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759



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BILL ANALYSIS

Department Fish and Game	Sponsor (Principal) Cotten	Bill Number HB 759
Department Position Favorable		
Division Director Richard Logan	Date 3/8/82	Commissioner Ronald O. Skoog Date 3/8/82

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE USE		
Comments:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Position Noted	By	Date

SUMMARY	
1. a) Related Bills (Similar or Conflicting)	1. b) Other Agencies Affected by Bill
2. a) Organizational Support for Bill	2. b) Organizational Opposition to Bill

3. Program Effects of Bill

Enhance recreational and habitat values of described area.

4. Fiscal Impact: None Fiscal Note Attached

5. Amendments Proposed: Sec 41.20.506 PURPOSE Amend as follows

a. The purpose of AS 41.20.506 4.20.512 is to dedicate the land and water described in AS 41.20.507(c) to protect and enhance the natural, cultural, scenic, and wildlife resources of Willow Creek State Recreation Area and the fishery resources of (continued)

6. Comments: PURPOSE

We are in agreement with the intent of the PURPOSE, however, feel that allowable uses should be specified initially to prevent misrepresentation of intent at some future time.

With respect to disposals, none should occur prior to establishment of the management plan. Disposals prior to establishment of the management plan or in disregard to the management plan can only result in conflicts with the intent of establishment of a recreation area.

ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT

In order to prevent conflicts, the management plan must be mutually agreeable to all parties with management authority over land and resources within the proposed recreation area. (continued)

Amendments Proposed: (continued)

Willow Creek and their uses including but not limited to camping, hiking, hunting, fishing, trapping and sightseeing.

- (b) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, the Department of Natural Resources may dispose of land under AS 38.08 within the Willow Creek State Recreation Area for recreational use provided those disposals are consistent with the master plan developed under Sec. 41.20.507(d). Disposals are prohibited prior to development of the plan.

Sec. 41.20 507. ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT Amend as follows:

- (d) The Commissioner of Natural Resources shall develop a master plan for the use and development of the Willow Creek State Recreation Area in cooperation with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Department of Fish and Game. The management plan developed under this section must be mutually acceptable to the above parties prior to its adoption.

THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWELFTH LEGISLATURE

FISCAL NOTE

I. REQUEST

Bill/Resolution No. HB 759
 Title Willow Creek State Recreation Area
 Requested by _____ Date 3/1/82

II. FISCAL DETAIL

Agency Affected Fish and Game
 Program Category Affected NRMEC
 BRU, Program, Or Subprogram(s) Affected Habitat Division
 (Note: If more than one budget component is affected, separate line-item amounts and funding for each component in the analysis section.)

EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		8.3K				
200 TRAVEL		0.7K				
300 CONTRACTUAL		2.0K				
400 COMMODITIES		0.3K				
500 EQUIPMENT		0.3K				
600 LAND & STRUCTURES						
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.						
TOTAL		11.6K				

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify Source)						

POSITIONS

FULL TIME						
PART TIME						
TEMPORARY						

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation Instruction, Section III)

One Habitat Biologist III in Region II for 2 months to participate in development of the Management Plan

IV. DATE 3/2/82 PREPARED BY Bruce Baker
 AGENCY Fish and Game
 PHONE 465-4105

Original: Legislative Finance
 cc: Budget and Management
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)
 33-001 (Rev. 12/81)

I. REQUEST
 Bill/Resolution No. HB 676 Appropriation to DOT/PF for
 Title Willow Creek Road and related user facilities
 Requested by DNR, Division of Parks Date 1/21/82

II. FISCAL DETAIL
 Agency Affected Dept. of Natural Resources, Division of Parks
 Program Category Affected General Fund
 BRU, Program, Or Subprogram(s) Affected _____
 (Note: If more than one budget component is affected, separate line-item amounts and funding for each component in the analysis section.)

EXPENDITURES (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 82	FY 83	FY 84	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87
100 PERSONAL SERVICES		\$ 349	\$ 135			
200 TRAVEL		78	30			
300 CONTRACTUAL		4,320	1,673			
400 COMMODITIES		58	23			
500 EQUIPMENT		-0-	-0-			
600 LAND & STRUCTURES		-0-	-0-			
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS, ETC.		-0-	-0-			
TOTAL	-0-	\$ 4,805	\$ 1,861			

FUNDING (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND		\$ 4,805	\$ 1,861			
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER (Specify Source)						
TOTAL	-0-	\$ 4,805	\$ 1,861			

POSITIONS

FULL TIME						
PART TIME						
TEMPORARY						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-			

III. ANALYSIS (See Fiscal Note Preparation instruction, Section III)
 This request was submitted by Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks, on January 15, 1982 to Representative Cotten, and by mistake, it has been assigned to Department of Transportation. Review of this Fiscal Note by Department of Transportation included Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks, and data was developed based upon their preliminary designs. It is requested that this project be reassigned to Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks.

IV. DATE 2/1/82 PREPARED BY MB
 AGENCY DOT/PF PHONE 465-3900
 Original: Legislative Finance
 cc: Budget and Management
 Prime Sponsor (First Legislator Named)
 33-001 (Rev. 12/81)

ARCC

1978

equity gap
capital availability
managerial gap

production
marketing

ORK

Name: Willow Creek State Recreation Site

Total acreage: 240

Highway (milepost): Parks Highway (71.2)

Community orientation: 28 miles north of Wasilla

Land & Water Conservation Funds used: YES NO

ESTABLISHMENT

Method	Citation	date	acres	legal description
Administrative	507 Site	8/17/60	90	Portions of Section 5 including lots 3 and 4, T19N, R4W, S.M.
Administrative	ILMT 50062	5/18/72	---	Same as above.
Administrative	ILMT 65719	1/13/75	150	See ILMT 65719.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This recreation site is located one mile up the Hatcher Pass Road at mile 71 on the Parks Highway. It is a convenient overnight stop for travelers, but is more popular as an excellent fishing site. Starting in the spring with grayling and rainbow trout, the good fishing continues through June with King

salmon, July with chum and into late summer with silver and pink salmon runs. Camping and sanitary facilities and firewood are provided for public use.

SPECIAL NOTES

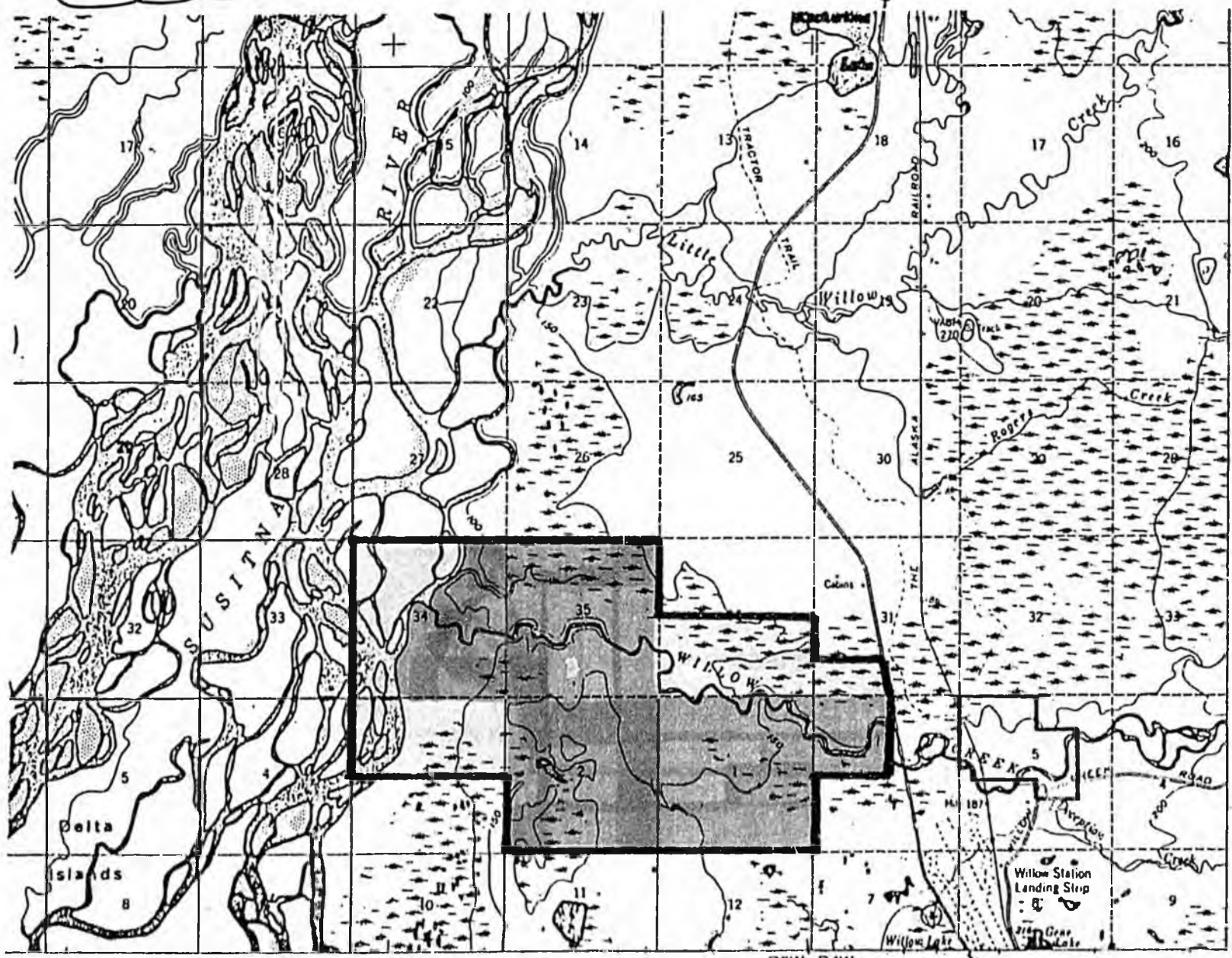
D-1)

WILLOW CREEK STATE RECREATION SITE

= STATE LAND

= BOROUGH LAND

To Fairbanks



1" = 1 mile

T20N
T19N

R6W R4W

Wasilla 27 ml.



Matanuska-Susitna Borough, Inc.

BOX B, PALMER, ALASKA 99645 • PHONE 745-3246

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

March 2, 1982

Mr. Reed Stoops, Director
Alaska Dept. of Natural Resources
Division of Research and Development
Pouch 7-005
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Stoops:

We wish to express our gratitude to you and your staff upon the successful conclusion of the Willow Sub-Basin planning effort. Bill, Randy, Chris, Marjorie, Liz, and Bob Loeffler worked fantastically hard to produce a very professional document. Their expertise, tireless dedication, and - yes - patience have been truly remarkable. We could not have asked for more consideration, nor found a better team of pros.

This plan is something of a milestone in inter-governmental cooperation and certainly a significant contribution to the State's efforts as well as the Borough's to plan for economic development and to meet the needs of the people. We certainly look forward, now, to continuing this effort so well begun.

Again, thank you and your staff.

Very sincerely yours,

Rodney Schulling
Principal Planner

RS:mu

cc: Bill Beatty
Randy Cowart
Chris Beck



Matanuska-Susitna Borough

BOX B, PALMER, ALASKA 99645 • PHONE 745-4801

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

February 25, 1982

John W. Katz, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources
Pouch M
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: Borough approval of Willow Sub-basin Plan

Dear John:

Over the past year Randy Cowart and Chris Beck have done a magnificent job working with people in this Borough, with our Planning Commission and our Assembly on the Willow Sub-basin Plan.

Their presentations were unfailingly good and interesting, they had an excellent capacity for give and take in working with the various interest groups you find in this Borough, and they always had the highest respect of everyone with whom they dealt.

They were always patient and were responsive to all queries and concerns.

Our planning staff enjoys working with your Division of Research and Development people, with Bill Beaty, Reed Stoops and the others, and we will be looking forward to working with you and others in DNR in the future.

In my opinion, approval of the Willow Sub-basin Plan by the state and the borough lays the foundation for a substantial state investment in creek-crossings and roads in a hitherto undeveloped area. So now that the plan has been approved by the state and the borough, we feel that we have a license to hound you, unmercifully, the present governor, any future governor and others in the state administration for funding of capital improvements to open up new agriculture, forest, recreation, resource and settlement lands in the Willow Sub-basin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Thurlow". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name of the signatory.

Gary Thurlow, Borough Manager

ys

cc: Bill Beaty, Section Chief
DNR, Anchorage

STATE OF ALASKA

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

619 WAREHOUSE DR., SUITE 210
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

February 2, 1982

DIVISION OF PARKS

PHONE: 274-4676

The Honorable Sam Cotten
Alaska State House of Representatives
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Sam:

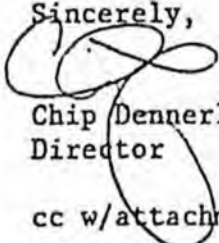
This letter is in response to our recent discussions concerning your proposal to establish and develop a Willow Creek State Recreation Area. I strongly support both the establishment and development based on the existing and growing recreation needs of the Anchorage and Mat-Su populations. I consider both elements of your proposal essential. In reality, neither should, nor will, proceed without the other.

Designation without development will not replace the growing use conflicts with new opportunities. Development without designation will represent a poor investment which will not provide the kind of recreation opportunity people seek. The Division of Parks does not have authority to construct and maintain facilities, provide public safety, etc., on non-park lands. Willow Creek has been recognized as a prime recreation site for more than 25 years. It will require constant maintenance and management. To have such an area developed and "managed" by other than the State's agency charged with those responsibilities simply would not make sense. The job won't get done and Alaskans will end up with a road full of garbage and inadequate facilities.

Moreover, a good deal of the public opportunities along the creek (even the feasibility of the road) depend on the cooperative management of the Mat-Su Borough. The borough has strongly supported our efforts, but has continually sought assurance that we would provide active management of the area as part of any request for development. A recreation area at Willow Creek has nothing to do with cramping the "Alaska lifestyle" (if it did, I doubt our efforts would be receiving such broad support from local government, sportsmen's groups, etc.). It has everything to do with providing the kind of developed and maintained recreation opportunity now required by a large urban population.

Every stream and lake in Alaska which possesses outdoor recreation values should not be a State Recreation Area. Willow Creek is not every stream. It is, because of its accessibility and productivity, a focal point. The need for recreation management there has been recognized in every federal, territorial and state recreation study since 1955. The approach which your bills take, is completely consistent with the current policies of DNR. I have included two attachments with this letter, a good overview of the whole situation and a capsulized "crib sheet". If you have any further questions, please call.

Sincerely,



Chip Dennerlein
Director

cc w/attachments: Honorable Rick Halford; Honorable Pat Carney; John W. Katz, Commissioner, DNR; Garry Thurlow, Manager, Mat-Su Borough; Russ Kedick, Regional Supervisor, Div. of Sport Fisheries, ADF&G; Hunter Fisher, Alaska Sportfishing Association

PROPOSED WILLOW CREEK STATE RECREATION AREA AND DEVELOPMENT

Recognition of Area. 1955 study by Federal government and Territory recommends establishment of major recreation area along Willow Creek. Early 1970's, DNR and ADF&G recommend recreation land classification and development downstream from highway bridge to mouth of creek. 1978 studies from Bond Fund appropriation show existing small upstream site to be inadequate and undesirable for development. 1981 DNR land use plan classifies land for recreation and proposes joint study with Mat-Su Borough to determine permanent management and development needs.

Coordination with local government. Mat-Su Planning Commission Resolution 81-28 and Borough Assembly Resolution 81-129 support cooperative study with Division of Parks, including future cooperative management agreements and/or exchanges. Borough land manager participates on joint planning team. Borough expresses support for inclusion of municipal land within external boundaries of proposed state recreation area.

Public support. At two public meetings in Willow and one in Anchorage strong general support for joint state borough plan, state recreation area management and development is voiced. Both airboat association and shore fishing interests support development approach to reduce growing conflicts. Alaska Sportfishing Association sends letter to legislature regarding Willow Creek.

Division of Parks progress. Master plan well underway. Two road alignment alternatives chosen and feasibility study underway. On ground assessment of recreation facility development completed including hydrologic assessment of flood prone and unstable areas. Utilizing existing bond monies, road alternative will be chosen and engineering accomplished this summer.

Coordination with DOT/PF. DOT southcentral engineers assigned to prepare fiscal note for HB 676 support project being accomplished by DNR, Division of Parks, based on amount of work already accomplished by the division, avoidance of unnecessary duplication, time frame of construction, and recognition that overall design and construction will need to be based upon recreation use and management of the area.

Why recreation area designation. Focal point for large urban area population. Publically recognized need for ongoing management and maintained. Fulfillment of DNR planning process and joint state/municipal study. Division of Parks has no authority for development and maintenance of non-park system lands.

Role within State Park System. Together with Nancy Lake and Kepler/Bradley Recreation Areas will provide a spectrum of recreation opportunity for Anchorage and Mat-Su populations. Nancy Lake -- weekend, overnight opportunities. Kepler/Bradley Lake -- day-use stocked lake fishing, picnicking, etc. Willow Creek -- day-use and overnight stream and salmon fishing, access into Susitna River. The Willow Creek Recreation Area would provide opportunities not presently available in the state park system in this region.

PROPOSED WILLOW CREEK STATE RECREATION AREA AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT

In 1955, the federal government in cooperation with the Territory of Alaska, conducted a survey to propose establishment of public use recreation sites. Most of the sites recommended were small access points to streams and lakes. These became the first units of our state park system. There was one area, however, for which the study proposed the designation of a sizeable amount of land along both sides of a stream to provide a focal point for future regional use -- that area was Willow Creek.

Since the early 1970's the Departments of Fish & Game and Natural Resources have considered the establishment of a recreation area along Willow Creek from the Parks Highway to its confluence with the Susitna River. Since 1975 the Matanuska-Susitna Borough has publically expressed a shared interest in such a proposal. The State's draft Land Use Plan for Public Lands in the Willow Sub-Basin (October 1981) explicitly states that "the public lands along Willow Creek below the Parks Highway Bridge should be studied cooperatively by the borough and state for possible recreation development and inclusion in the State Park System." The cooperative study is now underway. Recently, because of increasing conflicts between fishermen utilizing Willow Creek and large numbers of river and airboats on their way to the Doshka River and other Susitna tributaries interest (by both airboaters and shore fishermen) in providing a boat launch facility in the vicinity of the mouth of Willow Creek. Additionally, concern has been expressed about the effect of the heavy boat traffic on the fishery, water quality of Willow Creek and the noise associated with the operation of the boats.

For years the uncertainty of land ownership and management was an obstacle to serious planning and development. Following municipal selections (1978) and several cooperative meetings between the Director of Parks and the Mat-Su Borough Manager (1981) the final obstacles were removed.

Alaska's 1978 bond measure directed funding to the Division of Parks for rehabilitation of the existing flood damaged Willow Creek Recreation Site (a small site upstream from the bridge which is surrounded by private property.) After careful study and recognition of an active erosion problem, it was decided to convert this small site to a day-use area and, since the land issue had been resolved, to use the remaining funds for a master plan, site planning, and engineering design within the proposed Willow Creek State Recreation Area downstream of the Parks Highway. This approach was endorsed by the public, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission, the Borough Assembly and the borough manager.

The Master Plan is well underway. Three public meetings have been held by the Division of Parks, two in Willow and one in Anchorage. The Planning Commission and Borough Assembly have received additional briefings on the progress of the plan. Each has passed a supportive resolution.

An engineering feasibility study of two road alternatives is currently being conducted. Selection of a road alignment and completion of the engineering design in 1982 will allow construction to begin in 1983 with completion in 1984. Additionally, rehabilitation of the existing Willow Creek State Recreation Site will be completed in 1982.

The primary purpose of this project is to provide accessible stream fishing, recreation, with the additional benefits of reducing existing user conflicts and providing better access to other areas along the lower Susitna River. The project will also provide access to developable borough lands outside the proposed recreation area. The Division of Parks has planned, engineered, and constructed over ten million dollars in projects within the past two years. With planning and engineering already well underway, the Division is prepared to move quickly to construction on receipt of additional funding.

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letters from the people

anchorage daily news; pouch 6616, anchorage, alaska 99502

Full Parks

Fishing facilities

Another year has passed with the mass-media filled with stories of the State of Alaska's great oil wealth and how it is being and is to be used.

There is "Project 80s," "Alaska '84," an attempt at landing the World's Fair, or perhaps the Winter Olympics. Consultants and experts are flocking to Juneau to study and propose. Entrepreneurs sense an easy mark and move in for the kill.

In the meantime, far out in the Pacific Ocean, millions of salmon are gathered in great schools, foraging and maturing. One day late this winter or early this spring, an unexplained urge will be triggered in all the adults and they will turn towards Alaska. Millions of these salmon will be bound for the Susitna River Drainage. They will begin to show up early in the summer. By late July the streams that cross the Parks Highway in the Susitna

Valley will be plugged full of spawning salmon.

At precisely the same time the salmon are fulfilling their destiny, another predictable phenomenon will be occurring. Thousands of sport fishermen will be migrating to the Susitna Valley via the Parks Highway to fulfill one of the greatest reasons many of them came to Alaska, namely to fish for salmon.

They will line the river banks up and down stream from the highway at the Little Susitna River, Willow Creek, Sheep Creek, Caswell Creek, Goose Creek, Montana Creek, Sunshine Slough, Birch Creek Slough, etc. They will park along the highway, on private property, wherever they can find a place to squeeze in. They will litter, despoil and abuse the river banks, camping areas and even themselves.

By next fall these river crossings will be monuments not only to man's thoughtless-

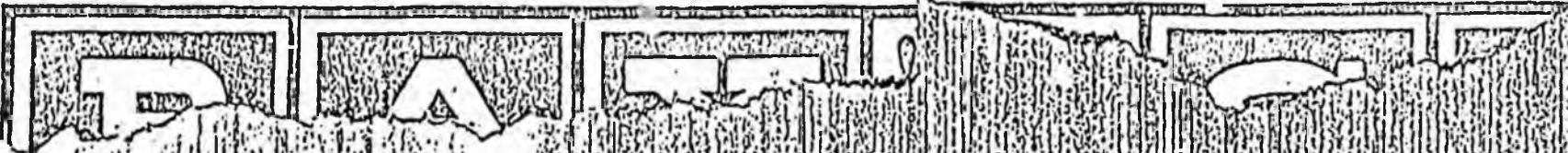
ness and disregard for himself and nature, but to the gross negligence of the State of Alaska. You see, there is not one public facility at any of these places mentioned.

What is so difficult about appropriating the money, purchasing the necessary access land, constructing parking lots, toilets, camping areas, picnic areas, and hiring the necessary personnel to maintain the facilities? There are none, other than those inherent and minor in any project of any size. The difficulty is that the state government's priorities are not in order.

Since sport fishing is participated in by more Alaskans than any other outdoor activity, development of these facilities presents the state with a perfect way to invest oil revenues to the benefit of all Alaskans.

I urge all sportsmen and concerned citizens to contact your legislators regarding this problem.

—Keith E. Heffner
Talkeetna



M E M O

TO: Rep. Ken Fanning, Co-Chairman
House Resources Committee

FROM: Rep. Sam Cotten *SC*

RE: HB 759/An Act establishing the Willow Creek State
Recreation Area

DATE: 2/23/82

In response to a request made by Gary Thurlow, Mat-Su
Borough Manager, I am requesting two amendments be made to
HB 759.

The amendments are:

page 2, line 7, add, pursuant to a cooperative managment plan
page 3, lines 9 and 10, strike, or borough land managed by
the state

The Department of Natural Resources has no objections to
these changes and with them the borough will be in complete
support of the bill.