

Calendar No. 644

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3429

To establish an Alaska Salmon Research Task Force.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 16, 2021

Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, and Mr. PETERS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

DECEMBER 14, 2022

Reported by Ms. CANTWELL, with an amendment

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italie*]

A BILL

To establish an Alaska Salmon Research Task Force.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Alaska Salmon Re-
5 search Task Force Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

7 The purposes of this Act are—

1 (1) to ensure that Pacific salmon trends in
2 Alaska regarding productivity and abundance are
3 characterized and that research needs are identified;

4 (2) to prioritize scientific research needs for Pa-
5 cific salmon in Alaska;

6 (3) to address the increased variability or de-
7 cline in Pacific salmon returns in Alaska by creating
8 a coordinated salmon research strategy; and

9 (4) to support collaboration and coordination
10 for Pacific salmon conservation efforts in Alaska.

11 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

12 It is the sense of Congress that—

13 (1) salmon are an essential part of Alaska's
14 fisheries, including subsistence, commercial, and rec-
15 reational uses, and there is an urgent need to better
16 understand the freshwater and marine biology and
17 ecology of salmon, a migratory species that crosses
18 many borders, and for a coordinated salmon re-
19 search strategy to address salmon returns that are
20 in decline or experiencing increased variability;

21 (2) salmon are an essential element for the
22 well-being and health of Alaskans; and

23 (3) there is a unique relationship between peo-
24 ple of Indigenous heritage and the salmon they rely

1 on for subsistence and traditional and cultural prac-
 2 tices.

3 **SEC. 4. ALASKA SALMON RESEARCH TASK FORCE.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
 5 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce,
 6 in consultation with the Governor of Alaska, shall convene
 7 an Alaska Salmon Research Task Force (referred to in
 8 this section as the “Research Task Force”) to—

- 9 (1) review existing Pacific salmon research;
 10 (2) identify applied research needed to better
 11 understand the increased variability and declining
 12 salmon returns in some regions of Alaska; and
 13 (3) support sustainable management of salmon
 14 in Alaska.

15 (b) COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Research Task Force
 17 shall be composed of not fewer than 13 and not
 18 more than 19 members, who shall be appointed
 19 under paragraphs (2) and (3).

20 (2) APPOINTMENT BY SECRETARY.—The Sec-
 21 retary of Commerce shall appoint members to the
 22 Research Task Force as follows:

- 23 (A) One representative from each of the
 24 following:

1 (i) The National Oceanic and Atmos-
 2 pheric Administration who is knowledge-
 3 able about salmon and salmon research ef-
 4 forts in Alaska and is from the Alaska Re-
 5 gion.

6 (ii) The North Pacific Fishery Man-
 7 agement Council.

8 (iii) The United States section of the
 9 Pacific Salmon Commission.

10 (B) Not less than 2 and not more than 5
 11 representatives from each of the following cat-
 12 egories, at least 2 of whom shall represent Alas-
 13 ka Natives who possess personal knowledge of,
 14 and direct experience with, subsistence uses in
 15 rural Alaska, to be appointed with due regard
 16 to differences in regional perspectives and expe-
 17 rience:

18 (i) Residents of Alaska who possess
 19 personal knowledge of, and direct experi-
 20 ence with, subsistence uses in rural Alaska.

21 (ii) Alaska fishing industry represent-
 22 atives throughout the salmon supply chain,
 23 including from—

24 (I) directed commercial fishing;

25 (II) recreational fishing;

- 1 (III) charter fishing;
- 2 (IV) seafood processors;
- 3 (V) salmon prohibited species
- 4 catch (bycatch) users; or
- 5 (VI) hatcheries.

6 (C) 5 representatives who are academic ex-

7 perts in salmon biology, salmon management,

8 salmon ecology (marine and freshwater), or

9 comprehensive marine research planning in the

10 North Pacific.

11 (3) APPOINTMENT BY THE GOVERNOR OF ALAS-

12 KA.—The Governor of Alaska shall appoint to the

13 Research Task Force one representative from the

14 State of Alaska who is knowledgeable about the

15 State of Alaska's salmon management and research

16 efforts.

17 (e) DUTIES.—

18 (1) REVIEW.—The Research Task Force

19 shall—

20 (A) conduct a review of Pacific salmon

21 science relevant to understanding and managing

22 salmon returns in Alaska, including an exam-

23 ination of—

24 (i) traditional ecological knowledge of

25 salmon populations and their ecosystems;

- 1 (ii) marine carrying capacity and den-
2 sity dependent constraints, including an
3 examination of interactions with other
4 salmon species, and with forage base in
5 marine ecosystems;
- 6 (iii) life-cycle and stage-specific mor-
7 tality;
- 8 (iv) genetic sampling and categoriza-
9 tion of population structure within salmon
10 species in Alaska;
- 11 (v) methods for predicting run-timing
12 and stock sizes;
- 13 (vi) oceanographic models that provide
14 insight into stock distribution, growth, and
15 survival;
- 16 (vii) freshwater, estuarine, and marine
17 processes that affect survival of smolts;
- 18 (viii) climate effects on freshwater and
19 marine habitats;
- 20 (ix) predator/prey interactions be-
21 tween salmon and marine mammals or
22 other predators; and
- 23 (x) salmon productivity trends in
24 other regions, both domestic and inter-
25 national, that put Alaska salmon popu-

1 lations in a broader geographic context;
2 and

3 ~~(B) identify scientific research gaps in un-~~
4 derstanding the Pacific salmon life cycle in
5 Alaska.

6 ~~(2) REPORT.~~—Not later than 1 year after the
7 date the Research Task Force is convened, the Re-
8 search Task Force shall submit to the Secretary of
9 Commerce, the Committee on Commerce, Science,
10 and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on
11 Environment and Public Works of the Senate, the
12 Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and
13 Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropria-
14 tions of the Senate, the Committee on Natural Re-
15 sources of the House of Representatives, the Sub-
16 committee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Re-
17 lated Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations
18 of the House of Representatives, and the Alaska
19 State Legislature, and make publicly available, a re-
20 port—

21 ~~(A) describing the review conducted under~~
22 paragraph ~~(1)~~; and

23 ~~(B) that includes—~~

1 (i) recommendations on filling knowl-
 2 edge gaps that warrant further scientific
 3 inquiry; and

4 (ii) findings from the reports of work
 5 groups submitted under subsection
 6 (d)(2)(C).

7 (d) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—

8 (1) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—

9 The Research Task Force shall select a Chair and
 10 Vice Chair by vote from among the members of the
 11 Research Task Force.

12 (2) WORK GROUPS.—

13 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Research Task
 14 Force—

15 (i) not later than 30 days after the
 16 date of the establishment of the Research
 17 Task Force, shall establish a work group
 18 focused specifically on salmon returns in
 19 the AYK (Arctic-Yukon-Kuskoskim) re-
 20 gions of Western Alaska; and

21 (ii) may establish additional regionally
 22 or stock focused work groups within the
 23 Research Task Force, as members deter-
 24 mine appropriate.

1 (B) COMPOSITION.—Each work group es-
2 tablished under this subsection shall—

3 (i) consist of not less than 5 individ-
4 uals who—

5 (I) are knowledgeable about the
6 stock or region under consideration;
7 and

8 (II) need not be members of the
9 Research Task Force; and

10 (ii) be balanced in terms of stake-
11 holder representation, including commer-
12 cial, recreational, and subsistence fisheries,
13 as well as experts in statistical, biological,
14 economic, social, or other scientific infor-
15 mation as relevant to the work group's
16 focus.

17 (C) REPORTS.—Not later than 9 months
18 after the date the Research Task Force is con-
19 vened, each work group established under this
20 subsection shall submit a report with the work
21 group's findings to the Research Task Force.

22 (3) COMPENSATION.—Each member of the Re-
23 search Task Force shall serve without compensation.

24 (4) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Secretary
25 of Commerce shall provide such administrative sup-

1 port as is necessary for the Research Task Force
2 and its work groups to carry out their duties, includ-
3 ing support for virtual or in-person participation and
4 travel expenses.

5 (e) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.—The
6 Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not
7 apply to the Research Task Force.

8 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

9 *This Act may be cited as the “Alaska Salmon Research*
10 *Task Force Act”.*

11 **SEC. 2. PURPOSES.**

12 *The purposes of this Act are—*

13 *(1) to ensure that Pacific salmon trends in Alas-*
14 *ka regarding productivity and abundance are charac-*
15 *terized and that research needs are identified;*

16 *(2) to prioritize scientific research needs for Pa-*
17 *cific salmon in Alaska;*

18 *(3) to address the increased variability or decline*
19 *in Pacific salmon returns in Alaska by creating a co-*
20 *ordinated salmon research strategy; and*

21 *(4) to support collaboration and coordination for*
22 *Pacific salmon conservation efforts in Alaska.*

23 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

24 *It is the sense of Congress that—*

1 (1) *salmon are an essential part of Alaska’s fish-*
2 *eries, including subsistence, commercial, and rec-*
3 *reational uses, and there is an urgent need to better*
4 *understand the freshwater and marine biology and*
5 *ecology of salmon, a migratory species that crosses*
6 *many borders, and for a coordinated salmon research*
7 *strategy to address salmon returns that are in decline*
8 *or experiencing increased variability;*

9 (2) *salmon are an essential element for the well-*
10 *being and health of Alaskans; and*

11 (3) *there is a unique relationship between people*
12 *of Indigenous heritage and the salmon they rely on*
13 *for subsistence and traditional and cultural practices.*

14 **SEC. 4. ALASKA SALMON RESEARCH TASK FORCE.**

15 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*Not later than 90 days after the*
16 *date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Commerce,*
17 *in consultation with the Governor of Alaska, shall convene*
18 *an Alaska Salmon Research Task Force (referred to in this*
19 *section as the “Research Task Force”) to—*

20 (1) *review existing Pacific salmon research in*
21 *Alaska;*

22 (2) *identify applied research needed to better un-*
23 *derstand the increased variability and declining*
24 *salmon returns in some regions of Alaska; and*

25 (3) *support sustainable salmon runs in Alaska.*

1 **(b) COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT.—**

2 **(1) IN GENERAL.—***The Research Task Force shall*
3 *be composed of not fewer than 13 and not more than*
4 *19 members, who shall be appointed under para-*
5 *graphs (2) and (3).*

6 **(2) APPOINTMENT BY SECRETARY.—***The Sec-*
7 *retary of Commerce shall appoint members to the Re-*
8 *search Task Force as follows:*

9 **(A)** *One representative from each of the fol-*
10 *lowing:*

11 **(i)** *The National Oceanic and Atmos-*
12 *pheric Administration who is knowledgeable*
13 *about salmon and salmon research efforts in*
14 *Alaska.*

15 **(ii)** *The North Pacific Fishery Man-*
16 *agement Council.*

17 **(iii)** *The United States section of the*
18 *Pacific Salmon Commission.*

19 **(B)** *Not less than 2 and not more than 5*
20 *representatives from each of the following cat-*
21 *egories, at least 2 of whom shall represent Alaska*
22 *Natives who possess personal knowledge of, and*
23 *direct experience with, subsistence uses in rural*
24 *Alaska, to be appointed with due regard to dif-*
25 *ferences in regional perspectives and experience:*

1 (i) *Residents of Alaska who possess*
 2 *personal knowledge of, and direct experience*
 3 *with, subsistence uses in rural Alaska.*

4 (ii) *Alaska fishing industry representa-*
 5 *tives throughout the salmon supply chain,*
 6 *including from—*

7 (I) *directed commercial fishing;*

8 (II) *recreational fishing;*

9 (III) *charter fishing;*

10 (IV) *seafood processors;*

11 (V) *salmon prohibited species*
 12 *catch (bycatch) users; or*

13 (VI) *hatcheries.*

14 (C) *5 representatives who are academic ex-*
 15 *perts in salmon biology, salmon ecology (marine*
 16 *and freshwater), salmon habitat restoration and*
 17 *conservation, or comprehensive marine research*
 18 *planning in the North Pacific.*

19 (3) *APPOINTMENT BY THE GOVERNOR OF ALAS-*
 20 *KA.—The Governor of Alaska shall appoint to the Re-*
 21 *search Task Force one representative from the State*
 22 *of Alaska who is knowledgeable about the State of*
 23 *Alaska's salmon research efforts.*

24 (c) *DUTIES.—*

25 (1) *REVIEW.—The Research Task Force shall—*

1 (A) *conduct a review of Pacific salmon*
2 *science relevant to understanding salmon returns*
3 *in Alaska, including an examination of—*

4 (i) *traditional ecological knowledge of*
5 *salmon populations and their ecosystems;*

6 (ii) *marine carrying capacity and*
7 *density dependent constraints, including an*
8 *examination of interactions with other*
9 *salmon species, and with forage base in ma-*
10 *rine ecosystems;*

11 (iii) *life-cycle and stage-specific mor-*
12 *tality;*

13 (iv) *genetic sampling and categoriza-*
14 *tion of population structure within salmon*
15 *species in Alaska;*

16 (v) *methods for predicting run-timing*
17 *and stock sizes;*

18 (vi) *oceanographic models that provide*
19 *insight into stock distribution, growth, and*
20 *survival;*

21 (vii) *freshwater, estuarine, and marine*
22 *processes that affect survival of smolts;*

23 (viii) *climate effects on freshwater and*
24 *marine habitats;*

1 *(ix) predator/prey interactions between*
2 *salmon and marine mammals or other*
3 *predators; and*

4 *(x) salmon productivity trends in other*
5 *regions, both domestic and international,*
6 *that put Alaska salmon populations in a*
7 *broader geographic context; and*

8 *(B) identify scientific research gaps in un-*
9 *derstanding the Pacific salmon life cycle in Alas-*
10 *ka.*

11 *(2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the*
12 *date the Research Task Force is convened, the Re-*
13 *search Task Force shall submit to the Secretary of*
14 *Commerce, the Committee on Commerce, Science, and*
15 *Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Envi-*
16 *ronment and Public Works of the Senate, the Sub-*
17 *committee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Re-*
18 *lated Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations of*
19 *the Senate, the Committee on Natural Resources of the*
20 *House of Representatives, the Subcommittee on Com-*
21 *merce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies of the*
22 *Committee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-*
23 *resentatives, and the Alaska State Legislature, and*
24 *make publicly available, a report—*

1 (A) describing the review conducted under
2 paragraph (1); and

3 (B) that includes—

4 (i) recommendations on filling knowl-
5 edge gaps that warrant further scientific in-
6 quiry; and

7 (ii) findings from the reports of work
8 groups submitted under subsection
9 (d)(2)(C).

10 (d) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.—

11 (1) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—*The*
12 *Research Task Force shall select a Chair and Vice*
13 *Chair by vote from among the members of the Re-*
14 *search Task Force.*

15 (2) WORK GROUPS.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—*The Research Task*
17 *Force—*

18 (i) *not later than 30 days after the*
19 *date of the establishment of the Research*
20 *Task Force, shall establish a work group fo-*
21 *ocused specifically on the research needs asso-*
22 *ciated with salmon returns in the AYK*
23 *(Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim) regions of West-*
24 *ern Alaska; and*

1 (ii) may establish additional region-
2 ally or stock focused work groups within the
3 Research Task Force, as members determine
4 appropriate.

5 (B) COMPOSITION.—Each work group estab-
6 lished under this subsection shall—

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12 (II) need not be members of the
13 Research Task Force; and

14 (ii) be balanced in terms of stakeholder
15 representation, including commercial, rec-
16 reational, and subsistence fisheries, as well
17 as experts in statistical, biological, eco-
18 nomic, social, or other scientific informa-
19 tion as relevant to the work group's focus.

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21 after the date the Research Task Force is con-
22 vened, each work group established under this
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24 group's findings to the Research Task Force.

1 (3) *COMPENSATION.*—*Each member of the Re-*
2 *search Task Force shall serve without compensation.*

3 (4) *ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.*—*The Secretary*
4 *of Commerce shall provide such administrative sup-*
5 *port as is necessary for the Research Task Force and*
6 *its work groups to carry out their duties, which may*
7 *include support for virtual or in-person participation*
8 *and travel expenses.*

9 (e) *FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT.*—*The Fed-*
10 *eral Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not*
11 *apply to the Research Task Force.*

12 **SEC. 5. DEFINITION OF PACIFIC SALMON.**

13 *In this Act, the term “Pacific salmon” means salmon*
14 *that originates in Alaskan waters.*

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117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 3429

A BILL

To establish an Alaska Salmon Research Task
Force.

DECEMBER 14, 2022

Reported with an amendment