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## Alaska Wildlife Troopers and Alaska Department of Law Team Up to Prosecute Three Sport Fishing guides in Yakutat

(Yakutat, Alaska) – Alaska is a sportsmen’s paradise. Each year hundreds of thousands of fisherman from around the world descend on Alaska’s pristine waters in hopes of landing that barn-door halibut, record king or simply fill their freezers for the long winter ahead. In 2016 alone, over half a million sporting fishermen traveled here just to catch that one special fish. Sales of sport fishing licenses and king stamps in 2016 generated revenue in Alaska exceeding \$20 million dollars. Truly, Alaska’s fisheries are something worth protecting.



There’s an estimated 3,385 registered sport fishing guides licensed in Alaska who are there to take you on that fishing trip of a lifetime. According to state regulations, fishing guides are forbidden to aide a client in a violation, they are mandated to prevent violations committed by clients and must report violations they witness to the department. In some instances saltwater sport fishing guides are required to follow rules and regulations outlined by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC). Sport fishing guides are further required to record and submit to the department a record of all fish their clients catch in a logbook. Timely and accurate reporting allows the department to effectively manage Alaska’s fisheries for future generations.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers, Wildlife Investigations Unit (WIU), routinely police sport fishing guide services to ensure compliance with State and Federal law. WIU often operates covertly to gain an honest perspective into the daily operation of sport fishing businesses. So it was during July 2017, that the WIU

fished “incognito” with three separate sport fishing guide services in Yakutat. Gross violations of Alaska’s sport fishing regulations were observed during these investigations and charges were forwarded to the Office of Special Prosecutions. By November 2017, these cases were adjudicated in the Yakutat District Court as follows:

- **Yakutat Charters.com**: sport fish guide Kenneth J. Chance, of Yakutat, pled guilty to the charges of sport fish guide aiding in the commission of a fishing violation; limitations for halibut: IPHC or NMFS; illegal possession of sport caught fish; molesting or impeding fish; waste of fish and false entry in a charter log book. Chance was fined a total of \$10,000.00 with \$8,000.00 suspended. Chance’s sport fish guiding license was suspended for two years and Chance was placed on probation for one year.
- **Yakutat Steelhead Inn**: sport fish guide Ronald I. Pelissier, of Castroville, California, pled guilty to two counts of sport fish guide aiding in the commission of a fishing violation; molesting or impeding spawning of fish and illegal possession of sport caught fish. Pelissier was fined a total of \$12,000.00 with \$8,000.00 suspended and Pelissier’s sport fishing guide license was suspended for one year. Pelissier was further placed on probation for a period of one year.
- **Tidewater Charters**: sport fish guide and owner/operator Reginald D. Krkovich, of Yakutat, pled guilty to two counts of sport fish guide aiding in the commission of a fishing violation; two counts of limitations for halibut: IPHC or NMFS; illegal possession of sport caught fish and exceeding the maximum number of fishing lines allowed from a charter vessel. Krkovich was fined a total of \$10,000.00 with \$8,000.00 suspended. Krkovich further received a lifetime revocation of his sport fishing guide license.

Alaska Wildlife Troopers want to remind all sportsmen that while Alaska’s resources are abundant, they are not limitless. Good conservation starts when each resource user adheres to the rules and regulations that govern our sporting community. This helps ensure future generations get to enjoy the same privileges we enjoy today.

The Alaska Wildlife Troopers would like to thank Assistant Attorney General Aaron Peterson and the Office of Special Prosecutions for their help in successfully prosecuting the case.

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