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A RESOLUTION OF THE JUNEAU CHAMBER OF COMMERCE URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS, AND THE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE NOT TO IMPLEMENT PROTECTION OF INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREAS UNDER THE "ROADLESS RULE" OR OTHERWISE RESTRICT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NECESSARY HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS IN THE TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST AND THE CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

06-11

WHEREAS, inventoried roadless areas, as defined in 36 C.F.R. 294.11, constitute approximately 57 percent of the acreage in the Tongass National Forest, and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has designated an additional 35 percent of the acreage in the Tongass National Forest as wilderness, and

WHEREAS, there is an extensive system of federally protected areas in the state, and

WHEREAS, on May 28, 2010, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture issued Secretary's Memorandum 1042-155 that reserves to the Secretary the authority to approve or disapprove road construction or reconstruction and the cutting, sale, or removal of timber in areas identified in the set of inventoried roadless area maps contained in volume 2 of the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Final Environmental Impact Statement, dated November 2000, and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture has approved only seven projects under the authority reserved in Secretary's Memorandum 1042-155, and

WHEREAS, 14 of the 15 hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and Chugach National Forest are subject to the protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R. 294.10 – 294.18 ("roadless rule") and will require approval by the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, and

WHEREAS, failure of the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture to approve the hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest would jeopardize the approval of necessary preliminary permits by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission because, without the Secretary of Agriculture's approval, the hydroelectric projects would not be able to proceed with the field studies and planning that are required for a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission preliminary permit, and

WHEREAS, the inability to develop hydroelectric projects and construct power lines to bring electricity to communities in the state will result in continued diesel power generation that emits pollutants into the environment, and

WHEREAS, the protection of inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" in 36 C.F.R. 294.10 – 294.18 and the inability to produce and distribute hydro-generated electricity will adversely affect communities in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest and will thwart the Governor's goal of generating 50 percent of the energy in the state from renewable sources, and
WHEREAS, the President of the United States has pledged to embrace and encourage the development of renewable energy sources, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Juneau Chamber of Commerce urges the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture not to implement protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R. 294.10 – 294.18 or otherwise restrict the development of necessary hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

COPIES, of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Juneau Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors on the date: March 15, 2011

Cathie Roemmich
CEO, Juneau Chamber of Commerce Representing nearly 400 Business Members