

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 20

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES JOHANSEN, Thomas, Stoltze

Introduced: 3/9/11

Referred: House Special Committee on Energy, Resources

A RESOLUTION

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 projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

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

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

3 **WHEREAS** the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture has
4 approved only seven projects under the authority reserved in Secretary's Memorandum 1042-
5 155; and

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

10 **WHEREAS** failure of the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture to
11 approve the hydroelectric projects in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National
12 Forest would jeopardize the approval of necessary preliminary permits by the Federal Energy
13 Regulatory Commission because, without the Secretary of Agriculture's approval, the
14 hydroelectric projects would not be able to proceed with the field studies and planning that are
15 required for a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission preliminary permit; and

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

19 **WHEREAS** the protection of inventoried roadless areas under the "roadless rule" in
20 36 C.F.R. 294.10 - 294.18 and the inability to produce and distribute hydro-generated
21 electricity will adversely affect communities in the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach
22 National Forest and will thwart the Governor's goal of generating 50 percent of the energy in
23 the state from renewable sources; and

24 **WHEREAS** the President of the United States has pledged to embrace and encourage
25 the development of renewable energy sources;

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the President of the
27 United States, the United States Congress, and the Secretary of the United States Department
28 of Agriculture not to implement protection of inventoried roadless areas under 36 C.F.R.
29 294.10 - 294.14 or otherwise restrict the development of necessary hydroelectric projects in
30 the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest.

31 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of

1 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
2 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Tom Vilsack, United States Secretary of
3 Agriculture; the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
4 Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives; the
5 Honorable Harry Reid, Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Mitch McConnell,
6 Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Jeff Bingaman, Chair of the Energy and
7 Natural Resources Committee of the U.S. Senate; and the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and the
8 Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative,
9 members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.