



***Southeast Alaska
Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council***

**Don Hernandez, Chairman
1011 E. Tudor Road, MS121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503**

In Reply Refer To:
OSM.B25031

MAY 06 2026

Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commissioner’s Office
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599

Dear Commissioner Vincent-Lang:

The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) wishes to express its concern about the Eek Lake Sockeye Salmon fishery on Prince of Wales Island. The Council respectfully encourages the State of Alaska to close the Eek Lake subsistence salmon fishery to help protect and rebuild this important stock for the benefit of future generations.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in the Southeast Alaska region. It was established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council’s charter establishes the Council’s authority to initiate, review, and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. The Council also reviews resource management actions occurring outside their regions that may impact subsistence resources critical to communities served by the Council. The Council provides a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region.

The Council met March 18–20, 2025, and Council members received a report on the status of fisheries in Southeast Alaska. This report included harvest and escapement information from several systems, including Eek Lake.

Eek Lake Sockeye Salmon have been monitored under a weir project operated by the Hydaburg Cooperative Association to assess the escapement and harvest of salmon from the system. In 2024, only 162 Sockeye Salmon were counted through the weir, while 225 were observed to be harvested in the subsistence fishery. This continues a recent trend of poor escapements of Eek

Lake Sockeye Salmon that have been documented through the monitoring project. In addition, an unknown number of Eek Lake Sockeye Salmon are harvested in mixed-stock commercial fisheries. It is clear to the Council that the continued harvest of Eek Lake Sockeye Salmon is unsustainable until escapements improve.

Coordination between Federal and State management of this stock is necessary to ensure that fishing opportunities are protected for future generations of Alaskans. The Council understands that Federal jurisdiction extends only to the mean high tide line and does not apply in marine waters where the majority of the fishing is occurring, underscoring the crucial need for ADF&G's collaboration to conserve this stock. Therefore, based on severe conservation concerns, the Council respectfully requests that you direct the ADF&G area management biologist to close the Eek Lake Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery until it demonstrates signs of recovery.

The Council appreciates your consideration of its request and your engagement with the local area management biologist in closing this fishery until the harvest is sustainable. If you have any questions regarding this letter, they can be addressed through our Council Coordinator DeAnna Perry, at 907-209-7817 or deanna.perry@usda.gov.

Sincerely,



Donald Hernandez
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Members
Office of Subsistence Management
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Mark Burch, Assistant Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Interagency Staff Committee
Administrative Record