

# STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

## 2012

### Source

SCS CSHJR 20(RES)

### Legislative Resolve No.

63



Urging the President of the United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture not to implement protection of inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" or otherwise restrict the development of necessary hydroelectric and other natural resource projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

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### BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

**WHEREAS** inventoried roadless areas, as defined in 36 C.F.R. 294.11, constitute approximately 57 percent of the acreage in the Tongass National Forest; and

**WHEREAS** the United States Congress has designated an additional 35 percent of the acreage in the Tongass National Forest as wilderness; and

**WHEREAS** there is an extensive system of federally protected areas in the state; and

**WHEREAS**, on May 28, 2010, the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture issued Secretary's Memorandum 1042-155 that reserves to the Secretary the authority to approve or disapprove road construction or reconstruction and the cutting, sale, or removal of timber in areas identified in the set of inventoried roadless area maps contained in

volume 2 of the Forest Service Roadless Area Conservation Final Environmental Impact Statement, dated November 2000; and

**WHEREAS** the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture has approved only seven projects under the authority reserved in Secretary's Memorandum 1042-155; and

**WHEREAS** Southeast Alaska has some of the largest deposits of precious metals in the world, and the region's economy is dependent on the responsible development of these natural resources; and

**WHEREAS** 14 of the 15 hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and Chugach National Forest are subject to the protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.18 ("roadless rule") and will require approval by the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture; and

**WHEREAS** failure of the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture to approve the hydroelectric and other natural resource projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest would jeopardize the approval of necessary preliminary permits by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and other federal agencies because, without the Secretary of Agriculture's approval, the projects would not be able to proceed with the field studies and planning that are required for permitting; and

**WHEREAS** the inability to develop hydroelectric projects and construct power lines to bring electricity to communities in the state will result in continued diesel power generation that emits pollutants into the environment; and

**WHEREAS** the protection of inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" in 36 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.18 and the inability to produce and distribute hydro-generated electricity and develop abundant natural resources will adversely affect communities in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest and will thwart the policies of the state, as stated in sec. 1, ch. 82, SLA 2010, to generate 50 percent of the energy in the state from renewable sources and, under AS 44.99.110, to encourage mineral development; and

**WHEREAS** the President of the United States has pledged to embrace and encourage the development of renewable energy sources and has set a goal of having 25 percent of the energy generated in the United States come from renewable energy resources by 2025;

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the President of the

United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture not to implement protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.14 or otherwise restrict the development of necessary hydroelectric and natural resource projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

**COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.