

Requested by: Deputy Mayor Larson

Adopted: February 11, 2008

Vote: Holler, Larson, Massie, Menard, Metiva and Woodruff in favor

**CITY OF WASILLA
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 08-05**

A RESOLUTION OF THE WASILLA CITY COUNCIL REQUESTING THE STATE OF ALASKA, DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF FISHERIES THAT SOCKEYE AND CHUM SALMON STOCKS OF THE SUSITNA (YETNA) RIVERS AND FISH CREEK BE DESIGNATED "STOCKS OF CONCERN," AND PREPARE A PLAN FOR SALMON ESCAPEMENT ENUMERATION; AND ESTABLISH ESCAPEMENT GOALS FOR ALL SALMON SPECIES OF THE NORTHERN DISTRICT, AND SUPPORT THE ENACTMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE SALMON POLICY INTO STATE LAW.

WHEREAS, the commercial harvest of sockeye salmon from the Northern District of Cook Inlet (NCI) has declined from an average of 180,000 in the 1980's to an average of 26,000 sockeye since 2002; and

WHEREAS, the commercial harvest of Upper Cook Inlet chum salmon has declined from 880,000 annually in the 1980's to fewer than 100,000 salmon during recent years; and

WHEREAS, spawning escapements for Susitna River sockeye have fallen below the minimum goal in five of the past seven years; and

WHEREAS, Fish Creek sockeye escapement thresholds have not been achieved over half of the time over the past ten years; and

WHEREAS, there are no escapement targets for chum salmon in NCI; and

WHEREAS, sport fisheries have been subject to continuous restrictions such as the prohibition of harvesting of sockeye over the past four years; and

WHEREAS, Northern Cook Inlet set net fisheries have had one or more closed fishing periods in each of the past seven years (except 2000); and

WHEREAS, commercial drift net fishing periods have been restricted annually since 2001; and

WHEREAS, chronic inability to maintain both minimum spawning escapements and expected harvests has occurred despite continuous restrictions on the fisheries; and

WHEREAS, the state's Sustainable Salmon Policy falls short of its potential by being regarded as a set of recommendations rather than clear legislative direction and as such being too easy to set aside as management decisions are made; and

WHEREAS, genetic stock identification studies are in midcourse and other Susitna Basin fishery investigations are also in progress, the number of issues cited herein indicate further action is in order; and

WHEREAS, closures, restrictions and related regulatory actions have had, and will continue to have, significant social and economic impacts on Alaskans who rely on these resources.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla requests the State of Alaska, Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), recommend to the Board of Fisheries (with Governor's Office Support) that sockeye and chum salmon stocks of the Susitna (Yetna) Rivers and Fish Creek be designated "stocks of concern", specifically yield concerns, as mandated by the Sustainable Salmon Policy (5 AAC 39.222); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla requests the legislature, with the support of the Governor, fund the development and application of technology that will assure acquisition of multi-species escapement information for Susitna (Yetna) River and Fish Creek salmon with emphasis on sockeye, coho, and chum in that

priority. This includes providing on-going funding for enumerating coho salmon at the Deshka Weir; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla requests ADF&G to prepare a phased enumeration plan, with cost estimates showing the funds needed to add each species beyond sockeye to the project. The development of an all-species enumeration project plan and cost figures by phase will allow the legislature and the Governor to decide the extent to which studies will be cost-effective given the current fiscal environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla considers it essential that escapement goals ultimately be established for all salmon species of the Northern Cook Inlet. It is acknowledged that it could require as much as seven years of capturing escapement counts (per above) to gain sufficient knowledge in support of establishing those goals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Wasilla requests the ADF&G and the Governor support legislative action to enact into statute (and/or regulation as appropriate) a codified version of the Sustainable Salmon Policy.

ADOPTED by the Wasilla City Council on February 11, 2008.



DIANNE M. KELLER, Mayor

ATTEST:



KRISTIE SMITHERS, MMC
City Clerk

[SEAL]

