, Version 27-LS1395\M, Kirsch, 2/23/12, as the working document, as withdrawn; it was officially withdrawn later in the hearing.]

[6:28:06 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON moved to adopt Conceptual Amendment 1, as follows:

Page 6, line 12, following "based on the"  
Delete "number of"  
Insert "dependence of"

Page 6, line 13, following "residents"  
Delete "dependent"

There being no objection, it was so ordered.

[6:29:12 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON moved to adopt Conceptual Amendment 2, as follows:

Page 6, lines 15 and 19, following "research"  
Delete "and"  
Insert "and/or"

There being no objection, it was so ordered.

[6:30:23 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER, referring to page 5, line 24, Version M, asked what "shall consider" would compel the board to do. He asked for more information about the "process and structure" of the board. Directing attention to page 5, line 25, he asked

which board regulations were referenced with "adopting its regulations."

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON deferred to a legal response.

[6:31:49 PM](#)

MS. GILLIS stated that page 5, line 25 of Version M, referred to the regulations of the Alaska Chinook Salmon Research and Restoration Endowment Fund Board.

[6:32:26 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if a more precise definition for "shall consider" on page 5, line 24, Version M, was necessary.

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN expressed his agreement that the intent could be clarified.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON offered his belief that the intent was for consideration, but not for obligation.

[6:33:49 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked for more definition to the structure and the process of the North Pacific Research Board.

MS. GILLIS described the structure of the North Pacific Research Board (NPRB) to include:

a board itself, a scientific technical committee that makes recommendations to the board; however, proposals are sought, [and] received by NPRB and they go through an independent peer review process. There's an independent peer review data base that includes researchers from around the world and those proposals are matched up with the expertise of the individuals in the data base. They require at least three independent peer reviews for each proposal.

MS. GILLIS explained that those reviews were returned to the science board, reviewed, and prioritized with recommendations to the endowment board. She opined that the structure had been "deemed of great scientific integrity" and that the NPRB conduct had been applauded for its transparency and broad use of scientific experts.

REPRESENTATIVE MILLER asked if the NPRB structure was recorded.

MS. GILLIS replied that it was written.

[6:35:58 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI asked why an endowment fund was being considered on lieu of other funding.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON explained that the endowment fund would be within the Department of Revenue, and its board within the Department of Commerce, Community & Economic Development. He reported that the legislature would annually consider appropriation of earnings from the fund.

CHAIR THOMPSON clarified that various other groups could also contribute to the endowment fund.

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON offered his belief that the fund principle could attract "significant match money, knowing that that money stays in a principle ... you can only use the earnings."

[6:37:53 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE KAWASAKI commented that the concept of the proposed bill and the long term strategy for funding research were good. He questioned the wisdom of creating a board, which could have regional priorities. He offered his belief that Alaska Department of Fish & Game needed the research funding.

[6:40:04 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HERRON stated that the proposed bill set high standards so that research was directed to areas of concern.

[6:41:02 PM](#)

CHAIR THOMPSON removed his objection.

[6:41:10 PM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE AUSTERMAN moved to report CSHB 332, Version 27-LS1395\M, Kirsch, 2/23/12, as amended, out of committee with individual recommendations and the accompanying fiscal notes. There being no objection, CSHB 332(FSH) was reported from the House Special Committee on Fisheries.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.