

HB

394

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 2/8/90

FURTHER: Judiciary

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE: 2/26/90

Resources _____

Committee considered _____

CSHB 394 (Judiciary)

Act relating to utilization of pollock and prohibiting the waste of pollock taken in a commercial fishery.

and recommended:

replace with 5 CS HB 394 (Res)
 or adopt _____ CS _____

same title
 new title
 technical title change (HB only)

attached amendment(s)
 _____ letter of intent adopted

do pass

do not pass

no recommendation

individual recommendations

further referral to _____

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Dept/Date:

fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note(s) _____

appropriation-no fiscal note

APPROVES PREVIOUS:

Dept/Date:

fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note(s) _____

Governor's bill w/fiscal note

SIGNING DO PASS:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]

[Signature]
Chair: Signature and Recommendation

Current Status: (S) RES

	Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
1	12/29/89	2007	(H)	PREFILE RELEASED
2	01/08/90	2007	(H)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRAL(S)
3	01/08/90	2007	(H)	RESOURCES, JUDICIARY
4	01/09/90	2028	(H)	CO-SPONSORS ADDED: HUDSON, JACKO
5	01/11/90	2047	(H)	CO-SPONSOR ADDED: LEMAN
6	01/12/90	2060	(H)	RES RPT CS(RES) 7DP 1NR
7	01/12/90	2060	(H)	-ZERO FISCAL NOTE (F&G) 1/12/90
8	01/12/90	2075	(H)	CO-SPONSOR ADDED: NAVARRE
9	01/24/90	2183	(H)	CO-SPONSOR ADDED: GOLL
10	02/02/90	2264	(H)	JUD RPT CS(JUD) NEW TITLE 4DP 2NR
11	02/02/90	2264	(H)	-ZERO FISCAL NOTE (DPS) 2/2/90
12	02/07/90		(H)	RULES TO CALENDAR 2/7/90
13	02/07/90	2325	(H)	READ THE SECOND TIME
14	02/07/90	2326	(H)	JUD CS ADOPTED UNAN CONSENT
15	02/07/90	2326	(H)	ADVANCED TO THIRD READING UNAN CONSENT
16	02/07/90	2326	(H)	READ THE THIRD TIME CSHB 394(JUD)
17	02/07/90	2326	(H)	PASSED Y38 N- X2
18	02/07/90	2333	(H)	TRANSMITTED TO (S)

Selection=>

PF1	PF2	PF3	PF4	PF5	PF6	PF7	PF8	PF9	PF10	PF11	PF12
HELP	SUBJ	EXIT	MENU	TEXT	PRINT	BWD	FWD	CMT/JRNL	FIRST	LAST	QUIT
HB 394											
Bill/Resolution Floor Action											
Page 3 of 3											

Current Status: (S) RES

	Jrn-Date	Jrn-Page		Action
1	02/08/90	2373	(S)	READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRAL(S)
2	02/08/90	2373	(S)	RES, THEN JUD
3	22/08/90	2373	(S)	CROSS SPONSOR ADDED: STURGULEWSKI, JONES

Selection=>

PF1	PF2	PF3	PF4	PF5	PF6	PF7	PF8	PF9	PF10	PF11	PF12
HELP	SUBJ	EXIT	MENU	TEXT	PRINT	BWD	FWD	CMT/JRNL	FIRST	LAST	QUIT



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BILL ANALYSIS

DEPARTMENT Fish and Game	DIVISION Commercial Fisheries	BILL NUMBER CS HR 304	SPONSOR Davidson
SHORT TITLE OF BILL Utilization of Pollock			
DEPARTMENT POSITION Support			
PREPARED BY Earl Krygier	DATE 01/19/90	COMMISSIONER'S SIGNATURE <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE 1/19/90

SUMMARY

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED BY BILL Public Safety	CONSTITUENT GROUPS AFFECTED BY BILL Commercial fishermen and fish processors
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BILL	ORGANIZATIONAL OPPOSITION TO BILL

FISCAL IMPACT NONE FISCAL NOTE ATTACHED

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE INTENT

This bill, in conjunction with federal fisheries management regulations recently passed by the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC), is intended to address the problem of pollock roe stripping which occurred in the Gulf of Alaska during the 1989 season. The pollock fishery is managed with a strict quota. In 1989, large factory trawlers moved into the Kodiak area during the pollock spawning season and quickly consumed all remaining quota by stripping the high value roe and discarding the males and the usable flesh of the roe-stripped females. As a result, local fishermen and shorebased processors were

ANALYSIS OF BILL PROGRAM EFFECTS

without access to a harvestable surplus.

The effect of this bill would be to prohibit roe stripping in state waters and at shorebased processing facilities. This action, in conjunction with a similar federal regulation governing federal waters, would eliminate pollock roe stripping in all catching and processing sectors of the industry.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED

PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR ANALYSIS.

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: Utilization of Dollock
Sponsor: Davidson
Requestor: Governor

Agency Affected: Fish and Game
BRU: Commercial Fisheries
Components: 311

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	0					
TRAVEL	0					
CONTRACTUAL	0					
SUPPLIES	0					
EQUIPMENT	0					
LAND & STRUCTURES	0					
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0					
MISCELLANEOUS	0					
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

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

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

POSITIONS:

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

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: Bob Clashy Phone: 465-4210
Division: Commercial Fisheries Date: 11/19/90

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Date: 11/19/90
Agency: _____

Distribution (by preparer):
Legislative Finance
Legislative Sponsor
Requestor
Office of Management and Budget
Impacted Agency(ies)

FEB 21 1990



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

hb 394

NEWS RELEASE
Steven Pennoyer
907-586-7221
February 16, 1990
For Immediate Release

IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EMERGENCY RULE TO LIMIT THE PRACTICE
OF ROE-STRIPPING POLLOCK OFF ALASKA

An emergency rule to limit the practice of pollock roe-stripping by at-sea processor vessels is implemented by Federal regulations effective February 16, 1990, according to Steven Pennoyer, Director, Alaska Region, National Marine Fisheries Service. This limitation implements a recommendation by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to prohibit the extraction of roe from pollock during 1990 unless male and female carcasses are further processed into products of commercial value. The emergency rule will be in effect for the remainder of the 1990 roe season.

Specifically, the emergency rule limits the amount of pollock roe that may be retained by an at-sea processor to no more than seven percent of the round weight equivalent of pollock and other pollock products retained on board the processor vessel at any time during a fishing trip. The product recovery rates that will be used to extrapolate round weight equivalents from pollock product weights are as follows:

Pollock Product Type	Pollock Product Recovery Rate
Fillet (no skin or ribs)	25 percent
Minced	25 percent
Surimi	22 percent
Meal	17 percent
Headed and Gutted	55 percent
Roe	7 percent

If pollock are processed into products other than those listed above, extrapolated round weight equivalents will be based on the best available information, including observer or vessel operator reported product recovery rates.

Copies of the emergency rule are available from the Fishery Management Division in Juneau at 907-586-7230 or through the NMFS Computer Bulletin Board, 907-586-7259. For further information, contact Susan Salvesson at 907-586-7230.



hb 394



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

211 4th Street, Suite 106
Juneau, AK 99801
907-586-2820

February 20, 1990 ^{558 2 1}

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

Alaska Crab Coalition
 Alaska Independent Fishermen's
 Marketing Association
 Alaska Longline Fisherman's
 Association
 Alaska Trollers Association
 Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
 Bristol Bay Driftnetters Association
 Concerned Area "M" Fishermen
 Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association
 Copper River Fishermen's Cooperative
 Cordova District Fishermen United
 Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association
 North Pacific Fisheries Association
 Northern Southeast Regional
 Aquaculture Association
 Peninsula Marketing Association
 Petersburg Vessel Owners Association
 Prince William Sound
 Aquaculture Association
 Prince William Sound Selnors Association
 Seafood Producers Cooperative
 Southeast Alaska Selnors
 Southern Southeast Regional
 Aquaculture Association
 United Cook Inlet Drift Association
 United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters
 Western Alaska Cooperative
 Marketing Association

Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp
PO Box V
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

You have before the Senate Resources Committee HB 394, a bill which would prohibit the practice of "roe stripping" in state waters.

The federal government has recently promulgated an emergency regulation that effectively has brought the practice to a close in waters of federal jurisdiction; until the state passes a similar requirement, we are fearful that the large factory trawlers will move inside state waters and fill the years quota in just a few weeks while wasting thousands of tons of usable seafood.

The pollock roe season has begun and there is a very real urgency that the bill becomes law. If you have perceived any technical problems I would appreciate a member of your staff letting me know.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Castner
Executive Director



STATE OF ALASKA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Box V, Juneau, Alaska 99811

(907) 465-2487 • 465-2498

REPRESENTATIVE CLIFF DAVIDSON • DISTRICT 27 • Box 746, Kodiak, Alaska 99615 • (907) 486-8250

TO: All House Members
FROM: Representative Cliff Davidson
DATE: February 7, 1990

HOUSE BILL 394

"An act relating to utilization of pollock and prohibiting the waste of pollock taken in a commercial fishery."

Pollock are a relatively small, low value fish that are valuable only because of their great abundance. Traditionally, pollock have been caught throughout the year by large trawler vessels. Pollock have provided a stable and reliable year round source of product to the onshore processing industry.

During the spring of each year pollock gather in huge aggregations to spawn. At that time the roe (or eggs) of the female pollock are an extremely valuable and desirable product. Last year in March and April of 1989, the large factory trawler fleet targeted the enormous pollock aggregations spawning in Shelikof Strait between Kodiak and the Alaska Peninsula. These huge vessels caught vast quantities of spawning pollock, throwing overboard everything but roe from the females.

As a result of this enormous waste, and the resulting publicity, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council proposed and passed an emergency regulation prohibiting the stripping of pollock roe in federal waters. That emergency regulation must be signed by the Secretary of Commerce to become effective.

The roe stripping ban adopted in HB 394 is intended to parallel action by the federal government. Without that federal ban in place, the offshore factory/processors will be able to strip pollock roe again this spring. HB 394 is intended to ban the odious practice of roe stripping and send a message to the Secretary of Commerce that Alaskans do not support roe stripping.

HB 394 Analysis

Section 1.

The legislative findings establishing the justification for banning roe stripping in pollock.

Section 2.

AS 16.10.164

Establishes a state policy that roe stripping and not using the eatable flesh is wasteful, and determines that:

- 1) roe stripping should be eliminated to the fullest extent possible and;
- 2) commercially taken pollock should be utilized for human consumption to the fullest extent practicable.

AS 16.10.165

- a) Establishes that a person may not waste pollock
- b) Delegates to the Board of Fish the ability to make regulations under this act.
- c) Makes waste of pollock a class A misdemeanor.
- d) Definitions of terms used in this section

*Note: The language in AS.16.165 is very similar to the language used in the statute prohibiting the roe stripping of herring.



December 18, 1989

From: Larry Cotter *LC*
Re: Proposed Pollock Roe Stripping Legislation

Thanks very much for sending me a copy of the draft legislation. I think it is very important that legislation such as this be passed as quickly as possible. The Secretary of Commerce will soon be in the process of determining whether or not to implement the North Pacific Council's emergency prohibition on roe stripping; action, or lack thereof, by the state could have an important impact on that decision.

With one exception, I think the draft is fine. That exception is the definition of "waste". The definition allows pollock flesh to be reduced to meal as an acceptable form of processing. I would prefer that reduction of flesh to meal be allowed only in the event the flesh is damaged or otherwise unfit or unmarketable for fillets or surimi.

The definition of processing is one the Council is grappling with and will deal with at the April meeting. It is a significant definition since some mothership and factory trawlers have meal plants on board and could more rapidly process the flesh into meal than into fillets or surimi. The result would be a waste of food protein and an increase in the speed with which the pollock quota is taken.

I would suggest language similar to the following:

(3) "waste" means the failure to use the flesh of commercially taken pollock for human consumption OR SCIENTIFIC OR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES, ALTHOUGH reduction to meal AND production of food for domestic animals or fish, ~~or scientific or educational purposes~~, IS ALLOWED IN THE EVENT THE FLESH IS DAMAGED OR OTHERWISE UNFIT OR UNMARKETABLE FOR FILLETS, SURIMI OR OTHER COMMERCIAL FOOD PRODUCTS FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION. "WASTE" ~~but~~ does not include normal, inadvertent loss of flesh associated with processing that cannot be prevented by practical means.

I hope this is helpful to you. Please contact me if you have any questions. I would be more than happy to testify at any hearing on this bill, and otherwise work for its adoption.

Friday 2/16/90

Anchorage Daily News

Gerald E. Grilly
Publisher



Howard Weaver
Managing Editor

Michael Carey, Editorial Page Editor

Katherine Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1971 to 1983
Lawrence Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1967 to 1971

Founded in 1948 by Norman C. Brown

Roe-stripping

Commerce Department must act — quickly

Once again, the rape of the Bering Sea's pollock stocks is underway. U.S. factory trawlers are on the water, processing millions of fish, ripping out the valuable eggs from the female, then tossing ton after ton of edible carcasses back into the sea.

The fish destruction is stunning. The damage to the overall fishery may be irreversible. And the ethics of such large-scale, wanton waste of food are, at the very least, troubling.

After last year's orgy, a repeat appeared unlikely. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council in December recommended an emergency ban on roe-stripping. Industry officials said they supported such a measure. Many trawler owners declared that, if regulations were not yet in place by the time the season opened, they would voluntarily comply with the council's recommendation. The Commerce Department, after an initial pause, declared that federal officials held authority to stop the slaughter and planned emergency regulations.

But all of this has collapsed. The Commerce Department, encountering criticism from the industry for its wording of the regulations, balked at issuing new rules. Some vessel owners are honoring the voluntary commitment to eschew roe-stripping — but many others are not.

In all, it has been a dismal demonstration of the Commerce Department's unwillingness to get off dead center and the fishing industry's unconcern for the long-range consequences of its acts.

Surveys show that Bering Sea pollock stocks are declining at a rate of about 10 percent a year. Processors' demand now exceeds available supply. Clearly, the fishery can little tolerate roe-stripping's wastefulness.

The Commerce Department must act and it must act quickly. If the agency continues to dally, Alaska's congressional delegation — Sens. Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski and Rep. Don Young — should turn up the heat.

The entire fishery is at stake. Every day lost to the orgy of roe-stripping heightens the threat to the resource.

Anchorage Daily News

VOL. XLIV, NO. 83 88 PAGES

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA, FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 198

Fleet dumps thousands

Pollock stripped of roe, then tossed; huge catch prompts

By HAL BERNTON
Daily News reporter

A factory trawler fleet massed off Kodiak this month scooped up more than 37,000 metric tons of pollock, but some of the ships kept only the valuable roe and dumped overboard thousands of tons of edible flesh.

The fishing frenzy of the 17-boat, Seattle-dominated fleet helped trigger Thurs-

day's unexpected shutdown of the major Gulf of Alaska pollock harvest and raise new questions about the ethics of deep-sea fishing.

"When the world is starving, the factory trawlers have decided to discard protein," said John Sevier, superintendent of the Alaska Pacific Seafoods, a Kodiak shore processor that uses the meaty flesh to manufacture

surimi. "It's wanton waste."

The closure order was issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service after determining that the entire year's Gulf harvest quota for pollock had been taken. The order is an economic blow to Kodiak, whose fishermen say their pollock season normally lasts through December and employs hundreds of people to harvest and pro-

cess the fish.

"This is the Seattle-ization of our fisheries," said Dave Harville, an island fisherman who serves shore-based plants with trawlers. "They took our fish and shut down their competition. Now, they're going out to the Bering Sea and fish the rest of the year. But we can't move our land."

of tons of fish

closure of Gulf of Alaska fishery

This year was the first time the U.S. factory fleet, which both catches and processes fish, has showed up off Kodiak. They were lured to the Gulf by the pollock roe, which fetches a high price from Japanese consumers. And in about a month's time, the fleet caught and processed about 60 percent of an annual harvest quota that last year went entirely

to shore-based plants.

The roe-stripping tactics of the factory fleet helped speed up the processing, according to Tyson Vogeler, a Kodiak-based North Pacific Fishery Management Council official attempting to monitor the harvest. Many ships reported spectacular catches of 500 to 900 metric

Please see Back Page, FISHERY

THE BACK PAGE

FISHERY: Fleet dumps thousands of tons of pollock after taking roe

tons per day, according to Vogeler.

The only way to handle such daily volumes of fish is to speed up the processing by cutting out the high-value roe, and jettisoning — rather than salvaging — the relatively low-value flesh.

Vogeler said precise data on roe-stripping was impossible to get because the U.S. factory ships — unlike foreign factory ships that used to dominate the fishery — don't have to carry federal observers.

Ted Evans, executive director of the Seattle-based Alaska Factory Trawlers Association, confirmed that at least some of the ships were roe-stripping. He said he didn't know how many.

Evans said he didn't like the waste but pointed out that federal regulations allow the practice. Foreign factory ships that used to fish off Kodiak also jettisoned pollock flesh, he said. And this year, at least one shore-based processor also was wasting pollock meat, he said.

"What degree of waste is acceptable," Evans said. "There are all kinds of philosophical viewpoints on that and we are certainly willing to participate in that debate."

Kodiak industry officials acknowledge that some fish were stripped in town and the carcasses hauled out to sea for dumping. But they say much more fish was wasted on the high seas, and such waste adds insult to the economic injury of the closure.

"There's a gigantic rape of the resource, that's what going on," said Reed Was-

son, president of Kodiak-based Eagle Fisheries.

John Peterson, the chairman of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, the group that helps regulate the harvest, also questions roe stripping.

"It's just not right in my opinion to waste the fish that way," Peterson said. He would welcome proposals to end the practice, he said.

In the most efficient of factory and shore-based plants, almost all of the fish can be utilized. Flesh is processed into fillets, surimi or other products. And guts, heads, skin, bones and tails are made into fish meal or fertilizer.

Jeff Stephan, manager of the Kodiak-based Alaska Fishermen's Marketing Association, said his group introduced a proposal to force processors to use more of the fish, but the council has not yet seriously considered it.

The arrival of the Seattle factory fleet off Kodiak reflects the final phase of Americanization that has allowed U.S. fishermen, with first claim to the resource, to push almost all foreign ships out of the Alaska bottom fishery.

The fishery is conducted according to federal regulations that offer U.S. shore-based processors no preference over U.S. factory ships.

All must fight for a share of a pre-set annual quota.

Up until this year, U.S. factory ships chose to stay out of the Gulf of Alaska to concentrate on much larger Bering Sea fisheries, where pollock also have been stripped of roe. That allowed shore-based processors in Kodiak to prosper by contracting with small catcher boats to bring the fish onshore for processing.

This year's quota would have been enough to keep the Kodiak plants operating through December, if they processed at the same rate as last year, according to National Marine Fisheries Service statistics.

Instead, unless the council decides to reopen the fishery, they will process a limited harvest of cod, flat fish, halibut and other species.

To prevent a repeat of 1989, Kodiak fishermen will ask the council to form a special fishing zone in the Gulf, according to Harville. The plan would require boats that choose to fish the

Gulf to remain there the entire year.

"If you want to fish in the Gulf, fine, but you can then turn around and head for the Bering Sea," Harville said.

Meanwhile, Kodiak fishermen, as well as others in the industry, are pressing for new federal or industry funding to finance a greatly expanded observer program.

Peter Craig, a Kodiak based state fishery official said the observer program would help document waste that ranges beyond pollock.

Rock sole, another marketable fish, frequently is stripped of roe and the flesh wasted, Craig said. And many fish are tossed overboard by both factory trawlers and smaller catcher boats because they are too small to fit the processing machinery. The undersized fish are supposed to be reported as part of the catch, but some boats routinely flaunt the law, he said.

"Everybody ... has a waste problem," Craig said.

Fish trashing angers Kodiak

By DANIEL R. SADDLER
Times Writer

*Alc. Times
2 MAR 89*

An Outside fleet of factory trawlers stripping valuable roe from pollack and discarding edible flesh in the Gulf of Alaska has outraged Kodiak's fishing community and prompted regulators to acknowledge the need to end the practice.

On Thursday, the National Marine Fisheries service ordered the Gulf pollack fishery closed, after fishermen took the entire 1989 allowable catch of 60,000 metric tons of pollack.

"We have reports that there was discarding of pollack carcasses, and only the roe was salvaged," Brooks said. "But I don't know if that was common practice with all operations."

"Our shore-based plants felt 60,000 tons would have gotten them through the year," said Dave Harville, owner of three shore-based trawlers and one longliner in Kodiak. "The factory trawler fleet moved in to the south end of island and just stripped roe until they put us out of business."

He said he could tell the larger ships were stripping roe by how fast they were going through the fish.

Ships stripping roe can use fish three times faster than the shore based processors who take time to fillet, process for surimi, and freeze pollack, he said.

Fishermen were getting \$4 per pound for untreated roe, while pollack flesh fetched about eight cents a pound, said Oscar Dyson, a Kodiak fisherman and member of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council.

"It's gonna be a disaster if its allowed to shut down our pollack fishery for the rest of the year," Dyson said. "I'd imagine 1,000 cannery workers will be out of work this September, when the fall pollack fishery would have come on line."

"It's the first time we've had pollack fishery of this magnitude outside Shelikof Strait," said Brooks. "We were fairly suprised by it ourself."

While roe stripping is legal, the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council acknowledges its problems. Last year, they closed pollack fishing in the Bering Sea during the spawning season when excessive roe fishing threatened stocks, Brooks said.

Brooks said the roe stripping didn't pose a problem to the continued health of the pollock stocks, because any fish caught were included in the total allowable catch.

However, he admitted the process is legal, and predicted the council would study the issue this summer, and eventually ban the practice.

"I think (a ban on roe stripping) has to happen," Brooks said. "How quickly it will happen, I don't know. Over time, discarding the enormous amounts of fish is simply not going to be accepted as a practice that can be sustained."

Jim Campbell, former director of the North Pacific Council, called for an end to roe stripping, the reservation of some share of the pollack catch for on-shore processors, and studies to see if regulators can allow a greater harvest of pollack this year.

"I'm suprised the owners of the large factory trawlers, primarily from Washington made this move to take that total allocation," Campbell said. "They must have known that doing this would inflame Alaskans and the general public."

Pollack stocks are down from their highs of the early 1980s, and as the domestic fishing fleet has taken over from the foreign fleets that formerly took groundfish under joint ventures with the U.S., the demand for the fish has increased.

This year, the domestic fleet had more than enough capacity to catch all the allowable groundfish catch in the Gulf and Bering Sea.

Anchorage Daily News



Winner, 1976 Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal for Public Service

Gerald E. Grilly
Publisher

Howard Weaver
Managing Editor

Michael Carey
Editorial Page Editor

Katherine Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1971 to 1983
Lawrence Fanning, Editor and Publisher 1967 to 1971

Founded in 1946 by Norman C. Brown

Troubled waters off Kodiak Island

A Seattle-dominated fishing fleet's month-long orgy of roe-stripping off Kodiak has yielded a severe blow to the community's fishermen. The fleet moved in, took more than 37,000 metric tons of pollock, stripped the valuable roe from the fish, and tossed much of the flesh back in the water — after which federal authorities shut down the major Gulf of Alaska pollock harvest.

Capping it all off, the Seattle fleet departed the area for the Bering Sea after slaughtering the pollock, the most abundant of the North Pacific bottomfish — leaving Kodiak fishermen to depend on a more limited harvest of other fish.

The debacle raises anew questions about the fairness of fishing regulations. Current regulations permitted the Outside fishermen to devour within a matter of weeks a fishery that otherwise would have contributed to Kodiak's economy through December.

More importantly, the episode renews revulsion at the obscene waste of tons of edible fish. To fish processors, the high-value roe is much preferred over the low-value pollock meat. The decision to strip the roe and throw the fish overboard is a business one. The practice, however, visits horrendous abuse upon the resource — abuse that no resource, fish or otherwise, can long endure.

The bald waste at the scene of a roe-stripping is stunning. Those who have witnessed some of the more frenzied operations report mile upon mile of dead fish in the water. The decaying fish float in the huge masses, then sink to the ocean bottom.

Few involved in the process can claim clean hands on the waste issue. In fact, some of the fish caught by the Seattle fleet were stripped in Kodiak and the fish carcasses hauled out to sea and dumped.

Regulations advancing the stable, long-term interest of the fishery and of Alaska are needed. And a central component of the regulatory process should be a stepped-up system of observer coverage. Observers have proven their value in policing fishing regulations, and a growing body of opinion is urging expansion of the tactic.

The course toward a sane fishing policy must weather a gale of conflicting economic and governmental interests. But the difficulties should not deter attempts to reach that goal. For nothing less than the wise use and preservation of the resource depends on it.

Offered:
Referred:

*The Senate Resources
CS adds an eff. date!*

Original sponsor(s): REP. DAVIDSON, Grussendorf, Hudson, Jacko, Leman,
Navarre, Goll; SEN. Sturgulewski, Jones

1 IN THE HOUSE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 SENATE CS FOR CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 394 (Resources)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to utilization of pollock and pro-
7 hibiting the waste of pollock taken in a commercial
8 fishery; and providing for an effective date."

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

10 * Section 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds

11 (1) extensive and valuable populations of pollock are available
12 for harvest in the water of and off Alaska;

13 (2) commercial markets are available for pollock processed in
14 several forms including both roe and flesh;

15 (3) the biology of pollock results in the tendency of pollock to
16 gather in large spawning aggregations during specific times of the year so
17 that large quantities of female pollock are easily harvested by commercial
18 trawl fisheries;

19 (4) the trawl fleet is a highly efficient fishery;

20 (5) trawl fleets targeting on spawning aggregations of pollock
21 generate management difficulties for state and federal fisheries managers,
22 and could cause serious conservation problems for the pollock resource;

23 (6) one processing technique presently employed involves strip-
24 ping roe from female pollock and then discarding the carcasses of both male
25 and female pollock;

26 (7) profitable markets for fish roe have promoted roe stripping
27 in commercial fisheries for salmon, herring, and pollock, however roe
28 stripping is now prohibited in the salmon and herring fisheries; recent
29 events have demonstrated the need to prohibit the wasteful practice of roe

1 stripping in the pollock fishery.

2 * Sec. 2. AS 16.10 is amended by adding new sections to article 3 to
3 read:

4 Sec. 16.10.164. POLICY ON UTILIZATION OF POLLOCK. The legisla-
5 ture declares that stripping roe from pollock without utilizing the
6 flesh is wasteful and does not constitute utilization of this resource
7 for the maximum benefit of the people. Therefore, it is the policy of
8 the state that

9 (1) roe stripping be eliminated to the fullest extent
10 possible; and

11 (2) pollock taken in a commercial fishery should be uti-
12 lized for human consumption to the fullest extent practicable.

13 Sec. 16.10.165. UTILIZATION OF POLLOCK TAKEN IN A COMMERCIAL
14 FISHERY. (a) Unless otherwise provided by law, a person may not
15 recklessly waste or cause to be wasted pollock taken in a commercial
16 fishery.

17 (b) The Board of Fisheries may adopt regulations under the
18 Administrative Procedure Act (AS 44.62) it considers necessary for
19 implementation of this section. The board may delegate its authority
20 under this section to the commissioner.

21 (c) A person who violates this section is guilty of a class A
22 misdemeanor.

23 (d) Each day on which a violation of this section occurs is a
24 separate violation.

25 (e) In this section

26 (1) "flesh" means all muscular body tissue surrounding the
27 skeleton,

28 (2) "person" includes a joint venture;

29 (3) "waste" means the failure to use the flesh of pollock

1 for human consumption, reduction to meal, production of food for
2 domestic animals or fish, or scientific, display, or educational
3 purposes; "waste" does not include normal, inadvertent loss of flesh
4 associated with processing that cannot be prevented by practical
5 means.

6 * Sec. 3. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).