

HB

225

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA TAXPAYERS' ASSOCIATION
Inc.
Box 779
Palmer, Alaska
99645



A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF ALASKA HOUSE BILL NO. 225,
ESTABLISHING THE TALKEETNA MOUNTAINS STATE GRAZING RESERVE

WHEREAS, The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly and Planning Commission has proposed an act establishing the Talkeetna Mountains State Grazing Reserve, and

WHEREAS, the proposed act provides for multiple-use concept with local agencies' control, and

WHEREAS, the proposed act provides a larger tax base which will assist in keeping our tax burden at a lower level,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matanuska-Susitna Taxpayers' Association go on record as supporting House Bill No. 225 to establish the Talkeetna Mountains State Grazing Reserve.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Matanuska-Susitna Taxpayers' Association, the 18th day of March, 1977.

Lois M. Knapp
Lois M. Knapp, President

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jm



Alaska State Legislature

House MEMORANDUM

File

JUNEAU ALASKA

1 March 1977

TO: House Resources Committee

FROM: Alvin Osterback, Chairman
House Resources Committee

Al Osterback, Jr.

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Mayor Maze

March 1, 1977 Mayor Maze informed the House Resources Committee that he supports HB 225 and will be sending a resolution.



THE HEART OF THE MATANUSKA VALLEY

CITY OF PALMER

COUNCIL-MANAGER GOVERNMENT

P. O. BOX 1368 PHONE (907) 745-3273

PALMER, ALASKA 99645

March 29, 1977

Mr. Al Osterback, Chairman
House Resources Committee
Pouch V, State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: H.B. #225, Talkeetna Mountains State Grazing Reserve

Mr. Mr. Osterback:

In reply to your request for the City of Palmer to take a position on subject bill, this letter is to inform you of the position taken by the City Council of the City of Palmer in action at the March 8, 1977 meeting.

Accordingly, we are enclosing a copy of the City Council minutes of that meeting, together with a copy of the newspaper article which appeared in the local newspaper.

Sincerely yours,

CITY OF PALMER

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William E. Curtis".

William E. Curtis
City Manager

WEC/rk

Enclosure (2)

cc: Senator Jalmar Kerttula
Representative Al Ose
Mr. Robert Risley

CITY OF PALMER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1977
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

A. CALL TO ORDER: at 8:02 P. M. by Mayor Jack E. Maze.

B. ROLL CALL, DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM, APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Present were Mayor Maze and Councilmen Pedersen, Dolenc, Ekstedt, Johnson and Hanson which established a quorum. Councilman Ingalls was out of the state with an excused absence. City Manager Curtis and City Attorney Biss were also present.

Changes to agenda:

Council unanimously approved, by request of Mayor Maze, the call for an executive session at the close of this agenda for the purpose of discussing personnel and contracts. They also approved the presentation of the Federal Highway Act to be placed on the agenda earlier in the meeting.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: led by Councilman Ekstedt.

D. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

1. Minutes of regular meeting of Tuesday, February 22, 1977 were approved as presented with no changes or corrections.

E. COMMUNICATIONS AND APPEARANCE REQUESTS: none

F. HEARINGS, ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS: none

G. BIDS: none

H. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Request by Sr. Citizens to Utilize Apartment in Community Center

Speaking on behalf of the Senior Citizens, Edna Wehking said they had inspected the apartment which she felt would be adequate for their purpose, but requested that the city remove one wall partition which separates the kitchen from the living room. City Manager is to get approval from the Alaska Railroad that this could be done. The council concurred to the rent free arrangement to the Senior Citizens, provided it meets with the approval of the Railroad.

2. Request to take Position on Hatcher Pass Grazing Reserve - H. B. #225

City Manager Curtis explained this bill was originally drafted by Robert Risley who is in support of the area being utilized for agricultural purposes rather than recreational. He said Mr. Risley also spoke before the Chamber of Commerce in this regard. Mr. Curtis said that several years ago, development plans were made for a very large recreational area with state lands to be leased to individual business comprised mainly of mining business and private individuals which was a very lengthy bill. He said he personally feels that this H. B. #225 is overly simplified for that large amount of acreage and would not pass legislation in this form. He also felt the Board of Directors is out of proportion wherein there is some representation from the Commissioner level vs. the Director of the Division of Agriculture. He did not feel there would be 20,000 sheep grazing in that area, but rather his recommendation was that the area be utilized for recreation if handled properly which would also help the economy.

Councilman Johnson agreed with the comments of Mr. Curtis and questioned how all those cattle would be fed during the winter season. Councilman Ekstedt said he is opposed to the park concept because it is so restrictive. He mentioned the Borough is presently in a hassle with the State and questioned if action taken opposing this bill may have a bearing on the amount of land the Borough is eligible for.

Councilman Dolenc preferred some flexibility and stated he did not favor the idea of the bill written in such a manner that grazing is the primary use. He said he is under the impression that all those serving on the Board of Directors should have equal say. City Manager Curtis said he felt it is poor to do it in that manner from a political angle and from an administrative level, i.e. the Director of the Division of Agriculture may be reluctant to vote against two commissioners on the apparent four man board.

Mayor Maze noted the bill does provide for an advisory group which includes a Borough representative as well as local committees who would have an input into it and could control this particular area. Councilman Hanson stated he felt the intent of this bill is not specifically to support grazing, but possibly a method of paving the way for local people to have some control over the uses of the area.

MOVED EKSTEDT, SECONDED PEDERSEN that the City of Palmer go on record as being in support of the CONCEPT of the Talkeetna Mountain State Grazing Reserve Bill, House Bill No. 225. MCU.

Administration was directed to send copies of this action to Mr. Al Osterback, Chairman of the House Resources Committee, Mr. Risley, Senator Kerttula and Representative Ose.

3. Bike Trails Matter:

City Manager Curtis said this plan was originally triggered by Mrs. Helena Myers and a Bike Trails Committee. The Borough presently has plans to construct bike trails to the new Palmer High School and coming in from the Butte along the Glenn Highway alternate and would now like to know what the city can do to establish bike trails within the city limits to connect with these proposed routes. He said the City Council previously approved the Bike Trails Master Plan but did not commit anything as far as funding is concerned. From an engineering and construction standpoint, he said there are problems since the majority of the street improvements are paid for by adjoining property owners and we cannot expect them to pay for bike trails. He said the priority exists for roads, curb, gutter and sidewalks which is needed a lot more than bike trails.

MOVED HANSON, SECONDED EKSTEDT to table this matter until the next meeting in order to get more information on it.

In discussion, Councilman Johnson asked what more information we can get, feeling we have all we need. He said it is a matter that the city cannot justify spending money for bike trails and we do not have a place to put them. City Manager Curtis said the Borough should have an overall plan for the entire Borough noting to date, the city has only had copies of the plan for the City of Palmer. Councilman Hanson commented that the Bike Trails Master Plan for Palmer was brought up rather suddenly and in all fairness, his recommendation was as stated in his motion, to have this matter deferred to the next meeting. MCU.

4. Request from Credit Union - to Utilize Airport Lands for Gardening

City Manager Curtis said he discussed this possibility with Mr. Paul Crippen of the Credit Union and felt if there is sufficient interest, it would be possible to provide a small amount of land at the airport. Councilman Hanson estimated five acres to be more than adequate for this purpose. Some points brought up for consideration in furnishing land is the fact that it not be in the construction area, the city would not be liable, tilled land is subject to wind, accessibility and the availability of water if needed.

MOVED JOHNSON, SECONDED PEDERSEN that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate a plan with the Credit Union for garden plots at the airport. MCU.

5. Establish Terms of Lease with F.A.A. for New Flight Service Station Facilities:

City Manager Curtis explained the original plan was to lease space in the new Flight Service Station facility to F.A.A. In planning this, we detected the city is required to comply with certain handicap requirements such as the installation of elevators, etc. In our meeting with them, we have now determined their attitude has changed and they perhaps won't need the space at all since they will be going remote because of lack of funds and closing them down. He said he explained to them that the city has planned the building for their use with 100% grant funds and in order to comply with E.D.A. requirements of commencing construction within 90 days of acceptance of grant offer and the 150-day completion date, there is no way the city can now change the plans. He said they offered no further explanation until F.A.A. has had an opportunity to review the entire operation.

Mr. Curtis added they originally informed us this would be a regional office and all of a sudden, they tell us they will not be maning anything and everything will be remote. Legally, they can only lease on a year-to-year basis. He said the city is somewhat committed, since part of this space was designed specifically for F.A.A. and the grant offer from EDA has been accepted. He inquired of the council if they would be willing to lease space to FAA on a "no rent" basis with them paying all utilities and basic costs. Councilman Ekstedt stated he could not see how FAA could possibly close it down because the airport is used a lot and this facility is badly needed. Councilman Johnson spoke in favor of constructing the building for the future since things do have a way of changing.

MOVED HANSON, SECONDED JOHNSON that the City Manager be authorized to negotiate terms with F.A.A. for leasing the new Flight Service Station facilities. MCU.

Learn "The Matanuska"

Grazing bill backed

Despite "problems" with a bill to create a Talkeetna Mountains State Grazing Reserve, the Palmer City Council gave the measure its endorsement Tuesday night.

Consideration of the bill, HB 225, introduced in Juneau by Rep. Al Ose (D-Dist. 6), had been held over from a previous meeting.

"I have problems with this bill," said City Manager Bill Curtis. "I feel it is overly simplified. It covers such a vast area of thousands of acres, but it's taken care of in a couple of pages."

"It's an ag bill from the word go," he commented on the legislation that originally was drafted by Robert Risley, member of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning & Zoning Commission.

Risley has been an advocate of agricultural uses as opposed to recreation alone for the Hatcher Pass area.

Curtis's principal criticism was that the grazing reserve would be adminis-

tered by a board of directors headed by the director of the state Division of Agriculture. The board also would include the department commissioners of Highways and Fish and Game, as well as a representative of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

"Actually," Curtis continued, "the director of agriculture is on a very low level in this state, not equal with the commissioners."

He did not mention Allan K. Linn, the current director, whose headquarters are in Palmer. The division is part of the Department of Natural Resources.

"My opinion of the bill is that it's a rag-tag kind of thing that's thrown together.

City eyes downtown auto race

An auto race through the streets of downtown Palmer may be considered as an attraction for the 1977 Midsummer Festival.

City Manager Bill Curtis, who also serves as president of the Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce, told the council Tuesday night some of the plans that are aimed at bringing visitors into the central business district.

Curtis admitted he didn't know what the liability would be for the city to permit stock car racing. It would be similar to an event at the Anchorage Fur Rendezvous.

The possible race course would follow S. Alaska Street to the Old Glenn Highway, then proceed across the Alaska Railroad tracks and return along S. Valley Way.

It will never get through the Legislature."

The city manager added some comments that he said represented "old Bill Curtis talking."

Referring to arguments that 20,000 sheep could be grazed in the Talkeetna Mountains, Curtis said: "To me, personally, it's ridiculous. To me, the potential of the area is recreational."

Mayor Jack Maze supported the provision in HB 225 for an advisory group largely representing recreational organizations that use the Hatcher Pass area.

"These people will have great input on the management of the grazing area," he said.

The motion to support HB 225 was made by Jim Ekstedt with the second of Everett Pederson. The vote was unanimous.

In other matters, the council:

- Agreed with Edna Wehking that it would be suitable to permit senior citizens to occupy an apartment in the Community Center. Approval will be sought from the Alaska Railroad, owner of the former depot.

- Tabled action on the matter of establishing bike trails through the city to connect routes reserved by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough that now come to the city limits. "In no good conscience can I recommend the city spend money on bike trails," said Curtis. "We need roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutters a heck of a lot more than we need bike trails."

He explained that by existing law, bicycles are not allowed to travel over sidewalks. The real problem, he added, is from an engineering and construction standpoint. "Our streets are built by special improvement money — by the adjoining property owners. Who's going to pay for bike trails?"

this bond request.

Both of the schools will eventual two-story wooden frame structures, ing 600.

Big Lake, with only about 75 students this year, is still a long way from net the whole thing. The planned addition add four basic classrooms to the school there now, plus a gym and multi-purpose room, media center, offices, and nurse station.

The addition would be joined to existing school by a long wide corridor leading toward the rear of property. Play areas would be behind the two buildings.

Boundaries for this school would generally from Houston to the Rain Lakes area, according to Rousey, provided those lines keep the enrollment under 140.

Until this school opens, some youngsters will continue at Iditarod, and others will be moved into portables on the site that are now being used as music and physical education rooms. Included equipment, it would come to \$1.6 million.

SU VALLEY SHOP

The proposed Susitna Valley vocational building is another planned to develop in stages.

This phase has a wood shop, metal shop, two classrooms, shop office, storage room and storage space. Besides the classes, an English-social studies area and the music practice area will move into the new building. A home economics curriculum will take over what is now a small shop area in the main building.

With completion of this project, designed as a separate building done in the same wooden, steep-roofed style as the original, the high school could add another 180 youngsters to its 180 capacity.

Future additions to the vocational building might include an expanded metal-auto shop, theater, drafting room and band-chorus room. The main building was also designed for additions, to a total of 400 students.

Principal Vern Olson says the present shop is inadequate, with much of the equipment having to be kept in storage.

Credit union bill nears vote

James Love, director of the Alaska Public Interest Research Group, said in Palmer Wednesday his group is sponsoring legislation to permit state-chartered credit unions.

"The bill should be coming to a vote in the next couple of weeks," Love said in an interview following his talk to the Greater Palmer Chamber of Commerce Wednesday.

In comparison to federally chartered credit unions, which offer consumer and personal loans, the state-chartered institutions would be able to compete in the mortgage market and offer a limited form of personal checking account, Love said.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

P. O. BOX 1467 - JUNEAU 99802
(907) 364-2121
(TELEX 099-45-371)

February 23, 1977

Re: 00-3077
House Bill #225

Mr. Alvin Osterback, Chairman
House Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Mr. Osterback:

Please refer to your letter dated February 19, 1977 requesting a position paper and material we may have on subject House Bill #225.

This department has neither a position paper or any other material which may be helpful to your committee and know of no fiscal implication at this time. We would, however, suggest that you contact the Department of Natural Resources if you have not already done so. Their input would quite possibly be much more meaningful to the endeavors of your committee.

Sincerely,

H. D. Scougal
H. D. Scougal
Commissioner of Highways

CC: Fran Ulmer, Governor's Office

HDS/DMC/mth

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - February 17, 1976

Subject: HCR 82; HB 580 and HB 664

Present were Eliason, Huntington, Osterback, Smith, Rhode, Hershberger, Brown, Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson.

Chmn. Anderson opened with several general statements, including the fact that the governor has a bill ready for introduction similar to HCR 82. Anderson has written a letter to Bradner, and one to the governor, asking for the FLUPC to study the agreement on Cook Inlet before the committee takes action. "My stand is that I want a closer look at the bill. The terms are complex. I don't feel I can recommend to the House approval at this time."

+ Talkeetna

Discussion as to the legal deadline for the legislature to act upon the bill brought to light the fact that the "Terms and Conditions" document mentioned in HCR 82 contains the 60-day limit, which will be met on March 12. Any change in that date would have to be approved by the Secretary of Interior.

Rep. Rhode expressed concern about the complexity of the problem--but that everyone had given something--federal, state, and natives. He moved a DO PASS.

Chmn. Anderson read to the group the rough draft of the bill to be presented by the governor on Cook Inlet. Although the bill was not officially before the committee, there was general agreement that it was better than the resolution, since it was clearer on subsurface rights.

Discussion ensued as to whether a bill could be introduced as a Committee Substitute for a Resolution. Answer - No.

It was moved that HCR 82 be given a Do Pass recommendation by unanimous consent. Motion carried.

Rep. Huntington moved a Do Pass on CSHB 664.

Smith stated that HB 580 does create a multiple use management area within the park, the state's first effort along those lines.

Huntington urged acceptance of HB664 because it puts the people in charge.

Smith mentioned a possible problem with miners coping with a prime agricultural use, as laid out in HB 664.

Anderson noted that in HB 580, the prime use is recreation, and yet the people themselves living in the area don't consider recreation to be prime.

In answer to Rep. Browns concern about permissible uses in both bills, Smith responded that he agreed neither was perfect, but a decision needed to be reached on which bill to work on.

Rep. Rhode stated his criteria for analyzing bills--Is it needed, will it work, and how much does it cost?

Mr. Smith moved to table HB664 with unanimous consent asked. Chmn. Anderson asked for a withdrawal of the motion in the interests of continuing action.

Chairman Anderson appointed Mr. Smith, Mr. Brown and Mr. Ose to work out problems in HB664, since that appeared to be the bill the committee wanted to mark up. Work is to be done Wed. at 4:30.

Vote on tabling HB664 failed.

Meeting recessed.

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - February 13, 1976

Present were Osterback, Hershberger, Huntington, Smith, Swanson, Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson.

Subject: HB 664 and HB 580

Valentina

Sponsor Ose stated that description corrections have been made in the Committee Substitute. Also, due to the request of the Borough, wording in the original bill pertaining to Sections 10 - 60 ...fff.. are deleted. Regarding the "advisory committee", the word "active" was added.

Mr. Smith reminded the committee that there is a motion pending to substitute the wording of SB 603 for the description in HB 580. The motion carried.

Sponsor Ose stressed passing HB 663--there are enough park projects in the area. Uncertainty of land status needs to be cleared up so as to relieve the anxieties of the people. There is no quarrel with recreational uses of the area--only the "lock up" that a park would cause.

Rep. Swanson expressed concern that Natural Resources still remains in charge of the area, in the CS.

Mr. Smith asked the sponsor whether there are people in the area experienced in management of agricultural and recreational aspects involved; also whether persons are available to handle the physical management of a recreational area. It is Smith's understanding that at least one group in the area wants the state to get involved in maintenance, to get the burden off the back of locals. In response to Ose's comment that locals have been doing o.k., Smith said he had a differing opinion--locals want help. Enforcement also would be necessary. He suggested an amendment be drawn up re: enforcement.

Swanson expressed concern about bureaucracy--rules and regulations force a team of "bureaucracy" to arrive on the scene. However, Swanson stated he is not against the bill.

Rep. Smith noted that the description in HB580 has more agricultural land involved than HB664. Maybe the descriptions should be reversed.

Rep. Huntington stated that we need to get away from having private property within parks, which then has to be bought up by the state at a future date. What is needed is clear title to park lands before they become parks.

Meeting was recessed.

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February 2, 1976 - Talkeetna State Park--Agricultural Reserve Hearings

Robert Risely - presented copy of MSB code title 16 - 8/20/74

Ed Martin, Sr., a resident, favors multiple use. There hasn't been enough exploration of the land to determine what the use should be. Not in favor of either bill--favors multiple use.

Mrs. Gene Woods, a resident, supports 664 with changes. She opposes 580. People can live with HB 664.

Miss Barbara Woods, a resident, favors HB 664. Multiple use, with some control.

A.L. Renshaw, a resident, is a 3rd generation mining engineer. He represents the Alaska Miners Association, and the people of the area. This is the 5th hearing on this issue. The proposals have hampered mineral exploration because of uncertainty. The Willow Creek Mining District has good gold potential. There are 2000 jobs involved--and a 10 billion dollar industry. HB 580 is a rehash of the Committee Substitute for last session from the mountaineering club. It is restrictive. Mr. Renshaw questioned Ln. 5 Pg. 5. Does this mean no development? How do you get access if no motor vehicles are allowed. He was also concerned with MAY wordings, veto power of the Park Dept., and Ln. 21 Pg. 6--reasonable to the state--Does not mention private. This could lead to possible condemnation. There is no responsibility for protecting in-holdings. Re: U.S.G.S. 10004--the recreation zone has shaded patented claims and survey areas--but does not show unpatented lands. Mr. Renshaw also stated that the Chief Planner had said that the recreation area was unmanageable. It is heavily mined. There is stored dynamite--a tremendous hazard. There would have to be restriction on public activities. There would have to be insurance for liability for the owners. Responsibility would have to be spelled out. Traditionally this has been a multiple use area...grazing, recreation, mining, etc. He opposes HB580. "Put the bill to rest--it keeps coming up" HB664 defines a reasonable multiple use for the area--the mining people can live with this.

Henry Hill, a resident, and involved in mining in the area. His family owns property in the area. Leave it exactly as it is. No one bothered it until recreation came in, then agriculture, now mining. Everybody used it before without any classification. Why change it. Existing laws will take care of it. HB580 allows one use--he's opposed. HB664--possibility of good economic source. Possible problem of revenue source vs. recreation source. In HB664 the management responsibility is too far removed from the people.

Mr. Harry Luckwald, a resident: There is gold potential in the area. Mining laws hold precedent--grandfather rights. Against HB580. HB664 is a giant step forward. People used to mine up high near Eagle River, but the Borough stopped them by use.

Anchorage Motor Musers Club--600 members--supports HB664.

Dean Bunker, a homesteader near the area. We do not need any more parks. There is Denali Park expansion. This park could expand.

Susitna Valley Kiwanis Club: We do not need more parks, but if there is a need for this park HB664 is more palatable.

Russ Cahill, Director of Parks, State of Alaska: HB580 is concerned with the area. It is a departure from normal parks, in that it has a corridor of multiple use within it. The Dept. is taking into consideration all mining claims patented and active. The intent of the Park is to NOT purchase land within the Park unless it is essential to campground or management. If land is to be purchased it will be at fair market value. Ranger patrols will be in effect. There will be a possible loss of revenue. Re: HB 664, this is 430,000 acres. 13% is good for agricultural purposes. 87% is not good for agriculture. Cahill is not in favor of this proposal. Only one Department and one man should run the system. If he does not do a good job, he can be removed.

Dr. Deerborn, a resident of the area: Is opposed to all regulations to create a park. It would cripple recreational potential by private ownership. Why not further develop Chugiak Park for Anchorites.

Virginia Del Piaz: President, Upper Cook Inlet Conservation Society: I favor HB580 strongly. 150,000 people in 1975 were opposed to HB664. The majority of the land is above 12,000 ft., and should be included within a Park. The area is not agricultural land. (Del Piaz lives in the area)

Wayne Bowens, a local dairy man: Favors HB664. The multiple use concept is best. Don't lock it up as a park. There is a grazing area, and some crops can be grown.

Arthur Criter, of the Willow Creek Miners: Is opposed to a Park which affects the mining area. Tired of fighting the issue of parks. Prepared to initiate lawsuits (31) Re: HB664, three mining claims additional would be working if not for the cloud of a Park over them.

Pete Green, a local realtor, and member of the Realtors Association: (30 members) Is not too concerned with either bill. Multiple use concept best--protect --put rights and mining first. Park people haven't shown him that they can manage parks. Costs haven't been brought up. Central location, and one agency, to which the people could go to secure all necessary permits, is necessary.

Sig Rigstad, a resident: 1 million acres of parks within the Borough now. There would be more than an acre per person if Talkeetna Mt. Park is enacted. It was mining that opened the area. Parks should take small areas and manage them for the people who would use them. Only outdoor people who are healthy can use the proposed Park areas. There is considerable expense to run a park even if it is not developed. Invest in the parks that are already established. Re: HB664, there is an option if the land has to be tied up. The Adv. Jury Committee is important. But this committee should have as a criteria the size of the organizations involved--not naming specific organizations.

Pat Carney, a dairy farmer: Is opposed to HB664. Is it proper for members of the committee to voice their opinions at this hearing? Feels we are facing a special interest group (mining) who is against HB580 and using HB664. Feels that the HB664 cannot stand as it is. There is not enough agricultural land to justify the bill.

George Parkee: Enjoys parks, but there is a need for agricultural reserve. Supports multiple use, but need to maintain agricultural land. Need for mining--the proven area is needed for recreation also.

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - Feb. 10, 1976

Present were Smith, Huntington, Hershberger, Osterback, Brown
Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson

Subject: HB 664 and HB 580

Talkeetna

Rep. Al Ose began testimony. (Chmn. Anderson requested the hearing to begin without a quorum.) Mr. Ose stated that grazing, mining, and recreation were the main uses of the area. The people living there do not want a park, but they do want recreation. A Park status would essentially close the area to mining. It would also take away a tax base from the Borough. Mining would involve major investment if the people involved knew it was to remain open. Now, under current uncertain conditions, the people won't invest. (Above statements refer to HB 680)

(Chmn. Anderson announced that a quorum was now present). Mr. Ose expressed opposition to HB 580, stating that it is too large an area to lock up in a park.

Ron Hawk, of the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club, expressed concurrence with HB 580 and opposition to HB 664. The wilderness experience in the Talkeetna area is great. The scenic resource alone justifies the park status. The area cannot absorb the tremendous growth pressures. Park designation would provide a management vehicle. The proposal of agriculture as the basic use does not make sense since recreation is in fact the basic use. He stressed that grazing and mining are possible in a multiple use area. He also stressed that there should be hearings in Anchorage with at least a week's notice.

Rep. Huntington stated that many people living in the area of the proposed park are against it. Mr. Hawk said that all people should decide what to do with the area.

Rep. Ose mentioned that there is no trouble in the area yet, but there will be if a park is made.

Russ Cahill, Director of Parks for the state, presented the written testimony he had used up north. He added that HB 580 does provide for mining now in existence. However, there are other mining areas that are not included in the bill. The grazing issue is real; however, the bill does not take away anything or any use now in existence. Mr. Cahill feels that the opposition is coming from a distrust of parks per se. He also mentioned the over-speculation of land in the area now because of the capitol move issue.

Chmn. Anderson: Does the Division of Parks enforce how land is to be used? If not, who can do it?

Cahill answered that Fish and Game or Parks could enforce, depending on the major use of the land. Major uses of this area are driving for pleasure, camping, hang-gliding, fishing, hunting, berry picking, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and bird hunting.

Chmn. Anderson asked how prohibiting motorized vehicles would help the area. He was answered by Cahill stating that most of the problems with land being damaged is because of misuse by motorized vehicles. Anderson asked if Fish and Game could regulate the moose hunting in the area? (This was in response to a statement that the moose herd was on the decline because of overhunting) Answer--Yes, if it were responsible for it.

Chmn. Anderson asked why Cahill was proposing a committee to manage the area, when he had previously stated that a committee was not a good way to manage? Cahill replied that this proposed committee was for "masterplanning", not managing.

Chmn. Anderson stated that it appeared that the people of the area were having problems with the wording on Page 5, Line 14 of HB 580 stating that the Commissioner would designate the uses that were compatible under the bill. Anderson felt that the land residents should have input into the use of the land. Cahill stated that the Senate version of the bill allows local input, and also takes out the Willow part of the proposal--it is a smaller proposal.

Rep. Hershberger asked how recreational use would be affected if the area were not a park. Cahill stated that now there is excess and unsafe shooting--it needs to be limited. Also there is uncontrolled auto use. Furthermore, recreation users bother the mines and miners. Rangers on duty in a park could patrol and cut down the problems.

Chmn. Anderson stated that recreation uses shouldn't weigh more than domestic uses of those living in the area.

Rep. Smith moved that on Pg. 5, Line 19, HB 580, after the word "B", add "reviewed by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and". Motion carried unanimously.

Rep. Smith moved that on Line 27, Pg. 5, HB 580, after "management", add "of land specified in 425 A of this chapter and". Motion carried

Regarding HB 664, Chmn. Anderson stated that grazing was considered primary, with other uses to be controlled accordingly. He asked Mr. Cahill what his arguments were against HB 664. Cahill stated that his basic objection was the setting-up of agriculture as the dominant use. Also, having the Director of Agriculture as the Land Manager for the area wasn't correct, since agriculture was not the primary use of the area.

Chmn. Anderson mentioned that HB 664 was a plan made up directly by the people of the area--one of the first such plans, and as such is a good example of what can be done. Cahill replied that Parks did consult with the people of the area before drawing up the bill--(HB 580)

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Richard Gordon, of the Alaska Wilderness Council, stated that the primary objective of HB 580 was to provide extensive recreational value, including scenic values. For instance, very few areas in the state have extensive alpine lakes such as this one does. Within the proposed park natural separations would enhance camping. However, funds need to be appropriated for staff within the park. This park would allow the new capitol city to be surrounded by "green belt".

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Des Dooley, of the Alaska Department of Highways stated that this proposal does not conflict with any current highway plans,---there is no 4-F conflict. However, there seems to be a problem with the park description in the Jonesville area.

Chmn. Anderson recessed the meeting until Friday, Feb.13, at 8:00 a.m.

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - February 17, 1976

Subject: HCR 82; HB 580 and HB 664

Present were Eliason, Huntington, Osterback, Smith, Rhode, Hershberger, Brown, Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson.

Chmn. Anderson opened with several general statements, including the fact that the governor has a bill ready for introduction similar to HCR 82. Anderson has written a letter to Bradner, and one to the governor, asking for the FLUPC to study the agreement on Cook Inlet before the committee takes action. "My stand is that I want a closer look at the bill. The terms are complex. I don't feel I can recommend to the House approval at this time."

Talbot

Discussion as to the legal deadline for the legislature to act upon the bill brought to light the fact that the "Terms and Conditions" document mentioned in HCR 82 contains the 60-day limit, which will be met on March 12. Any change in that date would have to be approved by the Secretary of Interior.

Rep. Rhode expressed concern about the complexity of the problem-- but that everyone had given something--federal, state, and natives. He moved a DO PASS.

Chmn. Anderson read to the group the rough draft of the bill to be presented by the governor on Cook Inlet. Although the bill was not officially before the committee, there was general agreement that it was better than the resolution, since it was clearer on subsurface rights.

Discussion ensued as to whether a bill could be introduced as a Committee Substitute for a Resolution. Answer - No.

It was moved that HCR 82 be given a Do Pass recommendation by unanimous consent. Motion carried.

- -----
Rep. Huntington moved a Do Pass on CSHB 664.

Smith stated that HB 580 does create a multiple use management area within the park, the state's first effort along those lines.

Huntington urged acceptance of HB664 because it puts the people in charge.

Smith mentioned a possible problem with miners coping with a prime agricultural use, as laid out in HB 664.

Anderson noted that in HB 580, the prime use is recreation, and yet the people themselves living in the area don't consider recreation to be prime.

In answer to Rep. Browns concern about permissible uses in both bills, Smith responded that he agreed neither was perfect, but a decision needed to be reached on which bill to work on.

Rep. Rhode stated his criteria for analyzing bills--Is it needed, will it work, and how much does it cost?

Mr. Smith moved to table HB664 with unanimous consent asked. Chmn. Anderson asked for a withdrawal of the motion in the interests of continuing action.

Chairman Anderson appointed Mr. Smith, Mr. Brown and Mr. Ose to work out problems in HB664, since that appeared to be the bill the committee wanted to mark up. Work is to be done Wed. at 4:30.

Vote on tabling HB664 failed.

Meeting recessed.

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - February 13, 1976

Present were Osterback, Hershberger, Huntington, Smith, Swanson, Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson.

Subject: HB 664 and HB 580

Valletta

Sponsor Ose stated that description corrections have been made in the Committee Substitute. Also, due to the request of the Borough, wording in the original bill pertaining to Sections 10 - 60 ...fff.. are deleted. Regarding the "advisory committee", the word "active" was added.

Mr. Smith reminded the committee that there is a motion pending to substitute the wording of SB 603 for the description in HB 580. The motion carried.

Sponsor Ose stressed passing HB 663--there are enough park projects in the area. Uncertainty of land status needs to be cleared up so as to relieve the anxieties of the people. There is no quarrel with recreational uses of the area--only the "lock up" that a park would cause.

Rep. Swanson expressed concern that Natural Resources still remains in charge of the area, in the CS.

Mr. Smith asked the sponsor whether there are people in the area experienced in management of agricultural and recreational aspects involved; also whether persons are available to handle the physical management of a recreational area. It is Smith's understanding that at least one group in the area wants the state to get involved in maintenance, to get the burden off the back of locals. In response to Ose's comment that locals have been doing o.k., Smith said he had a differing opinion--locals want help. Enforcement also would be necessary. He suggested an amendment be drawn up re: enforcement.

Swanson expressed concern about bureaucracy--rules and regulations force a team of "bureaucracy" to arrive on the scene. However, Swanson stated he is not against the bill.

Rep. Smith noted that the description in HB580 has more agricultural land involved than HB664. Maybe the descriptions should be reversed.

Rep. Huntington stated that we need to get away from having private property within parks, which then has to be bought up by the state at a future date. What is needed is clear title to park lands before they become parks.

Meeting was recessed.

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February 2, 1976 - Talkeetna State Park--Agricultural Reserve Hearings

Robert Risely - presented copy of MSB code title 16 - 8/20/74

Ed Martin, Sr., a resident, favors multiple use. There hasn't been enough exploration of the land to determine what the use should be. Not in favor of either bill--favors multiple use.

Mrs. Gene Woods, a resident, supports 664 with changes. She opposes 530. People can live with HB 664.

Miss Barbara Woods, a resident, favors HB 664. Multiple use, with some control.

A.L. Renshaw, a resident, is a 3rd generation mining engineer. He represents the Alaska Miners Association, and the people of the area. This is the 5th hearing on this issue. The proposals have hampered mineral exploration because of uncertainty. The Willow Creek Mining District has good gold potential. There are 2000 jobs involved--and a 10 billion dollar industry. HB 580 is a rehash of the Committee Substitute for last session from the mountaineering club. It is restrictive. Mr. Renshaw questioned Ln. 5 Pg. 5. Does this mean no development? How do you get access if no motor vehicles are allowed. He was also concerned with MAY wordings, veto power of the Park Dept., and Ln. 21 Pg. 6--reasonable to the state--Does not mention private This could lead to possible condemnation. There is no responsibility for protecting in-holdings. Re: U.S.G.S. 10004--the recreation zone has shaded patented claims and survey areas--but does not show unpatented lands. Mr. Renshaw also stated that the Chief Planner had said that the recreation area was unmanageable. It is heavily mined. There is stored dynamite--a tremendous hazard. There would have to be restriction on public activities. There would have to be insurance for liability for the owners. Responsibility would have to be spelled out. Traditionally this has been a multiple use area...grazing, recreation, mining, etc. He opposes HB580. "Put the bill to rest-- it keeps coming up" HB664 defines a reasonable multiple use for the area--the mining people can live with this.

Henry Hill, a resident, and involved in mining in the area. His family owns property in the area. Leave it exactly as it is. No one bothered it until recreation came in, then agriculture, now mining. Everybody used it before without any classification. Why change it. Existing laws will take care of it. HB580 allows one use--he's opposed. HB664--possibility of good economic source. Possible problem of revenue source vs. recreation source. In HB664 the management responsibility is too far removed from the people.

Mr. Harry Luckwald, a resident: There is gold potential in the area. Mining laws hold precedent--grandfather rights. Against HB580. HB664 is a giant step forward. People used to mine up high near Eagle River, but the Borough stopped them by use.

Anchorage Motor Musers Club--600 members--supports HB664.

Dean Bunker, a homesteader near the area. We do not need any more parks There is Denali Park expansion. This park could expand.

Susitna Valley Kiwanis Club: We do not need more parks, but if there is a need for this park HB664 is more palatable.

Russ Cahill, Director of Parks, State of Alaska: HB580 is concerned with the area. It is a departure from normal parks, in that it has a corridor of multiple use within it. The Dept. is taking into consideration all mining claims patented and active. The intent of the Park is to NOT purchase land within the Park unless it is essential to campground or management. If land is to be purchased it will be at fair market value. Ranger patrols will be in effect. There will be a possible loss of revenue. Re: HB 664, this is 430,000 acres. 13% is good for agricultural purposes. 87% is not good for agriculture. Cahill is not in favor of this proposal. Only one Department and one man should run the system. If he does not do a good job, he can be removed.

Dr. Deerborn, a resident of the area: Is opposed to all regulations to create a park. It would cripple recreational potential by private ownership. Why not further develop Chugiak Park for Anchorites.

Virginia Del Piaz: President, Upper Cook Inlet Conservation Society: I favor HB580 strongly. 150,000 people in 1975 were opposed to HB664. The majority of the land is above 12,000 ft., and should be included within a Park. The area is not agricultural land. (Del Piaz lives in the area)

Wayne Bowens, a local dairy man: Favors HB664. The multiple use concept is best. Don't lock it up as a park. There is a grazing area, and some crops can be grown.

Arthur Criter, of the Willow Creek Miners: Is opposed to a Park which affects the mining area. Tired of fighting the issue of parks. Prepared to initiate lawsuits (31) Re: HB664, three mining claims additional would be working if not for the cloud of a Park over them.

Pete Green, a local realtor, and member of the Realtors Association: (30 members) Is not too concerned with either bill. Multiple use concept best--protect --put rights and mining first. Park people haven't shown him that they can manage parks. Costs haven't been brought up. Central location, and one agency, to which the people could go to secure all necessary permits, is necessary.

Sig Rigstad, a resident: 1 million acres of parks within the Borough now. There would be more than an acre per person if Talkeetna Mt. Park is enacted. It was mining that opened the area. Parks should take small areas and manage them for the people who would use them. Only outdoor people who are healthy can use the proposed Park areas. There is considerable expense to run a park even if it is not developed. Invest in the parks that are already established. Re: HB664, there is an option if the land has to be tied up. The Advisory Committee is important. But this committee should have as a criteria the size of the organizations involved--not naming specific organizations.

Pat Carney, a dairy farmer: Is opposed to HB664. Is it proper for members of the committee to voice their opinions at this hearing? Feels we are facing a special interest group (mining) who is against HB580 and using HB664. Feels that the HB664 cannot stand as it is. There is not enough agricultural land to justify the bill.

George Parkee: Enjoys parks, but there is a need for agricultural reserve. Supports multiple use, but need to maintain agricultural land. Need for mining--the proven area is needed for recreation also.

HOUSE RESOURCE COMMITTEE - Minutes - Feb. 10, 1976

Present were Smith, Huntington, Hershberger, Osterback, Brown
Staff Assistant Van Doren and Chmn. Anderson

Subject: HB 664 and HB 580

Talkeetna

Rep. Al Ose began testimony. (Chmn. Anderson requested the hearing to begin without a quorum.) Mr. Ose stated that grazing, mining, and recreation were the main uses of the area. The people living there do not want a park, but they do want recreation. A Park status would essentially close the area to mining. It would also take away a tax base from the Borough. Mining would involve major investment if the people involved knew it was to remain open. Now, under current uncertain conditions, the people won't invest. (Above statements refer to HB 680)

(Chmn. Anderson announced that a quorum was now present). Mr. Ose expressed opposition to HB 580, stating that it is too large an area to lock up in a park.

Ron Hawk, of the Alaska Chapter of the Sierra Club, expressed concurrence with HB 580 and opposition to HB 664. The wilderness experience in the Talkeetna area is great. The scenic resource alone justifies the park status. The area cannot absorb the tremendous growth pressures. Park designation would provide a management vehicle. The proposal of agriculture as the basic use does not make sense since recreation is in fact the basic use. He stressed that grazing and mining are possible in a multiple use area. He also stressed that there should be hearings in Anchorage with at least a week's notice.

Rep. Huntington stated that many people living in the area of the proposed park are against it. Mr. Hawk said that all people should decide what to do with the area.

Rep. Ose mentioned that there is no trouble in the area yet, but there will be if a park is made.

Russ Cahill, Director of Parks for the state, presented the written testimony he had used up north. He added that HB 580 does provide for mining now in existence. However, there are other mining areas that are not included in the bill. The grazing issue is real; however, the bill does not take away anything or any use now in existence. Mr. Cahill feels that the opposition is coming from a distrust of parks per se. He also mentioned the over-speculation of land in the area now because of the capitol move issue.

Chmn. Anderson: Does the Division of Parks enforce how land is to be used? If not, who can do it?

Cahill answered that Fish and Game or Parks could enforce, depending on the major use of the land. Major uses of this area are driving for pleasure, camping, hang-gliding, fishing, hunting, berry picking, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling and bird hunting.

Chmn. Anderson asked how prohibiting motorized vehicles would help the area. He was answered by Cahill stating that most of the problems with land being damaged is because of misuse by motorized vehicles. Anderson asked if Fish and Game could regulate the moose hunting in the area? (This was in response to a statement that the moose herd was on the decline because of overhunting) Answer--Yes, if it were responsible for it.

Chmn. Anderson asked why Cahill was proposing a committee to manage the area, when he had previously stated that a committee was not a good way to manage? Cahill replied that this proposed committee was for "masterplanning", not managing.

Chmn. Anderson stated that it appeared that the people of the area were having problems with the wording on Page 5, Line 14 of HB 580 stating that the Commissioner would designate the uses that were compatible under the bill. Anderson felt that the land residents should have input into the use of the land. Cahill stated that the Senate version of the bill allows local input, and also takes out the Willow part of the proposal--it is a smaller proposal.

Rep. Hershberger asked how recreational use would be affected if the area were not a park. Cahill stated that now there is excess and unsafe shooting--it needs to be limited. Also there is uncontrolled auto use. Furthermore, recreation users bother the mines and miners. Rangers on duty in a park could patrol and cut down the problems.

Chmn. Anderson stated that recreation uses shouldn't weigh more than domestic uses of those living in the area.

Rep. Smith moved that on Pg. 5, Line 19, HB 580, after the word "B", add "reviewed by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and". Motion carried unanimously.

Rep. Smith moved that on Line 27, Pg. 5, HB 580, after "management", add "of land specified in 425 A of this chapter and". Motion carried

Regarding HB 664, Chmn. Anderson stated that grazing was considered primary, with other uses to be controlled accordingly. He asked Mr. Cahill what his arguments were against HB 664. Cahill stated that his basic objection was the setting-up of agriculture as the dominant use. Also, having the Director of Agriculture as the Land Manager for the area wasn't correct, since agriculture was not the primary use of the area.

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