

HOUSE BILL NO. 203

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES MCCABE, Foster, Tomaszewski, Schwanke, St. Clair, G.Nelson

Introduced: 4/22/25

Referred: House Special Committee on Fisheries, Resources

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the use of certain trawl or dredge fishing gear in state water; and
2 providing for an effective date."

3 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 * **Section 1.** AS 16.10 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 16.10.135. Use of trawl or dredge fishing gear.** A person may not use,
6 employ, or operate any trawl or dredge fishing gear that makes substantial bottom
7 contact with the seafloor while in use, as determined by the department, in the water of
8 the state.

9 * **Sec. 2.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
10 read:

11 **STUDY AND REPORT ON THE EFFECTS OF BOTTOM TRAWLING AND ON**
12 **THE CONDITION OF THE SEAFLOOR.** The Department of Fish and Game shall conduct a
13 comprehensive study of the health of seafloor ecosystems and fish habitat in state water. The
14 department shall submit a report on the results of the department's study under this section to

1 the senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives on or before January 1,
2 2027, and notify the legislature that the report is available. The report must include

3 (1) information as to how the state's fishery resource and seafloor marine
4 ecosystems have been, and may continue to be, affected by the use of trawl or dredge fishing
5 gear that makes substantial bottom contact with the seafloor while in use;

6 (2) to the extent available, the quantities of fishery resources taken as bycatch
7 by fishers using trawl or dredge fishing gear that makes substantial bottom contact with the
8 seafloor while in use, including the number of fish of each species, taken over the last 10
9 years; and

10 (3) recommendations as to whether the use of trawl or dredge fishing gear that
11 makes substantial bottom contact with the seafloor while in use should be prohibited or
12 otherwise limited for

13 (A) the maximum benefit of the state's people; and

14 (B) the sustained yield of the state's fishery resource.

15 * **Sec. 3.** Section 1 of this Act takes effect January 1, 2028.

16 * **Sec. 4.** Except as provided in sec. 3 of this Act, this Act takes effect immediately under
17 AS 01.10.070(c).