

Committee Chairman

Kelsey Hayden

Committee Members

Kory Blake

Tyler Dillon

Rod Jensen

Trae Lohse

Jerry McCune

John Williams

Committee Staff

Susan Bourgeois

Colette Gilmour

Cordova Fisheries Committee Meeting

May 8, 2025 @ 1:00 pm

Cordova Center Education Room

AGENDA

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Committee Chair Kelsey Hayden, Committee Members Kory Blake, Tyler Dillon, Rod Jensen, Trae Lohse, Jerry McCune, and John Williams

B. Discussion Items

1. Chair report from 03-13-25 meeting..... (page 1)
2. Salmon Harvest Task Force Meeting report
3. Legislative update
4. Next meeting date/time/location

C. Adjournment

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Cordova Fisheries Committee meeting
3/13/25

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Cordova Fisheries Committee! My personal goal was to help create a group of people that are a conduit of information between the council and the commercial fishing industry. We have a great group assembled and covered a lot of ground in our first meeting yesterday. Here is a recap of recent fisheries events, and thoughts going forward.

- **Dec 2024 Board of Fish Recap**

- The 2024 PWS meeting would not have had any celebratory outcomes without the hard work by CDFU member-fishermen, the PWS CR Advisory Committee, and the industry. The big hit of the meeting was the move of the first commercial gillnet opener to May 21st. From direct and personal discussions with BOF members early in the week, it was clear that BOF members were set on creating chinook protections, and would not budge from voting in favor of passing restrictive proposals, due to missing king escapement goals in two and possibly three of the last five years. Initial considerations by the BOF were to pass proposal 51 either as written or with a BOF driven amendment to close early season commercial openers until June 1 - despite overwhelming opposition. CDFU fishermen relentlessly worked with BOF members to negotiate a season start after May 21 along with severe paired restrictions on the personal use dipnet fishery.

Some of the WINS you may not have heard about were...

- The BOF passed proposals that support our harvestable herring populations and regulatory language to more effectively manage a fishery, including adding Kayak Island as a district into the plan. Permit holders can now harvest herring for their own use as bait.
- Sport fishing within 200 feet of the barrier seine in Main Bay.
- An extended season for sablefish
- No personal use sablefish fishery
- The removal of closed waters to pot gear
- Boats being able to use hooks and pots at the same time
- Repealing the closed waters for PWS Tanner crab fisheries
- Repealing the ineffective Tanner crab harvest management strategy in place that would never have resulted in fishing opportunity, and a commitment from the Department to open test fisheries
- Reopening the Dungeness crab subsistence fishery in 2025. If abundance is evident, this gives the potential for a commercial fishery in 2026.
- A directed octopus fishery
- The Anti-hatchery proposal that asked for a 25% reduction in production failed. We expect this to come up again at the Statewide meeting in March 2026.

- **March Board of Fish Statewide Shellfish and PWS Shrimp**
 - The March Shellfish/PWS Shrimp meeting is happening right now. I don't have a full report on that yet, but can by May. CDFU has staff and board members present, and so far the word is things are going well. Our website has information on proposals. This year, the department announced there is no commercial shrimp fishery in PWS
 - The next upcoming BOF Meeting is the Statewide meeting March 2026. Proposals will be due end of April.
- **International Pacific Halibut Commission Meeting recap**
 - CDFU board member Marc Carrel attended the IPHC in early January in Canada. The commission agreed to an overall cut of 15.8% of the coast wide harvest. 3A will take a 20.1% cut, which will translate to approximately a 22% cut in the 3A commercial quotas. The season will open later this year, 6:00 on March 20th and close at 23:59 on December 7th, 2025, due to concerns by NMFS about being able to process all the necessary regulations in time with a new administration.
- **FISHES Act**
 - Murkowski, Sullivan and Peltola last year spearheaded the FISHES act, that requires federal fishery disasters to pay out sooner. It was signed early this year, and it requires that the disaster monies be distributed to the grantees no more than 90 days after the U.S. Secretary of Commerce receives a complete spend plan from the state.
- **Federal Disaster Funding**
 - Applications for processors, permit holders, and municipalities has passed. The deadline for crew to submit an application for the 2018/2020 disaster funds is Friday March 28th. Pay out dates for crew, permit holders, and processors is unknown at this point, but has historically been within a couple months of application deadline.
 - Governor Dunleavy has submitted a disaster declaration request for 2024 Prince William Sound pink and chum salmon fisheries. With the new fishes act, we expect this to pay out much sooner than the 7 years it's taken for the 2018 funds.
- **Legislative update**
 - [HB 111: Finfish Farms and Products by Gov. Dunleavy](#) - This bill aims to establish guidelines for the operation of finfish farms and the management of finfish farm products within the state. While the bill would not allow salmon farming, it does seek to expand fin fish farming practices long banned in Alaska. This bill has not gotten enough support to pass, and while we are monitoring it, it's dead in the water.
 - [HB 33: Conflict of Interest Policy on Board of Fisheries and Board of Game](#) - This bill has circulated through the Legislature a number of times. It's looking to allow Board members who have a conflict of interest on a particular issue to still be able to participate in table discussions.
 - [HB 116 - A bill allowing marine vessel insurance co-ops/pools](#) - There are limited Marine Insurance providers, and while there are currently pools for

Southeast and Bristol Bay, the insurance providers are all in Washington. State law does not allow for co-op marine vessel insurance pools, and HB 116 aims to fix that.

- [HB 125 - Board of Fisheries Membership](#) - Aims to change the make-up of the Board of Fisheries to for diverse representation and expertise.
- [HB 18: VEHICLES/BOATS: TRANSFER ON DEATH TITLE](#)
This bill provides a mechanism for transferring the ownership of vehicles and boats directly to a designated beneficiary upon the owner's death, without needing probate.
- [HB 31 VESSELS: REGISTRATION/DERELICT FUND](#)
This bill deals with the registration of vessels and establishes or supports a fund for dealing with derelict vessels to address abandoned or neglected boats.
- **Alaska Seafood Joint Task Force**
 - There are many problems plaguing the seafood industry, and last spring a task force was created to give the legislature recommendations for fixes. [The full report is worth a read.](#) Some recommendations already have bills drafted. One of particular importance: Municipalities like ours rely heavily on fish taxes. There is a bill being drawn up to give all Fisheries Business Taxes and Fishery Resource Landing Taxes to the communities directly, instead of a split between the state and communities.
- **Upcoming**
 - The next upcoming BOF Meeting is the Statewide meeting March 2026. Proposals will be due end of April.
 - The Salmon Harvest Task Force Meeting will take place on May 6th at 1pm at the Cordova Center. CDFU has a number of meetings scheduled to develop recommendations for the season. VFDA, PWSAC, and ADFG will all give presentations on last season and preseason information.
 - We are planning to have a Fisheries Committee meeting on May 8th.

The Fisheries Committee has the following recommendations for council, and is happy to provide language and supporting letters -

- *Write a letter supporting HB 116 - Marine Vessel Insurance Pools and Co-ops*
- *Write a letter supporting HB 33: Conflict of Interest Policy on Board of Fisheries and Board of Game*
- *We support putting the Breakwater Fill Lot out for RFP*
- *We support putting the Shipyard Expansion Project up for discussion and RFP*

Thank you,
The Cordova Fisheries Committee Chair - Kelsey Hayden