

**Friends of Glacier Bay
PO Box 135
Gustavus, Alaska 99826
February 19, 2017**

To Whom It May Concern
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Via email: tammy.massie@alaska.gov

Subject: Friends of Glacier Bay Supports Adoption of HB130/SB61 Expanding the Dude Creek CHA

Friends of Glacier Bay (FOGB) supports the adoption of HB130/SB61 to expand the boundary of the Dude Creek CHA to include lands purchased by The Nature Conservancy from the Mental Health Lands Trust (MHLT) and returned to the State of Alaska specifically for inclusion in the boundaries of the CHA.

Friends of Glacier Bay is a non-governmental organization, centered in Gustavus, serving as a forum for the discussion, education and action on issues affecting Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. The Dude Creek CHA borders on Glacier Bay National Park. The critical Sandhill crane wetland habitat protected by the CHA actually extends beyond the original CHA boundary into the Park and also onto the State lands to be added to the CHA by this bill. The FOGB board met recently in Gustavus and directed the FOGB President to communicate its support for the inclusion of the former MHLT lands into the CHA. The official addition of the donated lands will provide for uniform management of the expanded CHA by ADF&G under the recently adopted CHA management plan. FOGB understands that the management rationale for the CHA differs from that for the adjacent National Park. However, the CHA rationale is compatible with that of the neighboring Park lands in supporting the needs of wildlife ranging across the broader landscape.

FOGB appreciates that the Gustavus City Council has also supported by resolution the proposed addition to the CHA, which lies between the existing CHA and the Icy Passage beach. Gustavus residents enjoy using these lands for recreation such as hiking, bird-watching, and hunting, and hope that they remain available for such public enjoyment, compatible with the primary goal of preserving wildlife habitat.

Please register the enthusiastic support of Friends of Glacier Bay for the adoption of HB130/SB61. We appreciate the opportunity to comment and to help move this appropriate wild land designation forward for the benefit of wildlife and of present and future human generations.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Taylor

Michael S. Taylor
President, Friends of Glacier Bay