

Agenda Item VIII-1, Hatchery Pink Salmon Impacts - Version 2 Draft Letter

Matanuska-Susitna Fish and Wildlife Commission

March 17, 2022 Meeting

Topic: Draft letter to the State of Alaska Board of Fisheries Hatchery Committee

Points of Emphasis:

- This Committee will meet March 23, 2022
- Location: Egan Civic and Convention Center
- You must register on-line prior to the meeting to comment
- Written comments to this committee were due by COB March 8, 2022
- However, in past practices the BOF has accepted late written comments

Dear Chair Carlson-Van Dort and members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

Please accept these comments addressing the current policies regarding hatchery production.

Background

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), formerly the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Sportsmen's Committee, was formed in February 2007 to represent the interests of the Borough in the conservation and allocation of fish, wildlife and habitat.

The commission advises the MSB Assembly and the State of Alaska Boards of Fish and Game regarding fish and wildlife practices and policies that affect the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The commission consists of eight representatives, to include Chair Mike Wood, Vice Chair Andy Couch, Assembly members Tim Hale and Jesse Sumner, Larry Engel, Kendra Zamzow, Peter Probasco, Howard Delo and ex-officio member Jim Sykes. Staff support is provided by MSB employee, Ted Eischeid.

Comments

The FWC recognizes and supports the Alaska salmon hatchery program and recognizes the importance of this program to many of the residents of Alaska. We also recognize that hatchery production supports local economies, communities and all user groups. The fact that Alaska's sustainable salmon fisheries are in part due to the enhancement generated from hatchery production is also supported and recognized.

The FWC shares many of the same concerns others have expressed in the past regarding salmon hatchery production. Specifically recognizing that additional scientific data is needed to address the question of the potential impact of increased hatchery production on wild stocks both conspecific and not conspecific. The potential impact straying may have as it relates to hatchery releases on wild stocks. We understand that a current study will conclude in 2023 which may inform us better on the topic of straying and potential impacts. This study may also help direct and focus future research. For many of us, answers to the questions regarding genetic, ecological and behavioral interactions between hatchery and wild origin salmon still need to be further explored.

The State of Alaska and the private sector have made huge investments in developing this program. The successes this program has experienced are many and hopefully will continue. However, we must still be prudent and good stewards to assure that both hatchery and wild stock production and the associated management of these vast resources do not negatively affect the other.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Mike Wood, Chair
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Fish and Wildlife Commission

Agenda Item VIII-1, Hatchery Pink Salmon Impacts - Version 3 Draft Letter

Matanuska-Susitna Fish and Wildlife Commission

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Background

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), formerly the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Sportsmen's Committee, was formed in February 2007 to represent the interests of the Borough in the conservation and allocation of fish, wildlife and habitat.

The commission [focuses on science and best available information in order to](#) advise the MSB Assembly and the State of Alaska Boards of Fish and Game regarding fish and wildlife practices and policies that affect the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

The commission consists of eight representatives, to include Chair Mike Wood, Vice Chair Andy Couch, Assembly members Tim Hale and Jesse Sumner, Larry Engel, Kendra Zamzow, Peter Probasco, Howard Delo and ex-officio member Jim Sykes. Staff support is provided by MSB employee, Ted Eischeid.

Comments

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The FWC shares many of the same concerns others have expressed in the past regarding salmon hatchery production. Specifically recognizing that additional scientific data is needed to address the question of the potential impact of ~~increased~~ hatchery production, [at current or increased levels](#), on wild stocks both conspecific and not conspecific. [Some potential impacts could occur through competition for food at different life stages, and/or straying hatchery stock in wild salmon spawning areas.](#)

~~The potential impact straying may have as it relates to hatchery releases on wild stocks.~~ We understand that a current study will conclude in 2023 which may inform us better on the topic of

straying and potential impacts. This study may also help direct and focus future research. For many of us, answers to the questions regarding genetic, ecological and behavioral interactions between hatchery and wild origin salmon still need to be further explored.

The State of Alaska and the private sector have made huge investments in developing this program. The successes this program has experienced are many and hopefully will continue. However, we must still be prudent and good stewards to assure that both hatchery and wild stock production and the associated management of [each of](#) these vast resources do not negatively affect the other.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Mike Wood, Chair
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Fish and Wildlife Commission

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