Alaska Conservation Alliance

Uniting for Alaska's Future

February 5, 2009

House Committee on Resources
State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Johnson, Buch and Munoz,

On behalf of the 40 conservation groups and the 38,000 Alaskans represented by the Alaska Conservation Alliance, I am pleased to acknowledge our strong support for HB12 to establish the Alaska Council on Invasive Species in the Department of Fish and Game. Some state economies have lost billions of dollars in revenue due to damage caused by inavasives. In order for Alaska to avoid a similar fate, it is prudent to address this issue now.

We believe the 14-member Council will provide the broad stakeholder cooperation and oversight needed to prevent new invasive species from taking root in Alaska and to mitigate the damage of invasives currently pushing our native species to the brink. At risk are Alaska's biological treasures, its flora and fauna; its harvested resources and subsistence plants and animals; the beauty and diversity that make Alaska a world-class tourist destination.

Already Alaska has suffered the effects of invasive Atlantic Salmon, pike and Reed Canary grass, to name a few. Plants, animals, fish and crustaceans, introduced into an environment devoid of their natural predators and limitations can irreversibly destroy an ecosystem and the economy and cultures it supports. These foreign species invade Alaska's ecosystem primarily due to human activities. It is therefore important that Alaskans take an active role to prevent this potential man-made disaster by serving on the Alaska Council on Invasive Species.

The Alaska Conservation Alliance would like to thank you for this opportunity to voice our support for HB 12 and encourage you to pass this bill out of the Senate Finance Committee.

Sincerely,

Kate Troll

Kate Troll
Executive Director

CC: House Finance Committee Members

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