

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 308(FIN)  
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
EIGHTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/12/94  
Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act modifying administrative procedures and decisions by state agencies that  
2 relate to uses and dispositions of state land, property, and resources, and to the  
3 interests within them; and modifying administrative procedures and decisions by  
4 state agencies that relate to uses and activities involving land, property, and  
5 resources, and to the interests within them, that are subject to the coastal  
6 management program when the use or activity is to be authorized or developed  
7 in phases; and providing for an effective date."

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

9 \* Section 1. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

10 (1) in order for the state to make a disposal of state land or of an interest in  
11 state land, the legislature has previously determined that it is the responsibility of the director  
12 of the division of lands in the Department of Natural Resources to make a written  
13 determination that the interests of the state will be best served;

1           (2) each determination under AS 38.05 that the interests of the state will be  
2 best served is a policy decision involving facts unique to each proposed disposal, and complex  
3 issues the analysis and resolution of which are most appropriately left to the expertise of the  
4 agency making the determination;

5           (3) it is the intent of the legislature to confirm that the determination of when  
6 and under what circumstances a disposal is in the state's best interest is vested in the  
7 discretion of the director of the division of lands, subject to the consent of the commissioner  
8 of natural resources and the policy guidance provided by this Act;

9           (4) the scope of the review undertaken by the director of the division of lands  
10 in support of a proposed disposal is to be established in the director's written finding made  
11 under the provisions of this Act, and is to be based upon the known information or  
12 information that is made known to the director during the administrative review;

13           (5) in delegating this discretion, it is not the intent of the legislature to limit  
14 public comment or the public's opportunity to participate in the administrative review that  
15 takes place before the determination by the director of the division of lands that a disposal is  
16 in the state's best interest;

17           (6) it is the legislature's intent to ensure that the public participates in a timely  
18 and meaningful manner in the development of the administrative record that will be used by  
19 the director of the division of lands to define the scope of review of the written finding;

20           (7) analyses comparable to those generally required by 42 U.S.C. 4321 - 4370a  
21 (National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended) for the preparation of an  
22 environmental impact statement under 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C) are not necessary for support of  
23 best interest findings issued under AS 38.05 or conclusive coastal zone consistency  
24 determinations issued under AS 46.40;

25           (8) speculation concerning future development activities that will be subject  
26 to independent permitting requirements is not necessary at the time a decision is made to  
27 dispose of state land or an interest in state land;

28           (9) this Act is not intended to allow the director of the division of lands to  
29 limit the scope of an administrative review so as to omit issues or disregard concerns that  
30 otherwise must be addressed under the provisions of applicable statutes and regulations;

31           (10) conducting phased coastal zone consistency determinations is appropriate

1 in those instances where there is insufficient information to determine the consistency of a  
2 proposed development project from planning to completion; and

3 (11) consideration of a disposal as a phase of a development project is not  
4 intended to artificially divide or segment a proposed development project to avoid thorough  
5 review of the project or to avoid consideration of potential future environmental, sociological,  
6 or economic effects, but rather is intended to allow for consideration of those issues when  
7 sufficient data are available upon which to make reasoned decisions.

8 \* Sec. 2. AS 38.05.035(e) is amended to read:

9 (e) Upon a written finding that the interests of the state will be best served,  
10 the director may, with the consent of the commissioner, approve contracts for the sale,  
11 lease, or other disposal of available land, resources, property, or interests in them, and,  
12 in addition to the conditions and limitations imposed by law, may impose additional  
13 conditions or limitations in the contracts as the director determines, with the consent  
14 of the commissioner, will best serve the interests of the state. The preparation and  
15 issuance of the written finding by the director is subject to the following:

16 (1) with the consent of the commissioner and subject to the  
17 director's discretion, for a specific proposed disposal of available land, resources,  
18 or property, or of an interest in them, the director, in the written finding,

19 (A) shall establish the scope of the administrative review on  
20 which the director's determination is based, and the scope of the written  
21 finding supporting that determination; the scope of the review and finding  
22 may address only reasonably foreseeable, significant effects of the uses  
23 proposed to be authorized by the disposal;

24 (B) may limit the scope of an administrative review and  
25 finding for a proposed disposal to

26 (i) applicable statutes and regulations;

27 (ii) the facts pertaining to the land, resources, or  
28 property, or interest in them, that the director finds are material to  
29 the determination and that are known to the director or knowledge  
30 of which is made available to the director during the administrative  
31 review; and

1 (iii) issues that, based on the statutes and regulations  
2 referred to in (i) of this subparagraph, on the facts as described in  
3 (ii) of this subparagraph, and on the nature of the uses sought to be  
4 authorized, the director finds are material to the determination of  
5 whether the proposed disposal will best serve the interests of the  
6 state; and

7 (C) may, if the project for which the proposed disposal is  
8 sought is a multiphased development, limit the scope of an administrative  
9 review and finding for the proposed disposal to the applicable statutes and  
10 regulations, facts, and issues identified in (B)(i) - (iii) of this paragraph  
11 that pertain solely to a discrete phase of the project when

12 (i) the only uses to be authorized by the proposed  
13 disposal are part of that discrete phase;

14 (ii) the department's approval is required before the  
15 next phase of the project may proceed; and

16 (iii) the department conditions its approval to ensure  
17 that any additional uses or activities proposed for that or any later  
18 phase of the project will serve the best interests of the state;

19 (2) the director shall discuss in the written finding prepared and  
20 issued under this subsection the reasons that each of the following was not  
21 material to the director's determination that the interests of the state will be best  
22 served:

23 (A) facts pertaining to the land, resources, or property, or  
24 an interest in them other than those that the director finds material under  
25 (1)(B)(ii) of this subsection; and

26 (B) issues based on the statutes and regulations referred to  
27 in (1)(B)(i) of this subsection and on the facts described in (1)(B)(ii) of this  
28 subsection;

29 (3) a [A] written finding for an oil and gas lease sale under  
30 AS 38.05.180 is subject to (g) of this section;

31 (4) a [. A] contract for the sale, lease, or other disposal of available

1 land or an interest in land is not legally binding on the state until the commissioner  
2 approves the contract but if the appraised value is not greater than \$50,000 in the case  
3 of the sale of land or an interest in land, or \$5,000 in the case of the annual rental of  
4 land or interest in land, the director may execute the contract without the approval of  
5 the commissioner;

6 (5) public notice requirements relating to the sale, lease, or other  
7 disposal of available land or an interest in land for oil and gas proposed to be  
8 scheduled in the five-year oil and gas leasing program under AS 38.05.180(b), are  
9 as follows:

10 (A) before a public hearing, if held, or in any case not less  
11 than 180 days before the sale, lease, or other disposal of available land or  
12 an interest in land, the director shall make available to the public a  
13 preliminary written finding that states the scope of the review established  
14 under (1)(A) of this subsection and includes the applicable statutes and  
15 regulations, the material facts and issues in accordance with (1)(B) of this  
16 subsection, and information required by (g) of this section, upon which the  
17 determination that the sale, lease, or other disposal will serve the best  
18 interests of the state will be based; the director shall provide opportunity  
19 for public comment on the preliminary written finding for a period of not  
20 less than 60 days;

21 (B) after the public comment period for the preliminary  
22 written finding and not less than 90 days before the sale, lease, or other  
23 disposal of available land or an interest in land for oil and gas, the director  
24 shall make available to the public a final written finding that states the  
25 scope of the review established under (1)(A) of this subsection and includes  
26 the applicable statutes and regulations, the material facts and issues in  
27 accordance with (1) of this subsection, and information required by (g) of  
28 this section, upon which the determination that the sale, lease, or other  
29 disposal will serve the best interests of the state is based;

30 (6) before [ . BEFORE] a public hearing, if held, or in any case not  
31 [NO] less than 21 days before the sale, lease, or other disposal of available land,

1 property, resources, or interests in them other than a sale, lease, or other disposal  
2 of available land or an interest in land for oil and gas under (5) of this subsection.  
3 the director shall make available to the public a written finding that, in accordance  
4 with (1) of this subsection, sets out the material facts and applicable statutes and  
5 regulations and any other information required by statute or regulation to be  
6 considered [LAW] upon which the determination that the sale, lease, or other disposal  
7 will best serve the interests of the state was based; however, a [ A] written finding  
8 is not required before the approval of

9 (A) [(1)] a contract for a negotiated sale authorized under  
10 AS 38.05.115;

11 (B) [(2)] a lease of land for a shore fishery site under  
12 AS 38.05.082;

13 (C) [(3)] a permit or other authorization revocable by the  
14 commissioner;

15 (D) [(4)] a mineral claim located under AS 38.05.195;

16 (E) [(5)] a mineral lease issued under AS 38.05.205;

17 (F) [(6)] a production license issued under AS 38.05.207;

18 (G) [(7)] an exempt oil and gas sale under AS 38.05.180(d) of  
19 acreage offered in a sale that was held within the previous five years if the sale  
20 was subject to a written best interest finding, unless the commissioner  
21 determines that new information has become available that justifies a revision  
22 of the best interest finding; or

23 (H) [(8)] a lease sale under AS 38.05.180(w) of acreage offered  
24 in a sale that was held within the previous five years if the sale was subject to  
25 a best interest finding, unless the commissioner determines that new  
26 information has become available that justifies a revision of the best interest  
27 finding;

28 (7) the director shall include in

29 (A) a preliminary written finding a summary of agency and  
30 public comments, if any, obtained as a result of contacts with other  
31 agencies concerning a proposed disposal or as a result of informal efforts

1 undertaken by the department to solicit public response to a proposed  
2 disposal, and the department's preliminary responses to those comments;  
3 and

4 (B) the final written finding a summary of agency and  
5 public comments received and the department's responses to those  
6 comments.

7 \* Sec. 3. AS 38.05.035(g) is amended to read:

8 (g) Notwithstanding (e)(1)(A) and (B) of this section, when [WHEN] the  
9 director prepares a written finding required under (e) of this section for an oil and gas  
10 lease sale scheduled under AS 38.05.180, the director shall consider and discuss

11 (1) in a final written [THE] finding [(1)] facts that are known to the  
12 director at the time of preparation of the finding and that are

13 (A) material to [THE FOLLOWING MATTERS OR TO] issues  
14 that were raised during the period allowed for receipt of public comment,  
15 whether or not material to a matter set out in (B) of this paragraph, and  
16 within the scope of the administrative review established by the director  
17 under (e)(1) of this section; or

18 (B) material to the following matters:

19 (i) [(A)] property descriptions and locations;

20 (ii) [(B)] the petroleum potential of the sale area, in  
21 general terms;

22 (iii) [(C)] fish and wildlife species and their habitats in  
23 the area;

24 (iv) [(D)] the current and projected uses in the area,  
25 including uses and value of fish and wildlife;

26 (v) [(E)] the governmental powers to regulate oil and  
27 gas exploration, development, production, and transportation;

28 (vi) [(F)] the reasonably foreseeable cumulative effects  
29 of oil and gas exploration, development, production, and transportation  
30 on the sale area, including effects on subsistence uses, fish and wildlife  
31 habitat and populations and their uses, and historic and cultural

1 resources;

2 (vii) [(G)] lease stipulations and mitigation measures,  
3 including any measures to prevent and mitigate releases of oil and  
4 hazardous substances, to be included in the leases, and a discussion of  
5 the protections offered by these measures;

6 (viii) [(H)] the method or methods most likely to be  
7 used to transport oil or gas from the lease sale area, and the advantages,  
8 disadvantages, and relative risks of each;

9 (ix) [(I)] the reasonably foreseeable fiscal effects of the  
10 lease sale and the subsequent activity on the state and affected  
11 municipalities and communities, including the explicit and implicit  
12 subsidies associated with the lease sale, if any;

13 (x) [(J)] the reasonably foreseeable effects of oil and gas  
14 exploration, development, production, and transportation on  
15 municipalities and communities within or adjacent to the lease sale area;  
16 and

17 (xi) [(K)] the bidding method or methods adopted by the  
18 commissioner under AS 38.05.180;

19 (2) in a preliminary written finding, facts that are known to the  
20 director at the time of preparation of the finding and that are  
21 (A) material to issues that the department identifies, whether  
22 or not material to a matter set out in (B) of this paragraph, and within the  
23 scope of the administrative review established by the director under (e)(1)  
24 of this section; or  
25 (B) material to a matter described in (1)(B) of this  
26 subsection [A SUMMARY OF AGENCY AND PUBLIC COMMENTS  
27 RECEIVED AND THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSES TO THOSE  
28 COMMENTS]; and

29 (3) the basis for the director's preliminary or final finding, as  
30 applicable, [DETERMINATION] that, on balance, leasing the area would be in the  
31 state's best interest.

1 \* Sec. 4. AS 38.05.035 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

2 (h) In preparing a written finding under (e)(1) of this section, the director may  
3 not be required to speculate about possible future effects subject to future permitting  
4 that cannot reasonably be determined until the project or proposed use for which a  
5 written best interest finding is required is more specifically defined, including  
6 speculation about

7 (1) effects that are remote in time or place;

8 (2) the exact location and size of an ultimate use and related facilities;

9 (3) the economic feasibility of ultimate development; and

10 (4) future environmental or other laws that may apply at the time of  
11 any future development.

12 (i) A person who is eligible to file a request for reconsideration under this  
13 subsection and who is aggrieved by the final written finding of the director entered  
14 under (e)(5) or (6) of this section may, within 20 days after the issuance of the final  
15 written finding, request reconsideration of the decision by the commissioner. A person  
16 is eligible to file a request for reconsideration if the person

17 (1) meaningfully participated in the process set out in this chapter for  
18 receipt of public comment by

19 (A) submitting written comment during the period for receipt  
20 of public comment;

21 (B) presenting oral testimony at a public hearing, if a public  
22 hearing was held; or

23 (C) adopting as the person's own testimony concerns that were  
24 expressed by another, either by submitting a written statement to that effect  
25 during the period for receipt of public comment or by so declaring during a  
26 public hearing; and

27 (2) is affected by the final written finding.

28 (j) A request for reconsideration submitted under (i) of this section must  
29 specify the written finding complained of and the specific basis upon which it is  
30 challenged. The commissioner shall grant or deny the request within 30 days after  
31 issuance of the final written finding. Failure of the commissioner to act on the request

1 for reconsideration within this period is a denial of the request for reconsideration and  
2 a final administrative decision for purposes of appeal to the superior court.

3 (k) If a request for reconsideration is granted, the commissioner may order the  
4 director to issue a new final written finding after reconsideration as may be required  
5 under the circumstances.

6 (l) A person may appeal a final written finding issued under (e)(5) or (6) of  
7 this section to the superior court, but only if the person was eligible to request, and did  
8 request, reconsideration of that finding under (i) of this section. The person shall  
9 initiate the appeal within 30 days from the date that the decision on reconsideration  
10 is mailed or otherwise distributed, or the date the request for reconsideration is  
11 considered denied by the commissioner's failure to act on the request, whichever is  
12 earlier. The points on appeal are limited to those presented to the commissioner in the  
13 person's request for reconsideration.

14 (m) For purposes of appeal under (l) of this section, the burden is upon the  
15 party seeking review to establish the invalidity of the finding.

16 \* Sec. 5. AS 38.05.075(h) is amended to read:

17 (h) A person aggrieved by a decision of the commissioner under this section  
18 may appeal to the commissioner within five days of the prequalification decision. The  
19 decision of the commissioner under this subsection [OR UNDER AS 38.05.035(e)]  
20 may be appealed to the superior court.

21 \* Sec. 6. AS 38.05.945(a) is amended to read:

22 (a) This section establishes the requirements for notice given by the department  
23 for the following actions:

24 (1) classification or reclassification of state land under AS 38.05.300  
25 and the closing of land to mineral leasing or entry under AS 38.05.185;

26 (2) zoning of land under applicable law;

27 (3) issuance of a

28 (A) preliminary written finding under AS 38.05.035(e)(5)(A)  
29 regarding the sale, lease, or disposal of an interest in state land or  
30 resources for oil and gas subject to AS 38.05.180(b);

31 (B) final written finding under AS 38.05.035(e)(5)(B)

1 regarding the sale, lease, or disposal of an interest in state land or  
2 resources for oil and gas subject to AS 38.05.180(b);

3 (C) written finding for [A DECISION UNDER  
4 AS 38.05.035(e) REGARDING] the sale, lease, or disposal of an interest in  
5 state land or resources under AS 38.05.035(e)(6);

6 (4) a competitive disposal of an interest in state land or resources after  
7 final decision under AS 38.05.035(e);

8 (5) a public hearing under AS 38.05.856(b);

9 (6) a preliminary finding under AS 38.05.035(e) and 38.05.855(c)  
10 concerning sites for aquatic farms and related hatcheries.

11 \* Sec. 7. AS 38.05.945(b) is amended to read:

12 (b) When notice is required to be given under this section,

13 (1) the notice must contain sufficient information in commonly  
14 understood terms to inform the public of the nature of the action and the  
15 opportunity of the public to comment on it;

16 (2) if the notice is of a preliminary written finding described in  
17 (a)(3)(A) of this section, the department shall give notice at the beginning of the  
18 public comment period for the preliminary written finding, notifying the public  
19 of the right to submit comments; the department shall give notice by

20 (A) publication of a legal notice in newspapers of statewide  
21 circulation and in newspapers of general circulation in the vicinity of the  
22 proposed action at least once a week for two consecutive weeks;

23 (B) publication of a notice in display advertising form in the  
24 newspapers described in (A) of this paragraph at least once a week for two  
25 consecutive weeks;

26 (C) public service announcements on the electronic media  
27 serving the area to be affected by the proposed action; and

28 (D) one or more of the following methods:

29 (i) posting in a conspicuous location in the vicinity of  
30 the action;

31 (ii) notification of parties known or likely to be

1 affected by the action; or  
2 (iii) another method calculated to reach affected  
3 parties;

4 (3) if the notice is of an action [NOTICE OF ONE OR MORE  
5 ACTIONS] described in (a) of this section, other than notice of an action under  
6 (a)(3)(A) of this section, the department shall give notice [SHALL BE GIVEN] at  
7 least 30 days before the action by publication in newspapers of statewide circulation  
8 and in newspapers of general circulation in the vicinity of the proposed action and one  
9 or more of the following methods:

10 (A) [(1)] publication through public service announcements on  
11 the electronic media serving the area affected by the action;

12 (B) [(2)] posting in a conspicuous location in the vicinity of the  
13 action;

14 (C) [(3)] notification of parties known or likely to be affected  
15 by the action; or

16 (D) [(4)] another method calculated to reach affected persons  
17 [. A NOTICE SHALL CONTAIN SUFFICIENT INFORMATION IN  
18 COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD TERMS TO INFORM THE PUBLIC OF THE  
19 NATURE OF THE ACTION AND THE OPPORTUNITY OF THE PUBLIC  
20 TO COMMENT ON THE ACTION].

21 \* Sec. 8. AS 46.40 is amended by adding a new section to read:

22 Sec. 46.40.094. CONSISTENCY DETERMINATIONS FOR PHASED USES  
23 AND ACTIVITIES. (a) The provisions of this section apply to a use or activity for  
24 which a consistency determination is required if

25 (1) at the time the proposed use or activity is initiated, there is  
26 insufficient information to evaluate and render a consistency determination for the  
27 entirety of the proposed use or activity;

28 (2) the proposed use or activity is capable of proceeding in discrete  
29 phases based upon developing information obtained in the course of a phase; and

30 (3) each subsequent phase of the proposed use or activity is subject to  
31 discretion to implement alternative decisions based upon the developing information.

1 (b) When a use or activity is authorized or developed in discrete phases and  
2 each phase will require decisions relating to a permit, lease, or authorization for that  
3 particular phase, the agency responsible for the consistency determination for the  
4 particular phase

5 (1) may, in its discretion, limit the consistency review to that particular  
6 phase if, but only if,

7 (A) the agency or another state agency must carry out a  
8 subsequent consistency review and make a consistency determination before a  
9 later phase may proceed; and

10 (B) the agency responsible conditions its consistency  
11 determination for that phase on a requirement that a use or activity authorized  
12 in a subsequent phase be consistent with the Alaska coastal management  
13 program; and

14 (2) shall, when the consistency review is limited under (1) of this  
15 subsection, conduct the consistency review for the particular phase and make the  
16 consistency determination based on

17 (A) applicable statutes and regulations;

18 (B) the facts pertaining to a use or activity proposed for that  
19 phase that are

20 (i) known to the state agency responsible or made a part  
21 of the record during the consistency review; and

22 (ii) material to the consistency determination; and

23 (C) the reasonably foreseeable, significant effects of the use or  
24 activity proposed for that phase;

25 (3) shall, when the consistency review is limited under (1) of this  
26 subsection, prepare and issue a written statement describing the reasons for its decision  
27 to make the consistency determination for the use or activity in phases.

28 (c) In this section,

29 (1) "agency responsible for the consistency determination" means

30 (A) the office of management and budget, for a consistency  
31 determination required to be made under AS 44.19.145(a)(11); and

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(B) the commissioner of the resource agency that coordinates a consistency review for a proposed use or activity, or for a proposed phase of a use or activity, when required by this chapter for which a permit, lease, or authorization is required to be approved or issued only by that resource agency;

(2) "resource agency" has the meaning given in AS 44.19.152.

\* Sec. 9. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).