

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

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NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

February 17, 2009

Tom Irwin, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources

Dear Commissioner Irwin:

The Natural Resources Conservation and Development Board (NRCDB) has reviewed and discussed House Bill 12 which will create an Alaska Invasive Species Council. It is our understanding the council is the next logical step towards creation and implementation of a statewide strategic plan for the prevention, management, and eradication of invasive species in Alaska. We also understand that states with invasive species councils are likely to be more successful in securing federal funding. The proposed invasive species council will also ensure that all relevant agencies have an opportunity for participation and greater efficiency should be achieved. We do, however, have two concerns related to the current draft of the bill.

- 1) A sunset date for the council should be provided for in the event that productive cooperation is not achieved in a reasonable time frame.
- 2) Sec. 03.22.110 (6) provides for participation by a member of a soil and water conservation district on the council. The NRCDB respectfully requests that the choice of the representative from among the soil and water conservation district cooperators to serve on the council rest with this board. The board feels that we are well suited to choose an appropriate representative based on our strong and knowledgeable ties within the soil and water conservation community.

This board does not generally believe that expanding government and bureaucracy is a wise course but if the formation of this council will improve credibility and possibly increase federal funding to the State, we are supportive. In closing, HB 12 will progress the development of a statewide strategic plan regarding invasive species and hopefully create an all-inclusive productive group in the Alaska Invasive Species Council.

Sincerely,

George Woodbury
Chair, NRCDB

"Develop, Conserve, and Enhance Natural Resources for Present and Future Alaskans"

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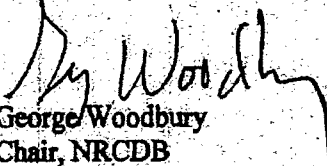
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