

Founded 1975

Executive Director
Marleanna Hall

**2019-2020
Executive Committee**
Jeanine St. John, President
Scott Jepsen, Sr. Vice President
Mike Satre, Vice President
Lori Nelson, Secretary
Lance Miller, Treasurer
Eric Fjelstad, Past President

Anna Atchison
Carol Fraser
Tim Gallagher
Scott Habberstad
Bill Jeffress
Wendy Lindskoog
Tom Maloney
Sam Mazzeo
Kara Moriarty
Hans Neidig
Christy Resler
Ralph Samuels
John Shively
Loralie Simon
Casey Sullivan
Sinclair Wilt

Directors
Greg Baker
Joe Balash
Rosie Barr
Chris Barrows
Greg Beischer
Genevieve Bell
Ethan Berto
Patrick Carter
David Chaput
Andy Cole
Steve Connelly
Jason Criqui
Gary Dixon
Kelly Droop
DJ Fauske
Mike Ferris
Stan Foo
James Fuego
Gideon Garcia
Paul Glavinovich
Stephen Grabacki
Karl Hanneman
Chuck Heath
Josie Hicel
Jim Hill
Matt Holta
Joy Huntington
Teresa Imm
Mike Jungreis
Rada Khadjinova
Jaeleen Kookesh
Thomas Krzewinski
John Lau
Tom Lovas
Thomas Mack
Wendie MacNaughton
Stephanie Madsen
Karen Matthias
Joey Merrick
Ben Mohr
Lisa Parker
Judy Patrick
Steve Post
Shannon Price
Greta Schuerch
Ethan Schutt
Alicia Siira
Keith Silver
Chad Steadman
Phil Steyer
John Sturgeon
Jan Trigg
Tim Williams
Sam Wolfe

Ex-Officio Members
U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski
U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan
Congressman Don Young
Governor Michael J. Dunleavy



RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

March 20, 2020

The Honorable Peter Micciche, Chair
Senate Resources Committee
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801
Sent via Senate.Resources@akleg.gov

Re: SB 160, Forest land use plans, appeals, and negotiated timber sales

Dear Chairman Micciche and members of Senate Resources:

The Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc. (RDC) is writing to support Senate Bill 160, An Act relating to forest land use plans, relating to forest land use plan appeals, and relating to negotiated timber sales.

RDC is a statewide trade association comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's fishing, forestry, mining, oil and gas, and tourism industries. RDC's membership includes Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

SB 160 is a good attempt by the Alaska Division of Forestry (DOF) to address problems with the current timber sale process and authorities. Under current law, negotiated timber sales are authorized under three different statutes. RDC agrees this framework is unnecessarily complicated and confusing. In addition, DOF lacks authority to offer long-term negotiated sales for out-of-state markets, and to offer more than one negotiated sale per year to a purchaser, which the industry currently requires.

For large acreage and long-term sales, DOF may issue a Best Interest Finding (BIF) and award the sale before all the Forest Land Use Plans (FLUPs) for the sale area are completed. In these cases, the BIF and FLUPs may be appealed at different times, delaying the sale and interrupting harvest operations. This creates considerable uncertainty for DOF and industry in executing the sale.

RDC supports DOF's proposed statute changes that consolidate small-scale negotiated sales now under AS 38.05.115 into the large-scale negotiated timber sales statute (AS 38.05.118 and delete the requirements that negotiated sales must be for local manufacture, and that only one per year may be offered to a purchaser. These revisions will provide the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources with the flexibility to negotiate timber sales that balance the evolving economics of the timber industry with the Alaska Constitutional mandate for resource development in the public interest. The revisions will also protect forest land use plans from being subject to appeal or reconsideration, while keeping a best interest finding concerning a timber sale appealable under the same statute. This will result in more efficient forest management planning and more predictable timber harvests, while retaining robust public and agency participation in the process.

RDC also supports preserving the exemption for negotiated sales of less than 500,000 board feet of timber from the written BIF requirement under AS 38.05.035(e)(6)(A). Moreover, RDC supports leaving intact AS 38.05.123, which deals with negotiated timber sales for local manufacture of wood products, to assure domestic manufacturers that they have an authority tailored to their specific needs.

RDC applauds DOF for its efforts through this legislation to address issues with the current process and put forward specific measures to make it more efficient. Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Carl Portman
Deputy Director

cc: Chris Maisch, State Forester, Division of Forestry
Laura Ogan, Division of Forestry