



University of Alaska

Land Grant Status

Senate Joint Resolution 8

House Resources Committee

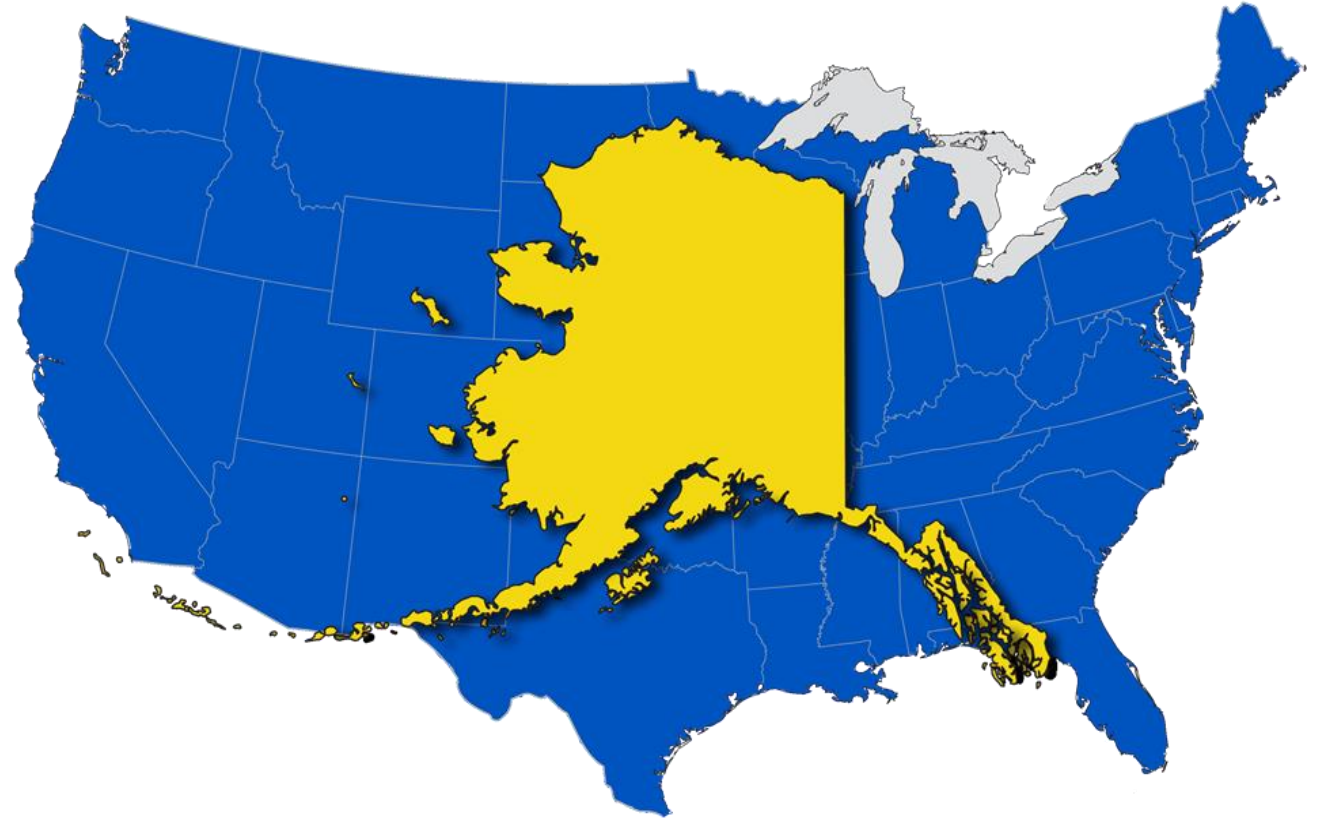
April 7, 2021



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

University Land Grant

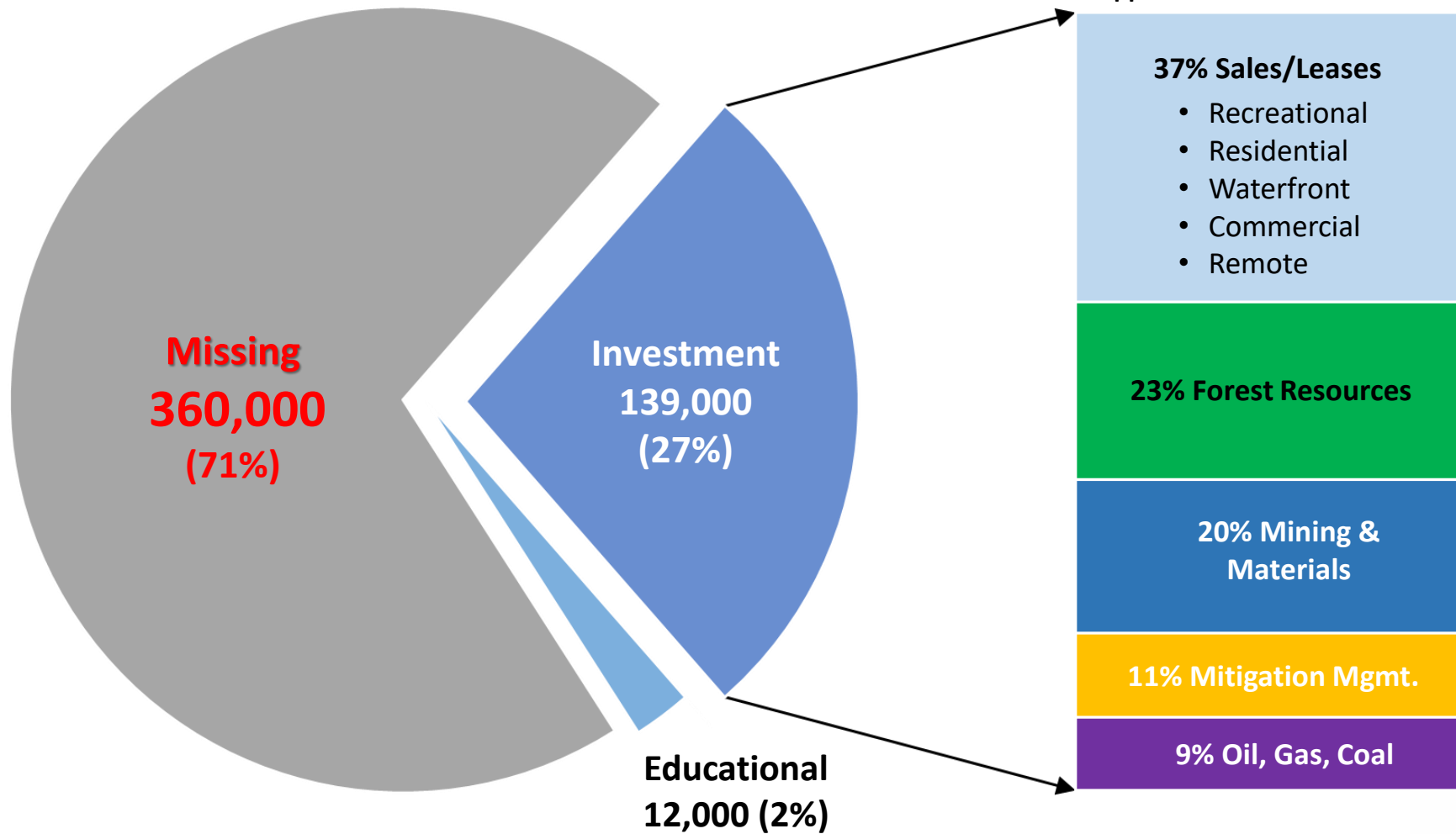
- Only Delaware & Hawaii rank below Alaska in higher education land grants
- UA only received ~111,000 acres of its federal land grant entitlement
- This grant makes up the bulk of UA's current 151,000 acre holdings
- Remaining land received from state & municipal sources, private gifts and bequests, and UA land acquisitions



***UA's Land Grant deficit is
360,000 acres***

UA Land Holdings

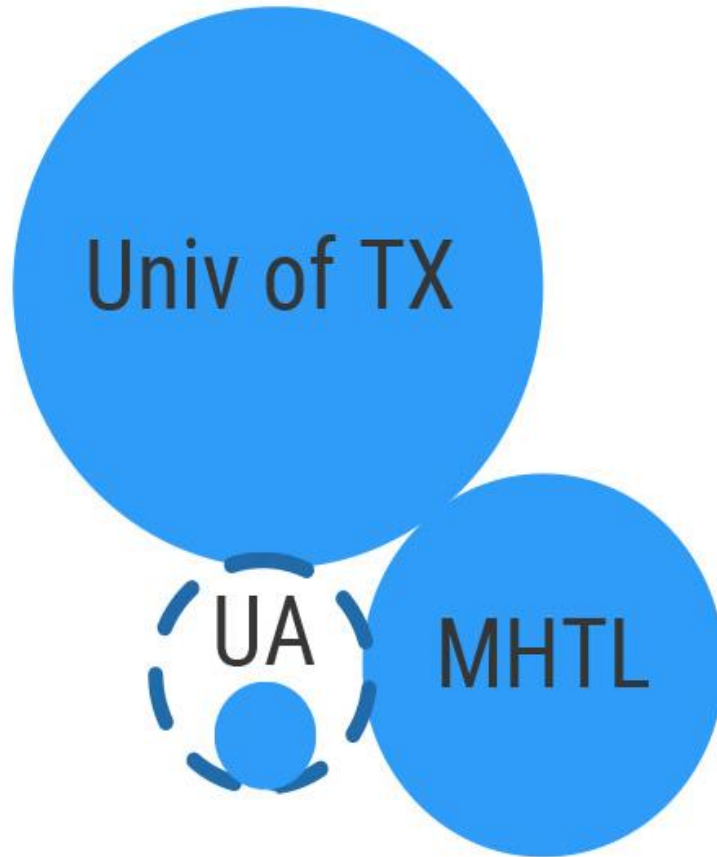
~151,000 acres



Educational: Includes campuses, research sites and other facilities



UA Land Grant Acreage Comparison



Univ. of Texas	Univ. of Alaska	Mental Health Trust
2.1 Million Acres	150,000 Acres <i>(360,000 missing)</i>	1 Million Acres
Generated \$21.4 billion <i>(cumulative as of 2019)</i>	Generated \$6.8 million <i>(2019)</i>	Generated \$10.6 million <i>(2019)</i>

***Despite an incomplete land endowment
UA has generated more than
\$220 million from its trust land assets
since 1980s***

Land Grant History

Pre-Statehood Federal Laws for UA Lands

- **1862 Morrill Act:** Each state upon admission was to receive 30,000 acres per each member of Congress (90,000 acres for Alaska) dedicated to higher education. Provisions not extended to Alaska at Statehood and so no acreage was conveyed to UA.
- **1915 “Wickersham” Land Grant Statute:** Reserved an estimated 336,000 acres in Tanana Valley area. Lands remained largely unsurveyed and less than 5% were ever conveyed to UA.
- **1929 “Sutherland” Land Grant Statute:** Congress grants 100,000 acres for UA. Left intact at Statehood, and acreage is (eventually) conveyed to UA, where it makes up most of current land holdings.

Land Grant History

- Following Statehood, the Alaska Legislature tries to provide UA's land. In **1959** a bill reserving 1 million acres, passes both Houses, but is vetoed
- Alaska Legislature in **2000** passes bill, and overrides gubernatorial veto, to grant UA 260,000 acres
- In **2004**, Alaska Supreme Court rules land conveyance is not an appropriation, but declines to address dedication clause issue

Land Grant History

- **2005:** Legislation identifies specific lands for transfer to UA (HB 130)
- **2007:** Environmental group sues arguing land transfer violates Constitution's anti-dedication clause (Article 9, Section 7)
- **2009:** Alaska Supreme Court agrees and strikes down the 2000/2005 legislation. State can't make a land grant to UA that "would operate in a manner similar to the way that the University's federal land grant has operated since before statehood."
- **2010:** UA begins transferring land back to the state
- **Today:** UA owns ~151,000 acres, most from 1929 Sutherland Act, private party donations, as well as from local governments.

Fulfilling UA's Land Grant

- Robust permanent land endowment would allow University to generate more revenue, and over time help moderate state general fund support
- State of Alaska repeated attempts to remedy gap, but constitutionally precluded from doing so
- Federal government's position is that University land was included in Alaska's Statehood Act grant and has resisted remedies that rely solely on additional federal lands

Framework for Solution

- Dedications are constitutionally allowed when required by federal government for state participation in federal programs
- Solution may entail a collaborative state-federal program
- Alaska Congressional Delegation, Governor, DNR and Dept. of Interior are working together to achieve a solution to fulfill UA's land grant

University of Alaska Fiscal Foundation Act

- Federal legislation by Alaska's Congressional Delegation
- Establishes program within Bureau of Land Management to identify and convey available lands to UA from lands selected by State of Alaska
- Framework for UA and State to jointly identify up to 360,000 acres
- U.S. Dept. of Interior will provide technical assistance identifying lands for inclusion in program
- Delegation working towards reintroduction in 117th Congress

Thank You