

Sponsored by: Assemblymember Sykes
Action:

**MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 17-___**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY SUPPORTING ALASKA STATE HOUSE BILL NO. 6, ESTABLISHING THE JONESVILLE PUBLIC USE AREA.

WHEREAS, the Jonesville area near Sutton gradually turned into a lawless area, over the past several years, that included one shooting death; several near misses; numerous poorly thought out unorganized shooting areas; shots fired at working construction equipment and residential houses; numerous four-wheeler accidents; massive partying with alcohol and other drugs; garbage; human waste and many other thoughtless, unsafe, and undesirable activities; and

WHEREAS, upwards of 20 truck and trailer loads of garbage and contaminants are picked up from the grounds in the area and taken to the local Mat-Su Borough transfer station by community volunteers each year; and

WHEREAS, Sutton community members became concerned and attempted to improve the area, but the undesirable uses grew faster than local solutions, and

WHEREAS, the community of Sutton provided its own resources and funds to clean and monitor the Jonesville area, even though the State of Alaska has jurisdiction over the lands; and

WHEREAS, the State of Alaska controls the active and abandoned mining leases and the moose range located in the Jonesville area, which has a long history of public use under the Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, requests for signage designating public use activities such as shooting and off-road recreational vehicles has not been provided in the absence of a management plan; and

WHEREAS, a management plan and agreement can only be put in place after the area has been declared a Public Use Area by State legislation; and

WHEREAS, the Sutton Community Council established the Jonesville/Slipper Lake Action Committee in November 2015, that reviewed the history, gathered widespread community participation and stakeholder input, and determined a course of action to improve the situation on public lands that also benefits the community of Sutton and the safety of the general public; and

WHEREAS, the Sutton Community sought help from Borough Planning and Land Management officials, Alaska State Department of Natural Resources, and Alaska State Troopers; and

WHEREAS, the current problems are similar to the Jim Creek area lands a few years ago prior to the establishment of the Knik River Public Use Area (KRPUA), and

WHEREAS, the steady establishment of the KRPUA of a shooting

range, designated trails, and other things have dramatically reduced violence, crime, alcohol and other drugs, and changed the character of the land use to be more family friendly; and

WHEREAS, legislation will allow a Jonesville management plan which will better protect the homes and property of local citizens in Sutton; reduce all-terrain vehicle accidents; provide needed safe places for recreational shooting; mitigate illegal dumping; and generally provide a healthier, cleaner and safer environment for public multiple use activities; and

WHEREAS, the areas adjacent to the main Sutton community are beautiful, accessible areas with great potential to have desirable camping, safe shooting areas, designated trails and more family friendly activities.

WHEREAS, the Matanuska Susitna Borough will continue supporting the State's development of a recreational management plan for the Jonesville/Slipper Lake area,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly enthusiastically supports HB6 that establishes the Jonesville Public Use Area.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly this - day of -, 2017.

VERN HALTER, Borough Mayor

ATTEST:

LONNIE R. McKECHNIE, CMC, Borough Clerk

(SEAL)