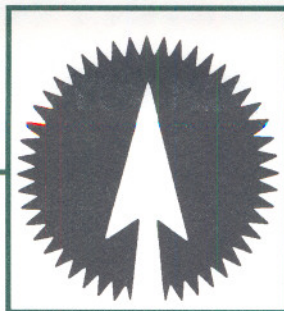


Alaska Forest Association, Inc.



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January 28, 2010

Senator Lesil McGuire, Co-Chair
Senator Bill Wielechowski, Co-Chair
Senate Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature, State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

RE: HB 162-An Act to Establish the Southeast Alaska State Forest

Dear Senators McGuire and Wielechowski:

The Alaska Forest Association (AFA) is one of the oldest trade associations in the State of Alaska and represents more than 120 members sharing an interest in the timber industry and public lands of Alaska. Our mission is to advance the restoration, promotion and maintenance of a healthy, viable forest products industry that contributes to the economic and ecological health in Alaska's forests and communities.

Most of the timber industry in Southeast Alaska has been operating for only about 50-years and, since it takes about 100-years to grow our commercial timber to maturity, we will not be able to begin a significant transition to young-growth operations for at least other 50-years. As a result, we must continue harvesting old-growth timber during the next 50-years. The harvest on federal lands will likely continue to be controversial because of this unavoidable reliance on old-growth timber. The State Division of Forestry has been able to sustain a viable but small timber sale program and we encourage the State Legislature to take advantage of every opportunity to increase the amount of commercial timber the State can make available to our mills.

We are in support of HB 162 which would establish a State Forest in Southeast Alaska and thus make it more efficient for the State Division of Forestry to perform thinning and other intensive forestry management practices that will maximize the growth of commercial timber on State lands.

Sincerely,

Owen Graham
Executive Director
Alaska Forest Association

SERVING ALASKA'S FOREST INDUSTRY