



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Natural Resources

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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January 26, 2018

Honorable Co-Chairs and Members of the House Resources Committee:

During our department presentation to your committee on January 19, 2018, members requested additional information related to various issues. This memorandum is intended to provide answers to those questions.

1. **Questions related to the ability for the department to release seismic data and limitations on the ability to charge fees.**

*The answer to these questions will be answered in a subsequent memo.*

2. **Questions regarding farm-to-school programs and the receipt of grants, specifically in Southeast Alaska.**

*Farm to School is being supported and engaged around the state by the Division of Agriculture. Alaska currently has more than 75% of our school districts participating in Farm to School activities.*

*The Division of Agriculture funded two projects in Southeast Alaska as part of a Team Nutrition Grant; Juneau and Petersburg. This grant was to support Farm to Summer Meal programs and the grant cycle has ended.*

*The Specialty Crop Block grant program has funded two projects; one was a project about garlic production and more recently a Southeast Alaska Local Food Demand Analysis. Recognizing the limited involvement in Southeast, a priority of the Division of Agriculture for this grant program to increase participation is to award regions of the State that have not been previously funded for projects.*

*If you are aware of any of your constituents that may be eligible for involvement in this grant process please have them contact Johanna Herron at [Johanna.Herron@alaska.gov](mailto:Johanna.Herron@alaska.gov) or call her at 907-761-3870.*

3. **Questions regarding the division of agriculture and wild harvest fruits and vegetables.**

*We have hired our first export internship this year whose focus will be to assist companies that can take advantage of the Western US Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA). This internship is paid for by WUSATA and can work with any company that uses American*

*agriculture or harvested products from American waters, this would include kelp and wild berries.*

*Wild harvest fruits and vegetables are not currently covered under the Alaska Grown program, because they are not intentionally managed & cultivated. We will look into what would need to happen in order to include these types of products in the program.*

**4. Questions regarding the 4H program in Alaska.**

*The Division of Agriculture does collaborate with UAF, 4-H, and FFA in addition to multiple other organizations and entities. We partner with these programs as feasible and collaborate throughout the year as well as provide technical assistance as requested and when opportunity arises. Division of Agriculture staff serve as judges for the annual FFA convention and 4-H livestock show at the state fair.*

*The Division of Agriculture has partnered with the University as feasible in multiple capacities. The University of Alaska has had multiple projects funded through the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to support research.*

*FFA and 4-H (i.e. Cooperative Extension) are both programs operated through the University of Alaska system whom have reduced capacity due to decreased funding.*

**5. Request for information regarding the Stikine River and trans-boundary issues.**

*The State's recently confirmed ownership of the submerged lands beneath the Stikine River doesn't change our interest in potential impacts from upstream development activities, or our commitments under the Statement of Cooperation with BC. The State of Alaska continues to closely engage on Transboundary related issues.*

*One area where clearly defined ownership of the submerged lands may be important, however, would be in proposals to use the Stikine for accessing sites in BC that lack road access. Commercial barging for construction of a mine or large development project could involve State authorizations if the barging were to need support infrastructure on the Alaska side (e.g. docks) or if the barge came in contact with the submerged lands (I.e. River bottom). A specific proposal would dictate our level of concern/review/authorization, but generally speaking, if the river were to be used for access to large projects upriver, we would have increased interest and our proven ownership of the submerged lands would be important in that conversation. This same argument holds true for the Taku River.*

*Also, DMLW has issued a water reservation to ADF&G on the Stikine for nearly the entire portion in the river. That reservation has specific minimum flows identified. Therefore, any hydroelectric projects in the watershed that proposes to impound water are of great interest to us. So far BC has only constructed run of river hydro projects, but last year a small company proposed the Moore Creek hydro project that proposed an impoundment. That project has not advanced to an Environmental Analysis (EA) yet.*

6. **Request for a list of agreements with non-profits regarding avalanche dangers in state parks.**

*DPOR has an MOU with the Chugach National Forest Avalanche Information Center as it pertains to avalanche forecasting, warnings and awareness in Chugach State Park.*

*DPOR also works closely with the Hatcher Pass Avalanche Center, though no official MOU exists with them. This past year, DPOR partnered with them to install three new avalanche beacon test stations at key points in the East Hatcher Pass Management Area.*

7. **Description of issues and regulations surrounding trapping in state parks.**

*Several areas are closed to trapping. These areas are enumerated in 5 AAC 92.550.*

8. **How many outbreaks of Canadian Thistle have there been in Alaska?**

*Statewide there are roughly 650 known infestations of Canada Thistle. Of those 650 sites 255 are currently under active management with a goal of eradication.*

Thank you again for the opportunity to present to your committee. If you have any additional questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Mack". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Andrew" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mack".

Andrew T. Mack  
Commissioner  
Department of Natural Resources