

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



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## Senator Gary Stevens

For Immediate Release, August 31, 2004  
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### **Senator Gary Stevens Calls for No Changes to Current Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats Clam Farming Regulations**

(Homer) While recognizing the need for greater economic opportunities in the region, District R Senator Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak) said that he does not support a proposal by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to open the Kachemak Bay/Fox River Flats Critical Habitat Area to hardshell clam farming. The area was placed off-limits to commercial harvesting in 2001 over concerns about the incompatible use of on-bottom mariculture. The proposal to lift the commercial harvesting ban has galvanized Kachemak Bay residents, as well as Homer and Seldovia civic leaders in strong opposition to the plan. Many have cited lack of public access to beaches used in the on-bottom clam farming, and denial of traditional harvest rights as reasons to oppose Fish and Game's proposal.

"There are numerous areas outside of the Critical Habitat Area that can support clam farming without affecting the rights of my constituents and the area," Senator Stevens noted. "I urge the Department of Fish and Game to listen to the public on this issue and keep the current regulations in effect."

Fish and Game has held public meetings in Homer and Seldovia to discuss the proposal, and has scheduled an additional public meeting to address the issue on Wednesday, September 8, 2004 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm in the Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center in Homer. Senator Stevens encourages the public to attend this important meeting.

Fish and Game is accepting written public comments through September 15. They may be submitted to:

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(For more information, contact Jane Alberts at 235-0690)

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