

Senate Backs Moratorium On Discharge Permits

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

The U-S Senate today (Tuesday) unanimously passed a bill written by Alaska Senator Lisa Murkowski, which gives commercial fishing boats and other small commercial vessels a two-year moratorium from permits for discharges under the Clean Water Act.

The bill also directs the Environmental Protection Agency to study the types, volumes and effects of discharges from different types of commercial vessels, to determine if permanent exemptions are warranted.

The legislation is a companion bill to the Clean Boating Act, which also passed the Senate by unanimous consent today. That bill already provides a permanent exemption to recreational vessels to the same incidental discharge permits under the Clean Water Act.

The U-S House is expected to take up the bill as soon as this afternoon.

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