

Stan Leaphart  
1311 O'Connor Road  
Fairbanks, AK  
March 10, 2023

Senator Click Bishop, Co-Chair  
Senator Cathy Giessel, Co-Chair  
Senate Resources Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 105  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senators Bishop and Giessel:

I am writing in support of SB34 which would extend the termination date of the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas in Alaska.

I began working for the original Commission in August 1982. I worked as a research analyst until February 1984 when I was appointed as the Commission's Executive Director. I served in that capacity until July 1999 when funding was lost. From July 2008 until August 2014, I again served as the Commission's Executive Director. Finally, I was member of the Alaska State Lands Advisory Group, which was an advisory group to the Commission.

The original Commission was created in 1981 and began operations in 1982. As stated in one of the Commission's early annual reports: "The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas was established in 1981 by the Alaska State Legislature to protect the rights of Alaskans to continue the traditional uses of federal lands throughout the State. The need for an official State agency to oversee the management of federal lands in Alaska was created primarily by the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) in 1980. ANILCA placed 124 million acres of land in Alaska into federal conservation units, and outlined specific use requirements and restrictions for those areas."

Legislation of the scope and nature of ANILCA was unprecedented. Not only were millions of acres put into conservation system units, as part of the compromises built into the statute, those conservation system units were to be managed much differently than their lower-48 counterparts. As an example, with exceptions for some older park units, access by snowmachine, airplanes, motorboats, and non-motorized surface transportation was authorized for traditional uses and for travel to and from villages and homesites, even in designated wilderness. This was a significant departure from similar units outside of Alaska. National preserves and national wildlife refuges were open to sport hunting unless specific regulatory action was taken to close them. ANILCA provided a preference for subsistence harvest of fish and wildlife on all federal lands. Hundreds of mining claims, Native allotments, and other private inholdings, as well as State and Native

Corporation lands, were encompassed in the new and expanded units. The potential for conflict between land users, land owners and federal land managers was great. The Commission was designed, in part, to attempt to lessen those conflicts.

During the 1980's the Commission was extensively involved with the initial implementation of ANILCA. Federal land management plans were being written for all the conservation system units, Forest Service wilderness areas, and wild and scenic rivers created or expanded by the statute. Along with the dozens of management plans, policies were being adopted and regulations implementing specific provisions of ANILCA were being promulgated. These included regulations for access into conservation system units and for use of cabins within national park units and national wildlife refuges. ANILCA also mandated studies for additional wild and scenic rivers, a scenic highway, and reviews of lands within national parks, wildlife refuges and national forests for possible additional wilderness designations.

In conducting our reviews and preparing comments on the various management plans, studies and regulations, the Commission worked closely with the State ANILCA Program and other state agencies. The Commission also worked with the Alaska Land Use Council (ALUC) and its Land Use Advisors Committee (LUAC) until both ceased operation in 1990. The Commission held several joint meetings with the LUAC. Commission staff also worked with federal agency staff and planners and attended numerous federally sponsored meetings throughout the state to hear firsthand the concerns and views of the public.

However, the Commission's primary focus was working directly with the public to identify possible problems with the plans, regulations and policies being adopted by the federal land management agencies. The Commission heard testimony from the public at its regular meetings and also sponsored public meetings on various issues throughout the state.

For example, when the National Park Service issued proposed regulations for the use and constructions of cabins within park and preserve units, the agency held public meetings only in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. Determining that holding meetings only in urban areas was inadequate, the Commission held public meetings in Eagle, Glenallen, Kotzebue and Cold Foot to identify concerns of cabin owners and incorporated those concerns into comments submitted to the agency.

In 1990, the National Park Service announced a proposal to close Glacier Bay to commercial fishing. The Commission, in cooperation with the agency, held a series of public meetings to gather input from commercial fishermen and affected communities on the possible impacts of this closure. Later, Commission staff participated in a working group consisting of state and federal agencies, commercial fishermen, environmental organizations and regional residents in an effort to keep the bay open to commercial fishing.

Commission staff regularly provided assistance to individuals experiencing problems or conflicts with federal land management agency policies and regulations or permitting requirements. In a number of instances staff helped individuals prepare and submit permit applications for cabin use or access to their inholdings. In other cases, staff was able to act as an intermediary or to facilitate meetings between members of the public and federal managers.

Another example of public outreach was the formation of an advisory group that helped identify management issues and concerns on the Tongass National Forest. The Southeast Advisory Group's (SAG) membership included representatives from the timber industry, the commercial fishing industry, the regional Native Corporation, local governments, sport fishing interests, the environmental community, the mining industry, and the general public. The group developed and submitted to the U.S. Forest Service, through the Commission, a series of resolutions addressing regional concerns about management of the Tongass.

More recently, the Commission formed the Alaska State Lands Advisory Group (ASLAG). That group was charged with examining the issue of federal overreach and exploring the viability of transferring management and/or ownership of certain federal public lands in Alaska to the State of Alaska. The group prepared a report to the Commission, which then drafted a petition encouraging the transfer of certain federal lands to the State of Alaska. The petition was transmitted to the Governor of Alaska, the Alaska State Legislature and Alaska's Congressional Delegation.

ANILCA became law just over 42 years ago. It has been amended numerous times. Also during those 42 years land management plans, regulations, policies intended to implement the statute have been adopted, revised, and rewritten - sometimes consistent with the letter and the spirit of the law and sometimes not. While ANILCA may be the primary statute affecting management of the federal lands in this state, others such as the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA) also have significant effects. Because the State of Alaska and many of her citizens are directly impacted by the management of the federal lands, which comprise some 60% of the state, it is essential that these management activities be closely monitored, problems identified and solutions to those problems found. The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas has in the past and can continue in the future to be a useful organization to assist in that effort. I encourage the passage of SB34. Thank you.

Stan Leaphart  
Fairbanks, AK

# ALASKA

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March 8, 2023

Senator James Kaufman  
State Capitol Room 115  
Juneau AK, 99801

Representative George Rauscher  
State Capitol Room 406  
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Letter of Support for SB34/HB83, Restarting CACFA

Dear Senator Kaufman and Representative Rauscher,

Thank you for sponsoring SB34/HB83. The Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA) supports the re-establishment of this important commission. For many years the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA), provided a valuable venue for engaging citizens, legislators and state officials on federal issues primarily related to implementation of the Alaska National Interest Land Claims Act (ANILCA). ANILCA is a broad suite of Alaska specific exclusions and exceptions to how federal conservation units are to be administered in Alaska. Consequently, ANILCA is in tension with the other Department of Interior Regions in the country. This tension requires constant vigilance and education to buffer agency tendencies to manage Alaskan refuges, parks, preserves and national forests like they manage the other conservation units in the lower 48. CACFA was created to fill the need for citizen engagement and education on the promises and rights guaranteed by ANILCA.

The APHA and the Alaska guide community still have active members who make their living on federal conservation units, that were guiding before ANILCA designated the land they still use as a park/preserve, refuge or national forest. As an organization, the APHA participated and represented hunting guide interests from inception to final passage of ANILCA. As a community, we fear the loss of knowledge of the guarantees that were made to our members to use historic camps, private inholdings, cabins and traditional forms of transportation. Our professional members are hunting guides, but are also often rural residents, trappers, sport fishermen and commercial fisherwomen too, all of which are outdoor and public land reliant lifestyles and passions. ANILCA was drafted in such a way as to protect, promote and ensure the continuation of these traditional

*Dedicated to the conservation of our wildlife resources.*

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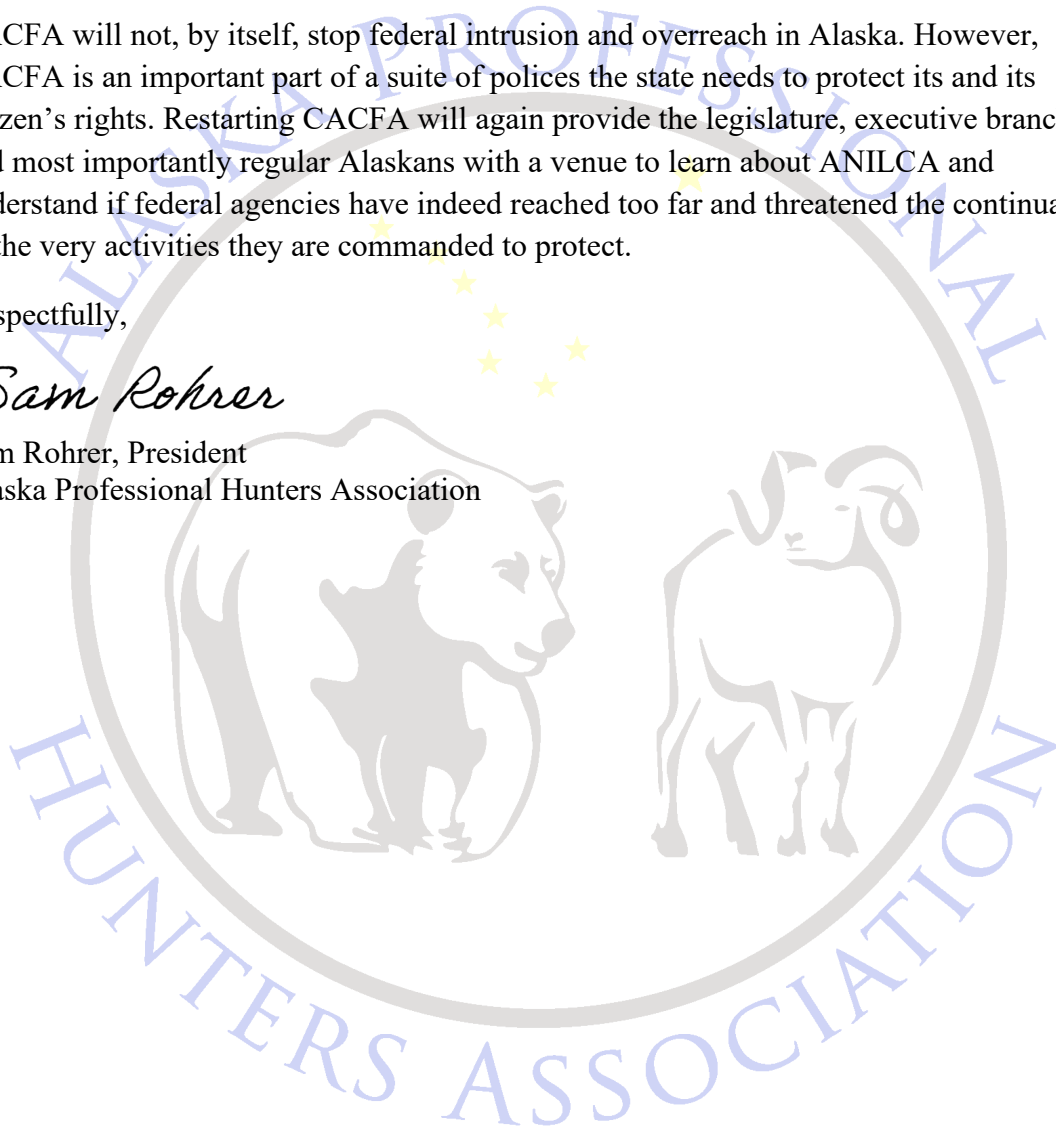
Alaskan activities. Sadly, over time we have experience more than a few instances where federal land managers have ignored or been ignorant of the statutory protections enshrined in ANILCA.

CACFA will not, by itself, stop federal intrusion and overreach in Alaska. However, CACFA is an important part of a suite of policies the state needs to protect its and its citizen's rights. Restarting CACFA will again provide the legislature, executive branch and most importantly regular Alaskans with a venue to learn about ANILCA and understand if federal agencies have indeed reached too far and threatened the continuance of the very activities they are commanded to protect.

Respectfully,

*Sam Rohrer*

Sam Rohrer, President  
Alaska Professional Hunters Association



*Dedicated to the conservation of our wildlife resources.*



The Honorable Click Bishop, The Honorable Cathy Giessel  
Co-chairs Senate Resources Committee  
33rd Alaska State Legislature

Re: Support for Senate Bill 34 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMM ON FEDERAL AREAS

March 9, 2023

Dear Senators Bishop, Giessel, and members of the Senate Resources Committee,

The Safari Club International Alaska Chapter and Kenai Peninsula Chapter support Senate Bill 34 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMM ON FEDERAL AREAS.

Founded in 1971, Safari Club International is the country's leading hunter rights advocate and additionally promotes worldwide wildlife conservation. SCI's approximately 50,000 members and 200 Chapters represent all 50 of the United States as well as 106 other countries. The Safari Club International Alaska Chapter (SCI AK) and Kenai Peninsula Chapter (KPSCI) are 501c4 conservation non-profit corporations. SCI AK was established in Alaska in 1977, and currently has 670 members. Our joint mission statement is "First for Hunters - First for Wildlife."

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA) was created after the 1980 passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). The commission was formed as a unique advisory agency within both the legislature and the executive branch to communicate views of citizens regarding implementation of ANILCA's complex rules and regulations. CACFA gave a voice to Alaskans until 1999 — when state funding was eliminated. The commission was re-established in 2007 but sunsetted again in 2016, despite a favorable review by the Legislative Budget & Audit Committee.

CACFA helps individual Alaskans navigate the federal red tape by appealing arbitrary decisions about commercial service permits and trapping cabins, and bringing federal managers into a public setting during hearings to address actions that affect social and economic activities occurring on and adjacent to federal land. CACFA helps distill long and complex documents that would intimidate the average Alaskan. CACFA had both the expertise and resources to evaluate and comment on the management decisions in these complex documents.

Alaska is facing unprecedented pressure from the federal government to control access and resources on lands that Congress intended would be used by the state's residents. One continuing concern previously addressed by CACFA are the many land use plans from the various Alaskan parks, preserves and refuges. These documents have far reaching impacts on all Alaskans in the form of proposed restrictions on travel (boat, ATV, snowmobile use, etc.), hunting, fishing and general access and use of the land and water.

We thank Senator Kaufman for introducing SB 34 and offer our full support for this valuable piece of legislation.

Best regards,

*John Sturgeon*

**SCI Alaska Chapter President**

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March 13, 2023

Senator James Kaufman  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801  
*Comments submitted via email*

Re: AMA Support for SB34, an Act reestablishing the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas (CACFA) in Alaska

Dear Senator Kaufman:

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) writes to comment in support of SB34, *"An Act reestablishing the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas in Alaska; and providing for an effective date."*

AMA is a professional membership trade organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. We are composed of more than 1,400 members that come from eight statewide branches: Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan/Prince of Wales, and Nome. Our members include individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies, Alaska Native Corporations, and the contracting sector that supports Alaska's mining industry.

For many years, CACFA successfully monitored and defended the State's interests, and those of individual citizens, from overarching and unreasonable federal regulation and management. Today, Alaska's need for the CACFA mission is greater than ever. Because the challenges at the federal level are numerous and broad-reaching, this year, AMA adopted an entire new section to its annual State Issues of Concern [document](#) in which it details eight individual policy positions related to federal policy. The positions range from defending sovereign rights under the Statehood Act to allow Alaska control over its water, to pursuit of guaranteed access for all uses across all lands, opposition to unwarranted Endangered Species Act listings, pursuit of lifting Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (d)(1) and other Public Land Orders, and much more. Reestablishing CACFA would put the State in a strong position to continue defending Alaska's best interests.

Thank you for introducing SB34, and we will urge its committees of referral to act on this important bill to ensure it becomes law.

Sincerely,

Deantha Skibinski  
Executive Director





Council of  
**Alaska Producers**

**Support for SB34  
Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal  
Management Areas (CACFA)**

March 13, 2023

Senator Click Bishop and Senator Cathy Giessel, Co-Chairs  
Senate Resources Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Bishop, Senator Giessel, and members of the Senate Resources Committee,

The Council of Alaska Producers (CAP) is writing to support SB34, "An Act reestablishing the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas in Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

Formed in 1992, CAP is a non-profit trade association that works to inspire Alaskans to realize a shared goal of sustainable mineral production, providing economic and social benefits to our communities and the people of Alaska. CAP represents the interests of Alaska's five large metal mines and several advanced projects, informing members on legislative and regulatory issues, supporting and advancing the mining industry, and educating members, the media, and the general public on mining related issues.

The federal government is the largest landowner in Alaska and its planning, operation, and development of the federal management areas must be monitored to ensure consistency with federal laws and congressional intent. For many years, the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Management Areas in Alaska (CACFA) effectively monitored the effects of federal regulation and management decisions. CAP supports reestablishment of this valuable commission to defend Alaska's rights.

Thank you for hearing this bill. We encourage the Resources Committee to pass it from committee quickly.

Sincerely,

Karen Matthias  
Executive Director

cc: Senator James Kaufman