

Introduced: 3/10/77
Referred: State Affairs

1 IN THE SENATE

BY ZIEGLER

2 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 TENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5 Urging approval of the U. S. Borax proposed
6 mining access road.

7 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 WHEREAS, since land is a finite resource, its uses must be allocated
9 among demands after careful consideration of alternatives so that the most
10 beneficial use may be made of the land with the least harmful impact on other
11 potential uses; and

12 WHEREAS U. S. Borax has applied to the United States Department of
13 Agriculture's Forest Service for an access road vital for exploration of the
14 practicability of development of a large potential supply of molybdenum which
15 will enhance the potential economic well-being of the State of Alaska and
16 the Nation; and

17 WHEREAS the environmental impact of this access road has been carefully
18 analyzed by a U. S. Borax and Forest Service interdisciplinary team; and

19 WHEREAS the route selected by this team is that recommended by the
20 Forest Service as the route which will have the least adverse effect on the
21 environment; and

22 WHEREAS four alternate routes and the alternatives of use of helicopters
23 have been examined in careful detail and the alternative of aerial cableway
24 has been considered, resulting in the conclusion that the route selected best
25 protects the environment; and

26 WHEREAS the basic uses of this land are for mineral development or for
27 wilderness area so these uses should be the ones primarily considered; and

28 WHEREAS wilderness use would not be the most beneficial use of the area
29 since it is difficult, if not illogical, to consider a small block of land

1 for wilderness, especially where, as here, its boundaries have no logic for
2 a wilderness study area and a multi-million acre area of eligible wilderness
3 land will still be available in the east Behm Canal and other mainland areas
4 of the Tongass National Forest from which to select wilderness; and

5 WHEREAS mineral use would be extremely desirable since the project will
6 enhance the opportunity for mineral exploration and sampling and could lead
7 to the development of a major molybdenum mine which would provide needed
8 mineral resources to the nation, eventually employ 400 to 500 workers on a
9 full-time basis which would contribute greatly to the economy of the region
10 and aid in reducing unemployment, and allow four million board feet of timber
11 to be made available to the area providing approximately 16 man-years of
12 direct wages; and

13 WHEREAS this use would remove a small area not suitable for wilderness
14 from the multi-million acres available for wilderness classification by
15 allowing creation of a major industry which has highly beneficial economic
16 impact and a minimum adverse environmental impact;

17 BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Legislature that based upon the
18 principle that land use should be allocated so that the most beneficial use
19 of the land for present and future generations is made allowing the permit
20 application of U. S. Borax would best serve the interest of the State of
21 Alaska and the Nation, and the Legislature strongly urges the U. S. Forest
22 Service to approve the permit application for a mining access road.

23 A COPY of this resolution shall be sent to John R. McGuire, Chief, U. S.
24 Forest Service; J. S. Watson, Forest Supervisor, U. S. Forest Service; and
25 to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U. S. Senators,
26 and the Honorable Don Young, U. S. Representative, members of the Alaska
27 delegation in Congress.

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