

## BRISTOL BAY

February 12, 2012

My name is Tim Troll. I'm a 33 year resident of Alaska. I have lived many years both in the YK Delta and in Bristol Bay.

I am now the Executive Director of the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust (BBHLT), an organization fostered by Choggiung Ltd, the Native village corporation for Dillingham in 2000. It was the first and is still the only land trust established in rural Alaska. I have been the Executive Director for 8 years and before that served on the board.



**HERITAGE LAND TRUST**

The BBHLT has a vested interest in preserving the mission of the Wood-Tikchik State Park. The creation of the Park was urged by the people of the Nushagak region to protect their resources as articulated in its enabling legislation:

*to protect the area's fish and wildlife breeding and support systems and to preserve the continued use of the area for subsistence and recreational activities*

In fact over the last decade the Land Trust and the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation have worked together on several projects to preserve that mission. Since its formation the Land Trust and its partner conservation organizations have raised millions of dollars to assist the Division in its efforts to protect the integrity of the Park. We have done so primarily by acquiring fee or conservation easements on private land inholdings within the Park, and in most cases turning these properties over to State ownership at no cost to the State.

The Land Trust continues to own one parcel in the Park and holds conservation easements on two others. One of these is a conservation easement (the first in the Park) granted by Harvey Samuelsen, a founder of Bristol Bay Native Corporation and an early advocate for the Park. BBHLT also jointly holds with the State a conservation easement on 21,000 acres along the Agulowak River and the eastern shore of Lake Nerka. The Land Trust and The Conservation Fund spent seven years putting together a \$10 Million Dollar package to purchase the easement from Aleknagik Native Corporation and the subsurface rights from Bristol Bay Native Corporation. In addition, the Land Trust maintains a endowment fund to steward this and our other properties in the Park. Again, all of this at no cost to the State.

A particular focus of our cooperative efforts with the State has been to acquire or secure conservation easements on small parcels of property that if developed could impact a large area in the Park. Several years ago the only private parcel on Chikuminuk Lake became available. The parcel sits at the outlet of the Lake, the area where preliminary studies site the hydroelectric dam. The Native owner who sold the property wanted to see it preserved in its natural state. Acquiring the only inholding on Chikuminuk Lake provided conservation protection for the entire lake. The Nature Conservancy, at our urging, purchased the property using funds it raised from private donors. The Nature Conservancy has now transferred the property to the Land Trust for stewardship and protection

The Land Trust's moral obligation to steward properties we have conserved inside the Park means we must also protect the purposes for which the properties were acquired. All of our properties were acquired to perpetuate the mission of the Park. The foundations, agencies, individual and business donors who gave us money for acquisitions did so in the belief that a State Park was a permanent creation and their donations would have lasting value.

This bill, SB 32, essentially negates their generosity by changing the rules. Amending the enabling legislation of the Park to allow a project that is speculative at best will likely make raising money for future conservation efforts in the Park difficult. It will certainly dampen our desire to continue acting as a fundraising ambassador for the Park. We cannot work with integrity in an atmosphere where funders doubt the resolve of the State to maintain the values of the Wood-Tikchik State Park, or perhaps any state park.

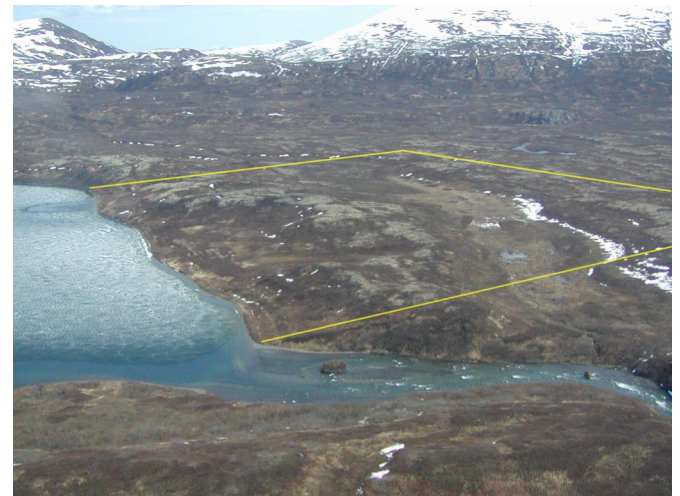
This bill should also be rejected because despite what you may have been told, it is not uncontroversial. It pits one region of the state against another. It is fostering discord between the Calista Region and the Bristol Bay Region where none need exist because this is a project not grounded in reality. It creates false hopes for great energy savings that will not materialize. Studies 30 years ago found the prospect of a dam at Chikuminuk infeasible, and recent studies show this project would not produce significant decreases in the cost per KWH over the continuing use of diesel.

The people of Bristol Bay are not asking for this project

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments



## Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust Property at the Outlet of Chikimunik Lake



- Approximate Proposed Geophysical Lines
- Control Monumentation Survey Area
- Geotechnical/ Geophysical Investigation Study Area

Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust Property is in the middle of the project area.

Information taken from Nuvista Light and Power map April 2012

