

# Cowper turns up heat on interception of Alaska fish

JUNEAU — Gov. Steve Cowper said recently his High Seas Advisory Group has turned up the heat on the federal government to eliminate the high seas interception of Alaska fish by foreign fishermen.

The group recently passed resolutions calling for an immediate moratorium on trawl fishing in the Bering Sea's "donut hole" and for the elimination of the interception of Alaska salmon by both the foreign high seas salmon fisheries and the foreign squid driftnet fisheries.

The group also passed resolutions urging continuing negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union and urging re-authorization of the Magnuson Act which established U.S. control over the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone along the American coast.

Reorganized by Cowper in 1987, the group represents a wide range of commercial, sport and subsistence fishermen, as well as environmental and government officials. Its purpose is to set aside regional differences to achieve a state consensus on policies to stop high seas interceptions of Alaska salmon.

Last summer alone, about 700 foreign fishing boats laid out 20,000 miles of nets across the North Pacific. There is convincing evidence they caught millions of dollars of Alaska-bound salmon.

At a recent meeting in Anchorage the advisory group recommended:

- An immediate public education campaign focused on Alaskans and other West Coast fishermen affected by foreign fishing, members of Congress and key newspapers to draw attention to the issue.

- Working with federal agencies to devise methods to improve enforcement and surveillance of foreign fishing on the high seas and to expand the scientific knowledge of marine resources.

- Support for legislation to strengthen trade sanctions under the federal Pelly Amendment against coun-

tries that refuse to control their high seas fleets.

Immediate congressional oversight hearings on the status of negotiations with Taiwan, Korea and Japan currently being undertaken by the U.S. State Department on the high seas squid fishery.

Last May the United States and Soviet Union signed a fisheries pact which pledges them to eliminate high seas salmon fishing. Negotiations between the two countries are scheduled to begin early this month in Washington, D.C.