

Assembly Considers Fisheries Research Committee

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Erik Wander/KMXT

At its work session Thursday, the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly discussed an ordinance that would create a Fisheries and Oceanic Research Board Committee. Assembly members agreed on the need for such a board to better advocate for the needs and interests of Kodiak's fisheries.

KMXT's Erik Wander has more.

Dr. Murat Balaban has been serving in the role of director of the University of Alaska Fairbanks' Fishery Industrial Technology Center in Kodiak for just over a year. He said that fisheries are critical for Kodiak in terms of economic and social impacts and pointed out that the nature of fisheries issues are always in flux. He said there are factors that can be controlled and some which cannot, such as changes in ocean temperature and the environment. He said the creation of a board would go a long way toward addressing those issues.

-- (Balaban 1 37 sec. "The things that we can control ... really good idea.")

Balaban said creating a board would be the first step in better advocating for Kodiak's needs regarding fisheries issues in Juneau and Washington, D.C.

-- (Balaban 2 27 sec. "The important thing is how ... in the fisheries area.")

Assemblywoman Sue Jeffrey, who is a commercial salmon fisherman, said the assembly feels the advent of a Fisheries and Oceanic Research Board Committee is a good idea, because it provides an opportunity for more communication and collaboration among researchers, fishermen and the public. She also said that Kodiak is the type of community that benefits most from such factors.

-- (Jeffrey 1 55 sec. "We thought that establishing ... in a perfect location.")

If adopted, the ordinance will create a roughly 12-member committee. Board members would include the director of the Fishery Industrial Technology Center, the director of the Kodiak Fisheries Research Center and a representative from the Kodiak office of Fish and Game. It would also include the city and borough mayors as well as the City and Borough managers, a rotating seat of village mayors and representatives from the Kodiak Fisheries Advisory Committee, the Coast Guard and the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

I'm Erik Wander.

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