

From: [Ed Weiss](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Cc: [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Joe Meehan](#)
Subject: HB321 support
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 9:47:26 AM

I'm writing in support of passage of HB321 in hopes that you will pass these needed changes. These land description errors and additions to state refuge lands have caused management issues for many years. Correcting these boundary descriptions and additions will greatly improve management and relieve public confusion when it comes to using these public lands.

Edward W Weiss

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Sent from my iPhone

From: [Charles Hamilton](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Cc: [Joe Meehan](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#)
Subject: In Support of House Bill 321
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 2:44:28 AM

Dear Members of the Alaska House Resources Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 321, "An Act relating to state refuges, sanctuaries, and fish and game critical habitat areas; relating to the hunting of brown bear; and providing for an effective date." Alaska's wildlife and public lands are among our state's greatest treasures, and thoughtful stewardship of these resources is essential for current residents and future generations.

As a professional wildlife biologist with more than 30 years of experience, I believe HB 321 provides an important step toward improving the clarity and consistency of how Alaska manages its special wildlife areas. By standardizing the designation and management framework for state refuges, sanctuaries, and critical habitat areas, the bill helps reduce confusion and strengthens the long-term protection and responsible use of these lands. A clear and unified system benefits wildlife managers, residents, hunters, subsistence users, and visitors alike.

Alaska's ecosystems are diverse and complex, and the species that depend on them—such as brown bears, caribou, moose, and other wildlife—require careful, science-based management. Ensuring that wildlife refuges and sanctuaries are managed with clear statutory intent supports sustainable wildlife populations while maintaining opportunities for public access, recreation, and traditional uses.

In a state where natural resources are deeply tied to our identity, culture, and economy, policies that promote responsible stewardship are vital. HB 321 moves Alaska in the right direction by improving the legal framework that guides how we care for our wildlife and habitat areas.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued work on behalf of Alaska's lands, wildlife, and communities. I respectfully urge you to support House Bill 321.

Kind Regards,

Charles S. Hamilton

Anchorage, Alaska

CC: Andy Josephson; Joe Meehan

From: [Vivian Mendenhall](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Cc: [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Joe Meehan](#)
Subject: Comment in support of HB321
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 10:19:45 PM

March 15, 2026

House Resources Committee
Alaska House of Representatives

My name is Vivian Mendenhall. I am a retired Wildlife Biologist with a specialty in birds, primarily water birds. I have spent many hours on Alaska State Refuges and Critical Habitats, observing birds, enjoying them, and learning ever more about their ecology and behavior.

I totally **support House Bill 321**, as submitted by Representative Andy Josephson. It will give Refuge managers more precise tools for preserving fish and wildlife populations and their habitats. It also directs better management of visits by the public, whether for hunting, bird-watching, or general enjoyment.

Adjustment of Refuge boundaries to include some nearby areas will benefit their protection. And removing Refuge jurisdiction from Native Corporation inholdings is an important recognition of their cultures and subsistence rights.

The most beneficial single change from HB321 will be the prohibition of motorized watercraft in Kachemak Bay. The birds that feed and nest in this "Critical Habitat" need protection from loud, fast-moving, wave-making machines. When I last visited the bay it was a quiet sanctuary for numerous waterfowl and other birds. But a recent court decision repealed that protection. HB321 will restore the bay to good management.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Vivian Mendenhall, PhD

[REDACTED]

Anchorage, AK 99516

[REDACTED] (landline)

[REDACTED]

From: [Theodore L Schmidt](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: House Bill 321
Date: Monday, March 16, 2026 11:45:02 AM

Respectfully

As a 30yr residents of, Homer, Alaska I, and my wife Tamara would like to express our support for House Bill 321.

We believe it is a reasonable solution to recognize the change in land & water designations that would insure protections to the fish, wildlife and long term enviromental quality of these areas.

We humbly request you seriously consider passing the Bill 321.

Theodore & Tamara Schmidt

██████████ Homer, Ak 99603

contact # ██████████

From: [Steve Hughes](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: HB 321
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 2:23:15 PM

Please reinstate the ban on Jet Ski's in Kachemak Bay State Park by passing HB 321. The repeal of this ban was misdirected and an insult to the majority of citizens who testified in support of keeping jet skis out of Kachemak Bay. These noisy, dangerous, and environmentally destructive thrill craft are in direct contrast to the original management plan for Kachemak Bay State Park which emphasizes preservation of natural habitat and minimal impacts on wilderness Park users.

Steve Hughes

From: [Nina Faust](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Cc: [Sen. Gary Stevens](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#); [Rep. Andy Josephson](#)
Subject: HB 321
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 6:13:22 PM


Homer AK 99603

House Resources
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Representatives:

My recent letter supporting HB 321 did not specifically address the issue of jetskis in Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats Wildlife refuges. I would like to see personal watercraft banned in these important wildlife habitats. The previous ban was widely supported after a very thorough public process to put the ban in place. Over the years I have talked with many visitors who have expressed their deep appreciation that the community had the foresight to ban these machines because the visitors had been to many places in the Lower 48 where personal watercraft were allowed. They appreciated the quiet of Kachemak Bay and that we had kept these types of vessels out of such a rich and sensitive environment. They also remarked that nearshore experiences here are delightful because almost all of the nearshore recreation on the water is quiet sports like kayaking, surfing, and kiteboarding.

Overall, our state budget is not adequate to police user conflicts near shore on the Homer side and damage to wildlife in shallow water areas in coves and bays on the other side of the Bay. Prevention through a personal watercraft ban, as we have had for nearly 20 years, is the most effective way to protect wildlife and habitat, as well as the reputation Homer has developed over the years as a "place of quiet beauty" in an incredibly beautiful setting.

Please pass HB 321. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Nina Faust

Below is my previous letter.



Homer AK 99603

House Resources
Alaska State Legislature

Dear Representatives:

House Resources Committee

RE: HB 321. "An Act relating to state refuges, sanctuaries, and fish and game critical habitat areas; relating to the hunting of brown bear; and providing for an effective date."

I urge you to support HB 321 as it will simply regulations governing Special Areas by changing all the various language used for these designated areas to just two specific terms: "Wildlife Refuges and Wildlife Sanctuaries." This will bring clarity and understanding of the uses and restrictions on these areas and their purpose.

It is important to retain the public uses and firearms regulations consistent with their original plans. I fully support the continued prohibition of personal watercraft in all these areas to protect their special qualities.

In the Homer area, many land acquisitions have been made adjacent to a number of these Special Areas. I fully support adding all of these to their adjacent Refuge or Sanctuary lands. The additional lands were protected to add a buffer to the protected areas, so they in turn should be protected under the State Refuge and Sanctuary regulations.

Adding adjacent state-owned lands sandwiched between McNeil Sanctuary and Katmai National Park is very important to the protection of the McNeil bears who roam these lands between the two special areas. McNeil and Katmai are world-class bear viewing areas, and as such, extra protection should be given to the land between to protect the bears. All these lands should be closed to brown bear hunting to protect this special bear population.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope you will support this bill.

Respectfully,

Nina Faust

From: mikeo@horizonsatellite.com
To: [House Resources](#)
Cc: [Rep. Andy Josephson](#); [Joe Meehan](#); [Rep. Sarah Vance](#)
Subject: HB 321:state wildlife refuges and sanctuaries
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 5:48:53 PM

Dear Co Chairs Frier, Dibert and Resources Committee members,

I support Representative Andrew Josephson's HB 321 as it is written. I've lived in Alaska since 1969 and have spent a great deal of time enjoying many of the special areas that are subjects of this bill. For the last fifty of those years I've lived overlooking the mouth of Kachemak Bay. This has given me a powerful sense of just how important these natural places are to our health, welfare, and prosperity. Like most of my neighbors, having access to the resources of our protected areas has provided fish, meat, recreation, education, beauty and solace in an often confusing and frustrating world. HB 321 is a long and complex document so I will be brief in my comments here.

HB 321 offers necessary clarification of the purpose of these natural areas, updates and unifies what they are called to better align with their purpose, makes some appropriate boundary changes and additions, and limits or specifically prohibits certain inappropriate uses. I am particularly supportive of reinstating prohibition of personal water craft in the Kachemak Bay and Fox River Flats Wildlife Refuges. Please throw your support behind Representative Josephson's bill. Without these adjustments I fear that we will leave our precious protected areas vulnerable to abuse and degradation.

Please accept my appreciation for the opportunity to comment and for the difficult work you do as legislators.

Many thanks,

Mike O'Meara
Homer and Anchor Point

From: [Diane K Frank](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: HB 321
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 3:01:16 PM

March 15, 2026

Alaska State Legislature
House Resources Committee
house-resources@alleg.gov

Dear Committee Members:

We generally support the passage of HB 321. However, we urge the committee to consult with the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation ("DPOR") concerning the adequacy of HB 321's proposed definition of "personal watercraft," a.k/a jet skis. The proposed definition is identical to the definition that DPOR currently uses and that definition has not kept pace with the changes manufacturers are making to jet skis.

Section 74 of HB 321 would add a definition of "personal watercraft" to AS 16.20.580 as follows:

"(b) A person may not operate a personal watercraft within the Fox River Flats Wildlife Refuge established under (a) of this section.

- (c) In this section, "personal watercraft" means a vessel that is
(1) less than 16 feet in length;
(2) propelled by a water jet pump or other machinery as its primary source of motor propulsion; and
(3) designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on the vessel, rather than by a person sitting or standing inside the vessel."

(Emphasis added.) As noted above, the new subsection (b)(3) contains language identical to DPOR's regulatory definition of "personal watercraft" governing State park waters. See 11 AAC 20.990(c)(19). This definition was adequate when DPOR first adopted it many years ago. At that time, jet skis did not have large covered wind shields, overhead canopies, and side shields that allowed the jet ski operator to sit or stand. The use of the phrase in the definition "rather than by a person sitting or standing inside the vessel" was intended to exclude from the ban larger craft in which an operator could sit or stand, e.g., recreational fishing boats, as these craft did not create the noise, high speed, sharp turning and other issues associated with jet skis.

A couple of years ago, however, a new model or style or version ("model") of jet ski appeared in Tutka Bay in Kachemak Bay State Park, a model apparently being manufactured in Homer. It had a wind shield and covered canopy that allowed the operator to remain seated. It exhibited all the high speed, excessive noise, sharp turning capability, and other problematic features of a typical jet ski. Yet it was wider, had a wind shield, and a covered canopy, all of which make it possible for the operator to sit or stand. Consequently, its use in Kachemak Bay State Park was not banned by the DPOR regulation. Nor was its use banned in the adjoining ADF&G-managed critical habitat areas and refuges where a personal watercraft definition and ban identical to DPOR's applied.

Use of this new model of jet ski should not be allowed in our State parks, critical habitat areas, or refuges. The new model causes exactly the same problems as the previous, more commonly seen models of jet skis.

We therefore urge the committee to amend the proposed definition of "personal watercraft" in Section 74 of HB 321 to better capture the entire range of possible jet ski models such that the ability of the operator to "sit[] or stand[] inside the vessel" does not lead to the definition inadvertently excluding the watercraft from the ban. This new definition should be part of AS 16 and for consistency of enforcement also part of AS 41.21 (governing State parks).

What follows are links to Alaska Fish Magazine describing the new, two-seater "modern" jet ski: <https://www.alaskafishmagazine.com/nimi-jet-boats/>
<https://www.alaskafishmagazine.com/nimi-jet-boats-2/>

The link below is video showing use of the jet ski in Tutka Bay:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/C8fG6Ns0fD2/>
<https://www.instagram.com/p/C8fG6Ns0fD2/>
<https://www.instagram.com/p/C8fG6Ns0fD2/>

Thank you for considering these comments.

Mike and Diane Frank
Anchorage, AK 99517

From: [michael Bayers](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: House bill 321
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 12:17:41 PM

I support, and urge you to support, provision 1 through 6 of house bill 321 as suggested by Cook Inletkeeper.

Michael Bavarsky

[REDACTED]

Homer

[REDACTED]

From: akwildlifeimages@gci.net
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: house bill 321
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 8:15:04 PM

Hello

I would like to voice my support for House Bill 321. Mcneil River bears regularly use the refuge and should be protected from any threat of sports hunting. These bears are worth protecting and are worth much more alive than dead. Bear viewing brings in millions of dollars and supports thousands of local jobs. McNeil bears in particular. Please do the right thing and pass House Bill 321.

Sincerely

Didier J Lindsey


Vice President

Friends Of Mcneil River

From: [Ben Harness](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: House Bill 321
Date: Sunday, March 15, 2026 11:26:06 AM

Please support House Bill 321 to protect Kachemak bay's critical habitat.
This is paramount for the environment as well as the local ecotourism industry.
Many thanks

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Ben Harness
General Contractor
Harness Bros. Construction LLC


From: [Anne Marie Holen](#)
To: [House Resources](#)
Subject: Support for HB 321
Date: Saturday, March 14, 2026 1:25:40 PM

Dear Members of the House Resources Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 321, which slightly expands the boundaries of the Kachemak Bay Critical Habitat Area, adopts wording to clarify that this area is a wildlife refuge, and makes it clear that personal watercraft (e.g. jet-skis) are prohibited from Kachemak Bay and the Fox River Flats Wildlife Refuges.

I have spent many wonderful days on Kachemak Bay over the last 49 years, many of them on kayaking trips up to a week in length. It is one of my favorite places in the world.

When I was working for the City of Homer, I had a quote taped to my computer that read:

NOTHING IN THE WORLD THESE DAYS STAYS SPECIAL BY ACCIDENT.

On that note, please help preserve this special place for current and future generations of people and wildlife.

Gratefully,

Anne Marie Holen