

**STATE OF ALASKA
SENATE**

2011

Source
SR 3

**Senate
Resolve No.**
3



Urging the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to amend the groundfish fisheries management plan for the Gulf of Alaska to allow for an annually adjusted cap of prohibited species catch based on an abundance of bycatch species, and expeditiously to implement a Chinook bycatch cap to limit the number of Chinook salmon harvested as bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council is the federal regulatory body with oversight of fisheries in federal waters; and

WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council currently sets a fixed cap of 2,000 metric tons of halibut bycatch for a trawl fishery and 300 metric tons for a longline fishery, regardless of bycatch species abundance; and

WHEREAS the current groundfish fishery management plan for the Gulf of Alaska does not limit the number of Chinook salmon that can be taken as bycatch; and

WHEREAS the North Pacific Fishery Management Council has not revised the groundfish fisheries management prohibited species catch plan for nearly two decades; and

WHEREAS Gulf of Alaska halibut populations have been steadily decreasing over the past decade; and

WHEREAS the total allowable catch for commercial and sport halibut fishermen has been adjusted to correspond with the decrease in halibut populations; and

WHEREAS the percentage of prohibited species caught has dramatically increased relative to the total allowable catch for targeted halibut sport and commercial fisheries; and

WHEREAS the 2007 and 2010 Chinook salmon incidental catch rate in the Gulf of Alaska reached historical highs of 40,320 and 51,258, respectively;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate urges the North Pacific Fishery Management Council expeditiously to amend the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries management plans to allow for prohibited species catch limits based on the abundance of those species; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate urges the North Pacific Fishery Management Council expeditiously to implement a Chinook bycatch cap to limit the number of Chinook salmon harvested as bycatch in the Gulf of Alaska; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate requests the Governor to encourage his appointees to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to ensure that these matters are addressed by the council with the utmost expeditiousness.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Gary F. Locke, United States Secretary of Commerce; the Honorable Cora Campbell, Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game; James W. Balsiger, Regional Administrator, Alaska Region, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service; Eric Olson, Chairman, North Pacific Fishery Management Council; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.