



SENATOR DENNIS EGAN

SCR 8 Taku River Task Force

Sponsor Statement

Taku River resources are critical to the economic and cultural foundations of Juneau and make significant contributions to the Southeast region.

The river provides some of the most important salmon habitat in Alaska, directly supporting over 400 commercial fishing-related jobs, along with sport and personal use harvests. All five species of salmon spawn in the river along with eulachon. King, coho and sockeye salmon rear within its banks.

Many local charter and sport fishing businesses depend on the river. Private cabin owners recreate along the river as part of a long-standing traditional use of the Taku watershed. Transportation and tourism businesses operate there.

In recent years, many citizens of the area have become very concerned about protecting the Taku River due to growing industrial-scale use of the river as a barging route. This provided the catalyst for citizens to start talking about how best to manage and protect the unique area and ensure it is available for future generations to play, work, gather food and make a living.

The Taku River Task Force will be a public forum for community input on how best to protect recreational uses and fish and wildlife habitat within the river. Its report and recommendations will be due to the legislature by December 1, 2011.

ALASKA SENATE

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