



Alaska Association of Student Governments

Resolution # 11

Stricter Trawling Regulations

Submitted by: Violet Thomas and Maci Burkeen

10/11/2024

Be it Resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments, that AASG supports stricter regulations in regards to trawling

1. **Whereas,** bottom trawling is a type of fishing where huge nets are dragged for miles along the seafloor;¹
2. **Whereas,** pelagic trawling (in the middle of the water column) is mainly used in pollock fisheries;²
3. **Whereas,** Alaska contains more than 70% of the United States' continental shelf, and nearly 150 species of corals and over 200 species of sponges are found in Alaska's waters;³
4. **Whereas,** sponges in Alaska's waters are immediately displaced when trawling;⁴
5. **Whereas,** deep-sea corals extend as far north as the Bering Sea and grow very slowly;⁵
6. **Whereas,** these corals provide habitats for sea stars and a place for cat sharks to lay eggs;⁵
7. **Whereas,** in the last decade bycatch records show trawling fleets in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska have caught, destroyed, and thrown away around 141 million pounds of salmon, halibut, crab, sablefish, and various other species annually;⁷
8. **Whereas,** sea turtles may be injured or drowned when caught as bycatch in a trawling net;⁷
9. **Whereas,** turtle excluder devices (TEDs) are only required when trawling for shrimp and summer flounder, despite Pollock being Alaska's main trawling export;^{7,8,9}
10. **Whereas,** representative Mary Peltola introduced the bill H.R.8507, or the Bottom Trawl Clarity Act of 2024, in May 2024;¹⁰
11. **Whereas,** the bill's goal is "To provide for the designation of areas within which fishing activities using bottom trawls may be carried out."^{10,11}
12. **Whereas,** to date H.R.8507 hasn't passed the House;¹⁰

13. **Whereas**, public comment periods on the bill will be held after the enactment of the Act and before Bottom Trawl Zones are designated,¹¹

Therefore, be it resolved by the Alaska Association of Student Governments, that AASG supports stricter regulations in regards to trawling.

Sources

1. “Net Loss: The Costs of Bottom Trawling in the Gulf of Alaska.” *Oceana USA*, 9 Sept. 2022, usa.oceana.org/reports/net-loss-the-costs-of-bottom-trawling-in-the-gulf-of-alaska/.
2. Leach, Josh. “Trawl Fishing: Wanton Waste on the High Seas.” *Fish Alaska Magazine*, Fish Alaska, 2 Oct. 2023, www.fishalaskamagazine.com/trawl-fishing/.
3. “Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program.” *Deep Sea Coral Data*, NOAA, www.deepseacoraldata.noaa.gov/regions/Alaska.
4. *Trawling Effects on Sponges in Alaska*, NOAA Fisheries, www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/ecosystems/trawling-effects-sponges-alaska.
5. *Innovation to Learn More About Alaska’s Deep-Sea Corals and the Species That Live There Post #8*, NOAA Fisheries, 29 July 2022, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/science-blog/innovation-learn-more-ab-out-alaskas-deep-sea-corals-and-species-live-there-post-8>

6. *Bro, Enough Bycatch*, The Alaska Center, 11 July 2023,

akcenter.org/salmon-clean-water/bycatch/.

7. *Fishing Gear: Bottom Trawls*, NOAA Fisheries, 6 July 2022,

www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/bycatch/fishing-gear-bottom-trawls.

8. *Alaska Pollock*, NOAA Fisheries, 6 Sept. 2024,

www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species/alaska-pollock.

9. *Alaska's Fishing Industry*, Resource Development Council, www.akrdc.org/fisheries.

10. *H.R.8507*, United States Congress, 22 May 2024,

www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/8507.

11. Peltola, Mary. *Bottom Trawl Clarity Act of 2024*, United States Congress, 22 May 2024,

peltola.house.gov/uploadedfiles/bottom_trawl_clarity_act_bill_text.pdf.

Passed with noted opposition

**Passed by the Fall 2024 General Assembly of AASG hosted by
Delta Junction High School**

Francis Myers

AASG Vice President, Francis Myers

Kathleen Navarre

AASG Executive Director, Kathleen Navarre