

From: [Roc Ahrens](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
Subject: Haines State Forestry Office
Date: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 8:48:08 AM

Dear Members,

I have lived in Haines since 1969 and am married to a local girl that was born and raised here. So this is, and in her case has always been our home. We are very proud of our community and the accomplishments the residents of this valley have worked so hard for as they raised their families here.

The State Forestry folks have provided a huge part of our success and growth. Without them, and the Timber Sales they have developed, the development and growth we all have learned to love and enjoy would not exist. Even the folks who like to think they are against the timber industry enjoy the access that it has created and maintained so we can experience its beauty and abundance. We often talk about the "Good ole Days" when the logging and saw mills provided for a thriving town, full of jobs that people could settle in and raise their families here. We miss that!

I worked for DOT/PF 25 years here in Haines, and dealt with the Forestry folks often. I was always impressed with their dedication and accomplishments it trying to promote timber sales, maintain the access into State Forestry areas, and go beyond the call of duty to provide firewood opportunities for locals trying to get by. Haines struggles, and has downsized from the loss of the logging industry as it was in the past, so you can appreciate the shock and fear we felt when we heard about this consideration of the State Forestry going away in Haines...

Success, growth, and income for the State of Alaska should be about promoting growth and development, not destroying it. We are dying on the vine here, even though we live in a valley of abundance and opportunity! If the Haines State Forestry office is not bringing in the expected revenue, it is not because of the employees of the Haines office. Please help us keep this valley alive.

At the very least, how are folks who can't afford oil to heat their homes going to be able to legally gather firewood? As a conservative, I love the forest and the trees as much as anyone, but we must accept the fact that to keep it alive we must use it or lose it. Please reconsider closing the Haines State Forestry office, as the forests here are our greatest renewable resources.

Sincerely,

Roc & Diann Ahrens