



Official Business

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## SENATOR THOMAS H. WAGONER

- Member, Senate Resources Committee
- Member, Community & Regional Affairs
- Member, World Trade

Session: January – May

State Capitol, #423

Juneau, AK 99801

Phone: 907-465-2828 Fax: 907-465-4779

Interim: May – December

145 Main Street Loop; Suite 226

Kenai, AK 99611

Phone: 907-283-7996 Fax 907-283-8127

May 13, 2008

Denby Lloyd, Commissioner  
Department of Fish and Game

Dear Commissioner Lloyd:

As you know, the Legislative Cook Inlet Salmon Task Force will hold the first meeting on May 22 at 5:30pm at the Kenai Peninsula College in the Kenai/Soldotna area. I assume you will be present to represent the Department of Fish and Game. Additionally, I think it would be beneficial to have Mel Morris available at all hearings to represent the Board of Fisheries.

In preparing for the hearings I have been working with some of my constituents on relevant testimony and questions of your Department that would better prepare me for the hearings. Here are the four questions:

- 1) At the Board of Fisheries meeting in 2008, ADF&G staff presented data from tagging studies in Upper Cook Inlet that showed over 80% of Northern District coho, chum, pink and Chinook salmon enter the Northern District despite the Central District drift and set gill net fisheries. Would you please prepare for me tables showing what percentage of these stocks enter the Northern District streams based on the data collected to date from the tagging studies and other pieces of information that you may have.
- 2) What is the sport fish harvest on these stocks relative to their average run size? For example, at the 2008 BOF meeting, ADF&G presented data that indicated over 1 million coho salmon enters the Northern District and yet the sport fish harvest was less than 50,000 fish. Would you please provide this comparison of average annual run strength to average annual sport fish harvest for all species? If you do not have all the data to make this comparison please present the comparison for the years you have data.
- 3) How many sockeye salmon does ADF&G actually want to have spawned in the Yentna River drainage and the Northern District total? Prior to the 2008

) Board of Fisheries meetings ADF&G testified that the Yentna escapements were about 25% of the total Northern District escapements and the number of spawners desired was 90,000 to 160,000 actual fish spawning.

If this figure is not correct, what is the actual number of spawning fish ADF&G desires? I am not looking for an index number but the actual number of spawners regardless of counting method. It would appear to me that ADF&G should have this number readily available for the hearings. If not please provide an explanation of why not and what data are required to do so and when it will be available. Since the goal is an SEG I would assume that you do not need the same level of data required for a BEG. In addition, please provide the level of precision that will be increased as a result of delaying making a decision now.

- 4) How does ADF&G plan to count the number of fish to meet the goal established in question 2? If you use a counting method that is an index of escapement, please provide the factual data to establish that relationship. For example, sonar counts to weir counts. Is that relationship significant?

I would appreciate your immediate attention to the above questions and an answer back to my office prior to the May 22<sup>nd</sup> task force meeting.

) Respectfully,

Senator Tom Wagoner

)