



Alaska State Legislature

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Sponsor: Sen. Ben Stevens, by Request
Current Version: CSSB 347(RES)
Contact: Cheryl Sutton, 465-2705
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Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 347

Short Title: Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Moratorium

Summary:

- Establishes a temporary moratorium on entry of new vessels into the state groundfish fisheries of the Gulf of Alaska.
- Gives the state the opportunity to plan for the potential consequences of federal management of the groundfish fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska Exclusive Economic Zone.

Benefits:

- Prevents a “stampede” into, and potential closures of, state water groundfish fisheries.
- Avoids a permanent limitation as the only available option.
- Protects the resource, coastal communities, and fishermen during the period of the temporary moratorium.
- Allows the state sufficient time to develop sustainable programs for state water groundfish fisheries that will take effect after the moratorium.

Background:

The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council has been addressing Gulf of Alaska groundfish rationalization over the past 12 years, and is developing several alternative approaches for new management policies. These actions could negatively affect the state water groundfish fisheries. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission have requested Senate Bill 347. Their belief is that this will allow time for the development of a more economically stable fishery with a range of management options suited to gear types and groundfish species in state waters of the Gulf of Alaska.