

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

April 18, 2024  
10:05 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Representative Sarah Vance, Chair  
Representative Kevin McCabe  
Representative Ben Carpenter  
Representative Rebecca Himschoot

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Representative CJ McCormick  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Representative Louise Stutes

**COMMITTEE CALENDAR**

HOUSE BILL NO. 297

"An Act establishing the sport fishing angler access account; establishing the sport fishing angler access surcharge; and providing for an effective date."

- MOVED CSHB 297(FSH) OUT OF COMMITTEE

**PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION**

BILL: HB 297

SHORT TITLE: SPORT FISHING ANGLER ACCESS ACCT/SURCHARG

SPONSOR(S): RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR

01/26/24	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
01/26/24	(H)	FSH, FIN
03/21/24	(H)	FSH AT 10:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
03/21/24	(H)	-- MEETING CANCELED --
04/02/24	(H)	FSH AT 10:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
04/02/24	(H)	Heard & Held
04/02/24	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)
04/04/24	(H)	FSH AT 9:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
04/04/24	(H)	Heard & Held
04/04/24	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)
04/16/24	(H)	FSH AT 10:00 AM GRUENBERG 120
04/16/24	(H)	Heard & Held
04/16/24	(H)	MINUTE(FSH)

04/18/24

(H)

FSH AT 10:00 AM GRUENBERG 120

**WITNESS REGISTER**

DOUG VINCENT-LANG, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Juneau, Alaska

**POSITION STATEMENT:** On behalf of House Rules by request of the governor, answered a question on HB 297.

**ACTION NARRATIVE**

[10:05:08 AM](#)

**CHAIR SARAH VANCE** called the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Representatives McCabe, Carpenter, Himschoot, and Vance were present at the call to order.

**HB 297-SPORT FISHING ANGLER ACCESS ACCT/SURCHARG**

[10:05:35 AM](#)

CHAIR VANCE announced that the only order of business would be HOUSE BILL NO. 297, "An Act establishing the sport fishing angler access account; establishing the sport fishing angler access surcharge; and providing for an effective date."

[10:05:57 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE moved to take from the table Amendment 1, as amended on 4/16/24, to HB 297, labeled 33-GH2500\A.1, Bullard, 4/11/24, which read:

Page 1, line 1, following "Act":

Insert "relating to the duties of the commissioner of fish and game;"

Page 1, following line 3:

Insert new bill sections to read:

"\* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the legislature that the commissioner model the biennial report required under AS 16.05.050(c), added by sec. 2 of this Act, on the Department of Fish and Game's Professional Publication No. 08-01, titled "Economic

Impacts and Contributions of Sportfishing in Alaska, 2007."

\* **Sec. 2.** AS 16.05.050 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(c) The commissioner shall produce and disseminate to the public a biennial report on the economic impacts of sport fishing in the state."

Page 1, line 4:

Delete "**Section 1**"

Insert "**Sec. 3**"

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 1, line 8, following "to":

Insert "production and dissemination of the biennial report on the economic impacts of sport fishing in the state required under AS 16.05.050(c) and"

Page 1, line 11, following "use.":

Insert "In allocating money from the account, the department shall apportion one dollar from the surcharge imposed on each license by AS 16.05.340(1) to the production and dissemination of the biennial report required under AS 16.05.050(c)."

Page 2, lines 22 - 31:

Delete all material and insert:

(1) resident sport fishing license .....	\$5
(2) resident hunting and sport fishing license .....	5
(3) resident hunting, trapping, and sport fishing license .....	5
(4) nonresident 14-day sport fishing license .....	26
(5) nonresident seven-day sport fishing license .....	21
(6) nonresident three-day sport fishing license .....	11
(7) nonresident one-day sport fishing license .....	6
(8) nonresident annual sport fishing license .....	41
(9) special nonresident military small game and sport fishing license .....	5

(10) special nonresident military sport fishing license ..... 5"

Page 3, line 7:  
Delete "Section 4"  
Insert "Section 6"

Page 3, line 8:  
Delete "sec. 5"  
Insert "sec. 7"

[There being no objection, Amendment 1, as amended, was before the committee.]

[10:06:05 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER moved to rescind the committee's action on 4/16/24 in adopting Conceptual Amendment 1 to Amendment 1. [Conceptual Amendment 1 would add "subsistence, commercial," before the word "sport" on line 14, page 1 of Amendment 1.] There being no objection, the adoption of Conceptual Amendment 1 was rescinded.

[10:06:19 AM](#)

CHAIR VANCE stated that Amendment 1 in its original form was before the committee. There being no objection, Amendment 1 was adopted.

[10:06:55 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER moved to adopt Amendment 2 to HB 297, labeled 33-GH2500\A.2, Bullard, 4/05/24, as amended, which read:

Page 1, line 2, following "**surcharge;**":  
Insert "**providing for the repeal of the sport fishing angler access account; providing for the repeal of the sport fishing angler access surcharge;**"

Page 2, following line 8:  
Insert a new bill section to read:  
"**\* Sec. 3.** AS 16.05.340(i), as amended by sec. 2 of this Act, is amended to read:  
(i) If the commissioner determines that residents of the state are entitled to obtain licenses for sport fishing, including sport fishing for anadromous king salmon, in Yukon, Canada, for the same

fees that are charged to residents of Yukon for comparable sport fishing licenses, the commissioner may adopt regulations authorizing residents of Yukon to receive

(1) nonresident annual sport fishing licenses for the fees charged to residents under (a) [AND (1)] of this section for a resident sport fishing license; and

(2) nonresident anadromous king salmon annual tags for the fee charged to residents under (a) of this section for a resident anadromous king salmon tag."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 2, following line 31:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"\* **Sec. 5.** AS 16.05.130(i) and 16.05.340(1) are repealed."

Renumber the following bill sections accordingly.

Page 3, line 7:

Delete "Section 4"

Insert "Section 6"

Page 3, following line 7:

Insert a new bill section to read:

"\* **Sec. 8.** Sections 3 and 5 of this Act take effect January 1, 2030."

Renumber the following bill section accordingly.

Page 3, line 8:

Delete "sec. 5"

Insert "secs. 7 and 8"

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT objected for the purpose of discussion.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER stated that Amendment 2 would create a sunset date of January 1, 2030, for the surcharge to the sports fish license fee. He stated that this would allow a conversation on the fee increase at a later date.

[10:07:44 AM](#)

CHAIR VANCE questioned why the timeframe of five years was chosen.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER expressed the opinion that five years would be enough time for some of the projects using the surcharge fee to be started.

[10:08:12 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT questioned why a sunset date would be needed.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER responded that there are constituents who would want to see an end to the increased fee. He surmised that once projects are built, the fee should be gone; otherwise, the fee would be perpetuated, whether it is needed or not.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT questioned whether the extra fee would be needed for ongoing matching funds. She expressed the assumption that there would be an unending list of projects, such as maintenance.

[10:09:46 AM](#)

DOUG VINCENT-LANG, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), on behalf of House Rules by request of the governor, answered that ADF&G has the intent that when projects are built, partners would be sought to operate the projects over the long term. When a partner cannot be found, the department would need to do the maintenance, and the money could be used in this way. He stated that the department is not opposed to being held accountable and having a future review; however, he cautioned that the timeframe should be further out so there would be money and results.

[10:10:51 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT questioned whether the five years would create a review of the effectiveness of the collected fees, and from this, the sunset could be reupped.

REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER recommended that if the sunset date does not seem right, the committee could amend it now. He suggested that this timeframe should be sufficient to see if the projects and funding are working appropriately. He explained that this would not be a "forcing function to stop," rather this would require a conversation to make an assessment.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT expressed the understanding that the date could be changed to 2035, for example.

[10:12:24 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE expressed support for sunset dates on issues like this because a timeframe would be created for a conversation.

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT expressed the desire not to "hamstring" the department, so it can do what it needs. She also expressed the desire for a simple path forward when there is a sunset date.

[10:13:44 AM](#)

REPRESENTATIVE HIMSCHOOT removed her objection. There being no further objection, Amendment 2 was adopted.

REPRESENTATIVE MCCABE moved to report HB 297, as amended, from committee with individual recommendations and the attached fiscal notes. He granted Legislative Legal Services the authority to make technical and conforming changes. There being no objection, CSHB 297(FSH) was reported from the House Special Committee on Fisheries.

[10:14:40 AM](#)

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the committee, the House Special Committee on Fisheries meeting was adjourned at 10:14 a.m.