

H B

346

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(9)

Date Referred: May 5, 1989

FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date of Committee Action: 4-10-90

The "RESOURCES" Committee considered:

HB 346

HOUSE BILL NO. 346 [YAKATAGA STATE GAME REFUGE ESTABLISHED]
"An Act establishing the Yakataga State Game Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- be replaced with CS HB 346 (RES) [] the same title
- [] have 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): (Dept) APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)

- [] fiscal impact _____ [] fiscal note(s) _____
- zero fiscal note H. Res. [] zero fiscal note(s) _____
- [] zero with analysis _____ [] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

[Signature] MENARD
[Signature] DAVIS
[Signature] NAVARRE

SIGNING: (Check approp. column)

	Do Not Pass	No Rec	Amend
<u>[Signature]</u> DAVIDSON			
<u>[Signature]</u> SWARD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

[Signature]
Chairman's Signature

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____ Agency Affected: All Agencies
 Title: Yakataga State Game Refuge
 Established
 BRU: _____
 Sponsor: Resources Committee
 Requestor: House Resources Committee
 Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0	0	0	0	0
CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

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

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by: House Resources Committee Phone: 465-4944
 Division: Representative Curt Menard Date: 4/10/90

Approved by Commissioner: _____ Date: _____
 Agency: _____

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

6-0920H
Bradley
4/10/90

Original sponsor(s): Resources Committee

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 346 (Resources)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing the Yakataga State Game Refuge;
7 relating to the management of state land within the
8 Yakataga area; and providing for an effective date."

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

10 * Section 1. AS 16.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

11 Sec. 16.20.033. YAKATAGA STATE GAME REFUGE. (a) The following
12 state-owned land, including tide and submerged land, and all land,
13 including tide and submerged land, acquired in the future by the state
14 lying within the parcels described in this subsection are established
15 as the Yakataga State Game Refuge:

- 16 (1) Township 19 South, Range 9 East, Copper River Meridian
17 Sections 3 - 10
18 Sections 15 - 21
19 Sections 28 - 34
20 (2) Township 19 South, Range 13 East, Copper River Meridian
21 Section 13: S1/2
22 Sections 24 - 26
23 Sections 35 - 36
24 (3) Township 19 South, Range 14 East, Copper River Meridian
25 Section 3: SW1/4
26 Section 4: S1/2
27 Section 5
28 Section 10: N1/2
29 Section 11

1 Section 13: NW1/4

2 Section 14: N1/2

3 Sections 15 - 22

4 Section 24: SE1/4

5 Sections 25 - 36

6 (4) Township 19 South, Range 15 East, Copper River Meridian

7 Sections 9 - 15

8 Section 16: S1/2

9 Sections 21 - 29

10 Sections 31 - 33

11 Section 34: W1/2

12 (5) Township 19 South, Range 16 East, Copper River Meridian

13 Sections 7 - 8

14 Sections 9 - 10: S1/2

15 Sections 15 - 16: N1/2

16 Section 17: NW1/4

17 Section 18

18 Sections 28 - 29: S1/2

19 Section 30

20 Section 31: NE1/4

21 Section 32: N1/2

22 Section 33: NW1/4

23 (6) Township 19 South, Range 17 East, Copper River Meridian

24 Section 2

25 Section 10: E1/2

26 Section 11: W1/2

27 Section 13

28 Section 14: S1/2

29 Section 15

Section 16: SE1/4

Section 21

Section 22: E1/2

Section 23

Section 24

Sections 25 - 29

Section 30: SE1/4

Sections 31 - 34

Sections 35 - 36: N1/2

(7) Township 20 South, Range 9 East, Copper River Meridian

Sections 3 - 10

Sections 12 - 36

(8) Township 20 South, Range 10 East, Copper River Meridian

Sections 6 - 7

Sections 16 - 23

Section 24: W1/2

Sections 25 - 36

(9) Township 20 South, Range 11 East, Copper River Meridian

Sections 19 - 20

Section 21: S1/2

Sections 25 - 36

(10) Township 20 South, Range 11 1/2 East, Copper River Meridian

Section 19: S1/2

Sections 30 - 31

(11) Township 20 South, Range 13 East, Copper River Meridian

Section 1

Section 11: E1/2

Sections 12 - 15

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Section 20: E1/2

Sections 21 - 29

Sections 32 - 36

(12) Township 20 South, Range 14 East, Copper River Meridian

(13) Township 20 South, Range 15 East, Copper River Meridian

Sections 3 - 11

Sections 15 - 36

(14) Township 20 South, Range 16 East, Copper River Meridian

Section 1: E1/2

Section 2: S1/2

Sections 5 - 6: S1/2

Sections 7 - 8

Section 9: S1/2

Sections 10 - 11

Sections 15 - 20

Section 28: S1/2

Sections 29 - 36

(15) Township 20 South, Range 17 East, Copper River Meridian

Section 4: W1/2

Sections 5 - 8

Section 9: W1/2

Section 16: W1/2

Sections 17 - 20

Section 21: W1/2

Section 24: S1/2

Section 25

Section 26: S1/2

Sections 27 - 36

(16) Township 21 South, Range 9 East, Copper River Meridian

- 1 Sections 1 - 24
2 Sections 26 - 27: N1/2
3 Sections 28 - 32
4 Section 33: NW1/4
5 (17) Township 21 South, Range 10 East, Copper River Meridian
6 Sections 1 - 12
7 Sections 13 - 15: N1/2
8 Sections 16 - 18
9 Sections 19 - 20: N1/2
10 Section 18: N1/2
11 (18) Township 21 South, Range 11 East, Copper River Meridian
12 Sections 1 - 8
13 Sections 9 - 12: N1/2
14 Section 18: N1/2
15 (19) Township 21 South, Range 11 1/2 East, Copper River
16 Meridian
17 Section 6
18 Section 7: N1/2
19 (20) Township 21 South, Range 12 East, Copper River Meridian
20 Sections 1 - 2
21 Sections 11 - 14
22 Sections 23 - 24
23 (21) Township 21 South, Range 13 East, Copper River Meridian
24 Sections 1 - 20
25 Sections 21 - 24: N1/2
26 (22) Township 21 South, Range 14 East, Copper River Meridian
27 Sections 1 - 12
28 Sections 13 - 14: N1/2
29 Sections 15 - 18

1 parcels described in (a) of this section shall be allowed through
2 access corridors established through agreement between the department
3 and the private landowners involved.

4 (e) The establishment of the Yakataga State Game Refuge under
5 this section does not impair or alter existing rights of access to set
6 net sites.

7 (f) The department shall allow commercial, sport, and subsis-
8 tence fishing and hunting within the Yakataga State Game Refuge under
9 regulations of the Board of Fisheries and the Board of Game. The
10 department shall also permit associated support activities when neces-
11 sary to support fishing and hunting permitted under this section,
12 including fish buying operations, aircraft support including landing
13 strips, and off-road vehicle use.

14 (g) The department shall issue a permit to the owners on the
15 effective date of this Act of existing cabins or tent frames within
16 the Yakataga State Game Refuge. Each permit must permit the use of
17 the cabin or tent frame for a period of five years and is renewable.
18 The department shall also issue new permits for cabins or tent shel-
19 ters that are consistent with the purposes of the Yakataga State Game
20 Refuge.

21 (h) In this section, "private land" includes pending Native
22 allotments.

23 * Sec. 2. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).
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FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 3/15/90
 Title: Management of state land within the Yakataga area Agency Affected: Fish and Game
 BRU: Habitat
 Sponsor: Resources Committee
 Requestor: Governor Components: _____

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	73.3	73.3	73.3			
TRAVEL	12.8	12.8	12.8			
CONTRACTUAL	5.9	5.9	5.9			
SUPPLIES	1.0	1.0	1.0			
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0			
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0			
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0			
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0			
TOTAL OPERATING	93.0	93.0	93.0	0	0	0
CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

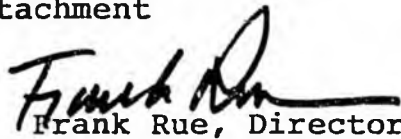
GENERAL FUND	93.0	93.0	93.0			
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	93.0	93.0	93.0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	1	1	1	0	0	0
PART-TIME	2	2	2	0	0	0
TEMPORARY						

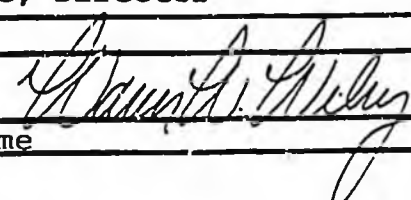
ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

see attachment


Frank Rue, Director

Prepared by: _____
 Division: Habitat

Phone: 465-4105
 Date: _____

Approved by Commissioner: 
 Agency: Fish and Game

Date: 3/28/90

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

Continuation Page for HB 583 Fiscal Note Analysis

The personal services covers:

4 months of Cartographer II
12 months of Habitat Biologist II
2 months of Habitat Biologist III

Travel includes cost of planning team meetings in Anchorage and public meetings in Seward, Cordova, and Yakutat.

Contractual services includes air charter costs to conduct annual aerial moose and goat surveys in the Yakataga-Cape Suckling area.

Yakataga State Game Refuge
HB 346

City of Yakutat

Cordova District Fishermen United

Southeast Regional Fish and Game Advisory Council

Sealaska Corporation

Yakutat Resource Council

Southeast Alaska Conservation Council

United Fishermen of Alaska

Alaska Discovery

Tongass Tourism and Recreation Business Association

Alaska Waveriders Association

Yakutat Fish & Game Advisory Committee

Alaska Center for the Environment

Northern Alaska Environmental Center

Alaska Wildlife Alliance

Gulf Coast Association

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

400 WILLOUGHBY AVE.
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1796
PHONE: (907) 465-2400

February 26, 1990

The Honorable Curt Menard
Alaska State Representative
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Representative Menard:

After the recent committee work session on timber harvest and wildlife issues in the Cape Yakataga area, you asked my staff to provide a budget estimate to conduct an area plan for state land near Cape Yakataga. I am pleased to provide this information.

In recent years, there has been a great deal of controversy in this region. I recognize the need for comprehensive planning for the region, and believe that an area plan would be an important step in resolving public controversy and providing for sustainable use of state land in that area.

The enclosed estimates include costs for both the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Department of Fish and Game (DF&G). The estimates assume that the departments would use the standard three-year planning process with three sets of public meetings in at least Cordova, Seward, and Yakutat. The first set would be for issue identification; the second set, to consider alternatives; and the third, to gather comments on a draft plan. The estimates assume that DNR will hire two additional staff (project manager and natural resource officer), and that DF&G will hire one additional habitat biologist and require time from two other staff.

DNR will require \$134.0 the first year, \$119.3 the second year, and \$139.8 the third year. The yearly cost varies mostly because publication costs vary in different parts of the planning process. DF&G estimates a need for \$93.0 for each year of the plan. This estimate provides an inexpensive area-wide planning project with extensive public involvement.

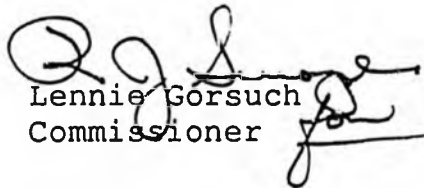
Representative Menard

-2-

February 26, 1990

I hope this budget estimate is useful. I appreciate your efforts in helping us resolve the natural resource management issues in this area.

Sincerely,


Lennie Gorsuch
Commissioner

Enclosures

cc: Senator Szymanski
Representative Goll
Gary Gustafson, Director
Division of Land and Water Management
Commissioner Don Collinsworth
Department of Fish and Game
Frank Rue, Director
Division of Habitat
Department of Fish and Game

**COST FOR YAKATAGA AREA PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 91**

<u>100 Personal Services</u>		
Natural Resource Manager I	(18A)	\$ 50.5
Natural Resource Manager II	(16A)	<u>44.5</u>
		\$ 95.0
<u>200 Travel</u>		
Planning team meetings (for each mtg.		8.3
3 staff Jnu-Anc or Anc-Jnu),		
5 meetings x \$550 (airfare +		
2 days per diem)		
Public meetings-issues (3-4 Communities)		7.0
Planning Area Overflight		<u>15.3</u>
<u>300 Contractual</u>		
Publish introductory brochure		2.0
Xeroxing, newsletters, ads		3.0
Inventory work, mapping		6.0
Print resource and issues reports		<u>2.2</u>
		13.2
<u>400 Supplies</u>		
Set-up and Misc. Supplies		<u>10.5</u>
		10.5
	TOTAL:	<u>\$134.0</u>

FISCAL YEAR 92

<u>100 Personal Services</u>		
Natural Resource Manager I	(18A)	\$ 50.5
Natural Resource Manager II	(16A)	<u>44.5</u>
		\$ 95.0
<u>200 Travel</u>		
Planning team meetings (5)		8.3
Public meetings - alternatives		<u>5.0</u>
		13.3
<u>300 Contractual</u>		
Alternatives brochures		5.0
Xeroxing, summary of comments, etc.		<u>5.0</u>
		10.0
<u>400 Supplies</u>		
Miscellaneous Supplies		<u>1.0</u>
		1.0
	TOTAL:	<u>\$119.3</u>

FISCAL YEAR 93

<u>100 Personal Services</u>			
Natural Resource Manager I	(18A)	\$ 50.5	
Natural Resource Manager II	(16A)	<u>44.5</u>	\$ 95.0
<u>200 Travel</u>			
Planning team meetings (5)		8.3	
Public Meetings - Draft Plan		<u>5.0</u>	13.3
<u>1300 Contractual</u>			
Agency Draft		5.0	
Public Draft, Brochure		10.0	
Final Plan, Summary		10.0	
Newsletters, postage, etc.		<u>5.0</u>	30.0
<u>400 Supplies</u>			
Miscellaneous Supplies		<u>1.5</u>	
			<u>1.5</u>
TOTAL:			\$139.8

Proposed Yakataga Area Plan
DNR Budget Summary

<u>FY 91</u>	<u>FY 92</u>	<u>FY 93</u>	
	(figures are in thousands)		
Personal Services	95.0	95.0	95.0
Public Meetings (travel, brochures, xeroxing, etc.)	9.0	12.0	17.0
Resource Assessment Research (travel, mapping, printing)	10.2		
Printing Final Plan			10.0
Supplies, xeroxing, misc mapping, travel to planning team meet- ings, etc.	19.8	12.3	17.8
	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	\$134.0	\$119.3	\$139.8

DF&G Budget Summary

	<u>FY91</u>	<u>FY92</u>	<u>FY93</u>
Personal Services	73.3	73.3	73.3
4 months Cartographer II (\$15.8)			
12 months Habitat Biologist II (47.1)			
2 months Habitat Biologist III (10.\$)			
Travel and per diem	12.8	12.8	12.8
(includes planning/work team meetings and travel to Seward, Cordova, and Yakutat)			
Contractual	5.9	5.9	5.9
(includes air charter costs to conduct annual goat and moose surveys)			
Supplies	1.0	1.0	1.0
	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL	\$93.0	\$93.0	\$93.0

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
IN THE HOUSE

HOUSE BILL NO.
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

A BILL

For an Act entitled: "An Act making special appropriations to the Department of Revenue, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Fish and Game for settlement of litigation concerning conveyance of limited timber cutting rights to the University of Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

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

* Section 1. The sum of \$1,968,511 is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Revenue for deposit in the University of Alaska Trust Fund as partial payment for acquisition of the university's timber cutting rights at Cape Suckling (tract A148).

* Section 2. The sum of \$134,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Natural Resources and the sum of \$93,000 is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Fish and Game for fiscal year 1991 costs for preparation and adoption of an area plan for state lands in the Icy Bay to Cape Suckling area.

* Section 3. The sum of \$_____ is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Natural Resources for costs of reappraisal of the University of Alaska's limited timber cutting rights at Cape Suckling.

* Section 4. The sum of \$_____ is appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Natural Resources for costs of surveying state lands at Reed Island and Upper George Inlet.

* Section 5. The unexpended balance of appropriations made in this Act lapse into the general fund on December 31, 1992.

* Section 6. This Act takes effect on the day following approval by the Alaska Superior Court in consolidated Case No. 1JU-88-271 Civil of a legal settlement between the City of Yakutat, the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) et al, the Department of Natural Resources, and the University of Alaska Board of Regents which provides for sale of the university's Cape Suckling limited timber cutting rights to the State of Alaska, and which settles other legal issues concerning the university's timber cutting rights at Cape Yakataga and White River.

Letter of Intent for

"An Act making special appropriations to the Department of Revenue, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Fish and Game for settlement of litigation concerning conveyance of limited timber cutting rights to the University of Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

It is the intent of the legislature that the settlement of SEACC et al v. Gorsuch (Consolidated Case No. 1JU-88-271) provide for repurchase of the University of Alaska's limited timber cutting rights at Cape Suckling (tract A148), for time for completion of an area plan for the Icy Bay to Cape Suckling area prior to any timber harvest at Cape Yakataga (tract 20), and for the otherwise unhindered exercise of limited timber cutting rights at Cape Yakataga and White River (tract 52) consistent with the terms and conditions of Appendix I to ADL 223456 as modified by the finding and decision on remand.

The legislature intends to compensate the university for the Cape Suckling limited timber cutting right based on a new appraisal which establishes the value of the affected timber as of the effective date of this Act from the following sources:

- 1) An appropriation of \$1,968,511 to the University of Alaska Trust Fund in the Department of Revenue;
- 2) If the appraisal exceeds \$1,968,511, transfer of all or a portion of Reed Island (tract 57, valued at \$1,762,500) and/or Upper George Inlet (tract 78, valued at \$206,000);
- 3) If the appraisal exceeds \$3,937,091, the legislature intends to appropriate additional amounts from the general fund, transfer state mortgage contracts, and/or transfer other state assets to the university until the full appraisal price is reached.

It is the intent of the legislature that an area plan for state lands in the Icy Bay to Cape Suckling area be completed under AS 38.05.065 and DNR regulations on or before December 31, 1992. DNR shall coordinate preparation and review of the area plan with ADF&G on fish & wildlife habitat protection issues, and consider management options for protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and populations, sport and subsistence hunting and fishing, recreation, tourism and scientific values, settlement, timber harvest, mining, material extraction, and other uses the department considers appropriate. DNR shall establish a temporary Citizens' Advisory Commission to assist in preparation and review of the area plan. If the area plan precludes exercise of all or a part of the university's limited timber cutting rights at Cape Yakataga, the legislature intends to compensate the university in cash at the then-current market value as determined by appraisal.

It is the intent of the legislature that the university and DNR develop a plan for harvest of White River trees in accordance with the Forest Practices Act as revised during the 1990 legislative session and in accordance with provisions of the 1988 settlement and the 1989 final finding by the commissioner.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Resources Committee
 committee on CS for HB 58-3 / 346, dated 3/22/90
 bill/subject ^{HB} committee name

I am Assistant Professor of Forest Ecology at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. I have performed contractual work for the Chugach National Forest and the Tongass National Forest to identify important scientific resources and establish a network of Research Natural Areas in those areas.

I am especially concerned that the scientific resources be identified in the state lands between Cape Suckling and Icy Cape by qualified people (e.g. 600+ year-old trees with valuable tree ring records). DNR seems insensitive to the natural values of the area. I urge the Legislature to provide an affirmative direction to protect the sensitive resources of the area by appropriate language in CS for HB 583 or preferably HB 346. The Legislature should speak and set a direction for the Area Plan or Game Refuge and thus constrain the options DNR might otherwise bring up.

Signed: _____

Testifier

Representing (Optional)

4837 Palo Verde Ave. Fairbanks 99709

Address

479-3765

Phone No.

Proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge
Background Information

Location: The proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge is located between Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga on the northeast gulf coast.

Area Description: The proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge is situated on a wide coastal plain sandwiched between the exposed northeast gulf to the south and the Bering Glacier and Robinson Mountains to the north. Several major river systems transect the area including Kiklukh River, Tashalich River, Seal River, Tsiu River, Tsivat River, Kaliakh River, Chuiki River, Duktoth River, and Yakataga River. A string of glacial lakes rings the toe of Bering Glacier.

The area includes large expanses of riparian and sedge/muskeg wetlands with extensive ponding formed by glacial moraines and enhanced by beaver dam building activity. Better drained sites support healthy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and mountain hemlock. Alder thickets crowd the lowlands. Western black cottonwood are also present. In the lowlands, the flatness of the terrain provides for widely braided river channels with extensive communities of riparian willow.

Justification: Pressed between rugged mountains and ice fields to the north and the storm beaten north gulf coastline to the south, the coastal lowlands located between Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga provide an oasis of productive habitat for fish and wildlife.

The proposed state game refuge lies along the main Pacific migration route of birds flying north to breed. The high coastal mountain range funnels millions of birds along the narrow coastal corridor. A majority of waterfowl migrating north along the coast stop to rest and feed in these coastal lowlands on their way to summer nesting grounds. A minimum of 295 trumpeter swans were counted in the proposed refuge in 1985, with nesting concentrated in the Kiklukh and Tashalich River drainages, the Kaliakh and Chiuki River drainages and the numerous beaver ponds of the Tsiu and Tsivat River floodplains. The Chiuki River, a tributary of the Kaliakh River, has one of the highest swan nesting densities in the state. A minimum of 62 trumpeter swans have been observed wintering within the proposed refuge boundary (1989) primarily in the Tashalich and Tsiu/Tsivat River lower drainages. Hundreds of bald eagles winter in high densities along the lower stream reaches. Upwards of 500 moose are known to use the coastal lowlands. In the winter they concentrate between the Tashalich River and Seal River and along the Tsiu River floodplain.

About 700 mountain goats inhabit the more mountainous regions. Extreme weather conditions and heavy snowfall often drive goats to lower elevations during winter. At these times, goats can be found in lowland forests along the coast. One-hundred fifty to two hundred brown bear inhabit the area. In the spring they concentrate along the Kiklukh River, on the lowlands between Bering Glacier and the coast, and along the coast from the Tsiu River to Cape Yakataga to feed on newly emergent vegetation. In the summer, brown and black bears concentrate along fish streams to feed. The most heavily fished systems are the Kiklukh, Tsiu, Kaliakh, and Kulthieth rivers. Approximately 35 - 50 wolves are estimated to occur in the proposed refuge. Their numbers have been slowly increasing in recent years. Other furbearers found in the area include wolverine, coyote, lynx, marten, mink, land otter and beaver.

Four species of salmon (king, sockeye, coho, and pink) occur in the area, although coho salmon are by far the most prevalent. Dolly Varden, cutthroat trout, and steelhead are also documented.

Land Status: The proposed state game refuge encompasses approximately 282,604 acres and is composed of state and federal land. Timber rights to portions of the state land have been slated for disposal to the University of Alaska with subsequent sale and harvest of timber planned. Portions of the proposed refuge have also been previously proposed for legislative designation as a state forest. Between the Kaliakh River and Cape Yakataga virtually the entire shoreline is staked for mining claims. There is also an offshore prospecting permit. A number of setnet cabins are located at the mouth of the Tsiu River. A five acre land lease has been granted near the Tsiu River for use in a commercial guide operation. Applications for several additional similar leases are pending.

Current Uses: The proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge is accessible by boat or plane and has long been an important hunting and fishing area for Yakutat residents. Within the proposed refuge boundaries, moose, mountain goats, black and brown bear and waterfowl are hunted by residents and guided non-residents. An average of 4 guide/outfitters have service the non-resident hunting/fishing public within the boundaries in recent years. Commercial setnet sites are concentrated at the mouths of every major river. The Tsiu/Tsivat River system is one of the richest commercial fishing systems for its size and type. Sport fishing opportunities are abundant. Outfitters and guides take fishermen into the area to fish for salmon; the Tsiu River is a popular coho fishing stream.

Other Natural Resources: Gold was discovered on Yakataga area beaches in 1897 or 1898. Prior to World War II approximately 15,000 ounces of gold was taken out of the area. Beach material in the area contains gold, garnet, ores of iron and titanium, and trace amounts of rutile, zircon, and chromite. Minor amounts of platinum also have been found.

Exploration for oil and gas occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s; however, no producing wells have been developed. Oil and Gas Lease Sale 79, proposed for 1994, includes areas both offshore and onshore between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay.

The area between Icy Bay and Cape Suckling contains an estimated 144,000 acres of commercial grade mature spruce and hemlock forest.

Support and Opposition: The City of Yakutat and various conservation organizations are known to support the bill.

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

SOUTHEAST REGIONAL OFFICE

PREPARED BY WILDLIFE CONSERVATION, ANCHORAGE

November, 1989

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 20
DOUGLAS, ALASKA 99824-0020
PHONE: (907)

The current estimated values of big game and furbearer species available for harvest in the project area are listed below. Estimates were derived from an informal survey of business operators and local staff knowledge regarding current expenditures and related costs for these activities. Out-of-pocket expenditure estimates were based on costs for transportation, guiding services, equipment, food, tags and licenses, lodging and meals ("out-of-field"), taxidermy, and food value of meat for successful hunters. These estimates were not derived from a specific economic study and do not incorporate all known public economic values of wildlife resources. They should be considered as minimum values developed to show the economic importance of these resources to the state.

The number of mt. goats available for harvest in the Icy Bay to Duktoth River area during the fall of 1989 was 15. The estimated 1989 economic value for these goats is \$64,000.

Five brown bear were estimated to be available for harvest in this area. The estimated value for these 5 bears is \$49,700.

There were an estimated 20 black bears available for harvest in this area during 1989. Their value is estimated at \$54,800.

The current liberal season for moose in the area provided an opportunity to harvest 5 moose. The estimated value of moose during 1989 is \$17,600.

Furbearers harvest records for the area are incomplete and therefore are more difficult to provide estimated values for. Estimated numbers of furbearers available include 3-8 wolves, 5-10 wolverines, 30-50 marten, 20-30 river otter, 80-150 mink, 30-70 beaver, 30 coyote and numerous but unknown number of ermine. The estimated value for the fur resources in the area is \$12,000-26,000.

The annual estimated total value of these wildlife resources is \$198,600-212,600. If this annual value is projected over a 100 year rotation period, then estimated value of these resources range from \$19,860,000 to \$21,260,000.

It is not our intent here to state that the above numbers represent absolute values of the area's wildlife resources. However, they do represent a reasonably accurate estimate of the economic value that is derived by the state from their utilization. Recognition of this value, and how it could be diminished by competing land use activities is an important aspect of any planning document.

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

TO: Jim McAllister
Regional Forester
Division of Forestry
Department of Natural Resources

DATE: November 24, 1989

FILE NO.:

TELEPHONE NO.: 465-4290

SUBJECT: Icy Bay Wildlife
Information

FROM: Richard D. Reed
Regional Supervisor
Habitat Division
Department of Fish and Game

This is in response to the October 11 memorandum sent by Mike Peacock directly to Herman Griese requesting significant amounts of wildlife information for the Icy Bay to the Duktoth River area. Given the broad nature of the request, the Wildlife Conservation Division has not been able to compile all of the information and evaluate the various documents associated with the Icy Cape Timber Sale modification that are currently under review. The division has provided the following information which is enclosed:

Mt. Goat Hunting Participation and Success, Icy bay to Cape Yakataga, 1983-1986

Mt. Goat Hunting Participation and Success, Icy Bay to Yakataga River, 1972-1975 and 1976-1979.

Mt. Goat Survey Data- Icy Bay Area

Brown Bear Harvest (Successful Hunts Only) Icy Bay-Cape Yakataga, 1961-1988.

Black Bear Harvest (Successful Hunts Only) Icy Bay-Cape Yakataga, 1973-1987.

We hope to provide the balance of the information requested within the next thirty days.

To assist us in prioritizing workloads, on future information requests please:

1. Send the request to the Habitat Division.
2. Be as specific as possible as to the information needed.
3. Provide dates by which the information is desired.

Thank you.

Enclosures as stated

cc: Dan Timm, WC, Anchorage
Herman Griese, WC, Cordova
Dave Hardy, Habitat, Sitka

bcc: Frank Rue

MT. GOAT HUNTING PARTICIPATION & SUCCESS
 ICY BAY TO CAPE YAKATAGA
 1983-1986

	<u>Number</u> <u>Successful</u>	<u>No.</u> <u>days</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>unsuccess.</u>	<u>No.</u> <u>days</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>hunters</u>	<u>%</u> <u>success</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>days</u>	<u>\bar{x} /</u> <u>hunt</u>
Independence Creek	1	2	0	0	1	100	2	2.0
Icy Cape	32	113	24	103	56	57	216	3.8
Munday Creek	17	66	16	70	33	52	136	4.1
White River	6	13	2	4	8	75	17	2.1
Cape Yakataga	19	92	16	61	35	54	153	4.4
Cotton Creek	1	5	0	0	1	100	5	5.0
Total	76	291	58	238	134		529	
(per year)	19	72.8	14.5	59.5	33.5	57	132.3	3.9

MT. GOAT HUNTING PARTICIPATION & SUCCESS
ICY BAY TO YAKATAGA RIVER (1972-1975)

	Number Successful	No. days	Number unsuccess	No. days	Total hunters	% success	Total days	\bar{x} days/ hunt
Independence Creek	0	No Data	0	No Data	0			
Icy Cape	21		9		30	70		
Munday Creek	0		0		0			
White River	5		0		5	100		
Cape Yakataga	5		5		10	50		
Total	31		14		45			
(per year)	7.3		3.5		11.3	69		

MT. GOAT HUNTING PARTICIPATION & SUCCESS
ICY BAY TO YAKATAGA RIVER (1976-1979)

	Number Successful	No. days	Number unsuccess	No. days	Total hunters	% success	Total days	\bar{x} days/ hunt
Independence Creek	0	--	0	--	0	--	0	--
Icy Cape	29	76	8	32	37	78	108	2.9
Munday Creek	1	1	1	7	2	50	8	4.0
White River	5	15	1	4	6	83	19	3.2
Cape Yakataga	13	25	5	10	18	72	35	1.9
Total	48	117	15	53	63		170	
(per year)	12	29.3	3.8	13.3	15.8	76	42.5	2.7

MO. GOAT SURVEY - ICY BAY AREA

CENSUS AREA	DATE	# OF GOATS
Independence Creek	8-11-89	23
	8-3-84	78
	7-28-77	96
Icy Cape	8-11-89	21
	8-3-84	82
	7-28-77	41
Munday Creek	8-11-89	18
	8-3-84	17
	7-28-77	246
White River	8-11-89	56
	8-3-84	46
	7-28/8-3-77	70
Cape Yakataga	8-11-89	33
	8-3-84	4
	8-3-77	12
S. Channel Yakataga River	8-11/8-12-89	31
	8-3-84	16
	8-3-77	1
Yakataga Glacier	8-12-89	106
	8-4-84	78
	8-3-77	103
Porcupine Creek	8-12-89	27
	8-3-77	13
Boulder Creek	8-12-89	5
	8-3-77	39
Cotton Creek	8-12-89	4
	8-3-77	15
Iron Creek	No Surveys	

BROWN BEAR HARVEST (SUCCESSFUL HUNTS ONLY)

ICY BAY - CAPE YAKATAGA

		S. Channel									Total		
		Independence	Icy Cape	Munday Creek	White River	Cape Yakataga	S. Channel Yakataga River	Yakataga Glacier	Porcupine Creek	Boulder Creek		Cotton Creek	Iron*
1961	No. Successful/												3/-
1962	No. Days					4/-		2/-					6/-
1963			1/-										1/-
1964								1/-					1/-
1965													0
1966													0
1967			2/-										2/-
1968													0
1969			2/10					1/1					3/11
1970			1/2					4/4					5/6
1971													0
1972								1/5					1/5
1973			2/7			1/1		2/2					5/10
1974													0
1975													0
1976		1/4						1/1					2/5
1977			1/9					1/5			1/4		3/18
1978			1/2					1/1					2/3
1979			1/1										1/1
1980								1/1					1/1
1981													0
1982			1/3										1/3
1983			3/16					1/3					4/19
1984			1/1								3/13		4/14
1985				1/3				2/10			2/2		5/15
1986			3/7										3/7
1987				1/2		1/1							2/3
1988											2/7		2/7
Total													
(1961-1988)		1	19	2	6	21				8			57
(1969-1988)		1	16	2	2	15				8			44
\bar{X} bears /year													
(1961-1988)		.05	1.05	.11	.33	1.16				.44			3.16
Total days													
(1969-1988)		4	58	5	2	33				26			128
\bar{X} days/hunt													
(1969-1988)		4.0	3.6	2.5	1.0	2.2				3.3			2.9

* Iron Creek data is combined with S. Channel Yakataga River.

BLACK BEAR HARVEST (SUCCESSFUL HUNTS ONLY)

ICY BAY - CAPE YAKATAGA

1973-1987 (15 YRS)

		Independence	Icy Cape	Munday Creek	White River	Cape Yakataga	Yakataga River	Yakataga Glacier	Pocupine Creek	Boulder Creek	Cotton Creek	Iron*	Total
1973	No Successful/	0						0	0	0	1/19		1/19
1974	No days												0
1975			1/9		1/1		1/1						3/11
1976											1/1		1/1
1977						1/7							1/7
1978													0
1979													0
1980							1/9						1/9
1981					1/10						1/1		2/11
1982													0
1983						1/10	2/2						3/12
1984			3/4	2/2		1/1	1/1						7/8
1985			5/13	3/18			3/16				2/4		13/51
1986			3/4										3/4
1987			1/5								4/21		5/26
Total Success (1973-87)		0	14	5	2	3	8	0	0	0	9		41
\bar{x} bears /yr.			.93	.33	.13	.20	.53				.60		2.73
Total days			36	20	11	18	29				46		160
\bar{x} days/hunt			2.6	4.0	5.5	6.0	3.6				5.1		3.9

* Iron Creek data is combined with Yakataga River.

FRANK'S
HANDOUT ©
RES. COMM.
HEARING ON
ICY BAY
TUGSER
SALS

BRIEFING PAPER FOR YAKATAGA AREA
Prepared by ADF&G Habitat Division
February 16, 1990

FEB 20 1990

REGION I

Area addressed here is located between Cape Suckling and Yakataga on the northeast gulf coast.

Area Description: The area is a wide coastal plain sandwiched between the exposed northeast gulf to the south and the Bering Glacier and Robinson Mountains to the north. Several major river systems transect the area including Kiklukh River, Tashalich River, Seal River, Tsiu River, Tsivat River, Kaliakh River, Chuiki River, Duktoth River, and Yakataga River. A string of glacial lakes rings the toe of Bering Glacier.

The area includes large expanses of riparian and sedge/muskeg wetlands with extensive ponding formed by glacial moraines and enhanced by beaver dam building activity. Better drained sites support healthy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and mountain hemlock. Alder thickets crowd the lowlands. Western black cottonwood are also present. In the lowlands, the flatness of the terrain provides for widely braided river channels with extensive communities of riparian willow.

Fish and Wildlife Resources: The coastal lowlands located between the mountains of Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga provide an oasis of productive habitat for fish and wildlife.

The area lies along the main Pacific migration route of birds flying north to breed. The high coastal mountain range funnels millions of birds along the narrow coastal corridor. A majority of waterfowl migrating north along the coast stop to rest and feed in these coastal lowlands on their way to summer nesting grounds. A minimum of 295 trumpeter swans were counted in the proposed refuge in 1985, with nesting concentrated in the Kiklukh and Tashalich River drainages, the Kaliakh and Chiuki River drainages and the numerous beaver ponds of the Tsiu and Tsivat River floodplains. The Chiuki River, a tributary of the Kaliakh River, has one of the highest swan nesting densities in the state. A minimum of 62 trumpeter swans have been observed wintering within the proposed refuge boundary (1989) primarily in the Tashalich and Tsiu/Tsivat River lower drainages.

Hundreds of bald eagles winter in high densities along the lower stream reaches.

Upwards of 500 moose are known to use the coastal lowlands. In the winter they concentrate between the Tashalich River and Seal River and along the Tsiu River floodplain.

About 700 mountain goats inhabit the more mountainous regions. Extreme weather conditions and heavy snowfall often drive goats to lower elevations during winter. At these times, goats can be found in lowland forests along the coast.

One-hundred fifty to two hundred brown bear inhabit the area. In the spring they concentrate along the Kiklukh River, on the lowlands between Bering Glacier and the coast, and along the coast from the Tsiu River to Cape Yakataga to feed on newly emergent vegetation. In the summer, brown and black bears concentrate along fish streams to feed. The most heavily fished systems are the Kiklukh, Tsiu, Kaliakh, and Kulthieth rivers.

Approximately 35 - 50 wolves are estimated to occur in the proposed refuge. Their numbers have been slowly increasing in recent years. Other furbearers found in the area include wolverine, coyote, lynx, marten, mink, land otter and beaver.

Four species of salmon (king, sockeye, coho, and pink) occur in the area, although coho salmon are by far the most prevalent. Dolly Varden, cutthroat trout, and steelhead are also documented.

Current Fish and Wildlife Uses: The proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge is accessible by boat or plane and has long been an important hunting and fishing area for Yakutat residents. Within the proposed refuge boundaries, moose, mountain goats, black and brown bear and waterfowl are hunted by residents and guided non-residents. An average of 4 guide/outfitters have service the non-resident hunting/fishing public within the boundaries in recent years. Commercial setnet sites are concentrated at the mouths of every major river. The Tsiu/Tsivat River system is one of the richest commercial fishing systems for its size and type. Sport fishing opportunities are abundant. Outfitters and guides take fishermen into the area to fish for salmon; the Tsiu River is a popular coho fishing stream.

Effect of Creating a Refuge: The effect of creating a refuge would be to emphasize the fish and wildlife values of the area while allowing other uses to occur as long as they are compatible with that primary purpose. It would also give the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) a greater role in land use decisions.

Need for Management Planning: Whether or not the legislature decides to create a refuge, public use area, or state forest the administration should initiate a regional plan for the area. The plan would assess all the resource values and set land use policy before major commitments of resources are made. This will avoid piecemeal decisions that can and have caused significant impacts to wildlife, and frustrated the public's need to understand and participate in the decisions that affect management of resources they depend on.

Staffing Needs: If the legislature directs the administration to begin a plan immediately and not wait until ongoing plans are completed, the department will need funding to participate.

ADF&G strongly supports the proposed amendment to the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) and the fiscal note that goes with it. If the fiscal note is approved, three of the department's six new positions will be assigned to southeast Alaska and one of those will focus on timber harvest in northern Southeast including the Yakataga area. Without this new position, the department will be left with what we have now -- the equivalent of one-half a position -- to deal with timber harvest on all lands in northern Southeast. If the FRPA and fiscal note do not pass we will be unable to give adequate attention to timber harvest and other uses of the Yakataga area

NOT ACTUAL
AREA BUT
I INCLUDED
JUST IN
CASE

ICY RAY MOUNTAIN GOAT SURVEY SUMMARY

by
Herman Griese
Wildlife Biologist
Cordova

Mountain goat surveys by nature produce variable results. Factors that influence surveys are numerous. Surveys conducted between 1977 and 1989 at Icy Bay and Cape Yakataga were conducted within a two-week time frame, around the first week of August. Time of day can influence survey results. Observability of goats and the chances of seeing the greatest percentage of goat populations are best the last three hours of daylight. Next best would be the first two hours of daylight, prior to sun hitting the goats. The hotter the goats become the more difficult it is to find them, thus surveys in the middle of the day are likely to represent a small sample of the entire population. Overcast days, being cooler, tend to produce more representative survey results. Aircraft type affects air speed of survey, and the best results come from slow maneuverable aircraft. There is inherent variation among observers. Few surveys of goat populations could ever be expected to locate 100% of the population, in fact most surveys are considered to locate between 60 and 80% under the best conditions. With all these qualifiers in mind the surveys conducted over the years for the areas east (East WR) and west (West WR) of the White River are presented below.

Date	Time	Number of goats (% kids)		ACRFT	Observer
		East WR	West WR		
7/28/77	0958	398-410 (25)	-----	C-180	R.Quimby
8/3/77	0945	-----	43 (35)	C-180	R.Quimby
8/4/84	1000	204 (22)	-----	PA-18	B.Dinneford
8/4/84	1217	-----	39 (28)	PA-18	R.Dinneford
8/11/89	1931	97 (27)	-----	PA-18	H.Griese
8/11/89	2100	-----	81 (20)	PA-18	H.Griese

Survey conditions were considered to be "excellent" in all surveys except for the 1989 survey of East WR, it was considered "good" due to sun glare.

What should stand out is that survey times and aircraft type have progressed to provide near optimum survey results. The decline in goat numbers in East WR is likely to have been

tempered by increased effort to find goats in later surveys. The decline is probably more dramatic than surveys indicate.

Factors that commonly effect mountain goat population declines include excessive harvest (legal and illegal), predation, deep snow or extremely icy winters, disturbance during critical life stages (winter and spring), and habitat loss. It is apparent that any weather condition experienced by one side of White River would be experienced equally by the other side. And likewise, predation by wolves, which apparently began during the 1970's, is likely to have affected both sides. In recent field activities in West WR wolf scat was located that contained goat hair and hooves. However, we have no indication that wolves have been more common on one side versus the other. That leaves human harvest to consider. Illegal goat harvest cannot be measured.

Hunters have been required to report goat harvest in Unit 6 since 1975. It is safe to say, however, that reporting has been less than 100%. In 1985, I found that reporting by all Unit 6 goat hunters may underestimate legal goat harvest by as much as 30%. The harvest numbers are therefore minimum legal harvest numbers.

After decades of research and population monitoring of mountain goats, wildlife managers have determined that hunter harvest should not exceed 5% of healthy populations, especially if the harvest approaches 50% females. Since surveys are not considered to represent 100% of populations, we have established upper allowable harvest levels at 7% of observed numbers for each population of goats in Unit 6.

Mountain goat harvest by hunters and poachers is generally influenced by ease of access. Both areas were subject to aircraft access by possessing substantial airstrips and potential for beach landings. Clearly, the many logging roads developed east of the White River have improved access to goat populations for hunters. Yet reported harvest is not indicated as a significant factor in the decline.

The differences in natural environmental conditions and legal hunting pressure between areas east and west of the White River are few. However, there are several major unnatural differences. The east side has a substantial area of clearcut timber, a great deal of heavy vehicle traffic on a substantial road system, a large seasonal population of loggers, and the human activities associated with logging.

What has influenced the population of goats east of the White River to decline is not clear. Considering the differences in remaining habitat and logging activities, it

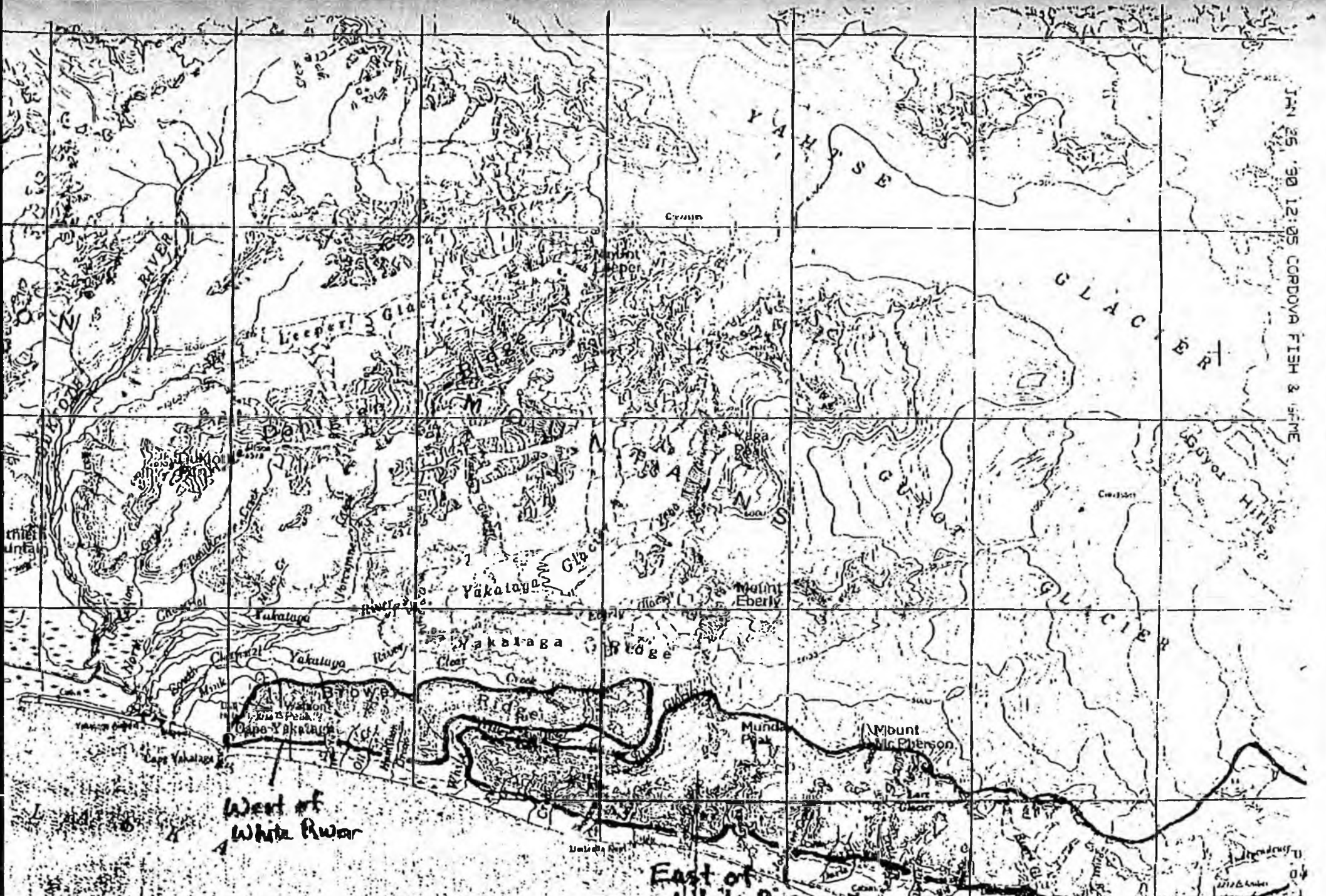
seems to be very clear that logging has promoted the decline in some way. Logging activities may have disturbed goats enough to force them to vacate historical range. In the survey notes of R. Quimby in 1977 he noted:

"Whether by coincidence or not, there were fewer goats above the logging area than on either side. Possibly the goats move away from the noise or perhaps those areas (of habitat) are not as good for some reason"

There remains a lot to be learned about how goats react to human activities. However, throughout the Pacific Northwest logging activities have repeatedly, in some way caused declines in adjacent populations of mountain goat.

griese/RICK3 griese/JREG13

JAN 25 '90 12:25 CORDOVA FISH & FIRE



West of White River

East of White River

MT. GOAT COUNT AREAS

SCALE 1:250000



1 22 S
1 23 S

Icy Cape

BAY



Northern Alaska Environmental Center

218 DRIVEWAY
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701
(907) 452-5021

30 January 1990

Representative Mike Davis
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: Cape Yakataga Timber Sales

Dear Representative Davis:

I'd like to express my appreciation, on behalf of the membership of the Northern Center, for the Oversight Hearings that House Resources Committee is holding on timber sales in the Cape Yakataga area.

We are concerned that non-timber values in the Cape Yakataga-Cape Suckling area have been and are being overlooked. Department of Fish and Game objections to the timber sales, based on the effect of logging on important habitat resources, were brushed aside, although those objections since have proved justified.

We are also concerned about the *process* by which the Icy Cape II timber sale was held, as well as the 1987 timber rights conveyance to the University of Alaska and the 1986 *Sullivan* settlement. From my perspective, all seem to flagrantly disregard the public interest and I believe they merit careful scrutiny.

The Northern Center opposes the land use classifications in DNR's Draft *Cape Yakataga Land Use Plan*. Instead, we strongly support the Resource Committee proposal for State Game Refuge status for all lands between Cape Yakataga and Cape Suckling, and we believe that lands covered by the *Land Use Plan* should be classified as Wildlife Habitat rather than as Resource Management or Forestry.

DNR's history of land management in this magnificent and important piece of Alaska's coastline has not been a proud one. We applaud the decision of the Resources Committee to give this area the time and attention it deserves.

Sincerely,

June Weinstock
President, Board of Directors



Northern Alaska Environmental Center

218 DRIVEWAY
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701
(907) 452-5021

12 February 1990

Representative Curt Menard
Co-Chairman, House Resources
Box V
Juneau 99811

RE: HB 346 Yakataga State Game Refuge

Dear Representative Menard:

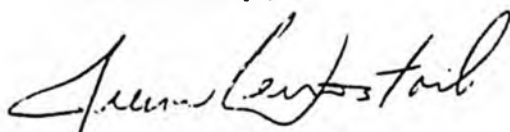
Enclosed you'll find a letter to Mike formally expressing our support for State Game Refuge designation of the lands between Capes Yakataga and Suckling.

I know you're a committee sponsor of HB 346, so I send this along merely as a formal statement of our concern and position. If you should ever need to demonstrate that concern for the Yakataga area is indeed statewide, you can wave it.

I hope you'll be able to move this bill as soon as possible. Please let us know if we can help.

Thanks!

Sincerely,


June Weinstock

Tongass Tourism & Recreation Business Association

740 Fifth Street Juneau Alaska 99801

February 15, 1990

Representative Curt Menard, Co-Chair
House Resources Committee
Pouch V, State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Representative Menard:

The Tongass Tourism and Recreation Business Association (TTRBA) is a coalition of over 100 Alaska businesses operating in southeast Alaska, including Yakutat and Cordova. We are primarily tourism-based or recreation-based lodges, fishing charters, outfitters, tour operators, guides, air taxis and retailers that believe in the wise use and management of all natural resources.

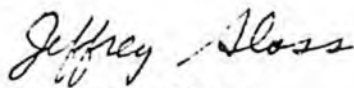
We are deeply concerned over the State's Dept. of Natural Resources' Draft Cape Yakataga Land Use Plan. The plan is flawed in that far too much of the timbered area is committed to logging and not enough is retained for fish, wildlife, recreation and subsistence uses.

Too much of the area's coastline has already been logged; a nearly unbroken 21 mile stretch of clearcuts extend from Icy Cape to Cape Yakataga along the state-owned forelands. Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game protective stipulations were largely ignored resulting in the clearcutting of buffer strips, stream violations and a decline of nearly 50% in mountain goat populations above the sale areas.

Therefore, those lands between Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga must be excluded from timber harvest. We urge you to support HB 346, providing State Game Refuge status and re-classification to Wildlife Habitat for all state lands between Capes Yakataga and Suckling. In addition, all lands under the Draft Cape Yakataga Land Use Plan should be classified Wildlife Habitat (instead of Forestry or Resource Management as proposed in the draft plan).

This last stretch of unlogged state foreland is increasingly important to many of our hunting & fishing guides, outfitters and air taxis as well as to sport hunters & fishermen, commercial fishermen and subsistence users. The area has been described by at least one ADF&G biologist as the richest wildlife habitat in the state! It is far more valuable unlogged for the long-term sustained yield of healthy tourism and recreation industries as well as for subsistence use, fisheries & wildlife habitat.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey Sloss
Executive Director



Alaska Center for the Environment

700 H Street, Suite 4 • Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • (907) 274-3621

March 21, 1990

House Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99811

Re: Proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge

Dear Members of the Committee:

I am again sorry that because of a conflict I will not be able to attend one of your hearings, this time on the proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge, a subject about which ACE feels very strongly. Our position, however, has not changed since we testified at the February 1 teleconference, so for the most part we will briefly reiterate what we said at that time.

The suggestion was made at that earlier hearing that additional logging should be allowed so that "direct human benefits" could be provided to the people of Seward and elsewhere. However, the spectacular forests along this coast, uncut, provide a great many direct human benefits, both economic and non-economic, to a wide variety of users, including subsistence users, commercial and sport fishermen, hunters, guides, outfitters, air taxi operators, and, as we also learned last time, wind surfers (and undoubtedly this is not an inclusive list).

Logging is incompatible with the above existing, valuable uses. We need to recognize that allowing additional logging in the area requires substantial trade-offs, that is, the acceptance of significant damage to the existing uses. We don't believe the trade-offs are acceptable.

A major portion of this coastline has in effect been allocated to large-scale logging, and the result has been the destruction of mountain goat habitat, of certain important streams, and of the area's spectacular scenic beauty. The only certain, long-term means of balancing this allocation with an allocation that favors the other, very important resources and uses, is the legislative designation of much of the remainder of this stretch of coastline. For this reason we strongly support the establishment of the Yakataga State Game Refuge.

A DNR area planning effort, while generally a good idea when the land allocation slate is relatively clean, would not be an appropriate solution in this instance. We already know that an existing major commercial allocation for logging needs to be balanced by an allocation that will protect the many valuable competing resources and uses. And DNR, especially in

recent years, has been extremely reluctant in its area plans to make recommendations for legislative designations, especially specific ones and ones that would result in a change of land managers (e.g., from DLWM to ADF&G). DNR has repeatedly said that that is a job for the legislature--which of course it is; the plan would merely recommend. So there's no reason why the legislature shouldn't act now rather than wait for the completion of a planning effort that is highly unlikely to seriously address the game refuge proposal; and shouldn't permanently protect an area with known values that could at any time be threatened by administrative actions.

Thank you for the chance to submit these comments.

Sincerely,

Cliff Eames

Cliff Eames
Issues Director



CORDOVA DISTRICT FISHERMEN UNITED

P.O. Box 939

Cordova, Alaska 99574

(907) 424-3447

February 26, 1990

Representative Curt Menard
Chairman House Resource Committee
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

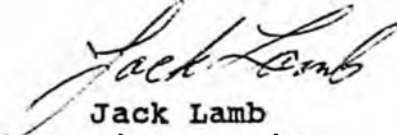
Dear Sir:

I sat in on the teleconference on Tuesday evening, February 20, concerning the Yakataga Timber Issues, from the conference phone at the community college here in Cordova. As the conference went on and with Steve Ranney there in Juneau representing CDFU, I chose not to speak at that time, feeling that my comments then would be non-productive.

I do feel that comments are in order as a result of the conference. The direction that the conference took was a step in the right direction in terms of addressing the need for the development of an area wide management plan. If DNR, DF&G and other appropriate departments will work together without the usual "turf battles" to develop such a plan, then we are all moving in the right direction. However, in order to develop this kind of plan you must have public input and I submit to you that the public has already spoken to a large degree with the request of a Yakataga Game Refuge. Of course, as the plan develops, there will be more public input, but I believe that with a Game Refuge you will already have identified the public's greatest concern in the Yakutataga area. A Game Refuge does not preclude development of the area, it protects the sensitive environment and habitat of the area from being overrun.

In closing, I would like to thank you sir, for allowing me to speak freely on this issue and for your personal attentiveness as well.

Sincerely,


Jack Lamb
Vice-President

cc: Governor Steve Cowper
Representative Cliff Davidson
Senator Bettye Farenkamp
Representative Gene Kubina

Senator Jay Kerttula
Senator Mike Szymanski
Senator Dick Eliason

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF HABITAT

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

BOX 3-2000
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802
PHONE: (907) 465-4106

BRIEFING PAPER FOR YAKATAGA AREA
Prepared by ADF&G Habitat Division
March 21, 1990

Location: The area addressed here is located between Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga on the northeast gulf coast.

Area Description: The area is a wide coastal plain sandwiched between the exposed northeast gulf to the south and the Bering Glacier and Robinson Mountains to the north. Several major river systems transect the area including Kiklukh River, Tashalich River, Seal River, Tsiu River, Tsivat River, Kaliakh River, Chuiki River, Duktoth River, and Yakataga River. A string of glacial lakes rings the toe of Bering Glacier.

The area includes large expanses of riparian and sedge/muskeg wetlands with extensive ponding formed by glacial moraines and enhanced by beaver dam building activity. Better drained sites support healthy stands of Sitka spruce, western hemlock, and mountain hemlock. Alder thickets crowd the lowlands. Western black cottonwood are also present. In the lowlands, the flatness of the terrain provides for widely braided river channels with extensive communities of riparian willow.

Fish and Wildlife Resources: The coastal lowlands located between the mountains of Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga provide an oasis of productive habitat for fish and wildlife.

The area lies along the main Pacific migration route of birds flying north to breed. The high coastal mountain range funnels millions of birds along the narrow coastal corridor. A majority of waterfowl migrating north along the coast stop to rest and feed in these coastal lowlands on their way to summer nesting grounds. A minimum of 295 trumpeter swans were counted in the proposed refuge in 1985, with nesting concentrated in the Kiklukh and Tashalich River drainages, the Kaliakh and Chiuki River drainages and the numerous beaver ponds of the Tsiu and Tsivat River floodplains. The Chiuki River, a tributary of the Kaliakh River, has one of the highest swan nesting densities in the state. A minimum of 62 trumpeter swans have been observed wintering within the proposed refuge boundary (1989) primarily in the Tashalich and Tsiu/Tsivat River lower drainages.

Hundreds of bald eagles winter in high densities along the lower stream reaches.

Upwards of 500 moose are known to use the coastal lowlands. In the winter they concentrate between the Tashalich River and Seal River and along the Tsiu River floodplain.

About 700 mountain goats inhabit the more mountainous regions. Extreme weather conditions and heavy snowfall often drive goats to lower elevations during winter. At these times, goats can be found in lowland forests along the coast.

One-hundred fifty to two hundred brown bear inhabit the area. In the spring they concentrate along the Kiklukh River, on the lowlands between Bering Glacier and the coast, and along the coast from the Tsiu River to Cape Yakataga to feed on newly emergent vegetation. In the summer, brown and black bears concentrate along fish streams to feed. The most heavily fished systems are the Kiklukh, Tsiu, Kaliakh, and Kulthieth rivers.

Approximately 35 - 50 wolves are estimated to occur in the proposed refuge. Their numbers have been slowly increasing in recent years. Other furbearers found in the area include wolverine, coyote, lynx, marten, mink, land otter and beaver.

Four species of salmon (king, sockeye, coho, and pink) occur in the area, although coho salmon are by far the most prevalent. Dolly Varden, cutthroat trout, and steelhead are also documented.

Current Fish and Wildlife Uses: The proposed Yakataga State Game Refuge is accessible by boat or plane and has long been an important hunting and fishing area for Yakutat residents. Within the proposed refuge boundaries, moose, mountain goats, black and brown bear and waterfowl are hunted by residents and guided non-residents. An average of 4 guide/outfitters have service the non-resident hunting/fishing public within the boundaries in recent years. Commercial setnet sites are concentrated at the mouths of every major river. The Tsiu/Tsivat River system is one of the richest commercial fishing systems for its size and type. Sport fishing opportunities are abundant. Outfitters and guides take fishermen into the area to fish for salmon; the Tsiu River is a popular coho fishing stream.

Effect of Creating a Refuge: The effect of creating a refuge would be to emphasize the fish and wildlife values of the area while allowing other uses to occur as long as they are compatible with that primary purpose. It would also give the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) a greater role in land use decisions.

Need for Management Planning: Whether or not the legislature decides to create a refuge, public use area, or state forest the administration should initiate a regional plan for the area. The plan would assess all the resource values and set land use policy before major commitments of resources are made. This will avoid piecemeal decisions that can and have caused significant impacts to wildlife, and frustrated the public's need to understand and

participate in the decisions that affect management of resources they depend on.

Staffing Needs: If the legislature directs the administration to begin a plan immediately and not wait until ongoing plans are completed, the department will need funding to participate.

ADF&G strongly supports the proposed amendment to the Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA) and the fiscal note that goes with it. If the fiscal note is approved, three of the department's six new positions will be assigned to southeast Alaska and one of those will focus on timber harvest in northern Southeast including the Yakataga area. Without this new position, the department will be left with what we have now -- the equivalent of one-half a position -- to deal with timber harvest on all lands in northern Southeast. If the FRPA and fiscal note do not pass we will be unable to give adequate attention to timber harvest and other uses of the Yakataga area

MAR 19 1990

STEVE COWPER

STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
JUNEAU

March 19, 1990

Ms. Ann L. Lowe
Chair
Southeast Regional Fish
and Game Council
c/o Department of Fish and Game
Division of Boards
P.O. Box 3-2000
Juneau, AK 99802

Dear Ms. Lowe:

Thanks for your letter concerning House Bill 346 which would establish the Yakataga State Game Refuge. I agree with you that in recent years, there has been a great deal of controversy in this region. I recognize the need for comprehensive planning for the region and believe that an area plan would be an important step in resolving public controversy and providing for sustainable use of State land in the area.

In response to these public concerns about planning for the Yakataga region and the need to carefully consider the regionwide forestry, fish and wildlife, and other values, future timber sale or timber rights transfer will be prohibited until an areawide plan is completed. This prohibition will apply to all State land between Icy Bay and Cape Suckling, except the University timber transfer parcels and the Icy Cape II timber sale and extension which are the subject of previous legal commitments.

An areawide land use plan will determine land use allocation, guidelines, and classifications using a public process with three full rounds of public meetings in local communities such as Yakutat, Cordova, and Seward. The areawide plan will be a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) area plan or, if the Legislature creates a State forest in the region, it could be a DNR State forest management plan. On the other hand, if the Legislature creates a State game refuge, it could be a management plan prepared by the Department of Fish and Game.

Ms. Ann L. Lowe

- 2 -

March 19, 1990

Thanks again for pointing out your concerns. I assure you that natural resource decisions in the region will be made with full public input and involvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Cowper", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Cowper
Governor

cc: Senate Resources Committee
House Resources Committee
Senator Jim Duncan
Senator Jalmar Kerttula
Senator Mike Szymanski
Senator Lloyd Jones
Representative Eugene Kubina
Representative Ben Grussendorf
Representative Bill Hudson
Representative Robin Taylor
Representative Fran Ulmer
Representative Niilo Koponen
Commissioner Don Collinsworth
Department of Fish and Game
Commissioner Lennie Gorsuch
Department of Natural Resources
Gary Gustafson, Director
Division of Land and Water Management
Department of Natural Resources
Alaska Trollers Association
United Fishermen of Alaska
Southcentral Regional Fish and Game Council
Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
Prince William Sound Advisory Committee

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March 15, 1990

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(907) 276-3621

VIA FACSIMILE: 465-2299

Johanna M. Munson, Esq.
c/o The Honorable Rep. Curt Menard
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: House Bill on Management of the Yakataga Forest

Dear Johanna:

Following our brief conversations this morning and afternoon, and at your suggestion, I am herewith offering three specific, limited comments on the draft bill on management of the Yakataga forest. As I mentioned, Chugach Alaska Corporation has not had an opportunity to review the draft, and Chugach's president and timber manager are not expected back to town until after the weekend. I have not had the opportunity to discuss the bill with them and these limited comments should not be taken as Chugach's final or complete position on the bill.

Whether Chugach can support the bill is a decision that will have to be made by Chugach management after careful consideration. As I noted, these limited suggestions would go a long way toward removing potential objections to this effort from Chugach's point of view.

First, while everyone acknowledges Chugach's legitimate claims under the Icy Cape settlement, the fact is that satisfaction of those claims is long overdue and Chugach has sustained substantial injury as a result. Under the settlement agreement, the state was obligated to provide the promised timber by March, 1989, fully a year ago. It is worth noting that out of all the entities that have asserted or expressed interests in this area, Chugach alone has considerable amounts of money invested and at risk in these management decisions. Chugach alone has shareholders to which it must account for its bottom line.

Johanna M. Munson, Esq.
March 15, 1990
Page 2

In utterly, unquestionably reasonable reliance upon the state's commitments under the settlement agreement, commitments negotiated by the Department of Natural Resources and the Attorney General's office and approved by the superior court, Chugach has substantially changed its position in numerous ways. The very decision to purchase Sullivan, Inc. was based entirely on the state's obligations under the settlement agreement; the price Chugach paid for Sullivan was based almost entirely on the value of the state's obligations under the settlement agreement; Chugach's short and long term timber plans, including its sawmill operations, were based on the settlement agreement timber being harvested in 1989-90; Chugach invested heavily in infrastructure at Icy Bay, expending considerable sums mitigating shoddy practices of previous operators and preparing to harvest the settlement agreement timber.

These are real, hard dollar expenses incurred by Chugach on the completely reasonable expectation that the state would honor contractual commitments negotiated by the public agencies charged with the authority to make such commitments and approved by a court in settlement of bona fide legal claims. I will leave it to other voices at Chugach to describe the importance to Chugach and its shareholders of diversifying its business by developing a viable, in-state forest products operation to provide economic opportunities for its Native shareholders and otherwise fulfill its obligations under the Native Claims Settlement Act.

I would never presume to tell the legislature how to do its job, but even the legislature cannot turn back the clock. The contractual commitments made by the state cannot be unmade, the decisions made by Chugach in reliance upon those commitments cannot be undone, the money spent by Chugach cannot be unspent. While we can appreciate the legislature's dissatisfaction with past management of this area, we cannot accept a "solution" that fails to redress the injury already suffered by the one party who has the most to lose and is the least at fault. It seems trite to note that two wrongs don't make a right, but plainly it is this premise underlying any argument that Chugach should not receive the timber it has been promised. The problems the legislature perceives in the management of this area will not be cured by failure to provide Chugach its timber or inflicting additional financial harm on Chugach.

Accordingly, before any legislative direction in this area can receive the support of Chugach, it must unequivocally provide for satisfaction of the state's obligations to Chugach under the settlement agreement. In this regard, I propose replacing the second sentence in section 1(g) of the bill with the following sentence:

Johanna M. Munson, Esq.
March 15, 1990
Page 3

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the commissioner shall permit the harvest of timber necessary to satisfy the state's obligations under the court approved settlement agreement entered in Sullivan v. State, Case No. 1KE-85-446 Civil, in accordance with the terms thereof.

Chugach has already publicly stated its support for an area-wide plan for the Yakataga forest and, as a responsible landowner, corporate citizen and Native organization, it will constructively participate in the planning process. But participation and planning is a two-way street and action must be taken to satisfy Chugach's claims under the settlement agreement.

Second, as the largest private landowner in the region covered by the bill, it is important that the moratorium set forth in the first sentence of section 1(g) of the bill not adversely impact Chugach's ability to access and develop its own ANCSA resources in the area. While I'm sure this is not the intent of the bill, I would propose including language explicitly acknowledging these rights. Preliminarily, I would propose adding after the comma in the first sentence of section 1(g) the phrase, "and subject to valid existing rights," and adding as a final sentence:

Nothing in this section shall diminish the right of any private property owner to access or develop its land or resources or the authority of any agency to grant approval therefor.

Third, the proposed citizens advisory commission appears not fairly representative of the entities with legitimate interests in this area. Given that the planning process provides ample opportunity for public comment, the benefit of elevating certain "preferred" voices is debatable. Also, it is unclear what legitimate policy interests are served by having on an advisory commission of eight, four or more persons who would be expected to have very similar advice for the planning process. I would note that there are six Native corporations in the Chugach region, which includes the Yakataga area, but only one proposed for inclusion in the commission. I also note that the Yakataga area includes more than 125 mining claims, which suggests that the commission is not inclusive of all the resource interests in the area.

I would propose eliminating the commission on the ground that the planning process provides sufficient opportunity for the responsible agencies to receive recommendations from interested

Johanna M. Munson, Esq.
March 15, 1990
Page 4

parties. If there must be a commission, I would propose limiting it to representatives of the cities of Cordova and Yakutat, Chugach Alaska Corporation and the University of Alaska, as the four parties with clearly unique and special interests in resource planning in the region. If the commission must include the enumerated entities in section 1(e), I would propose expanding the commission to encompass a balanced and representative array of interests in this area.


As I stated above, these comments should to be taken as constituting Chugach's support for the bill in its present or any other form, or as constituting Chugach's final or complete comments on the matter. Given the apparently inalterable urgency of the committee's need to consider this bill, I felt compelled to submit these limited comments in writing, as you requested. I'm certain Chugach management will have further comments on the bill.

On the issue of timing, I must restate my objection to the extremely limited timeframe in which Chugach is once again expected to respond to a proposal obviously being driven by persons with scant appreciation or concern for Chugach's interest or position in this regrettable affair. This is neither fair to Chugach nor conducive to reasoned policy making. While I am certain that Chugach will participate in the hearings now set for March 22 or 23, I would repeat my request, made to you in obht our conversations, that the hearings be postponed so that I might be able to address the committee personally. As I mentioned, I have prior commitments on both of those days but believe that I might be able to facilitate the committee's consideration of the matters on the table.

Please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

BIRCH, HORTON, BITTNER
AND CHEROT


Philip Blumstein

PB:jb

cc: Edgar Blatchford, Chairman of the Board,
Chugach Alaska Corporation
Michael Chittick, President, Chugach
Alaska Corporation
Paul Tweiten, Timber Division Manager,
Chugach Alaska Corporation

Student Position Statement On University Logging

The University of Alaska is concealing a major legal and moral contradiction from it's students, faculty and general public and it must stop.

The university currently owns the timber rights to 37,777 acres of land between Cape Suckling and Cape Yakataga along the Gulf of Alaska and bounded by the Saint Elias Mountains. It acquired these rights as a result of a lawsuit against the Department of Natural Resources.

Originally in 1978 the DNR set aside land in Anchorage for the University but this was given to the municipality of Anchorage. The University threatened to sue, and for reparations was granted a selection of land throughout the state. After this selection was made the University then asked for, and received the timber rights to the land in question outside the public hearing process, violating the law which requires that the University have a period of public notice. This notice was inadequate and in addition, what was posted had the wrong township and range locations for the area. This misled Cordova and Yakutat residents to believe that their area would be unaffected. This failing was observed by a Cordova resident and he alerted other residents and forced DNR and the University to hold a public hearing. At this hearing a capacity crowd testified unanimously against the timber transfer which had already taken place.

As of the 16th of October 1989, the Yakutat Fisherman's Association, the Cordova District Fisherman United, Steve Ranny of Cordova, the Alaska Center for the Environment, and the Southeast Alaska Conservation Council, have filed suit along with the City of Yakutat against DNR and UA. For this many local people to cry out against this timber sale there has to be a valid reason for their discontent. The land in question is an important spawning ground for fish, the area abounds with wildlife important for subsistence uses, for guided sport hunting and fishing tours. Previous adjacent timber sales have lead to a crash in mountain goat populations of almost 75% since logging began. This timber transfer would threaten the livelihoods of the residents of Cordova and Yakutat potentially for generations who have depended on the area's resources as a source of income. In addition the University plans to log the area with a non-local company further robbing local people of any benefits which might be derived from the proposed operation. Aside from being unpopular the University is practicing bad forestry by it's own definition.

In a recent lecture on forestry, Dr. John D. Fox of the School of Land and Resource Management said that two important criteria for forest management are that there be "equity" and social and cultural acceptability." Clearly there is nothing equitable or fair about harvesting timber in an area, probably degrading a fisheries resource and definitely degrading a wildlife resource as illustrated by previous harvests. This would eliminate an important resource and not redistribute anything into the local economy. In addition the University is seeking to avoid following the environmental required for state timber sales as opposed to

timber transfers. This type of logging has been referred to as nuclear logging by U.S. Forest Service employees.

In an interview by Karen Kolivosky of the Sun Star, Brian Rogers, vice president of finance is quoted as saying: " The University's view is that it has a responsibility. We're supposed to make money with our trust fund, but have a responsibility to come up with the best way to ensure that there's no harm done to commercial and subsistence fisheries and the regeneration of trees." To make this money, the University could do a number of things. They could demand the dollar value of the area from DNR or reselect lands somewhere where the impact would not be so great. This would preclude denuding vast areas of forest, damaging the livelihoods of local people and keep the University out of ugly legal proceedings. With all the intelligence to be found at this institution, I am sure that a far less heavy handed and respectful way to resolve this problem can be found.

Sacha Botbol Student U.A.F

Director of A.S.U.A.F Movies

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Fairbanks, AK 99775

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Representative Curt Menard
Chairman, House Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V (MS3100)
Juneau, AK 99811

2-20-90

Regarding request for long term natural resource
interests in the Yakataga/Icy Bay area

At present WestGold has one operating gold mining property in Alaska located at Nome. We operate the BIMA dredge on the largest offshore marine placer in the world, and have been one of the largest gold producers in the State for the last 3 years.

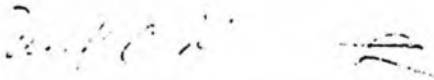
WestGold is interested in expanding its mining operations in the State and has initiated an aggressive exploration program involving placer, hardrock and offshore targets. To date hardrock and placer efforts have centered on Western and interior Alaska. However, offshore prospects have included Norton Sound, Goodnews Bay, the Aleutian islands and the Gulf of Alaska, particularly the area from Icy Bay to Dry Bay. I have included excerpts from several publications indicating mineral potential in coastal areas of Alaska, along with criteria used by WestGold in assessing mineral potential in these areas. This material clearly demonstrates a substantial resource that may have significant economic potential to the State as a whole, as well as the Yakataga area in particular.

Careful comprehensive planning is necessary for the protection and wise use of all natural resources for the best interest of the State. Without such an effort both resource protection and reasonable, environmentally sound development will likely suffer as a result of political controversy and emotional rhetoric of special interest groups from all sides as they attempt to influence public policy. In many cases scientific fact and sound management practices, essential elements in the wise stewardship of our natural resources, are lost as a result of pressure from these special interest groups. A strong and well balanced long term regional plan that addresses all resources and uses in a fair and equitable manner will be an asset to all parties in keeping focussed on resource management consistent with the best interests of the State.

With respect to the Yakataga/Icy Bay area, WestGold would be glad to participate in, or provide input to, a comprehensive planning program representing mining interests. We would recommend that such a comprehensive plan be prepared by ADNR, Southcentral region, since the bulk of the interest groups, Federal agencies and land owners have a presence or regional offices in Anchorage.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on resource interests and planning in the Yakataga area.

Very Truly Yours,



Paul C. Rusanowski, Ph.D.
Manager Environmental Affairs