

– Senate Bill 88 –

Submitted Testimony to Senate Resources Committee

3 April 2017

by

Charles E. “Ed” Wood

Mitkof Highway Homeowners Association

Petersburg, Alaska 99833

1. Chair and members of the Senate Resources Committee,
2. My name is Charles Wood, and I am speaking in favor of Senate Bill 88 as a spokesman and co-founder of the Mitkof Highway Homeowners Association.
3. The MHHA is a group of 95 Petersburg homeowners living below and commuting along State Highway 7, the Mitkof Highway, which lies at the foot of the Trust’s demonstrably steep, unstable, hillside parcels.
4. The soils across the majority of the Trust’s parcels of concern to our group have been shown by the U.S. Forest Service orthophotographic mapping as landslide hazard soils. The majority of these parcels exceed the Forest Service standards pertaining to logging.
5. The Mitkof Highway corridor below the Trust parcels in question here in Petersburg, have been analyzed and mapped by the Division of Forestry’s Landslide Science & Technical Committee as a landslide hazard zone. The State Division of Forestry has no criteria in its Best Management Practices specific to logging steep unstable slopes within inhabited landslide hazard areas, yet if the Trust were to ever log these slopes, it would do so under the guidance of Alaska’s Forest Resources & Practices Act.
6. The sole focus of the MHHA over the past 11 years has been entirely on public safety. Never once have we mentioned view-shed or community backdrop, local recreational opportunities, wildlife corridor, or tourism, though each of these issues present reasonable arguments in favor of the land exchange.

7. Nor have we offered commentary on the Trust lands next to other communities, or of the Forest Service lands involved with the exchange.
8. Logging the slopes above our homes runs the risk of accelerated landslide activity. Our group believes that the Division of Forestry's Best Management Practices guidelines providing insufficient safeguards to protect our homes and property from unwise timber harvest. Conversely, we do expect that management of our hillside by the U.S. Forest Service will entail other criteria which will ensure that public safety will not be impacted by logging.
9. The Mitkof Highway Homeowners Association asks you to support SB 88.
10. Respectfully,
Charles E. "Ed", Co-Founder
Mitkof Highway Homeowners Association
P.O. Box 383
Petersburg, AK 99833-0383
907-772-3480
fvitalon@icloud.com