

HOUSE BILL NO. 184

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTIETH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVE JAMES

Introduced: 3/12/97

Referred: Resources

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to land used for agricultural purposes and to state land
2 classified for agricultural purposes or subject to the restriction of use for
3 agricultural purposes only; and annulling certain program regulations of the
4 Department of Natural Resources that are inconsistent with the amendments made
5 by this Act."

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

7 * **Section 1.** LEGISLATIVE INTENT. It is the intent of the legislature in amending
8 AS 38.05.321(a) in sec. 9 of this Act that, for state land classified as agricultural land, the
9 state convey fee title subject to a covenant running with the land that limits use of the land
10 to agricultural purposes.

11 * **Sec. 2.** AS 38.04.045(b) is amended to read:

12 (b) Before the issuance of a long-term lease under AS 38.05.070 or of a patent
13 for state land, an official cadastral survey shall be accomplished, unless a comparable,

1 approved survey exists that has been conducted by the federal Bureau of Land
2 Management. Before land may be offered under [AS 38.05.055, 38.05.057,] AS 38.08
3 [.] or AS 38.09, **or before land may be offered under AS 38.05.055 or 38.05.057,**
4 **except land that is classified for agricultural uses,** an official rectangular survey grid
5 shall be established. The rectangular survey section corner positions shall be
6 monumented and shown on a cadastral survey plat approved by the state. For those
7 areas where the state may wish to convey surface estate outside of an official
8 rectangular survey grid, the commissioner may waive monumentation of individual
9 section corner positions and substitute an official control survey with control points
10 being monumented and shown on control survey plats approved by the state. The
11 commissioner may not issue more than one conveyance for each section within a
12 township outside of an official rectangular survey grid. **Land** [NO PORTION OF
13 LAND] to be conveyed may **not** be located more than two miles from an official
14 survey control monument except that the commissioner may waive this requirement
15 on a determination that a single purpose use does not justify the requirement if the
16 existing status of the land is known with reasonable certainty. The lots and tracts in
17 state subdivisions shall be monumented and the cadastral survey and plats for the
18 subdivision shall be approved by the state. Where land is located within a
19 municipality with planning, platting, and zoning powers, plats for state subdivisions
20 shall comply with local ordinances and regulations in the same manner and to the same
21 extent as plats for subdivisions by other landowners. State subdivisions shall be filed
22 and recorded in the district recorder's office. The requirements of this section do not
23 apply to land made available through a cabin permit system, for material sales, for
24 short-term leases, for parcels adjoining a surveyed right-of-way, or for land that has
25 been open to random staking under the remote parcel program or homestead program
26 in the past; however, for short-term leases, the lessee **shall** [MUST] comply with local
27 subdivision ordinances unless waived by the municipality under procedures specified
28 by ordinance. In this subsection, "a single purpose use" includes a communication site,
29 an aid to navigation, and a park site.

30 * **Sec. 3.** AS 38.04.065(h) is amended to read:

31 (h) Before the commissioner adopts a regional land use plan, a land

1 classification may be made on the basis of a site-specific land use plan, except a
 2 classification for a land disposal under AS 38.05.057, AS 38.08, or AS 38.09 [, OR
 3 A NEW COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURE PROJECT UNDER AS 38.05.020(b)(6)].
 4 After adoption of a regional land use plan, land classifications shall be made under the
 5 plan.

6 * **Sec. 4.** AS 38.05.020(b) is amended to read:

7 (b) The commissioner may

8 (1) establish reasonable procedures and adopt reasonable regulations
 9 necessary to carry out this chapter and, whenever necessary, issue directives or orders
 10 to the director to carry out specific functions and duties; regulations adopted by the
 11 commissioner shall be adopted under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act); orders
 12 by the commissioner classifying land, issued after January 3, 1959, are not required
 13 to be adopted under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act);

14 (2) enter into agreements considered necessary to carry out the purposes
 15 of this chapter, including agreements with federal and state agencies;

16 (3) review any order or action of the director;

17 (4) exercise the powers and do the acts necessary to carry out the
 18 provisions and objectives of this chapter;

19 (5) notwithstanding the provisions of any other section of this chapter,
 20 grant an extension of the time within which payments due on any exploration license,
 21 lease, or sale of state land, minerals, or materials may be made, including payment of
 22 rental and royalties, on a finding that compliance with the requirements is or was
 23 prevented by reason of war, riots, or acts of God;

24 (6) classify tracts for agricultural uses [AND REQUIRE THE
 25 PREQUALIFICATION, INCLUDING THE SUBMISSION OF CONSERVATION
 26 PLANS, DEVELOPMENT PLANS, OR OTHER PLANS, SCHEDULES, OR
 27 PROGRAMS, OF PERSONS WHO APPLY TO PARTICIPATE IN AN
 28 AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT UNDER AS 44.33.475];

29 (7) waive, postpone, or otherwise modify the development requirements
 30 of a contract for the sale of agricultural land if

31 (A) the land is inaccessible by road; or [AND]

1 (B) transportation, marketing, and development costs render the
2 required development uneconomic;

3 (8) reconvey or relinquish land or an interest in land to the federal
4 government if

5 (A) the land is described in an amended application for an
6 allotment under 43 U.S.C. 1617; and

7 (B) the reconveyance or relinquishment is

8 (i) for the purposes provided in 43 U.S.C. 1617; and

9 (ii) in the best interests of the state.

10 * **Sec. 5.** AS 38.05.057(j) is amended to read:

11 (j) The commissioner may require a participant in a lottery under this section
12 for the sale of land that is part of an agricultural development project under **former**
13 AS 44.33.475 to submit a single application for that land. Immediately following the
14 drawing of an applicant's name in the lottery, the applicant shall be given an
15 opportunity to select for purchase one parcel of the land that is offered in the lottery.
16 The names of alternate applicants shall be drawn after all parcels have been selected.
17 If the applicant who originally selected a parcel unequivocally rejects the offer to
18 purchase the parcel or fails to sign the contract of sale within the period of time
19 specified by the commissioner, the parcel shall be offered for sale to alternate
20 applicants in the order in which their names were drawn.

21 * **Sec. 6.** AS 38.05.059 is repealed and reenacted to read:

22 **Sec. 38.05.059. Sale of agricultural land.** The commissioner may provide
23 for the sale of land classified under AS 38.05.020(b)(6) for agricultural uses in parcels
24 or tracts described by aliquot parts. The parcels or tracts are subject to state
25 subdivision requirements and municipal ordinances.

26 * **Sec. 7.** AS 38.05.065(c) is amended to read:

27 (c) The director shall, for contracts under (a), [OR] (b), **or (h)** of this section,
28 set out in the contract for each sale the period for the payment of installments and the
29 total purchase price plus interest. The director, with the consent of the commissioner,
30 may also include in contracts under this section conditions, limitations, and terms
31 considered necessary and proper to protect the interest of the state. Violations of any

1 provision of this chapter or the terms of the contract of sale subject the purchaser to
 2 appropriate administrative and legal action, including but not limited to specific
 3 performance, foreclosure, ejectment, or other legal remedies in accordance with
 4 applicable state law.

5 * **Sec. 8.** AS 38.05.065(h) is amended to read:

6 (h) The commissioner

7 **(1) shall provide that, notwithstanding (a) and (b) of this section,**
 8 **in a contract for the sale of land classified under AS 38.05.020(b)(6) for**
 9 **agricultural uses, the interest rate to be charged on installment payments may not**
 10 **exceed 9.5 percent; and**

11 **(2)** may declare a moratorium of up to five years on payments on **land**
 12 **sold under this section for** [A SALE OF AGRICULTURAL] land **classified under**
 13 **AS 38.05.020(b)(6) for agricultural uses** [UNDER THIS SECTION] if

14 **(A)** [(1)] the commissioner determines that the moratorium is
 15 in the best interest of the state;

16 **(B)** [(2)] the commissioner certifies and the contract purchaser
 17 agrees to perform farm development, crop production, and harvesting, not
 18 including land clearing or related activity, requiring the expenditure of amounts
 19 equivalent to the payments that would otherwise be made during the
 20 moratorium;

21 **(C)** [(3)] the sale of the agricultural land takes place after
 22 July 1, 1979; and

23 **(D)** [(4)] the contract purchaser is in compliance with the
 24 development plan specified in the purchase contract at the time the purchaser
 25 applies for a moratorium under this subsection and remains in compliance with
 26 the development plan during the moratorium; **for the payments subject to the**
 27 **moratorium declared under this paragraph, interest** [. INTEREST]
 28 payments are subject to the moratorium but interest continues to accrue during
 29 the moratorium.

30 * **Sec. 9.** AS 38.05.321(a) is repealed and reenacted to read:

31 (a) The department shall include in a document that conveys state land

1 classified as agricultural land

2 (1) a covenant running with the land that restricts or limits the use of
3 the land exclusively for agricultural purposes; and

4 (2) a covenant running with the land permitting the owner of state land
5 classified as agricultural land to subdivide and sell the land in not more than four
6 parcels of not less than 40 acres each and prohibiting the parcels resulting from the
7 subdivision that is authorized by this paragraph from being further subdivided.

8 * **Sec. 10.** AS 38.05.321(b) is amended to read:

9 (b) **Subject to (a) of this section, state** [STATE] land classified as agricultural
10 land that has been selected by a municipality under former AS 29.18.190 - 29.18.200
11 or former AS 29.18.205(e) may be approved by the director for patent under
12 AS 29.65.050(c) [; HOWEVER, ONLY RIGHTS IN THE LAND FOR
13 AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES MAY BE TRANSFERRED AND ALL OTHER
14 INTERESTS IN THE LAND WILL REMAIN WITH THE STATE]. Agricultural land
15 approved for patent to a municipality shall be credited, acre for acre, toward fulfillment
16 of that municipality's entitlement under AS 29.65.010 - 29.65.030 or former
17 AS 29.18.201 - 29.18.203. [IF THE DIRECTOR LATER DETERMINES IT TO BE
18 IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE STATE TO TRANSFER SOME OR ALL OF
19 THE ADDITIONAL RIGHTS IN THAT APPROVED OR PATENTED
20 AGRICULTURAL LAND, THOSE RIGHTS SHALL PASS WITHOUT
21 CONSIDERATION TO THE MUNICIPALITY IN WHICH THE LAND IS
22 LOCATED. THE NOTICE AND REVIEW PROVISIONS OF AS 38.05.945 ARE
23 APPLICABLE TO CONVEYANCE OF RIGHTS UNDER THIS SECTION.]

24 * **Sec. 11.** AS 38.05.321 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

25 (d) For state land classified as agricultural land that is conveyed under (a) of
26 this section,

27 (1) the commissioner may require the landowner to cooperate with the
28 appropriate soil and water conservation district under AS 41.10 in the development and
29 implementation of soil conservation plans as authorized by AS 41.10.110(6);

30 (2) as a condition of the conveyance, the commissioner may not require
31 preparation and implementation of a farm development plan unless the commissioner

1 permits modification of a plan in cases of economic hardship or other extenuating
2 circumstances;

3 (3) the commissioner may not limit

4 (A) the landowner's right to construct improvements related to
5 agricultural use;

6 (B) the landowner's right to use the land and improvements for
7 purposes that are incidental to and not inconsistent with the primary use of the
8 land for agricultural purposes; and

9 (C) the landowner's right to subdivide and sell the land if the
10 resulting parcels are not in violation of the minimum parcel size set out in
11 (a)(2) of this section.

12 (e) A covenant described in (a) of this section may be enforced only by a civil
13 action.

14 (f) In this section, "agricultural purposes" means

15 (1) the production of plants and animals useful to man, including forage
16 and sod crops, grains and feed crops, fruits, trees, and vegetables, dairy animals and
17 products, and livestock;

18 (2) the construction of fixed, permanent, or immovable structures
19 reasonably required for or related to agricultural production, including that farmstead
20 normally required for yards, driveways, parking, barns, and other outbuildings, and
21 similar uses;

22 (3) the use of gravel reasonably required for agricultural production on
23 the parcel conveyed; and

24 (4) removal and disposition of timber in order to bring agricultural land
25 into production.

26 * **Sec. 12. CONVERSION OF DISPOSALS MADE UNDER AS 38.05.069(c) OR UNDER**
27 **FORMER AS 38.05.321(a).** (a) The provisions of AS 38.05.321(a), as amended by sec. 9
28 of this Act, apply to state land classified as agricultural land that, under AS 38.05.069(c) or
29 under AS 38.05.321(a) before its amendment by sec. 9 of this Act, was subject to the
30 limitation of the conveyance of only the interest in the land that related to agricultural
31 purposes and that was sold, leased, or disposed of by the state after August 15, 1976, and

1 before the effective date of this Act.

2 (b) When the owner of the rights for agricultural purposes in land described in this
3 section applies to the Department of Natural Resources, the commissioner of natural resources
4 shall issue a new instrument of conveyance for the land that conforms to AS 38.05.321(a) and
5 (d), as amended and enacted by secs. 9 and 11 of this Act. The commissioner of natural
6 resources may issue a new instrument of conveyance under this section only if the owner of
7 the rights tenders a deed or other appropriate instrument of conveyance transmitting the
8 owner's interests in the land to the state, accompanied by title insurance coverage for or a title
9 report affirming ownership of the rights in the person making application under this
10 subsection.

11 (c) Until the commissioner of natural resources issues the new instrument of
12 conveyance under (b) of this section, when necessary to enforce a state interest in the land,
13 the state may enforce the interests in the land in the manner authorized by the instrument of
14 conveyance that transferred the rights for agricultural purposes.

15 * **Sec. 13.** CONVERSION OF DISPOSALS MADE UNDER FORMER AS 38.05.321(b).

16 (a) The provisions of AS 38.05.321(a), as amended by sec. 9 of this Act, apply to state land
17 classified as agricultural land that, under AS 38.05.321(b) before its amendment by sec. 10
18 of this Act, was subject to the limitation of the conveyance of only the interest in the land that
19 related to agricultural purposes and that was conveyed by the state to a municipality after
20 June 30, 1978, and before the effective date of this Act.

21 (b) When a municipality holding the rights for agricultural purposes in land described
22 in this section applies to the Department of Natural Resources, the commissioner of natural
23 resources shall issue a new instrument of conveyance for the land that conforms to
24 AS 38.05.321, as amended by secs. 9 - 11 of this Act. The commissioner of natural resources
25 may issue a new instrument of conveyance under this section only if the municipality tenders
26 a deed or other appropriate instrument of conveyance returning the municipality's interests in
27 the land to the state, accompanied by title insurance coverage for or a title report affirming
28 the municipality's ownership of the rights.

29 (c) Until the commissioner of natural resources issues the new instrument of
30 conveyance under (b) of this section, when necessary to enforce a state interest in the land,
31 the state may enforce the interests in the land in the manner authorized by the instrument of

1 conveyance that transferred the rights for agricultural purposes.

2 * **Sec. 14.** The following regulations are annulled: 11 AAC 67.162, 11 AAC 67.165, 11
3 AAC 67.167(d), 11 AAC 67.170, 11 AAC 67.172, 11 AAC 67.175(1), 11 AAC 67.185, 11
4 AAC 67.187, 11 AAC 67.188(a)(3), 11 AAC 67.188(a)(4), 11 AAC 67.188(a)(5), 11 AAC
5 67.188(a)(6), 11 AAC 67.188(b), 11 AAC 67.188(c), 11 AAC 67.190(a), 11 AAC 67.192.