

Sheffield signs state subsistence legislation

ANCHORAGE — Gov. Bill Sheffield signed into law changes in Alaska's subsistence hunting and fishing statutes that "give urban and rural Alaskan alike a fair, enforceable set of rules to live by."

With sport, commercial and subsistence hunting and fishing representatives looking on, the governor placed his signature on HB 288, a bill Sheffield sponsored to return Alaska's hunting and fishing laws and regulations to the stability they enjoyed before a 1985 court decision. State law also

now conforms to federal law on the issue.

"Alaska has some of the best hunting and fishing in the world, and we now have the flexibility in our laws to protect our resources and provide a fair chance for everyone to fish and hunt," Sheffield said.

"I believe the signing of this law finally puts behind us an issue that rightfully can now be addressed where it should be — the Boards of Fisheries and Game. We've got a great regulatory system for fish and game

in Alaska, and I'm glad we can now let it work for everyone," he said.

The new law allows the regulatory boards governing hunting and fishing in Alaska to establish guidelines for subsistence harvests in rural Alaska

and personal use hunting and fishing in all other parts of the state. Subsistence and personal uses join commercial and sport hunting and fishing as the four broad categories of activities allowed under the law.



Gov. Bill Sheffield signs HB288, which guarantees a subsistence preference to rural residents, into law.

photo by Jim Benedetto