



REPRESENTATIVE CATHY MUÑOZ

SPONSOR STATEMENT HOUSE BILL 274

Since 2010, I have worked with a local non-profit and the State of Alaska to resolve a long-standing land exchange issue. Despite considerable effort to work within the Title 38 statutory framework, I have found that private land exchanges identified to be in the state's best interest are challenging to execute.

The most recent completed exchange involved state land in Skagway and federal land in Gustavus for the Falls Creek hydro project in 2006. Initial discussions between the National Parks Service and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began in 1980. The intent of House Bill 274 is to address the inherent inefficiencies under Title 38 private land exchanges and to help DNR in their ability to effectively manage state land resources.

The main changes made by House Bill 274 include:

- Exchange procedures will follow AS 38.05.035(e) decisions and AS 38.05.945 notice provisions and will follow state best interest findings.
- The decision can include the exchange of either the land estate or mineral estate without the existing restriction related to separate estates.
- When determining whether the exchange is of equal value, the restriction of only considering the land is removed.
- Removes the one year limitation on the validity of an appraisal.

House Bill 274 maintains the legislative review and approval for exchanges that exceed \$5 million in state land value or for exchanges other than of "approximate equal value."

Thank you for the opportunity to present this legislation and I appreciate your support.