

## **PROPOSAL 53**

### **5 AAC 24.368. Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) Hatchery Management Plan.**

Amend the *Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) Hatchery Management Plan* to reduce straying of hatchery-produced salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 24.368. Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) Hatchery Management Plan

(a) **Fish stocks in the state shall be managed consistent with sustained yield of wild fish stocks.**<sup>[1]</sup>The department, in consultation with the hatchery operator, shall manage the Esther Subdistrict and the Perry Island Subdistrict to achieve the corporation's escapement goal for the Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) salmon hatchery. **Management to achieve an adequate return of fish to enhancement projects for brood stock shall be consistent with sustained yield of wild fish stocks.**<sup>[2]</sup>

....

(e) **Wally Noerenberg (Esther Island) has legislative responsibility to incorporate the following PNP Hatchery Act mandated obligations to reduce pressure on wild populations:**

**(1) fish stocks in the state shall be managed consistent with sustained yield of wild fish stocks**<sup>[3]</sup>

**(2) hatchery programs shall be operated without adversely affecting natural stocks of fish in the state**<sup>[4]</sup>

**(3) hatchery programs shall be operated under a policy of management which allows reasonable segregation of returning hatchery-reared salmon from naturally occurring stocks;**<sup>[5]</sup>

**(4) Hatchery program remote release sites shall be located in an area where a reasonable segregation from natural stocks occurs**<sup>[6]</sup>

**(5) hatchery operations and specifications must be consistent with the comprehensive regional salmon plan approved under AS 16.10.375**<sup>[7]</sup>

**(6) the department and board shall define and validate straying proportions “based on the best available scientific information” to sustain productivity, without adversely affecting, or jeopardizing sustained yield of wild naturally occurring salmon**<sup>[8]</sup><sup>[9]</sup>

**(7) validated proportions of benign hatchery salmon straying are defined as chinook xxx%; sockeye xxx%; coho xxx%; chum xxx%, pink xxx%;**

**(8) Until the department and board have a policy of management that justifies and validates this reasonable segregation, of straying proportions without jeopardizing wild stock sustained yield,**<sup>[1]</sup> **the CSP and genetics policy 2% rule will be adhered to within wild naturally occurring streams**<sup>[10]</sup>

**(9) when proportions of hatchery salmon straying exceed validated percentages, jeopardizing sustained yield of wild fish stock, production shall be ramped down the following spring, from each Remote Release Site, hatchery or THA source incrementally until adverse affects cease**<sup>[11]</sup><sup>[12]</sup>

[1] AS 16.05.730 (a) Management of Wild and enhanced Stocks of Fish

[2] AS 16.05.730 (b) Management of Wild and enhanced Stocks of Fish

[3] AS 16.05.730 Management of Wild and Enhanced Stocks of Fish.

[4] PNP Hatchery Act legislative intent

[5] PNP Hatchery Act legislative intent

[6] AS 16.10.420. (10) Conditions of a Hatchery Permit

- [7] AS 16.10.480 (f) Contracts for the Operation of State Hatcheries
- [8] 5AAC 39.222 Policy For The Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries (c)(1) (B),(D), (2)(D); (3)(B),(F)
- [9] PNP Hatchery Act legislative intent
- [10] 5AAC 39.222 Policy For The Management Of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries (c)(1) (B),(D); (2)(D); (3)(B)(F)
- [11] Intent of PNP Hatchery Act
- [12] Article VIII Section3 and 4. Natural Resources, Common Use; Sustained Yield. Alaska Constitution

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** AS 16.10 375 Regional Salmon Plans was the beginning to designate regions of the state for the purpose of salmon production. Salmon Production to aid our at that time failing runs.

The AHRP results presented by ADFG at the Hatchery Committee meeting, showed the Relative Reproductive Success (RRS) averaged 0.42, less than half, of natural stocks reproductive production of hatchery fish in wild streams. Straying is jeopardizing production and sustained yield of wild fish populations.

The Wally Noerenberg WNH (Ester Island) Salmon Hatchery is one of the facilities creating unacceptable inter-regional hatchery straying from PWS into LCI wild significant stocks. Of the facilities in 2014 AFK made up almost 32% ; 15% of facilities were AFK in 2015; and 8% in 2016. You can see the variation within years.

This is unacceptable to the public trust and the laws to protect wild fish in the state of Alaska. Inter-regional straying is not condoned in the Genetics Policy.

In one Significant Stock alone, Barabara Creek, 92.6% were hatchery fish, 87.4% were PWS hatchery fish from 250 miles away with 24% documented through reading otoliths coming from this WNH hatchery. This is not reasonable segregation and is against the law.

This pattern necessitates that production at this hatchery be ramped down by at least 10%-20% increments each year, until this straying ceases. While it is understood that straying varies year to year and system by system it is time to create a framework of phased reduction, and recognize and admit the damage we are exerting as wild populations are getting homogenized into lower productivity opposite the very reason for hatcheries.

**PROPOSED BY:** Pioneer Alaskan Fisheries Inc. (EF-F20-137)  
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