

HJR

69

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

Date referred: 3/14/88

FURTHER REFERRALS:

DATE: 3-22-88

The Resources Committee has considered HTR 69

Relating to the maintenance of the U.S. Forest Service Offices in Petersburg.

RECOMMENDS:

- replace with _____ the same title
- attached amendment(s) a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

- fiscal impact same as previous fiscal note published _____
- zero fiscal note same as previous zero fiscal note published _____
- zero with analysis

SIGNING DO PASS:

Sam G. T.
White Hovine
[Signature]
[Signature]
Cliff Davidson
Adelheid Herrman

SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Sam G. T.

Chairman's signature

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title: USFS in Petersburg

Agency Affected: None
BRU: _____

Sponsor: Sund
Requestor: House Resources

Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANECUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

REVENUE						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL						

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

No fiscal impact on state agencies

Prepared by: House Resources
Division: _____

Phone: 465-3711
Date: March 21, 1988

Approved by Commissioner: J. G. A.
Agency: _____

Date: _____

- Distribution (by preparer):
- Legislative Finance
 - Legislative Sponsor
 - Requestor
 - Office of Management and Budget
 - Impacted Agency(ies)

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCE COMMITTEE
MARCH 22, 1988

Regional Forester Mike Barton has appointed a Task Force of eight Forest Service people who represent a broad cross section of the agency to look at the ways we do business on the Tongass National Forest. The objective of this group is to examine the way we are operating to determine if there are more cost effective means of accomplishing the public's business. The group is charged to study how we might better organize our work processes to more effectively respond to project work requirements:

Task Force Composition

Bill Edwards, LMW, Team Leader
Lyall Hadsel, P&CR
Laura Nelson, Stikine
Jean Norheim, Stikine
Joy Berg, Ketchikan
Jane Hurst, Ketchikan
Helen Clough, Chatham
Mike White, Chatham

The Task Force will examine the following:

1. What are the primary workload functions currently being accomplished on the Tongass National Forest?

2. Where in the organization are primary workload functions being accomplished (e.g., RO, SO's, or RD's)?

3. Are new technologies available which would make accomplishment of the workload more cost effective? Consideration of this issue includes, but is not limited to:

* Cost and availability of the new technology

* Savings which would accrue as a result of implementing the new technology.

4. Do opportunities exist to accomplish elements of the workload in a more cost effective manner through greater use of contracting? Consideration of this issue includes, but is not limited to:

* Cost and availability of potential bidders

* Savings which would accrue as a result of contracting

5. Are office consolidations and/or centralization of some work processes possible, and if so, are they desirable? Consideration of this issue includes, but is not limited to:

* What are the impacts on service to the public and the resources we manage?

The Task Force will develop a series of alternative ways we could do business and propose a series of alternatives including making no changes from the present situation and assess the impacts of these proposals based on the following criteria:

1. What impacts could be predicted on any local community's economy, services, or political well-being (i.e., examine the socio-economic costs of such a decision)? If impacts are significant, provide strategy for implementation which, to the maximum extent possible, minimizes adverse effects on Forest Service employees and local communities.

2. How would proposed consolidations/centralizations affect the efficiency of accomplishing on-the-ground work?

3. What costs and savings would be realized to the Forest Service in dollars and FTE's? Include personnel, travel, moving, office costs, and intangible costs.

The Task Force report is due to the Regional Forester in mid-May. Any decisions resulting from the study are expected in early June and will be based on how can the public best be served and how can the resources of the Tongass National Forest best be managed?

We encourage anyone with ideas to make them available to the Forest Service. This can be done by contacting members of the team or any local Forest Service office. The Task Force will work to keep the affected communities informed as the study progresses. While we would rather not do this study we believe it is imperative that we look at all the options available to increase our organizational effectiveness. We recognize the consideration of change elements such as contemplated here have a tremendous potential for disrupting ongoing work and generating undue concern both within the Forest Service and in the local communities. We believe we can reduce costs, maintain public service and accomplishments in ways that minimizes adverse effects to the extent possible on our people and on the local communities of Southeast.

Alaska State Legislature



House of Representatives House Judiciary Committee

P. O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4990

March 15, 1988

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Rep. Sam Cotten, Co-Chair
Rep. Adelheid Herrmann, Co-Chair
House Resources Committee

FROM: Rep. John Sund, Chairman
House Judiciary Committee

RE: HJR 69 "Relating to the maintenance of the U.S. Forest
Service Offices in Petersburg."

.....

House Joint Resolution 69 asks the federal government to maintain the Stikine Area Regional Supervisor's office of the U.S. Forest Service in Petersburg. Please schedule this resclution at your earliest convenience.

The Stikine Area Regional Supervisor's office which currently employs 55 people, is the potential target of Forest Service funding cuts. Closing the Stikine office could be devastating for Petersburg's economy. New homes and larger schools were built to accommodate the influx of Forest Service personnel, and their leaving would be a hardship for Petersburg.

The Forest Service personnel account for some 38 homes, about \$2 million in annual payroll, and 85 children in the public school system. Loss of the students would decrease Petersburg's state education funding by about \$80,000.

Forest Service may close office here

Petersburg Pilot

PETERSBURG, ALASKA

No. 9 1988 16 Pages 60¢

by Bob Tkacz

The grim news which local Forest Service employees got six weeks ago was officially disclosed to the rest of the community Tuesday afternoon: the agency is considering closing the Petersburg Supervisor's Office over a three year period.

"We don't have our minds made up at all," emphasized Regional Forester Mike Barton to a score of Petersburg Chamber of Commerce members and representatives of major governmental entities at the quickly-organized luncheon meeting.

Barton, the Forest Service boss

for Alaska, and Mayor Doug Barber, who is also acting Stikine Area supervisor, gingerly admitted that the Forest Service is actively considering abolition of the facility here. The move could result in a net loss of 30 federal jobs from the present level here and the transfer of as many as 25 other current supervisor's office personnel to either the Petersburg and Wrangell District Rangers' Offices.

Barber said 30 Forest Service jobs roughly translates into 15 to 20 homes which would be added to the glutted local real estate market.

In a January 15 letter to Stikine Area employees, Barber stated the prospect more directly than he or Barton did at Tuesday's meeting.

"We're of the opinion that it's time to openly consider this option," Barber wrote. He also stated that because of congressionally mandated personnel reductions the regional forester "has now opened the door to further consideration of the proposal ... This proposal simply formalizes much of what has begun to occur over the past year."

In an interview following the chamber meeting Barber conceded that it was he and former area supervisor Bob Lynn who proposed that the supervisor's office here be closed.

"Bob Lynn and I did throw out the proposal" at a January meeting, Barber said.

From a strictly budget-cutting point of view the idea makes sense.

Barber said the Stikine Area was created when district offices were abolished by a 1971 Forest Service reorganization. It was designed to remove bureaucratic levels but didn't succeed and in 1980 district-level offices were re-established, Barber explained.

He told the avid chamber listeners that middle-level management positions have been a prime target in recent years for public and private sector budget cutters and the Forest Service was only considering what has been a cost effective move.

In the interview he noted that most national forest areas include four to 10 ranger districts, but the Petersburg supervisor oversees only the local and Wrangell

Continued on Page 7



sult and the city pool, one last week's Alaska Marine water near-drowning and on the adult and younger

students spent last Wednesday evening trying out, and trying to get into various flotation devices. Watch for a photoreport on the class in next week's Pilot. (Pilotphoto by Bob Tkacz)

rantees

ital mandates insurance

on and Tom Wood.

Administrator Gary Grand last Friday that his standing is that the policy is effective immediately board passage and that all staff members have 30 comply.

d whether doctors would ately lose their hospital ges if they are not in com- with the policy after 30 Grandy id, "I assume hat the board was saying." oard labored long and hard e policy, at times almost g over the prospect that ision could make PGH a l without doctors. That pro-

"I can't guarantee, even from month to month, that I'll be able to keep it," Wood told the Pilot of his insurance coverage. "The message is, the rug could get jerked out from under us."

He explained that his problem with malpractice insurance is not only the increasing cost, but the continually decreasing protection it provides. "They've got loopholes for themselves," Dr. Wood said of MICA.

"There's a point at which any reasonable person would feel they're paying an exorbitant amount for nothing," the doctor said, candidly noting that insurance costs are, at the bottom

he carries none.

Breaking Dr. Wood's \$17,000 annual payment into monthly installments of about \$1,500, Dr. Coon said Monday, "I've gone 14

Continued on Page 5

		Low Tides				High Tides			
		A.M.		P.M.		A.M.		P.M.	
	TIME	FT.	TIME	FT.	TIME	FT.	TIME	FT.	
4	Fri	7:32	0.7	1:45	-0.8	1:37	16.5	1:39	16.6
5	Sat	8:01	0.2	8:12	-0.2	1:59	16.8	2:09	16.2

30 FS jobs threatened here

Continued from Page 1

district offices. With four districts now in both the Ketchikan and Sitka supervisors' offices, both could pick up one more, Barber said.

The regional forester told the chamber that a study team is considering all options for budget reductions, with and without closure of the supervisor's office. The team's report is due early in June, Barton said.

He also emphasized, "We're not going to do any of this in the closet."

When Dave Olmer asked what Petersburg could do to effect the deliberations, Barton said, "I think you need to work with Doug. Get your concerns laid out on the table."

Immediately after the meeting ended, school district Superintendent Bill Creger volunteered to serve on the study committee. Barber responded that it had, heretofore, been an inhouse organization, but agreed with Creger that community representatives could provide a valuable perspective.

Barton took pains to make the point that no decision has yet been reached. "It's entirely possible we'll make no change," he said at the meeting. "No action is a viable alternative at this point if there are ways to achieve the reductions."

The administrators were well questioned by business and government leaders at the meeting.

Ann Phillips asked if the Forest Service owns the building where the supervisor's office is located. Barber responded that it held a 20 year lease which was only five years old and that the cost of breaking the rental agreement would be a factor.

Phillips also wondered what relocation costs would be. Barton answered that the agency uses a figure of \$25,000 for budgeting employees' moves from Alaska.

After Barton explained that a saving has already been realized by centralizing all personnel processing tasks in Juneau, Dave Berg suggested that the FS should move its purchasing section to Petersburg.

"That's a possibility. We pride ourselves on being decentralized,"

It's official: Board inks teacher pact

The Petersburg School Board put the final, official stamp of approval on the "instant negotiations" on a new teachers' contract.

At a special meeting Monday night the board unanimously approved Superintendent Bill Creger's recommendation to ratify the tentative agreement.

Announced last month the pact

Barton said, but he added that Juneau offered a greater efficiency of scale because the regional office is already located there.

Creger noted that as many as 85 students could be lost to the school district. Under the state funding formula, he said, they would comprise two or three classroom units, worth \$60,000 per year to the district.

"The loss to us could effect the quality of education," Creger stated.

Barton said the reputation of Petersburg schools is well known and that the change of adverse impacts to them would also be

considered.

"We'd rather not do this at all," Barton said.

"We'd rather you didn't," Creger responded.

Job Service manager John Johnson suggested that the closure prospect offered "a good lesson." He said, "We haven't been nice to the Forest Service ... I think it's coming to rest here that we should be nice to them."

But Barton quickly declared, "What the relationship between our outfit and the community is has nothing to do with it. I think it's very good. Right now it's great and has been for some time."



Here's One Vac Kids Will Be All

If you want to make your children sit up and take notice, take them on an Alaska Airlines vacation to Disneyland.

Our package includes four nights' deluxe accommodations, airport transfers and two days of all the Disneyland fun and adventure you can handle. Or spend one day at Disneyland and the other at Knott's Berry Farm.

You can also choose which airport you

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