

# ALASKA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## Interim:

3340 Badger Road, Suite 290  
North Pole, AK 99705  
Phone: (907) 488-5725  
Fax: (907) 488-4721



## Session:

State Capitol, Room 204  
Juneau, AK 99501  
Phone: (907) 465-3719  
Fax: (907) 465-3258

## REPRESENTATIVE JOHN COGHILL

House Majority Leader

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**Contact:** J.D. Wallace  
House Majority Press Secretary, (907) 465-5369

## House Approves Removal of Chitina Dipnet Fee Fishers Not Likely to Trespass on Private Land; Fee Not Necessary

(JUNEAU)—The Alaska House of Representatives approved House Bill 210 by a vote of 31 to four on Monday. Sponsored by House Majority Leader Rep. John Coghill (R-North Pole), HB 210 eliminates the 25-dollar permit fee for a Chitina dipnetting permit.

“Chitina is the only fishery in the state that pays a maintenance fee,” Coghill said. “That fee isn’t necessary, and Chitina should be maintained like any other fishery in the state, without a user fee.”

In 2000, the legislature increased the fee to 25-dollars to guarantee access to the fishery. From each permit, the Ahtna and Chitina Corporations receive 18-dollars as a trespassing fee for river access across corporation land. In 2001, the legislature approved money for the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) to post signs that mark public and private lands surrounding the fishery and to publish a brochure to inform the public about access to the fishery. The legislature also authorized DOTPF to conduct a survey of lands surrounding the fishery. The results are that 60-percent of the land that surrounds the fishery is public land.

“We are adequately marking public access to the fishery, and we’ve informed the public about avoiding private land,” Coghill said. “There is no reason for people to trespass on private lands to access the Chitina fisheries; therefore, we do not need to pay these corporations a trespassing fee.”

HB 210 moves to the Senate.

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