



BRIEFING PAPER: Remote Recreational Cabin Sites

– SB 198/HB 281

January 2024

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF MINING, LAND & WATER

SB 198/HB 281 would repeal and reenact the existing Remote Recreational Cabin Site (RRCS) staking program statute in AS 38.05.600 to increase opportunities for Alaska residents to permit, lease, and purchase state land for a remote recreational cabin site. The bill outlines a process to be followed when the commissioner offers available land and the ability for the public to nominate land to be permitted, leased, or purchased and directs the commissioner to establish regulations to implement the program.

The bill provides for the commissioner to annually identify areas where land is properly classified, publish and provide public notice for an annual schedule of land offerings suitable for remote recreational sites, and offer those lands for staking. It also allows Alaskans to nominate 10 acres of unencumbered land for remote recreational sites to be staked by an eligible participant. The commissioner could then approve the nomination without a written best interest finding. If the nominated land is not properly classified, the commissioner may classify or reclassify it per existing statutes. Still, the applicant is responsible for administrative costs associated with the classification process. After approval, the applicant who nominated the land would have 90 days to stake the parcel or the land may be included in the annual land offering.

The bill would establish a process for Alaskans to stake and purchase a piece of state land for a remote recreational site. This process requires the applicant to pay the costs for appraisal, survey, and platting the site and for the commissioner to set the sale price at fair market value.

The bill would establish a process for leasing a remote recreational site with an initial 10-year term and two additional 10-year lease renewal periods. Leases may not be assigned, allowing for the termination of leases for non-compliance. The lessee may purchase the site at any time during the lease.

The bill would provide for a permit to be issued for a remote recreational site for a 5-year term with four additional 5-year renewal periods. The permits may not be assigned and would be revocable at the discretion of the commissioner and may be terminated for any reason, including failure to use the permitted land as required by the terms of the permit. The permittee would be eligible to lease or purchase the site, and if the land subject to the permit is offered for sale or lease, the commissioner shall first offer the site to the permittee.

The bill would provide that if a permit or lease is terminated, improvements or personal property remaining on the land would be handled as provided in AS 38.05.090.

This bill will increase the availability of land for recreational use and help make land available to Alaskans.