

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
HATCHERY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Saturday, October 14, 2023, 8:30 a.m. Egan Civic Center, Anchorage  
**Gale K. Vick Limited comments in red**

**OPEN FORUM DISCUSSION**

Open forum discussion, moderated by a BOF Member, to be held similar to a Committee of the Whole process, wherein members of the public in attendance are called upon for the BOF to hear a range of opinions. No public sign-up required. Open Forum Subjects are limited to the topics indicated below.

- Should independent research be conducted to ascertain what, if any, impact the hatcheries' release of pink salmon may have on other species?
  - **Vick: Absolutely.**
- Is a precautionary approach being implemented when managing hatcheries? If so, is it working?
  - **Vick: This is really hard for the public to know. The preliminary evidence on straying indicates that precautionary measures to separate wild stock from hatchery stock may be greatly insufficient. If we apply maximum precautionary principles to protection of wild stock, that would assume that we have no interaction between wild and hatchery whatsoever. But that is definitely not the case. The reality is that hatchery stock inter-mingle with wild stock at every level, from release into the ocean, to return to terminal harvest areas, with a significant amount of straying into wild steams where the hatchery fish threated wild stock genetics and spawning habitat. The annual Alaska Salmon Fisheries Enhancement reports do not illustrate the full risks in management in a mixed stock fishery.**
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  - **The Alaska hatchery program is almost totally integrated with the State of Alaska (through permitting, RPTs, Division of Investments, etc.), PNP hatcheries, fishermen (through common property fishing and contract cost recovery), fishing communities (RPTs and local fishing effort), ASMI (marketing for hatchery fish is integrated with marketing for wild fish), processors and other vendors. This inter-dependency makes introspection on the risks of hatchery production and management unlikely but not impossible. We need that introspection.**
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  - **There is a growing culture of Alaskans, non-resident fishermen, and managers who believe that replacing wild stock with hatchery stock is perfectly reasonable. This is in direct conflict with the Alaska State Constitution.**
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- Should the Alaska salmon fishery enhancement program be used to rehabilitate depleted king salmon runs across Alaska?
  - **Vick: Absolutely not.**
  - **Chinook production for a harvestable surplus has never been sustainable and where it has occurred has cost billions of dollars.**
  - **Chinook production in Alaska, primarily for sports fishing, is limited to an agreement between Sports Fish hatcheries and PNP hatcheries because Chinook notably cannot pay their own way in a PNP production**
  - **Significant peer-reviewed research over the entire Pacific Northwest<sup>i</sup> indicates that hatchery stock will overtake wild stock over a period of time.**
  - **However, there should be a conversation on a very limited mitigation hatchery program. I am not concurring with this concept, but I think we need an informed dialogue.**
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- How can the Department better communicate accurate information about the Alaska Salmon fishery enhancement program?
  - **Vick: There are many ways that the State can help Alaskans better understand the operations and impacts of hatcheries. Aside from previously noted in this letter,**
    - **The annual enhancement reports should include detailed benefits to the common property fishery**
      - **estimated percentage of hatchery fish within harvest**
      - **gross earnings to Alaskans vs. non-resident**
      - **annual and cumulative report of PNP hatchery loans, and interest payments to the State**
      - **annual assessment of cost recovery percentages at each hatchery**
      - **annual reporting of the charts presented in the 2023 Alaska's Fishery Enhancement Program: Planning efforts and production trends**
      - **details on on-going research projects with links**
      - **detailed maps that show hatchery relationship to wild stock streams within a 25-mile (or other relevant) radius**
      - **annual details of enhancement taxes (and rates) from each RAA**
      - **annual and cumulative percentages of wild vs. hatchery in each THA and SHA**
    - **The State should create more infographics on *impacts* of hatcheries**
    - **Alaska should definitely have an *independent* cost-benefit analysis of PNP hatcheries**

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<sup>i</sup> “A global synthesis of peer-reviewed research on the effects of hatchery salmonids on wild salmonids” *Article in Fisheries Management and Ecology* · July 2023 DOI: 10.1111/fme.12643 John McMillan, et.al.