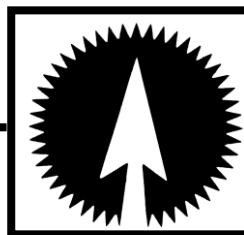


Alaska Forest Association



111 Stedman Street
Ketchikan, AK 99901
Phone: 907-225-6114
Fax: 907-225-5920

March 17, 2016

Senator Cathy Giessel
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau AK, 99801

Senator Bert Stedman
State Capitol Room 30
Juneau AK, 99801

Alaska Forest Association comments in support of SB163

Dear Senators,

The Alaska Forest Association (AFA) is a non-profit business association that was formed in 1957 to represent the interests of the timber industry in Southeast Alaska. The AFA currently manages a pension program, a group health insurance program, a scholarship program for the timber industry and also sponsors the Sustainable Forestry Initiative program for Alaska.

At our Spring meeting in Juneau last week, Michelle Hale, Director for the Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Water (DEC) gave our group a good briefing of the potential impacts of a Clean Water Act – Outstanding National Resource Water designation (Tier 3 water designation).

The AFA supports the intent that only the State Legislature should have the authority to actually make a Tier 3 designation. The DEC already has effective regulatory tools for protecting water quality and the potential implications of adding a Tier 3 designation are so extreme that it should only be done in an extraordinary circumstance with a clear understanding of the impacts of such a designation.

The AFA also agrees with the recommendations of the Alaska Miners Association March 4, 2016 letter to your committee.

Sincerely,

Owen Graham
Executive Director
Alaska Forest Association