

SJR

34

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

FIRST COMMITTEE OF REFERRAL

Date of 5-DAY NOTICE
IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNIFORM RULE 23

FURTHER:

**FISCAL NOTE(S) ATTACHED **
IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS 24.08.035
(see below)

3/27/87 DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE _____

Mr. President:

RESOURCES Committee considered SJR 34

interception of Alaska salmon on the high seas.

and recommended:

- replace with CS _____ same title
- attached amendment(s) and new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- further referral to _____
- letter of intent adopted and attached

** Committee attached or adopted fiscal note(s)
 zero fiscal impact

MEMBERS SIGNING DO PASS

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Bob Press
John Duncanson
Paul Frisk

[Signature]
 Chairman signature and recommendation

Committee Backup Attached

do pass

STATE OF ALASKA 1987 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST: _____

Bill Version: SJR 34
Publish Date: 3/27/87

Revision Date: 3/27/87
Title: Relating to the interception of Alaska salmon on high seas
Sponsor: Binkley, Jones, et.al.
Requestor: Senate Resources

Agency Affected: ADF&G
BRU: _____
Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92
PERSONAL SERVICES	-0-					
TRAVEL	-0-					
CONTRACTUAL	-0-					
SUPPLIES	-0-					
EQUIPMENT	-0-					
LAND & STRUCTURES	-0-					
GRANTS, CLAIMS	-0-					
MISCELLANEOUS	-0-					
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-					

CAPITAL	-0-					
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REVENUE	-0-					
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	-0-					
FEDERAL FUNDS	-0-					
OTHER	-0-					
TOTAL	-0-					

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	-0-					
PART-TIME	-0-					
TEMPORARY	-0-					

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: Poland Shanks
Division: Commissioner's Office

Phone: 465-4100
Date: 4/8/87

Approved by Commissioner: Quill Callanworth
Agency: Fish and Game

Date: 4.8.87

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)
- Senate Secretary

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 3-2000
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802-2000
PHONE: (907) 465-4100

March 20, 1987

The Honorable John D. Negroponte
Assistant Secretary
Oceans and International Environmental
and Scientific Affairs
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador Negroponte:

Harold Sparck has indicated that he had a chance to discuss the Japanese high seas salmon fishery and your forthcoming trip to Japan. Harold requested that I follow up with you regarding the status of Western Alaska chinook stocks and the economic and biological implications of high seas interceptions of these fish.

Enclosed is a department paper outlining western Alaska chinook stock status. I apologize for its length, but it is mostly for background to use as you see fit. I will summarize the findings and their implications for the 1987 season.

Conservation problems exists for two of the major stock components in this area--the Yukon and Kuskokwim. These are not short-term problems, as escapements in both rivers have been depressed for four or five years. In the case of the Kuskokwim, this problem is so severe that it will preclude a directed commercial fishery and may require some restrictions in the subsistence fishery. Protection of chinook will also probably mean a reduction in the number of chums and reds which can be taken commercially as well, since the timing of these stocks overlap. Total losses to the Kuskokwim fishery from these restrictions may be as much as \$1 million in a fishery that only averages about \$3 million ex-vessel value per year.

The Yukon and Kuskokwim region is one of the most economically depressed in the United States. Fisheries are the single most important source of cash income in this area as well as an important food source to the subsistence economy of most villages. Despite its importance to the area, the average commercial fisherman makes less than \$7,000.00 per

year for his efforts. Obviously, interception of salmon on the high seas has a very significant economic impact to the Indian and Eskimo residents of this region.

Estimates of interception of western Alaska chinook salmon average about 100,000 fish per year for recent years prior to the latest INPFC renegotiations. An additional loss is incurred by fish which drop out of the nets uncounted which is only partially offset by the fact that some of these fish would have died from natural mortality before returning inshore. The net result was probably an average loss of 160,000 western Alaska chinook salmon per year. The renegotiation will result in a zero interception in the Central Bering Sea, but it takes eight years to totally close this area. It does not substantially reduce interceptions in our EEZ, but hopefully the U.S.S.R. quota of 50,000 chinook salmon will be more closely adhered to since their catches are being better monitored by our negotiated increase in observer coverage. Overall, the renegotiation should reduce known interceptions by about one-half over time.

To make a long story short, it would be desirable from a conservation and economic standpoint to reduce their interceptions of western Alaska chinook as far as possible as soon as possible. Adherence to the U.S.S.R. quota level in our zone will help, but we would also like to ensure that we get more help, faster in the central Bering Sea (donut) area than currently envisioned under the treaty eight year phase out. The Soviets also have a 20,000 fish chinook quota in the donut area. We would like to have a better feeling for how tightly the Soviets will try to make the Japanese adhere to this figure, but beyond that we would like some assurances the actual catch is monitored. The Soviets do have observers on Japanese motherships in this area but not on catcher boats. There is no way to determine if catcher boat operators are discarding chinook to avoid the ceiling without this coverage.

For the last several years, the U.S. has had an industry agreement with Japan that allowed us to leave our catcher-boat observers onboard when their boats went to the donut from our zone. Japan has now indicated that this agreement ended with the 1986 season and they refuse to renew it. This is unacceptable to us since it will leave us with no ability to monitor catch levels in the donut area. We may have large increases in retained or non-retained catch during this period of phaseout with a very negative impact on our ability to rebuild these stocks.

Even with better catch monitoring and assuming the Soviets force Japan's compliance with their quotas, the net impact of Japanese interceptions (known catch and dropout) could

March 20, 1987

total 80,000 western Alaska chinook in 1987. The alternative of an unmonitored central Bering Sea fishery is potentially much worse. We have no way to apportion these catches by river system, but the Yukon and Kuskokwim account for the majority of the western Alaska runs, so we would assume a substantial portion of these fish would be bound for these rivers.

In summary, our conservation problems on Kuskokwim and Upper Yukon chinook stocks are worse than was known during the recent negotiations. We believe this warrants additional action on the part of the Japanese. The actions which we think need to be taken are:

1. Maintenance of prior levels of U.S. catcherboat observer coverage in the central Bering Sea (donut) area.
2. Assurance by Japan that their mothership fishery catches of chinook salmon in the central Bering Sea and our EEZ during the period of phaseout under the current agreement will not exceed those of recent years which have generally been less than the Soviet quotas for these areas.
3. Reduction in these catch levels in at least the short term in each area to take into account the severity of the current conservation problem.

Thank you for your assistance. Please feel free to contact me for any further information you may need. We would be pleased to meet with you and Japanese government or industry representatives to explain these issues if required.

Sincerely,



Steven Pennoyer
Deputy Commissioner

Enclosure

cc: Senator John Binkley
John Katz
Rod Swope

Senator: John B. (Jack) Coghill
Alaska State Legislature

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TO: SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
FROM: COMMITTEE STAFF
DATE: APRIL 10, 1987
RE: SJR 34, "RELATING TO THE INTERCEPTION OF ALASKA SALMON
ON THE HIGH SEAS"

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1. FISCAL NOTE
2. LETTER FROM FISH AND GAME TO AMBASSADOR NEGROPONTE
3. LETTER FROM GOVERNOR SHEFFIELD TO SECRETARY OF STATE
GEORGE SHULTZ

Senator John Binkley

Alaska State Senate
P.O. Box V • Juneau, Alaska 99811 • (907) 465-4985



Finance Committee
Co-Chairman

M E M O R A N D U M

April 7 ~~APR~~ 10 1987

TO: SENATOR JACK COGHILL, CHAIRMAN
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: SENATOR JOHN BINKLEY *John Binkley*

SUBJ: SJR34, relating to the high seas interception of
Alaska salmon

I am extremely concerned over recent developments regarding the status of certain western and interior Alaska salmon stocks and actions taken by the Japanese with respect to onboard observers on their high seas salmon fleets. The recently negotiated U.S./Japan high seas salmon agreements are completely unsatisfactory in providing adequate protection for certain severely depleted western and interior Alaska salmon stocks. Furthermore, I believe that the recent position taken by the Japanese by refusing to allow United States observers on Japanese catcher vessels operating in international waters off the coast of Alaska makes folly of the recent salmon renegotiations between our two countries.

For the past several years, United States observers have been allowed on Japanese catcher vessels operating in international waters off the coast of Alaska to monitor compliance with international salmon harvest agreements. Without independent onboard observers there is little incentive for the Japanese high seas fleets to respect the negotiated chinook salmon quotas.

Some western and interior Alaska salmon stocks are so severely depressed that extraordinary conservation measures are required again this year. The proposed restrictions include the reduction and elimination of certain directed salmon fisheries, as well as additional subsistence restrictions. Conservation problems for the Kuskokwim and upper Yukon chinook stocks appear to be long-term, as escapements in these river systems have been far below Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) objectives for the past four to five years.

Senator Jack Coghill
April 7, 1987
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The Yukon and Kuskokwim region in western Alaska is one of the most economically disadvantaged in the United States. Commercial fisheries represent the single most important source of cash income, yet produce an average of less than \$7,000 per fisherman per year. The ADF&G estimates that total losses from the proposed conservation restrictions on the Kuskokwim fishery may total \$1 million this year from a fishery in which the total amount paid to the fishermen averages \$3 million per year.

In a March 20, 1987 letter to Ambassador Negroponte, the ADF&G states that conservation problems for Kuskokwim and upper Yukon chinook stocks are worse than were known during the recent renegotiations. The ADF&G believes this warrants additional action on the part of the Japanese.

One mechanism to generate leverage for Japanese concessions on the interception problem is through the issuance of the marine mammal permit. I recommend that we appeal to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator Calio through Senate Joint Resolution 34 to not issue the permit until the Japanese have agreed to allow United States observers on their vessels in international waters. Moreover, I further recommend that we request Administrator Calio impose, at a minimum, the restrictions recommended by Administrative Law Judge Dolan on the number of certain marine mammals that can be taken by the Japanese fleets incidental to their salmon harvest.

I am optimistic that a reduction in the marine mammal take by the Japanese high seas salmon fleets will result in a reduced harvest of Alaska salmon.

We are experiencing a conservation crisis with respect to this important American resource. Our local fishermen are being shut down so that the Japanese can catch our salmon in our waters. This situation is unacceptable to me and to the thousands of western Alaskan fishermen who depend on salmon for income and food.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this most important resolution.

STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

March 14, 1986

The Honorable George P. Shultz
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The recently concluded agreement between negotiators regarding U.S./Japan high seas salmon relationships falls far short of our ultimate goal of eliminating significant interceptions of North American salmon and steelhead by the high seas fleets of Japan. By our calculation, the agreement in its present form will provide no more than a 20 to 30 percent reduction in the interceptions currently being made by these fleets over an eight year period.

The agreement does not reduce interceptions in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. It does not move the land-based fishery ten degrees farther west as required to eliminate significant interceptions, nor does it remove the Japanese from the central Bering Sea as quickly as we desired.

I am extremely disappointed that you were unable to achieve greater reductions in Japan's time and area of fishing, particularly in the land-based fishery. Although an improvement over the current situation, the agreement is not an acceptable end to the interception problem. We must continue to seek further movement in reducing interceptions.

While the phase-out of Japanese fishing in the central Bering Sea has long been an objective of ours, I believe that the primary value of this agreement is the improved enforcement, research, and catch monitoring programs jointly agreed to by the two countries. These aspects of the agreement serve as the basis for future evaluation of what further measures will be required to eliminate significant interceptions.

The agreement contains the appropriate language regarding research and monitoring, but the governments of both countries

Secretary Schultz

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March 14, 1986

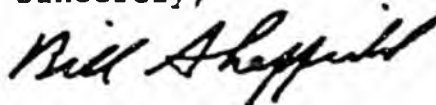
must commit resources to ensure that this program goes forward. Since the U.S. State Department has committed to this process in lieu of immediate regulatory relief from interception, I believe that it is the obligation of the State Department to help secure the funding to support this agreement.

The National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Research Institute at the University of Washington, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game are cooperating in drafting proposals for research and monitoring, including the presence of U.S. observers on Japanese research and enforcement vessels. These proposals will be provided to Ambassador Ed Wolfe for his information.

I respectfully request that you strongly support Administration funding of these proposals. I also request that you support funding of the presence of a U.S. Coast Guard cutter in the eastern part of the land-based fishery during the entire season that this fishery is open. I believe only by this type of cooperative research, monitoring, and enforcement presence can we ensure that the government of Japan will reciprocate and that any long-range benefits of this agreement can be realized.

Thank you for your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Sheffield".

Bill Sheffield
Governor