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Department of
Fish and Game

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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

NOAA Releases New Biological Opinion and Environmental Impact Statement for SEAK Salmon Fisheries

October 3, 2024 (Anchorage, AK) – Yesterday, NOAA Fisheries released a new Biological Opinion (BiOp) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Southeast Alaska salmon fisheries. These documents comply with a court order in the *Wild Fish Conservancy v. Quan et al.* litigation. The new BiOp is the document that provides coverage for the incidental taking of species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act and allows Alaska's Pacific Salmon Treaty salmon fisheries to operate. The court deemed that an EIS was also required to comply with National Environmental Policy Act.

The new BiOp appears to be a far more comprehensive and robust analysis of fisheries impacts to ESA-listed salmon and Southern Resident killer whales, provides objective and measurable protections for ESA-listed Chinook salmon stocks, and consistent and equitable consideration of impacts from all U.S. west coast fisheries on killer whales. We are grateful to NOAA Fisheries for completing these documents ahead of the court-mandated deadline which allows Southeast Alaska salmon fisheries to continue uninterrupted.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game was not part of the team that finalized the rules within these documents. That said, based on our preliminary review, the new rules do not fundamentally alter the status quo for Southeast Alaska salmon fisheries. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and Department of Law are still reviewing the lengthy documents.

The new documents can be found here:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/environmental-impact-statement-issuance-incident-take-statement-under>

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