

**S B**

**430**

DATE:

FURTHER:

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE: 4-24-90

RESOURCES

Committee considered

SB 430

and recommended:

replace with \_\_\_\_\_ CS SB 430 (Res)  
 or adopt \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_  
 attached amendment(s)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent adopted

same title  
 new title  
 technical title change (HB only)

do pass

do not pass

no recommendation

individual recommendations

further referral to \_\_\_\_\_

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

APPROVES PREVIOUS:

fiscal note(s) ITG, ONE Dept/Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Dept/Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

zero fiscal note(s) \_\_\_\_\_

appropriation-no fiscal note

Governor's bill w/fiscal note

SIGNING DO PASS:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Rick Hallford  
Carl J. ...  
William ...  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Robert ...  
 Chair: Signature and Recommendation

# 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

March 16, 1990

MAR 16 1990

The Honorable Mike Szymanski  
Alaska State Senator  
P. O. Box V  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Szymanski:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 430 yesterday. We are pleased with the changes in the bill.

During the hearing, you requested the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) comments on coordinating multiple use language in SB 430 and SB 454 (Multiple Use). We would like discussion of changes to AS 38.04.910 coordinated, so that the final statute is consistent. The thrust of SB 454 is legislative monitoring of administrative restrictions on multiple use or mining on state lands. The bill requires that DNR report annually to the legislature on new mineral closures (Sec. 2(d)) and closures of land to multiple use (Sec. 3 (b)). It also requires 5-year reports summarizing total closures to mining and multiple use.

DNR has testified in support of SB 454. However, I understand that a hearing on SB 454 is being held this morning in Senate Finance, so changes may have been made since our last testimony.

We recommend combining the changes to 38.04.910 from both bills in SB 454 so that Legislative discussion considers the joint effect of adding roadless area consideration to the multiple use definition and requiring new reports on restrictions to multiple use. It should also be clear that the resources and uses considered under multiple use management include, but are not limited to, the finite list in 38.04.910. There are many other uses and activities that could also be included.

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 3/21/90  
Title: Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area  
Sponsor: Rodey  
Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affected: Fish and Game  
BRU: Habitat Division  
Components: \_\_\_\_\_

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	65.0	65.0	65.0			
TRAVEL	.5	.5	.5			
CONTRACTUAL	5.0	5.0	5.0			
SUPPLIES	.5	.5	.5			
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	71.0	71.0	71.0	0	0	0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE	0	0	0	0	0	0
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL						

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

See attached continuation page

Prepared by: Frank Rue, Director  
Division: Habitat

Phone: 465-4105

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Commissioner: Adrian W. G. Hilder  
Agency: Department of Fish and Game

Date: 3/28/90

Distribution (by preparer):

- Legislative Finance
- Legislative Sponsor
- Requestor
- Office of Management and Budget
- Impacted Agency(ies)

The CS for SB 430 requires that the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) undertake and complete a review of the Susitna Area Plan within three years from the effective date of the Act (FY93 or 94). SB 430 specifically requires DNR to consider remote recreation and the designation of roadless areas. An independent economic evaluation of the value of recreation and tourism in the Susitna Valley is also mandated by the bill.

It is anticipated that the revision process will attract a very high degree of public attention and participation. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) will not only have to provide information on fish and wildlife resources, habitats and uses, but will also have to collect and provide timely information on recreation and tourism related to fish and wildlife resources. This will require ADF&G to expand our expertise and information base in this area. It is anticipated that there will be numerous public meetings, and hearings over key issues. ADF&G's participants will also be expected to review, analyze, and respond to numerous technical reports, policies, and proposals.

To meet ADF&G's statutory mandates, it is anticipated that a full time habitat biologist III, with appropriate clerical and cartographic support, would be necessary to provide ADF&G representation on this project. Additional project support and supervision would be provided by other Habitat, Sport Fish, Wildlife Conservation, Subsistence, and Commercial Fisheries staff.

Budget Summary No FY 90 impact.

Line 100 Personal Services

HBIII	12 mo.	55.2
CTIII	2 mo.	5.2
Cart.	1 mo.	<u>4.6</u>
Total		65.0

Line 200 Travel and Per Diem  
to Mat-Su Valley

Total .5

Line 300 Telephones, Photocopying, Reproduction, etc.

Total 5.0

Line 400 Maps and Supplies

Total .5

Grand Total 71.0

**STATE OF ALASKA  
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

BILL VERSION : CSSB 430 (Res) nsp  
PUBLISH DATE : \_\_\_\_\_

**FISCAL NOTE**

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: 17-Apr-90 Agency Affected: Natural Resources  
Title: Susitna Valley Remote Recreation BRU: Land & Water Mgmt  
Area  
Sponsor: Senator Rodey Components: Land & Water Mgmt  
Requestor: Senate Resources

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)**

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES	137.9	137.9	99.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
TRAVEL	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CONTRACTUAL	48.4	173.9	21.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
SUPPLIES	3.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
EQUIPMENT	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
LAND&STRUCTURES						
GRANTS,CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>196.3</b>	<b>316.8</b>	<b>126.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>CAPITAL</b>						
<b>REVENUE</b>						

**FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)**

GENERAL FUND	196.3	316.8	126.5			
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196.3</b>	<b>316.8</b>	<b>126.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME	3.0	3.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
PART-TIME	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TEMPORARY	1.0	1.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)**

See Attached

Prepared by: Ron Swanson Phone: 762-2680  
Division: Land & Water Management Date: 17-Apr-90  
Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Lennie Gorsuch Date: 17-Apr 90  
Agency: Department of Natural Resources

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

## ANALYSIS

### Background

1. Update will combine Susitna and Willow Subbasin area plans.
2. Area includes original land in area plans minus land in the Beluga Subregion within the Kenai Peninsula Borough that will be included in the Kenai Area Plan. Land within management plans that are completed or in progress will not be addressed by the area plan except for regional (Chapter 2) guidelines that apply to the management planning areas. Management plans cover Hatcher Pass, Matanuska Valley Moose Range, state refuges, state parks and recreation areas, state recreation rivers, Deception Creek, and Kashwitna. This proposal assumes a plan will be in progress for the Willow Mt. Critical Habitat Area.

This proposal assumes that legislative designations will not be in place, nor management plans mandated for Jim-Swan Lakes Recreation Area, Susitna State Forest, Chelatna Public Use Area, SB 430, or other new areas prior to the update.

3. The update will do more detailed planning in the Knik Glacier-Jim-Swan Lakes and Susitna Corridor areas. The Susitna Corridor work will fulfill the requirement for a management plan.

### Staffing

1. All positions are step A. Estimates include benefits but not merit increases.
2. Planning staff include 1 range 18, 1 range 16, 1 range 14, and 1/3 range 8 clerk. The If the Susitna State Forest bill passes and sets up a separate management planning process, the range 14 can be changed to a 1/2-time 14 or a tech position.

### Travel

Travel includes per diem for overnight stays during public meetings in Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, Glacier View, and Lake Louise. One trip per year to Juneau for legislative briefings also is included.

### Contractual

1. This estimate assumes the legislature will direct consideration of roadless areas. If this alternative is considered, a statistical public attitude survey will be required. \$40,000 is included for a public attitude survey

during the public review of alternatives.

2. This estimate assumes the legislature will require a study of recreation and tourism. Absent more detail on the questions to be addressed by this study, it is estimated that \$150,000 will be needed to contract for this study.
3. Printing costs include an introductory brochure and resource assessment in FY91, an agency review draft, public review draft, and summary brochure in FY 92; and the final plan and summary review draft in FY 93. The plans will encompass both the Willow and SAP plans and may require two volumes.
4. Transportation costs include mileage to Palmer-Wasilla for public meetings and planning team meetings, and to Willow, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, Glacier View, Sutton, and Lake Louise for public meetings. Air charter costs are included for public meetings in Skwentna, and for overflights to the Susitna valley, Matanuska valley, and Knik valley.

#### Equipment

Desks, chairs, and computer equipment.

#### Miscellaneous and Supplies

Xeroxing, newsletters, rental for public meeting rooms, mylar, graphic supplies, airphotos, etc.

Position Title Natural Resource Manager I		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 18/A	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status Full	Staff Months 12	Location Anchorage		Election District
Justification				
<b>Background</b>				
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary*	37.4	////////////////////		
Benefits*	12.3	////////////////////		
Premium Pay (Included in Above)	////////////////////	////////////////////		
Other	////////////////////	////////////////////		
Total Personal Services	////////////////////	49.7		
Travel		1.0		
Contractual		1.4		
Commodities		0.5		
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		52.6		
<b>Funding Source for Total Cost</b>				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G.F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004			
Program Receipts/GF	1005	52.6		
I-A Receipts	1007			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				
* Personal Services Salary and Benefits Costs are from PACS.				
<b>Staffing</b>				
1. Planning staff include 1 range 18, 1 range 16, 1 range 14, and 1/3 range 8 clerk. If the Susitna State Forest bill passes and sets up a separate management planning process, the range 14 can be changed to 1/2-time or a tech position.				
2. This position will be the project manager.				

REQUEST FOR  
NEW POSITION

AGENCY Natural Resources  
BRU Land & Water Mgmt  
COMPONENT Land & Water Mgmt

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Revised Date 3-13-90

FY 91

Position Title Natural Resource Officer II		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 16/A	Org. Unit GGU
Time Status Full	Staff Months 12	Location Anchorage		Election District
		Justification Background		
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary*	32.4	////////////////////		
Benefits*	10.7	////////////////////		
Premium Pay (Included in Above)		////////////////////		
Other		////////////////////		
Total Personal Services		43.1		
Travel		0.5		
Contractual		1.0		
Commodities		0.5		
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		45.1		
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G.F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	45.1		
Program Receipts/GF	1005			
I-A Receipts	1007			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				
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1. Update will combine Susitna and Willow Subbasin area plans.

2. Area includes original land in area plans minus land in the Beluga Subregion within the Kenai Peninsula Borough that will be included in the Kenai Area Plan. Land with/in management plans that are completed or in progress will not be addressed by the area plan except for regional Chapter 2) guidelines that apply to the management planning areas. Management plans cover Hatch Pass, Matanuska Valley Moose Range, state refuges, state parks and recreation areas, state recreation rivers, Deception Creek, and Kashitna. This proposal assumes a plan will be in progress for the Willow Mt. Critical Habitat Area.

This proposal assumes that legislative designations will not be in plan, nor management plans mandated for Jim-Swan Lakes Recreation Area, Susitna State Forest, Chelatna Public Use Area, SB 430 or other new areas prior to the update.3.The update will do more detailed planning in the Knik Glacier-Jim-Swan Lakes and Susitna Corridor areas. The Susitna Corridor work will fulfill the requirement for a management plan.

3. The update will do more detailed planning in the Knik Glacier-Jim-Swan Lakes and Susitna Corridor areas. The Susitna Corridor work will fulfill the requirement for a management plan.

Staffing

1. Planning staff include 1 range 18, 1 range 16, 1 range 14, and 1/3 range 8 clerk. If the Susitna State Forest bill passes and sets up a separate management planning process, the range 14 can be changed to 1/2-time 14 or a tech position.

REQUEST FOR  
NEW POSITION

AGENCY Natural Resources  
BRU Land & Water Mgmt.  
COMPONENT Land & Water Mgmt.

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Revised Date 3-13-90

FY 91

Position Title Natural Resource Officer I		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 14/A	Barg. Unit GGU																																						
Time Status Full	Staff Months 12	Location Anchorage		Election District																																						
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REQUEST FOR  
NEW POSITION

AGENCY Natural Resources  
BRU Land & Water Mgmt.  
COMPONENT Land & Water Mgmt.

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Revised Date 3-13-90

FY 91

Position Title Clerk Typist III		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 8/A	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status Part	Staff Months 4	Location Anchorage		Election District
Type of Expenditure		Justification <u>Background</u>		
1	2	3		
Salary*	6.5	1. Update will combine Susitna and Willow Subbasin area plans.		
Benef <sup>ts</sup> *	1.1	2. Area includes original land in area plans <u>minus</u> land in the Beluga Subregion within the Kenai Peninsula Borough that will be included in the Kenai Area Plan. Land within management plans that are completed or in progress will not be addressed by the area plan except for regional Chapter 2) guidelines that apply to the management planning areas. Management plans cover Hatch Pass, Matanuska Valley Moose Range, state refuges, state parks and recreation areas, state recreation rivers, Deception Creek, and Kashwitna. This proposal assumes a plan will be in progress for the Willow Mt. Critical Habitat Area.		
Premium Pay (Included in Above)	////	This proposal assumes that legislative designations will not be in plan, nor management plans mandated for Jim-Swan Lakes Recreation Area, Susitna State Forest, Chelatna Public Use Area, S3 430 or other new areas prior to the update.3.The update will do more detailed planning in the Knik Glacier-Jim-Swan Lakes and Susitna Corridor areas. The Susitna Corridor work will fulfill the requirement for a management plan.		
Other	////	3. The update will do more detailed planning in the Knik Glacier-Jim-Swan Lakes and Susitna Corridor areas. The Susitna Corridor work will fulfill the requirement for a management plan.		
Total Personal Services	////	Total Cost 7.6		
Travel		0		
Contractual		0		
Commodities		0.5		
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		8.1		
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G.F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	8.1		
Program Receipts/GF	1005			
I-A Receipts	1007			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				
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		1. Planning staff include 1 range 18, 1 range 16, 1 range 14, and 1/3 range 8 clerk. If the Susitna State Forest bill passes and sets up a separate management planning process, the range 14 can be changed to 1/2-time 14 or a tech position.		

REQUEST FOR  
NEW POSITION

AGENCY Natural Resources  
 BRU Land & Water Mgmt.  
 COMPONENT Land & Water Mgmt.

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 Revised Date 3-13-90

FY 91

Patrick M. Rodey  
Senator

# Alaska State Legislature



Senate

3111 C. St., Suite 510  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
(907) 561-7618

During Session:  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
(907) 465-3793

DATE: April 5, 1990

TO: Senator Bettye Fahrenkamp, Chair  
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Senator Pat Rodey *PR*

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 430, Susitna Valley Remote  
Recreational Area

I would like to request the Senate Resources Committee to consider scheduling the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 430, An Act Establishing the Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area, at the earliest possible time.

The purpose of Senate Bill 430 is three fold. First, the bill amends the definition of "multiple use" to include the "remote recreation" and "roadless areas" as part of the resources uses. Second, it requests the Commissioner of Natural Resources to undertake and complete the review of the Susitna Area Plan within three years. Lastly the bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to consider "remote recreation" and "roadless areas" when reviewing the plan and to contract for an independent economic survey of tourism, recreation, including both remote and site-specific recreation.

The committee substitute does differ from the original bill, by not setting aside any land for recreation, but gives the Department of Natural Resources the necessary direction to truly develop a multiple resource plan for the Susitna Valley.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me or my staff, Mark Begich at 465-3793.

**Susitna Valley Association**  
9600 Slalom Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99516  
346-1943

**Economic Values of Remote Recreation, Tourism, and  
Commercial Fisheries In the Susitna Valley**

The Susitna Valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area which also supports a valuable commercial fishery. A highly complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities has evolved which is supported by thousands of people and which channels millions of dollars into the local economies. Following is a synopsis of various valley activities and resource uses which the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) has compiled:

**Real estate.** Over the past twenty years the state has encouraged recreational use of the Susitna Valley by selling thousands of properties in state land disposals in the area, mostly for recreational purposes. Just within the SRFP planning area, there are 17,609 private properties, and many more still for sale. (Borough Tax Assessment Office, 12-19-89) These are widely scattered throughout the valley. Land sales were a high priority of the state and borough during the '70s in the form of various land disposal programs, and even earlier with the Open-to-Entry program, homesteading and remote parcel distributions. As one would expect, this resulted in the formation of a potent constituency for protecting those values that attracted people to the area. The property owners have a vested interest in their lands and cannot be expected to remain silent on what happens in the valley. The assessed value of the private property is \$14.8-million.

**Lodges.** According to the Department of Fish and Game, there are 52 lodges which operate in the Susitna Valley, most of them remote. SVA has surveyed 23 of the lodges. Based on that survey, the total gross income for the 52 lodges was estimated at \$7.5-million, with a total employment of approximately 283 people. All but two of the lodges surveyed were owned and operated by Alaskans. 93% of their clients were from out-of-state, bringing new dollars into the Alaskan economy.

**Air taxi services.** 38 air taxi charter services presently fly clients into the valley for recreational activities and flightseeing. They service lodges, year-around residents, recreational cabin owners, and their own remote camps. 24 of those companies are based in Anchorage, and 14 in the Borough. Based on an SVA survey of ten of the companies, a total combined gross income derived from servicing the Susitna Valley in 1987, for only those 10 companies, was \$4-million, with employment of 145 people. The companies estimated 74.5% of their clients were non-residents. (Note that 28 of the companies are not included in the above figures.)

**Commercial fishery.** The entire Susitna drainage serves as a vast spawning and fish rearing habitat for a highly productive commercial fishing industry. According to

## Economic Values

Page 2

the ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, the direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish reared in this drainage is between \$8-million and \$11-million per year. In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska attributed to this harvest, excluding processing, was just under \$18-million.

**Sportfishing.** The ADF&G Division of Sport Fisheries established that 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10.4-million. 84 percent of those days was spent at streams with no road access. The lack of roads, rather than being a barrier, was very likely what attracted people to the area. It also indicates the complex economic network which exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. According to Fish and Game, salmon stocks in the Susitna Basin are already fully allocated.

**Moose and bear hunting.** The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated by ADF&G at up to \$18.9-million dollars. This includes activities of game guides and outfitters, as well as the independent hunters.

**Recreational pilots.** There are over 5000 registered pilots in the Anchorage area and 800 in the Mat-Su Borough. The Anchorage pilots own a total of over 2000 airplanes. SVA surveyed 208 of the pilots and found that the Susitna Valley was their destination 81 percent of the time. Based on data from our survey, the total value of the airplanes based just in Anchorage can be estimated at \$90-million. Total plane related expenditures for 1987 was estimated at \$7.4-million.

**Hotel expenditures.** According to a study by the Alaska Hotel/Motel Owners Association, approximately 3 percent of the occupied rooms in Anchorage are related to clients traveling to or from hunting and fishing destinations in the Susitna Valley. The economic value of these rooms is \$6.8-million.

**Tour companies.** Tour operators sell the Susitna Valley as an accessible "Alaska wilderness experience". The valley is marketed for independent and adventure tours such as flightseeing trips, riverboat fishing and camping, sportfishing and hunting, remote lodge vacations, and rafting trips.

The valley is also an important component of the large package tours. According to information SVA received in 1988, Westours and Princess Tours had purchased and were renovating 14 railroad dome cars at an investment of \$8-million. These dome cars travel through the east side of the Susitna Valley. The tour companies are anticipating related gross revenues during 1990 of over \$100-million dollars.

**Other users.** The Alaska Boaters Association estimates there are approximately 20,000 boats in the Anchorage area, a high percentage owned to access the Susitna Valley streams. There are 20 to 30 riverboat charter services doing business on the streams of the valley. Many activities such as river freight services, mushing, skiing, trapping, and snowmachining remain to be quantified.

**Economic Values**  
Page 3

**Related services.** Also to be taken into consideration are the local businesses in adjacent communities that are economically supported by these activities and industries; the multiplier factor. These factors would take into account such items as the purchase of construction materials; maintenance costs of buildings and equipment; advertising; insurance; purchase and maintenance of airplanes, boats, motors, and snowmachines. It would include employee expenses; gas, oil, and propane; generators; radio equipment; food and supplies; purchase of camping equipment, guns, fishing gear, and clothing; fish and game packing and processing; taxidermy services; and money spent at eating and drinking establishments when going to and from the valley.

(DATED: January 1, 1990)

**R**ecreational boating's popularity and impact on the United States' economy is well documented.

According to the National Marine Manufacturer's Association:

- About 75 million Americans participated in some form of boating in 1989, including 14 million who tried the sport for the first time.

- One out of every seven American households now owns a boat.

- Boating industry sales (including motors, trailers and accessories) more than doubled during the 1980s, from about \$7.5 billion in 1980 to more than \$17 billion in 1989.

- The boating industry employs approximately 600,000 people.

- Boating industry sales rank fourth in the United States among all leisure activities, ahead of such traditional favorites as movies, magazines and books and spectator sports.

The NMMA also has a state-by-state breakdown of boat, motor, trailer and accessories purchases for 1988 (the most recent year for which statistics are available). No. 1 in sales, not too surprisingly, is Florida, with \$354.2 million in retail sales. At the bottom of the list is New Mexico, with \$2.9 million in sales.

Only two states are not included in the NMMA's listing, for lack of information. Hawaii. And Alaska.

Very little — almost nothing, in fact — is known of recreational boating's economic impact on the Alaska economy, despite the sport's popularity in our state.

According to U.S. Coast Guard statistics, nearly 29,000 boats were registered in Alaska in 1988, or about one boat for every 20 people. But that figure doesn't reflect total boat ownership for a couple reasons. First, the Coast Guard requires only that motorized boats be registered; non-motorized canoes, kayaks, rafts and sailboats are not included. Second, it's likely that a significant number of the state's rural boat owners haven't registered their boats.

# Boating industry impact on Alaskan economy unknown

Given those circumstances, Steve Morgheim estimates that Alaskans own 50,000 to 60,000 boats. Or more. "I think it's safe to say that at least one out of 10 Alaskans owns a boat, which is right in line with the national average," says Morgheim, executive director of the Alaska Marine Dealers Association.

Beyond Coast Guard statistics, several other bits of evidence suggest that recreational boating is among Alaska's most popular outdoors activities.

Many Southcentral rivers are clogged with boat fishermen during the salmon season. Sea kayaking is widely recognized as one of the state's fastest-growing sports. Conflicts between boat owners — big boats vs. small, motorized vs. non-motorized — are steadily rising as waterways become increasingly crowded during the spring and summer. Increased boating impacts on the environment and safety concerns have already resulted in regulations requiring horsepower limits on the Kenai River and have prompted the state to formulate a recreational river management plan for the Sitna Basin.

Yet for all that, data that demonstrates the recreational boating industry's importance is noticeably lacking.

"We can't tell anyone what's happening with the Alaska boating industry because we don't have the information. It doesn't exist anywhere,"

says Dave Benesch, co-owner of Alaska Mining & Diving and a member of the AMDA Board of Trustees.

But Benesch and Morgheim hope that situation will soon begin changing.

The AMDA is in the process of completing an economic survey of its membership, which includes 50 boating-related businesses, primarily within the Southcentral region.

The survey's findings — scheduled to be released in March — won't paint a complete picture, but should at least provide an a data base from which economic trends can eventually be determined.

"Right now we're in the building stages," Morgheim says. "The survey will provide a snapshot of where we're at in 1990. With that in hand, we'll be able to track the Alaskan (boating) market on an annual basis and take a more realistic look at growth patterns and trends."

As data becomes available, ADMA members hope state lawmakers will come to them for information when making decisions that affect recreational boating.

"It's not our goal to become lobbyists or be controversial. But we want our state's decision-makers to understand the economic consequences of legislation they pass. Some decisions are being made without adequate information," Morgheim says. "As we gather information, we'll do a better job of defining our industry's role. And we'll gain more more credibility (with lawmakers) in the process."

# Timber vs. tourism in the Susitna Valley: Incompatible resources?

By Loisann Reeder

This article examines the two year land-use planning process of the Department of Natural Resources which resulted from the state's attempt to launch a large-scale commercial timber industry in the Susitna Valley. The current process illustrates the benefits of a systematic examination of land characteristics, ownership patterns, and land-uses in the Susitna Valley. It is also an example of a flawed process which focuses on only one commercial use, the formation of a wood products industry, to the exclusion of other existing and incompatible uses.

The Susitna Valley is a vast river drainage covering an area stretching from the Cook Inlet, north to Denali Park, and from the Talkeetna Mountains on the east to the Alaska Range on the west. With its complexity of streams, hundreds of lakes, beautiful forests, abundant wildlife, and wild scenic values, the valley has long been a popular recreation destination both for the people of Southcentral Alaska and tourists.

It was here that the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) met with disastrous results in an attempt to hold a large timber sale two years ago. As a result of overwhelming public opposition, DNR withdrew the sale proposal, and initiated a planning process for a "forest management plans", called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP).

All lands in the Susitna Valley below 1000 feet in altitude, a total of over two million acres, are being analyzed for commercial timber harvesting potential. The goals of the SRFP are to (1) identify the location and volume of commercial timber

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*"THE FOCUS IS ON THE BEST ECONOMIC RETURN FOR THE WOOD PRODUCTS INDUSTRY, NOT FOR TOURISM, RECREATION, OR WILDLIFE HABITAT."*

---

in the identified area, (2) develop guidelines for harvesting it, and (3) determine how to access the harvest units. It is not a park plan; it is a forestry plan, which is required to take into consideration other forest values as they relate to forestry. The focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

The two-year planning process, involving an extensive and unprecedented examination of land records and resource database of the Susitna Valley, resulted in the exposure of a multitude of existing land uses which were previously little understood or appreciated. In many cases, large-scale commercial logging and the resulting complexity of timber roads is not seen by the public to be compatible with those existing uses.

The public is not being offered a range of land management options for the valley because other options, or alternatives to logging, are not being considered and analyzed. People do not even have the option to approve or disapprove of the plan, but are merely being asked to comment on the state's proposed guidelines for doing it.

A highly complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities has evolved in the Susitna Valley which benefits thousands of people,

creates hundreds of jobs, and channels millions of dollars into the local economies every year. The valley also supports a valuable commercial fishery. During the SRFP planning process, various state agencies and private groups such as the Susitna Valley Association have compiled impressive economic data relating to the valley:

Fifty-two remote lodges had a 1987 estimated total gross income of \$7.5 million; 38 air taxi charter businesses service the valley, with an economic impact of up to \$13 million annually. Annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting, including activities of guides and outfitters, is estimated at up to \$18.9 million dollars. In 1986, 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the valley, 84% of them at lakes and streams with no road access, with associated expenditures of \$10.4 million. The Alaska Boaters Association estimates there are approximately 20,000 boats in the Anchorage area, a high percentage owned to access the Susitna Valley.

Widely dispersed throughout the SRFP planning area are 17,609 private properties, mostly purchased for recreation, valued at \$14.8 million. Local pilots own over 2000 airplanes with an estimated value of \$90 million, with related 1987 expenditures of \$7.4 million. The Susitna Valley was the pilot's destination-of-choice 81% of the time.

In addition to being an important component of the large package tours, tour companies also market the easily accessible Susitna Valley for independent and adventure tours. Related gross revenues during 1990 are expected to be over \$100

million. Approximately 3% of the occupied hotel and motel rooms in Anchorage are related to recreation activities in the valley, with a 1987 economic value of \$6.8 million.

The basin serves as a vast spawning and fish-rearing habitat for a highly productive commercial fishing industry which, excluding processing, generated almost \$18 million in 1986. The economic value of activities such as river freight services, riverboat charter services, mushing, skiing, camping, trapping, and snowmachining remain to be quantified.

Also to be considered are the local businesses in adjacent communities that are supported by these industries—the multiplier factor. These factors would take into account such economic values as the purchase of related equipment and supplies, construction materials, maintenance costs, advertising, insurance, fuel, generators, radio equipment, food, fish and game packing and processing, taxidermy services, etc.

**T**he number of tourists coming to Alaska is expected to increase by 5% a year; to Denali by up to 18%. The Alaska

Railroad has been growing almost 10% a year in passengers and has added six new cars. Both the large tour companies and the railroad are marketing new tour packages for the Susitna Valley.

According to tour operators, Alaska is increasingly becoming the traveler's destination-of-choice, and the emphasis is shifting from Southeast to the Interior. Much of this is in response to the companies' marketing strategies to encourage repeat visitors. The state is planning to construct a new lodge in Denali State Park. Valley air taxi services, remote lodges, and river charter operators report growth up to 200% during the past two years.

Economists advise that Alaska needs to discover what it has that is unique, and market it. What we do have in abundance, what people come to experience and will pay to come back for, is quality "wilderness". Few other places have it, it's rapidly becoming scarcer with increasing world populations. It is a highly marketable commodity, especially with the growing interest in adventure and nature tours.

For the Susitna Valley recreation and tourism industries, the perception of wilderness or remoteness is a critical fac-

tor in marketing. However, "wilderness" as a marketable commodity quickly loses its value once clear-cutting and road building occurs. The incompatibility of these activities becomes even more pronounced in an area such as the valley where the primary orientation is from the air.

The borough and state are at a crossroads in deciding the most appropriate use of the Susitna Valley. The type of tourism discussed focuses on a low volume/high dollar marketing approach, and must be carefully controlled. It focuses on a "working" wilderness, not a "hands-off" wilderness. But, the success and continuation of the existing businesses are dependent on not crossing the threshold into high volume/low dollar.

In the two-million acre study area, the SRFP has identified 430,000 acres of state land with commercial potential that is in land-use designations that would allow forestry as one of the uses. But not all that acreage is available for forestry.

In much of this area, the timber's proximity to streams, lakes, private property, or other sensitive areas, as well as its inaccessibility, require its removal from the com-

*Please turn to page 56*

## The Mat-Su Forest: Use or lose it

By Budd Goodyear

Alaska's forests are dying. Shall we let them burn? That sentiment, if not those words, was echoed at the November Resource Development Council conference in Anchorage by more than one speaker. The subject was harvestable timber on the Kenai. Similar statements about Mat-Su timber land have surfaced.

There are a number of important reasons for harvesting Mat-Su timber at sustained yield levels. One is the stabilizing impact renewable resource development has on the economy. It is estimated that Mat-Su forest land has the biological potential to produce 26,000 acres of timber annually in sustained yield harvest, providing up to 350 jobs and \$250 million in timber sales. There are approximately two million acres of forest land in the Mat-Su region including: 860,000 acres of birch; 440,000 acres of

white spruce; 540,000 acres of cottonwood. Black spruce and aspen make up a less significant amount.

Another reason, just as important, is

### Opposing Viewpoint

overall forest resource management. A forest managed with modern, environmentally sound technical skills and management practices is a living resource, not a dying one. Unfortunately, Alaska ranks first in the nation in natural forest mortality. It is fourth in the amount of commercial timber available, but last in the amount of commercial timber harvested and forest products sold.

These Forest Service statistics testify to

the neglect of Alaska's forests, which is partly due to the fact that our Division of Forestry is so underfunded that it is relegated to fire-fighting only. Neglect is also caused by an uninformed public and by special interest groups comprised of a majority of members who live outside Mat-Su and whose goal is preservation *at any cost*.

With timber development, forests are renewed by removing mature trees and reseeded young ones, not by the natural process of bug infestations; death and fire, which also destroys wildlife.

The Spruce Bark Beetle is moving north and may already have arrived in the Susitna Basin. On the Kenai the beetle kill of White Spruce equals the number of board feet logged in South-

*Please turn to page 56*

# The state's planning process biased toward timber

*Continued from previous page*

commercial resource base. Additionally, forestry is designated as a "secondary" use in much of this area and must not conflict with the primary uses. Even where forestry is designated as a primary use, it always shares that designation with several other uses, and mitigation measures must be taken to minimize conflicts. Accordingly, the final timber resource base will be substantially less than 430,000 acres.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Division of Forestry, in the Susitna Valley an average of 367 acres is required to produce 1 million board-feet of timber. This calculation is based on an average volume of 940 cubic feet of wood per acre of commercially harvestable timber, and a conversion factor of 2.9 board feet per cubic foot.

Timber industry representatives, as well as the Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCED), have stated that a minimum of 50 million board-feet a year would be needed for a successful wood products industry in the valley. Based on these volume figures, 18,350 acres would have to be harvested per year to produce 50 million board-feet. Over an 80-year rotation, almost 1.5 million acres of

commercial timber would have to be available from the valley to meet this demand.

The Susitna Valley does not have one-third of that volume, and the 430,000 acres presently being studied is dispersed over a 2 million acre area of mostly wetlands, making access costly and difficult. While existing small-scale timber harvest can and should continue in certain areas to accommodate commercial firewood sales and personal-use wood lots, large-scale commercial harvesting may simply be out of the question.

**A** basic flaw of the DNR's current planning process is that it does not recognize or evaluate the economics of the existing remote recreation and tourism industries, or their potential. It does not evaluate whether these industries are compatible with large-scale commercial logging and related roading. Nor does it evaluate whether the development potential of the remote industries could ever be realized if the proposed logging and road building activity goes forward. Finally, it does not balance any of these competing values against the expected return from logging,

which, as pointed out above, is highly questionable.

**T**he SRFP advances a management plan for only "forestry," independent of management plans for the other designated land uses, even though the necessity for concurrent planning for all uses was stressed in the Susitna Area Plan.

The Alaska Department of Commerce and Economic Development was asked to do an economic feasibility study of the wood products industry in the valley, and to address the other resource values in the process. The latter is not being done. Instead, the department conceded that the data necessary to address the economics of the other uses was incomplete, and there was not time, personnel, or money available to acquire it.<sup>3</sup>

In 1988, the Legislature passed a \$30,000 budget increment with the following stipulation, "It is the intent of the legislature that the DNR work with all interested parties to conduct an economic and environmental analysis of the Mat-Su Timber sale which includes but is not limited to the economic effects on the guiding industry,

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## Valley timber development: We can do it right

*Continued from previous page*

east Alaska during the last 30 years, yet harvesting the Kenai is being successfully opposed. Rather than improve the state's economy by harvesting dying timber, Alaska is likely to face a "Yellowstone" type firestorm on the Kenai. Such wanton waste must not be allowed in the Mat-Su. Some foresters believe the insects will not stop until every mature White Spruce in Alaska is dead. Timber development would harvest the mature trees on which the beetles thrive, thereby reducing their food. This type of forest management keeps forests healthy.

Timber development opens up the land. Presently many of these forest areas are not accessible to the general public because no roads exist. How many sport fishermen fished Montana Creek before the Parks highway was built? End destinations are the most important tourist need of the Mat-Su. Open forestland will give Alaska's

Heartland many of these berry-picking patches, fishing holes, and woodland walks which make the living forests a recreational opportunity for those who want to be near nature but can't afford the high cost of guides and remote camps.

"Wilderness" tourism and timber development *can* coexist. But it is important to note that such a remote-experience tourism industry in Mat-Su cannot compete, in an economic sense, with a \$250 plus million per year timber industry. It is clear too, that building the remote-experience industry will itself negatively impact the attractiveness of the area and increase opportunities for *serious forest land disaster* caused by too many visitors in non-managed areas.

**T**imber development in cooperation with professional wildlife habitat management is also important. Successful tim-

ber development in Finland, a country slightly larger than the Mat-Su region, produces 70,000 moose annually. A solid forest management plan which includes both timber development and wildlife habitat management can produce similar results here. Imagine what this could do for our hunting industry.

A study completed for the Mat-Su Borough reported that over 90% of Mat-Su residents surveyed selected the following as the top benefits of timber development: 1) jobs, 2) increased access, 3) economic development, 4) improved forest quality, and 5) habitat enhancement.

Let it burn? Let the bugs have it? Why? Preservationists have already set aside millions of acres in Alaskan wilderness areas, parks and preserves for natural activities which include forest infestation by bugs and forest fire. We need the forests to support a diverse economy, not bugs or wildfires.

commercial and sport fisheries, lodges, tourism and recreational uses." This was not done.

The DNR's plan, if adopted, will provide a blueprint for logging and road building in the valley, complete with an annual allowable cut determination. By so doing, and by not identifying and analyzing other competing and conflicting values, the plan will predispose the valley to logging. Since a "forestry plan" is the only management plan the state has developed, it will obviously be the plan that will be advanced.

**W**ithout pertinent information regarding other values, SVA contends it will not be possible for the state to make an informed comparison to determine the best use of the public resources in the Susitna Valley. This is a decision that could impact hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in existing investments and income. State officials have admitted they not have all the information necessary to make that decision, and yet are moving ahead. This is not a responsible approach to land use management. Rather than introducing a new, conflicting industry, perhaps the state would be wiser to promote, protect, and enhance

Environmentally sound forest management with appropriate timber harvest will enhance wildlife habitat and forest quality, strengthen the economy, increase access for the tourism industry and create jobs. We can do this and save the forests too. And that's our highest purpose: Save the forest! With sound management, we can use it, not lose it!

--APAJ

*Budd Goodyear holds a B.A. from Indiana University and Master of Science in Management and Master of Liberal Arts degrees from Alaska Pacific University from which he graduated with honors. Goodyear is currently Executive Director of the Mat-Su Regional Economic Development Corporation, a private nonprofit organization working to improve the Mat-Su regional economy.*

existing industries that are successful and growing.

**I**n conclusion, the two year SRFPP planning effort suggests two important lessons. First, future planning efforts done under the scope of an area plan should recognize all existing and potential uses and evaluate all uses equally. Otherwise the focus of the planning effort, if for a specific use, distorts and predetermines the results.

Second, the planning process must provide a balancing mechanism when competing uses are seen to be incompatible. This is especially critical when the state's planning efforts are directed to an area where the potential for damage to other land uses which are already extensive and well-established, such as in the Susitna Valley, is high.

--APAJ

*Loisann Reeder is president of the Susitna Valley Association, a coalition of organizations and individuals formed to promote recreation and tourism in the Susitna Valley.*

Notes

(1) The Susitna Valley is subject to two DNR area plans: the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) and the Willow Sub-Basin Area Plan, developed in 1985 and 1982, respectively. Both provide for the development of management plans for various land uses which were identified in the area plans.

(2) Acreage figures given here are only approximate, and do not include any estimate of the exclusions mentioned above. This effort, on a sub-unit by sub-unit basis, will be conducted by DNR over the next several months. Thus, the estimates of the available resource base given here are optimistic.

(3) After two years into the planning process, an economic feasibility study for a wood products industry in the Susitna Valley has still not been completed.

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346-1943

**TESTIMONY OF LOISANN G. REEDER**

**SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE HEARING ON CSSB 430**  
April 18, 1990

My name is Loisann Reeder. I want to thank the committee for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the Susitna Valley Association.

As you are well aware, the bill before you today has gone through substantial changes from the original bill we started out with for establishment of a Remote Recreation Area. Even though we do not see this as a substitute for our original bill, we do believe it addresses some of the primary concerns which were behind the original, and does have our continued strong support.

The association has been willing to sit down and work with all sides on the Susitna Valley land-use issue, and we do believe this substitute is an indication of our willingness to compromise. I am pleased to report that both Dr. Welbourn from the Department of Natural Resources and Ted Smith representing the Mat-Su Assembly did speak out in support of this legislation at the last hearing.

The forestry plan being developed by DNR for the Susitna Valley does not fairly and adequately evaluate the ongoing and historic land-uses in the Valley. A data base is being developed for a wood products industry, but not for recreation and tourism. No one represents dispersed recreation or tourism on the agency planning team because these uses are not included in the state's multiple-use planning spectrum. DNR has repeatedly stated they do not have the money or personnel to establish the necessary data base to evaluate the value, needs, or potential of these industries; industries which presently are bringing millions of dollars into the economy. Yet DNR is doing a similar evaluation for the wood products industry.

Dr. Welbourn has stated that DNR is looking to the legislature for direction on this issue; that these changes to the state's multiple use definition would help them in their planning process. The bill will help put the impacted and pertinent land-uses on a level playing field so all values will be equally considered. This is necessary if the state is to make a responsible decision on the best and most appropriate use of the Susitna Valley lands.

We ask for your help support on passing this bill. Thank you.



# Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc.

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## Position Paper SB 430

The Resource Development Council for Alaska, Inc., would like to express its concerns regarding CSSB 430, relating to a proposed remote recreation area in the Susitna Valley.

While the committee substitute significantly alters the original land lock-up proposed by the Susitna Valley Association, the new bill creates problems when it attempts to rework the statutory definition of "multiple use."

RDC is opposed to the definitional section, which would add remote recreation and roadless areas to the multiple use statute. The statute already covers a variety of uses, including recreation, without this amendment. In attempting to pacify a special interest group whose goal is to protect its remote property, the committee substitute has jeopardized the rights of other landowners - both private and public - across the state.

It has been correctly suggested during the hearing process on SB 430, that those landowners who recreate in the Susitna Valley participate in the next round of discussion on the Susitna Area Plan. That public process, which resulted in the current plan for the valley, will allow the landowners the opportunity to express their position in favor of remote recreation and roadless areas, just as their fellow landowners will have the opportunity to present differing views.

Although significant changes have been made in the body of this bill, RDC remains opposed to SB 430, based on the new definition of multiple use, and the directive it gives to the Department of Natural Resources. RDC urges the Senate Resources committee not to pass SB 430.

6-1800J  
Bradley  
4/20/90

Original sponsor(s): SEN. RODEY

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 430 (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 relating to state land management generally  
7 and within the Susitna Valley."

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

9 \* Section 1. AS 38.04.910(5) is amended to read:

10 (5) "multiple use"

11 (A) means the management of state land and its various  
12 resource values so that it is used in the combination that will  
13 best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska,  
14 making the most judicious use of the land for [SOME OR] all of  
15 the [THESE] resources or related services over areas large enough  
16 to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to  
17 conform to changing needs and conditions;

18 (B) [IT] includes

19 (i) [(A)] the use of the [SOME] land for less  
20 than all of the resources but does not exclude compatible  
21 competing uses; [,] and

22 (ii) [(B)] a combination of balanced and diverse  
23 resource uses that takes into account the short-term and  
24 long-term needs of present and future generations for renew-  
25 able and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited  
26 to, recreation, remote recreation, range, timber, minerals,  
27 watershed, wildlife and fish, roadless areas, and natural  
28 scenic, scientific, and historic values;

29 \* Sec. 2. REVIEW OF SUSITNA AREA PLAN. (a) The commissioner of

1 natural resources shall undertake and complete the review of the Susitna  
2 area plan within three years from the effective date of this Act.

3 (b) In the review of the Susitna area plan, the commissioner of  
4 natural resources shall consider remote recreation and the designation of  
5 roadless areas and shall contract for an independent economic survey of  
6 tourism, recreation, including both remote recreation and site-specific  
7 recreation, within the area described by the Susitna area plan. The inde-  
8 pendent economic survey may not be conducted by an agency supervised by the  
9 governor or by an officer supervised by the principal executive officer of  
10 a department but may be conducted by an agency such as the Institute of  
11 Social and Economic Research of the University of Alaska.

12 (c) The commissioner shall submit the revised Susitna area plan to  
13 the presiding officers of each house of the legislature on its completion.  
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6-1800J ✓  
Bradley  
4/21/90

Original sponsor(s): SEN. RODEY

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 430 (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 changing the definition of 'multiple use' of  
7 state land and relating to the review of the Susitna  
8 area plan."

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

10 \* Section 1. AS 38.04.910(5) is amended to read:

11 (5) "multiple use"

12 (A) means the management of state land and its various  
13 resource values so that it is used in the combination that will  
14 best meet the present and future needs of the people of Alaska,  
15 making the most judicious use of the land for [SOME OR] all of  
16 the [THESE] resources or related services over areas large enough  
17 to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to  
18 conform to changing needs and conditions;

19 (B) [IT] includes

20 (i) [(A)] the use of the [SOME] land for less  
21 than all of the resources but does not exclude compatible  
22 competing uses; [,] and

23 (ii) [(B)] a combination of balanced and diverse  
24 resource uses that takes into account the short-term and  
25 long-term needs of present and future generations for renew-  
26 able and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited  
27 to, recreation, remote recreation, range, timber, minerals,  
28 watershed, wildlife and fish, roadless areas, and natural  
29 scenic, scientific, and historic values;

1 \* Sec. 2. REVIEW OF SUSITNA AREA PLAN. (a) The commissioner of natu-  
2 ral resources shall undertake and complete the review of the Susitna area  
3 plan within three years from the effective date of this Act.

4 (b) In the review of the Susitna area plan, the commissioner of  
5 natural resources shall consider remote recreation and the designation of  
6 roadless areas and shall contract for an independent economic survey of  
7 tourism, recreation, including both remote recreation and site-specific  
8 recreation, within the area described by the Susitna area plan. The inde-  
9 pendent economic survey may not be conducted by an agency supervised by the  
10 governor or by an officer supervised by the principal executive officer of  
11 a department but may be conducted by an agency such as the Institute of  
12 Social and Economic Research of the University of Alaska.

13 (c) The commissioner shall submit the revised Susitna area plan to  
14 the presiding officers of each house of the legislature on its completion.  
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Susitna Valley

Patrick M. Rodey  
Senator

# Alaska State Legislature



Senate

3111 C. Sr., Suite 510  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
(907) 561-7618

During Session:  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
(907) 465-3793

DATE: January 31, 1990  
TO: All Senators  
FROM: Senator Pat Rodey *Pat*  
SUBJECT: Proposed legislation/Susitna Valley Remote  
Recreational Area

Please find attached a draft piece of legislation regarding the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area.

The purpose of this legislation is to enhance and continue the economic activity that currently exist in the region through long term economic development. Within this area there are a number of current uses that contribute millions of dollars to the Susitna Valley economy, such as commercial fisheries, sports fisheries, lodge operations, tourism and other recreational activities.

This legislation would allow these types of activities to continue and also would include; Personal-use timber sales for individuals and commercial facilities, adequate and feasible access for all occupancies, construction of commercial recreation and tourism facilities, land disposals and mineral leasing. Also the Department of Natural Resources would manage the Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area through a comprehensive management plan which would require public review and comment.

I hope that you would take the time to review the attached draft legislation and back-up material and if you have any question please don't hesitate to call my legislative aide Mark Begich at 465-3793.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation please free to call my office before Friday, February 2.

BY SEN. RODEY

1 IN THE SENATE

2 SENATE BILL NO.

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 Susitna Valley Remote Recre-  
7 ation Area."

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

9 \* Section 1. AS 41.21 is amended by adding new sections to article 4 to  
10 read:

11 Sec. 41.21.496. PURPOSE. The purpose of AS 41.21.496 - 41.21.-  
12 498 is to establish the area described in AS 41.21.498 as the Susitna  
13 Valley Remote Recreation Area. The Susitna Valley Remote Recreation  
14 Area is established to

15 (1) manage, protect, and maintain fish and wildlife habitat  
16 so that traditional public uses of fish and wildlife populations may  
17 continue on a sustained yield basis;

18 (2) perpetuate and enhance public enjoyment of fish and  
19 wildlife and their habitat, including fishing, hunting, trapping,  
20 viewing, and photography;

21 (3) perpetuate and enhance remote recreation including  
22 camping, boating, cross-country skiing, dog sledding, hiking, sight-  
23 seeing by plane, snowmobiling, and all-terrain vehicle use while  
24 ensuring the scenic and natural integrity of the area;

25 (4) perpetuate and enhance continued remote commercial  
26 recreation, including air taxi services, lodges, guided hunting and  
27 fishing, adventure tours, riverboat charter services, and commercial  
28 operations supporting these industries in a quality environment;

29 (5) protect and perpetuate the remote character that has

1 historically attracted people to the area and upon which the present  
2 and future recreational uses and community uses depend;

3 (6) allow additional public uses of the Susitna Valley  
4 Remote Recreation Area in a manner compatible with the purposes stated  
5 in (1) - (5) of this section.

6 Sec. 41.21.497. MANAGEMENT OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECRE-  
7 ATION AREA. (a) The commissioner is responsible for the management  
8 of the surface and subsurface estate within the Susitna Valley Remote  
9 Recreation Area. The commissioner shall adopt and may revise a man-  
10 agement plan for the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area after  
11 public hearings. The management plan must include guidelines relating  
12 to mining leasing and location, commercial tourism and recreation  
13 facilities, access, and the location and identity of future land  
14 disposals and access to them to ensure that the activity occurs in a  
15 manner that is consistent with AS 41.21.496.

16 (b) The commissioner of fish and game is responsible for the  
17 management of the fish and wildlife resources and public use of fish  
18 and wildlife in the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area consistent  
19 with the purposes of AS 41.21.496 - 41.21.498. The commissioner of  
20 fish and game and the commissioner of public safety have necessary  
21 access for fish and wildlife management, research, and enforcement  
22 purposes.

23 (c) The commissioner

24 (1) may not

25 (A) subject to valid existing rights, allow mining  
26 under AS 38.05.135 - 38.05.275 except under (2)(A) of this sub-  
27 section;

28 (B) dispose of timber for commercial use under AS 38.-  
29 05.110 - 38.05.12, AS 41.15, or AS 41.17 except under (2)(B) of

1           this subsection; or

2                   (C) allow the construction of publicly financed or  
3 maintained roads connected to the state highway system;

4           (2) may

5                   (A) permit mining leasing under AS 38.05.205 if the  
6 commissioner has allowed mining leasing under the management plan  
7 adopted by the commissioner under (a) of this section and estab-  
8 lished appropriate conditions for permits, operating plans, and  
9 leases to mitigate the effects of mineral development activities  
10 and prevent, to the extent practicable, degradation of the recre-  
11 ational use of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area;

12                   (B) permit the harvest of timber by negotiated per-  
13 sonal use sales under AS 38.05.115 for house logs and firewood by  
14 individuals and commercial facilities such as lodges.

15           (d) The commissioner may, if consistent with the purposes of  
16 AS 41.21.496 - 41.21.498 and the management plan adopted under (a) of  
17 this section, authorize the construction and operation of commercial  
18 tourism and recreation facilities and services under AS 41.21.027.

19           (e) The commissioner shall permit access to private land and  
20 borough land, including mining claims and other valid existing rights,  
21 within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. The access is  
22 subject to regulation to protect the natural and other values of the  
23 land and water within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area and  
24 access does not necessarily require access by a road. The commis-  
25 sioner may not permit the construction of roads within the Susitna  
26 Valley Remote Recreation Area to permit access unless the commissioner  
27 determines that other modes of access are not adequate or feasible.

28           (f) The commissioner shall permit traditional access to the  
29 Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area by motorized or nonmotorized

1 means of transportation to private land and for lawful hunting, fish  
2 ing, trapping, and recreational purposes in a manner that is com  
3 patible with AS 41.21.496. The commissioner and the commissioner o  
4 fish and game may jointly develop regulations for traditional access.

5 (g) The commissioner may determine a use to be incompatible with  
6 AS 41.21.496 in the management plan or a revision of it after public  
7 hearings. If the commissioner determines that a use is incompatible  
8 with AS 41.21.496, the management plan must state

- 9 (1) each determination of incompatibility;  
10 (2) the specific area where the incompatibility exists;  
11 (3) the time within which the incompatibility exists; and  
12 (4) the reasons for incompatibility.

13 Sec. 41.21.498. SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA ESTAB-  
14 LISHED. The vacant and unappropriated state-owned land and water and  
15 the state land and water acquired in the future lying within the  
16 boundaries described in this section, excluding the land and water  
17 described within AS 41.23.500, are designated as the Susitna Valley  
18 Remote Recreation Area, reserved for all purposes compatible with  
19 their primary purpose as public remote recreation land, and are as-  
20 signed to the commissioner for control and management:

21 Township 15 North, Range 7 West, Seward Meridian

22 Section 5: W1/2

23 Section 6

24 Township 16 North, Range 7 West, Seward Meridian

25 Sections 1 - 21

26 Sections 28 - 33

27 Township 16 North, Ranges 8 - 10 West, Seward Meridian

28 Township 16 North, Range 11 West, Seward Meridian

29 Sections 1 - 19

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Section 24  
Township 16 North, Range 12 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 1 - 6  
Sections 8 - 15  
Sections 23 - 24  
Township 17 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 6 - 7  
Sections 17 - 20  
Township 17 North, Ranges 6 - 12 West, Seward Meridian  
Township 18 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 18 - 19  
Sections 30 - 31  
Township 18 North, Ranges 6 - 12 West, Seward Meridian  
Township 19 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 4 - 9  
Sections 16 - 20  
Township 19 North, Ranges 6 - 12 West, Seward Meridian  
Township 20 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 2 - 10  
Sections 15 - 21  
Sections 28 - 33  
Township 20 North, Ranges 6 - 12 West, Seward Meridian  
Township 21 North, Range 5 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 1 - 12  
Sections 14 - 23  
Sections 26 - 35  
Township 21 North, Ranges 6 - 15 West, Seward Meridian  
Township 22 North, Range 3 West, Seward Meridian  
Sections 3 - 5

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Sections 8 - 9

Sections 16 - 17

Sections 20 - 21

Township 22 North, Ranges 5 - 15 West, Seward Meridian

Township 23 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

Section 7

Sections 18 - 19

Sections 29 - 30

Township 23 North, Range 2 West, Seward Meridian

Section 13

Sections 19 - 30

Township 23 North, Range 3 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 22 - 28

Sections 33 - 35

Township 23 North, Ranges 5 - 15 West, Seward Meridian

Township 24 North, Ranges 6 - 15 West, Seward Meridian

Township 25 North, Ranges 9 - 14 West, Seward Meridian

Township 26 North, Range 9 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 4 - 9

Sections 16 - 36

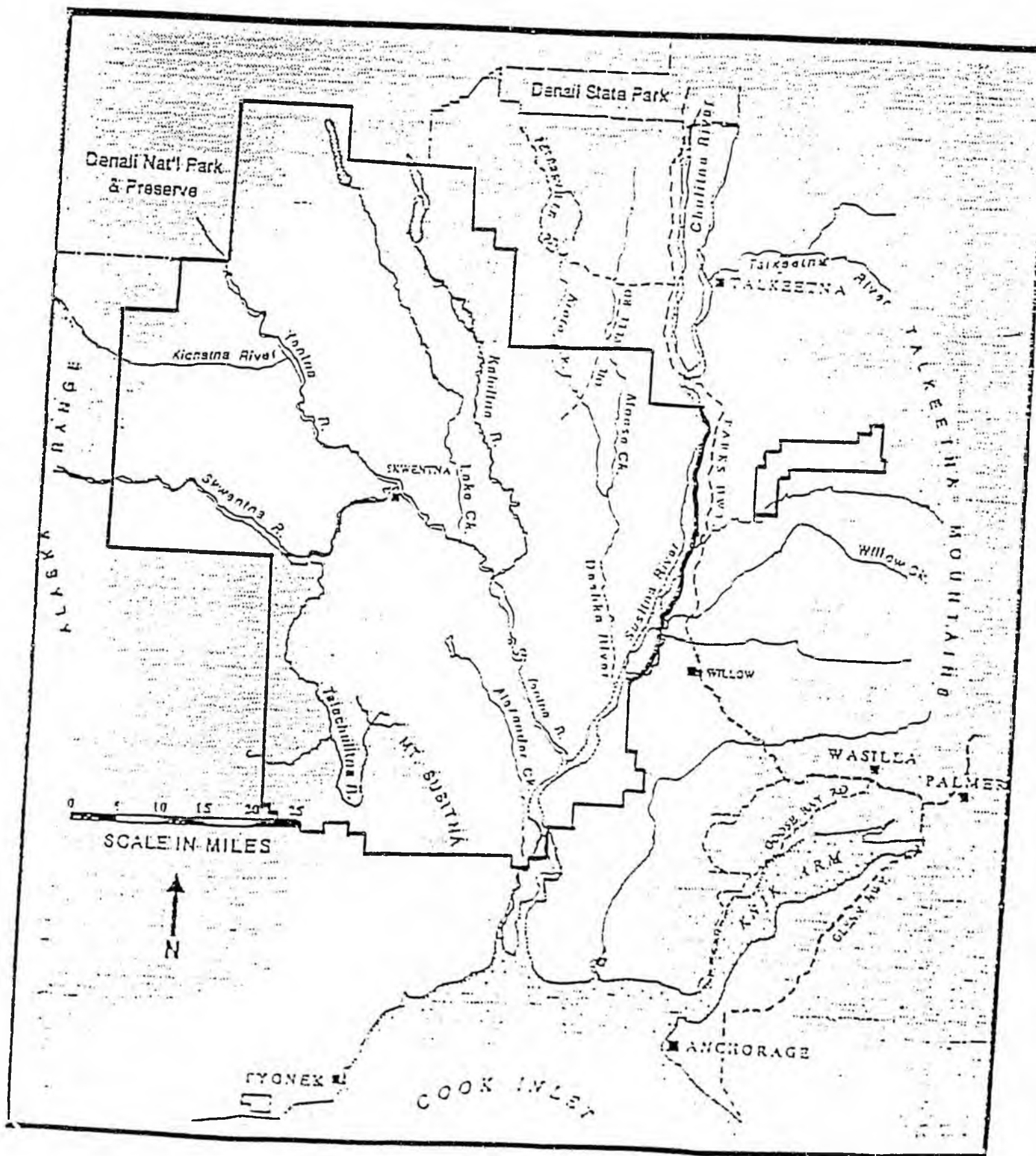
Township 26 North, Ranges 10 - 13 West, Seward Meridian

Township 27 North, Ranges 10 - 13 West, Seward Meridian

Township 28 North, Ranges 12 - 13 West, Seward

Meridian.

# SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA



**SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION**

**ECONOMIC SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES**

Which will be Impacted by Susitna Valley Logging

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> which service the Valley	
Combined gross income for 1987 (10 of 38)	\$4,000,000
Combined value of businesses (10 of 38)	\$11,400,000
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> in the Valley	
Combined gross income in 1987 (23 of 52)	\$3,340,000
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b>	
Combined value of businesses (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)	\$1,500,000
<b>COMMERCIAL FISHERIES</b> (from Susitna Drainage harvest)	
Estimated ex-vessel value in '86: \$10,664,716	
Total sales generated in Alaska due to this harvest	\$17,703,428
(Does not include value of processing of fish.)	
<b>SPORTFISHERIES</b>	
Value to Southcentral Alaska of sportfishing on	
Susitna Valley streams in 1986	\$10,420,000
<b>ANCHORAGE HOTEL/MOTEL ROOMS</b>	
Value of Susitna related hunting and fishing to the	
Anchorage Hotel/Motel business	\$5,104,080
Value to Anchorage of impacted Hotel/Motel wages	\$1,660,500

**EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES**

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> (10 of 38)		
39 Full time + 106 Part time = 145 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	75
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> (23 of 52)		
Total employees: 125		
Estimated 46 Full time and 79 Part time		
	Full time equivalent	73
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b> (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)		
18 Full time + 8 part time = 26 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	21
<b>HOTEL/MOTELS</b>		
Number of employees to service related rooms		
	Full time positions	90
	Total employees:	386
	Total full-time equivalent employees:	259

**PRIVATE PROPERTIES**

Number of privately owned parcels within the area being considered for timber harvesting	13,685
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## SUMMARY OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA PROPOSAL

**PURPOSES** - The purposes of the SVRRA is to perpetuate and enhance the present character and existing uses of a portion of the Susitna Valley. Specifically, the SVRRA has six main purposes:

1. Protection and maintenance of fish and wildlife populations and habitat;
2. Continued public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
3. Continued remote recreation while protecting natural integrity and scenic values;
4. Continued remote commercial recreation in a quality environment;
5. To perpetuate and enhance the remote character upon which the recreational uses and community lifestyles depend; and
6. To allow additional public uses in a manner compatible with the above purposes.

**ALLOWED ACTIVITIES** - Addresses only activities on state lands. Except as noted in the next section, all existing uses would be allowed, including:

1. Personal-use timber sales for individuals and commercial facilities.
2. Adequate and feasible access to private land, existing mining claims, borough land, and other valid occupancies.
3. Local roads not connected with the existing interstate highway system.
4. Trails.
5. Construction of commercial recreation and tourism facilities.
6. Land disposals.
7. Mineral leasing.

The legislation assures that traditional access, both motorized and nonmotorized, such as by boat, plane, ATV, snowmachine, dogsled, snowshoes, skis, etc., will continue.

**INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES** - the following activities would not be allowed:

1. Commercial logging on state land. (Existing commercial firewood sale areas are all outside the SVRRA boundaries and would not be impacted.)
2. Publicly financed or maintained roads connected to the highway system.
3. Mining claims. (Valid existing rights would continue.)

**MANAGEMENT** - The SVRRA will be managed by DNR, through a management plan, requiring public review and comment. ADF&G has management responsibilities for fish and wildlife resources. The commissioner of DNR may determine that a use is incompatible or needs to be modified, but only after public review and comment.

# Valley economy stands at fork in road

Anchorage Daily News Sunday, January 28, 1990

By CHARLES WOHLFORTH  
Daily News reporter

**P**ALMER — On the lonely Palmer Hay flats, where frigid wind from the Knik Glacier builds dunes of snow, a line of cars two hours long passes in the dark every morning and every night like an endless desert caravan.

But instead of bearing Persian rugs or Oriental spices, this caravan brings a far more valuable commodity to the Matanuska Valley: people who make money in Anchorage and spend it here.

Commuters provide half the wealth keeping the stagnant Matanuska-Susitna Borough economy alive, and it appears likely that most of the Valley's growth will come from commuter paychecks, too. They contribute more than 10 times the money produced by agriculture, mining, logging, tourism and all other Valley basic industries combined.

That analysis came last year from Scott Goldsmith and Eric Larson of the University of Alaska Institute of Social and Economic Research. Even the state's permanent fund dividend program brings in twice the wealth of the Valley's basic industries, and so do government social service programs, according to their report for the state Department of Transportation.

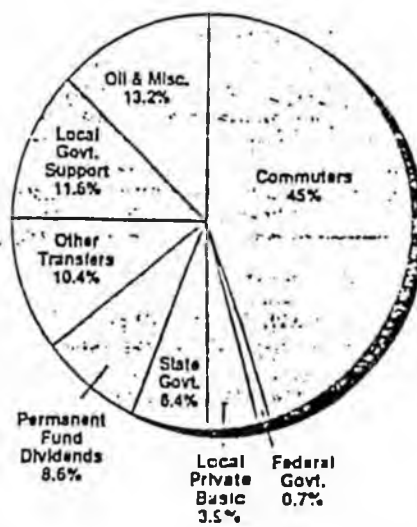
The Valley's main function is to provide bedrooms. According to a recent survey, people who work elsewhere want their bedrooms in the Valley because of the isolated, rural lifestyle.

But despite evidence that keeping those bedrooms full of commuters will determine the area's future economic health, a cadre of borough leaders would rather the people who sleep in them didn't commute. They want a return to the frontier Valley and its economy of rough-handed work like logging, mining and farming, its fast growth, and its wide-open development.

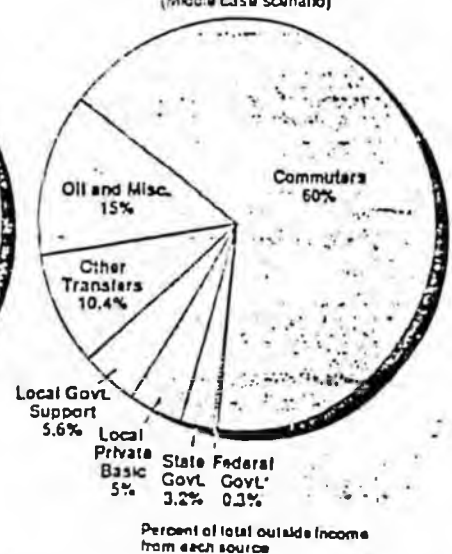
They don't think that approach puts the current commuter economy at risk.

## What Will Power the Mat-Su Economy

Mat-Su Income 1988  
From outside sources



Mat-Su Income 2015  
From outside sources  
(Middle case scenario)



Sources: I.S.E.R., Alaska Dept. of Transportation, Mat-Su Borough

Anchorage Daily News/Don Tuohus

If they are wrong, the stakes of the gamble are high. Paychecks of Anchorage and the North Slope commuters produce 45 percent of the Valley's income. The local industries produce less than 4 percent of its income.

Goldsmith and Larson predicted that commuters will become even more important if the Valley is to grow. Even though they assumed a huge ski resort at Hatcher Pass and a coal mine at Sutton both will be built soon, by the year 2015 they expect commuters to bring in 60 percent of the income, compared to 5 percent for basic industry.

But the economists said commuter income is not a sure thing. It depends on commuters wanting to live in the Valley. And a growing number of residents say the way for the Valley economy to succeed is to plan its future so the quality of living there that attracts commuters is protected.

For instance, when debate turned to a major timber operation in the Valley, the borough commissioned a public opinion survey to find out how residents feel about

logging. The survey showed that 79 percent want logging to stay small, as it is now. Six percent supported the borough's goal of attracting large, outside timber developers.

Despite that kind of public sentiment, the borough government's economic program is devoted entirely to increasing resource and industrial development. The borough wants to rid itself of dependence on commuters and has pushed hard for large-scale timber development. Borough assembly members say they want commuters to stop commuting and work in the Valley in a self-sufficient economy.

Politicians say commuters import political apathy, lack community spirit, and spend too little time with their families. Their children need expensive schooling, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it because they are in Anchorage.

Still, commuters are a dominant economic force, and there is mounting evidence that most don't support wide open, frontier-style development.

and the central core have begun efforts to manage their own development, saying the best way to boost the borough economy is to keep the Valley a pleasant place to live. They criticize the borough's attempts to launch big development projects at the expense of stable, basic government.

Environmentalists have organized and gained clout. One group plans to fill an empty Wasilla storefront with an office of the Alaska Center for the Environment, "in the belly of the beast," as one of them joked.

The group claims to represent a silent majority.

□  
Some day a million people will live in the heart of the borough, between Palmer and Wasilla, if the future unfolds the way Bob Vroman predicts. When that happens, today's strip development along the highways won't bother anyone, he said, because similar development will fill in the areas between.

Vroman was a development activist in the old days of borough politics, when bad roads prevented commuting. Today he is part of a group working to plan the future of the core area.

He remembers formation of the borough in 1964. The economic problems have not changed. The Sutton coal mine had closed. The Matanuska Maid creamery had moved to Anchorage. Lower shipping costs from Outside were making Valley agriculture less competitive. The area seemed to be losing its economic reason to exist.

Vroman was borough chairman. He set to work drafting a comprehensive plan to attract industry to the Valley. It took years to write and was finally published in 1970.

The borough sent copies of the plan all over the country, and received inquiries about timber and industrial development, Vroman said. A dairy project on Point MacKenzie was proposed and a Texas millionaire leased borough land to build an enclosed, futuristic city on the point.

But at the same time Vroman was working on another project that ultimately changed the Valley far more. He was a construction engineer, and he helped lay the deep gravel foundations of the highway across the swampy flats, which makes Anchorage less than an hour's drive from Palmer and Wasilla.

Oil was discovered at Prudhoe Bay, and as the state's population grew, commuting workers from Anchorage and the North Slope helped super-heat the Valley's economy. The population of the borough increased from 7,400 in 1970 to 44,280 in 1987.

Most of the new residents were commuters and people working for businesses that survived on commuter dollars.

In their study, Goldsmith and Larson asked why people with jobs in Anchorage were willing to drive 40 miles each way to work. The survey found the main attractions were low housing costs, large lots and clean air.

Anchorage and Mat-Su residents were asked how much cheaper a house has to be in the Valley to make the commute worthwhile. Answers settled around 40 percent — a comparable house would have to cost 40 percent less in the Valley for most people to choose to commute. The study said Valley housing is now about 50 percent cheaper.

But the government has to provide good roads and protect the lifestyle that attracts commuters if it wants to keep them, the economists said.

"I've talked to a bunch of people, and they all want that — they want to protect their lifestyle," said Bob Gilfilian, who owns an engineering firm and serves with Vroman on the Core Area Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. "Most of the people here want their rural-urban thing. They're on their one acre, but they don't want their neighbor to put in a cow barn."

Gilfilian said the borough could help the economy by

aiding residents who, like him, want planning to protect their piece of suburbia.

"People like myself — entrepreneurs — are looking at what can be done with what we've got here," Gilfilian said. "I don't see any help coming from the local government or the state. They're not creating work out there."

"I think the borough government has its place to make sure the community will be stable. I'm not talking about creating jobs, but just making it possible for business to exist."

Instead, he and others said, the borough pursues big development projects, which might be good, but leave the basic business of government undone. Even Vroman, who is as pro-development as they come, criticizes the borough assembly for chasing rainbows.

"Over the last 10 years, the borough has shotgunned everything," Vroman said. "They've tried to be all things to everybody. Everyone who comes in, they get on with them, and then someone else comes in, and bang, they're off with them. They go from one thing to the other, and leave all these things lying here like unpopcorn. And it's left everyone in the community divided."

□  
Vroman himself was part of the borough's biggest 180-degree shift. In 1984, the borough drafted a comprehensive plan that residents interpreted as a move to begin zoning. Vroman helped lead a successful fight against the idea. Zoning opponents voted in a pro-development assembly and threw Borough Manager Gary Thurlow out of office. The planning department became the development services department, then changed back to planning in 1988.

But the borough's new emphasis on industrial and resource development hasn't led to much actual development.

The assembly built a road — at a cost of nearly \$1 million — to the water at Point MacKenzie in hopes of

putting a port there to export timber and other resources. It formed a port commission and asked voters to approve \$25 million in bonds to build the port.

Voters narrowly turned down the measure, and a study later showed the port would be speculative and unlikely to break even. But the borough is still pushing it.

In 1987, the state proposed a massive timber sale in the Susitna Valley. Borough officials have supported large-scale logging on borough land.

But an alliance of cabin owners, guides and rural residents rose up and blocked the state's timber. Studies by the state and borough since then have shown that a large-scale timber industry in the Valley probably isn't possible because the land available doesn't produce enough wood.

Trees in the Valley take 50 to 100 years to grow large enough to cut. Some potential timber has been reserved for wilderness or is in private hands, and much of what is left is swamp.

Ted Smith, a contrarian assembly member from Willow and former state forester, said the Valley could support only a small timber industry.

Various studies on the Valley's trees have produced widely varying estimates of how much lumber they could produce. But using optimistic standards of how much wood grows on each acre, and assuming it takes 80 years for cut trees to grow back, the 450,000 acres of state and borough land that studies show might be available could produce no more than 18 million board feet a year. By comparison, a new sawmill being built in Seward will be able to handle 80 million board feet a year.

Other basic industries also show little chance of a boom.

Small vegetable farmers are making a living selling produce to Anchorage grocery stores, but the dairy industry, unable to produce milk for a competitive price,

is in shambles. Only two dairy farmers are still in business except on the state-subsidized Point MacKenzie Project. Almost all the farms on the project have collapsed or are being run by the state.

A huge ski resort planned by a Japanese company for state land in Hatcher Pass appears unlikely to happen soon. The company never did as much work on the idea as borough and state officials. The company asked for an additional year before it has to do anything more because a study showed Japanese skiers are not interested in coming to Alaska.

There is still hope that a coal mine will reopen in Sutton, but borough officials say it may not be economically practical unless the borough and state governments buy a train to move the coal to the port in Seward.

The borough's Overall Economic Development Program, which the assembly approved earlier this month, is aimed almost entirely at developing five "major economic sectors," which it defines as forestry, agriculture, coal and hardrock mining, marine port developments, and tourism.

The federally mandated plan was written by the borough staff. It represents the views of the assembly, which passed it with words of praise, rather than the broad-based citizen's committee that had been required by the federal government. Although the plan identifies the committee members as co-authors, one member said he had never seen it and another is listed only by her last name.

Borough economic development specialist Dan Slaby admitted that he ran short of time to prepare the plan and did most of the work himself.

Slaby said there is no conflict between resource development and lifestyle issues such as outdoor recreation and open space. He said opposition to logging is instead based on a mistaken concept of man's relation to nature.

"I think this goes back to fairy tale mythology," Slaby said. "I think it goes back to the Garden of Eden, and people thinking that nature is in some way pure and perfect and man's involvement will just destroy it. . . . Nature is a constant struggle against death, a struggle to live, and only man has been able to overcome that."

Most of the assembly was elected after the economy went bad, and economic development was the constant theme of election campaigns. Although most Valley residents have not lived here long enough to remember a time when the area had its own self-sustaining economy, those who voted installed a pro-development assembly that wants the local jobs of the past to come back.

"This is the first time anyone in our family has had to leave the state to make a living," Assemblywoman Eleanor Malapanes said. "And that's in generations."

Borough Mayor Dorothy Jones said resource development will help commuters, too, by providing jobs in the Valley so they don't have to commute. She and assembly members say development doesn't have to conflict with the rural pleasures of living in the Valley.

But groups like the new Center for the Environment and Susitna Valley Association don't agree.

"There is a growing number of conservationists in the Valley," said Mike Bronson, a commuter and one of the new center's board members. "It's the amenities that attract people to the Valley — besides the cheap housing — like the natural surroundings."

The people running the borough don't agree, he said, because they belong to a small group that stands to profit from resource development.

"I think that is a very important element of our local politics," Bronson said, "that the people who are the most likely to derive direct

benefit from real estate speculation are also the most likely to sit on the boards and commissions that will make decisions on that."

Three of the seven members of the borough assembly hold real estate licenses, and a fourth has large land holdings.

Malapanes owns Double Eagle Real Estate Investments. She said real estate dealers bring important skills to the assembly, planning commission and platting board. But she agreed that their interests differ from Bronson's.

"It really scares me to have this be a bedroom community," Malapanes said. "That was a reason why I ran for the assembly, because I was hearing people saying all we have to be is a bedroom community for Anchorage."

Commuters have children who need to be educated, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it, she said.

"It means that the local taxpayer — the property owner — is going to have to pick up more and more of the burden of educating children."

□  
But what do the people of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough really want?

In the last election, which included the hot port issue, only 29 percent of registered voters voted. That amounted to 5,443 ballots, or one for every nine residents.

Community leaders on every side of the issues say it is difficult to get anyone involved. Neighborhoods are diffuse and populated by commuters too tired to go to meetings after coming home from Anchorage.

"You can almost isolate yourself here," said Richard DeBusman, a high school teacher and one of the organizers of the new Center for the Environment office. "There's not a lot of cohesiveness in the community. There is the old guard who sticks together, but the rest of the newcomers are not cohesive. It's a real problem,

because a small group of people can get a lot of power easily."

He and other environmentalists say the apathy has hurt them rather than their foes. They say those who stand to make money from development have taken roles in the government, while those who want planning and protection of their lifestyle say nothing until they are directly threatened.

The state's timber sale proposal gave birth to the anti-logging Susitna Valley Association, which DeBusman said still has 600 members in the Valley.

"People come out and buy a house and find out it's next to a gravel pit, and then they cry out for planning," Smith said. "And when you get enough people who do that, you get planning. I think we're getting to that point."

Wasilla Mayor John Stein said Wasilla doesn't want smokestack industry and prefers tourism to logging. But the city council recently voted to offer tax incentives to new industries that come to town.

Stein, Vroman, Gilfilian and others said developers need planning, too, because they now are afraid to act for fear of unpredictable reactions from their potential neighbors.

"As it is now, development is afraid to come in because they don't know what the rules are," Stein said.

Even the borough's pro-development economic plan points to the need for a more cohesive community. One of its goals is to, "Encourage the formation of a Borough identity through clarification of community values, prioritize community development goals, and creation of a community image integrated with a Borough identity."

Slaby translated. "Everyone's kind of lived their own life and had the leeway to hold their own views without having to worry about the affect on anyone else," he said. "We need to pull the community together."

## FORUM

## Wilderness means jobs, lifestyle in Talkeetna

By PAUL BRATTON

**T**ALKEETNA — "Make jobs, not more wilderness."

I first saw this bumper sticker plastered on a fancy Cadillac parked in Wasilla. Redcorp and other timber industry promoters are distributing this to promote their philosophy.

In Talkeetna we don't have many Cadillacs or any Redcorp bumper stickers, but if we did plaster a slogan on our Super Cubs, fishing boats, pickups, or dog sleds, it would read "Wilderness produces our jobs."

Commercial fishing and processing employs more people in Alaska than any other private industry. I make my living gillnetting salmon and herring. There's no place on this Earth that has been able to maintain a healthy salmon fishery once the wilderness is gone. There's no reason to believe Alaska could be an exception.

But you don't have to look out to the coast to see the jobs that the Susitna basin wilderness produces. I've been around Talkeetna for 17 years and have seen a few changes, but the major one is the development and growth of a wilderness-based creation economy. In the early '70s, Raynet guiding climbers and a couple air taxis flying them was about it.

Now I couldn't begin to list all the air taxis, riverboat charter services, guides, lifters, tour operators, and other businesses that depend upon the tourism and door recreation economy.



People in Talkeetna didn't just sit around waiting for the state or borough to develop a ski area or park hotel or timber industry to hand them a subsidized income. Instead they built an economy using renewable natural resources but not destroying those resources.

Local initiative found the niches where an individual, family, or small business could survive and make a profit.

Today this economy is threatened with ruin by the state and borough's reckless attempts to create timber industry jobs at any cost.

In coming weeks the Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission will hold public hearings on a plan to encircle Talkeetna with blocks of land dedicated to commercial timber harvest. That means road construction and clear-cutting on some of the most valuable wildlife habitat and remote recreation areas in our community.

There is no surer or quicker way to destroy the community character and wild country that makes Talkeetna an economically viable community.

This isn't just one man's opinion. At a half-dozen community meetings over the past three months I have yet to hear a single resident support the borough's timber plan. In 17 years I've never seen this kind of unanimity before.

Unfortunately, this community consensus hasn't deterred the borough's single-minded drive to implement widespread clear-cutting in the Upper Susitna Valley. This is especially distressing as more than 150 area residents are now participating in the Talkeetna and Chase Comprehensive Planning processes to determine appropriate land uses and development directions for our community. Many who have dedicated their energies to this planning effort view the unseemly rush to impose clear-cutting units here as a slap in the face to community self-determination.

In this age of perestroika, when people all over the Earth are insisting on their right to determine their own destinies, the borough appears to be telling Talkeetna that we have little choice but to accept the dictates of a handful of special-interest promoters and logging bureaucrats.

I know the timber industry consultants, pressure groups, and promoters along with their friends in government will not believe it but they occupy exactly the same position that the Communist Party had in Eastern Europe until recent weeks.

When I made this analogy at a planning

commission meeting, some found it objectionable. But I contend the comparison is valid. I am not ascribing evil motives merely pointing out that this group occupies the position of a party elite certain they know better than those of us who are from and on the lands they intend to "develop."

In contrast, the community comprehensive planning process is a fine example of decentralized Jeffersonian democracy. It may be slower and seem awkward, but the long run it is the only way excellent decisions can be made about the proper use of public lands. I encourage borough residents to attend hearings and contact planning commission members to stop the clear-cutting juggernaut which threatens to bring down our forests!

I hear that Palmer, Wasilla and Houma are talking about pulling out of the borough. In Talkeetna people are beginning to talk about incorporation if the borough attempts to impose their timber-cut plans on our community.

Unless the borough learns to listen to its citizens, rather than just a handful of special-interest promoters, borough officials may one day find themselves administering a borough only the size of Rhode Island.

Paul Bratton is a Talkeetna resident.

# Straight talk on evolving forest management plans

1-27-88

By BECKY LONG

As we have some straight talk on the two current forest management plans that will affect Mat-Su Valley residents and users.

The state and borough plans are blueprints for logging and road access. The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plan, called Susitna Remote Forest Plan, is planning timber harvests for 150,000 acres. Public hearings should occur in July. The Mat-Su Borough plan, called Borough Use Forest Management Plan covers 112,000 acres in 14 forest management units. Comment was due Dec. 26. After that, the plan will go through the Borough Planning Commission and the Borough Assembly, with its own public hearings.

Why do we want to propose to the governor and Mat-Su Borough administration that these timber harvest plans be put on hold until the Susitna Remote Forest Plan (SAP) is revised publicly in 1990. SAP is a guiding plan for land management decisions. Passed into law in 1985, the plan does call for revisions and amendments if needed. The public has never been asked if they want large-scale commercial logging on their state and borough public lands. This crucial public policy question can be re-addressed through the 1990 revision. The governor's office and the borough administration are under a microscope for these plans.

The state is a multi-million dollar industry in the Susitna Valley now. People are not going to sit back and watch the tourism, recreation, hunting and fishery, that they have invested in and built communities around, to be threatened for the sake of a few logging jobs subsidized



by the state and borough.

Specifically, a 1990 public revision of SAP is needed for the following reasons:

- Since SAP was signed in 1985, land-use patterns have evolved into social and economic conditions with different demands on public lands than envisioned in SAP. Data, which has been gathered by the Habitat Division and the Susitna Valley Association, shows this. State and borough agencies continue to ignore this data in their professional planning. Thus, the public is proposing a special legislative designation, the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, in order to recognize and protect these outstanding public values that support Valley economics, and have been ignored by the agencies.

- To the detriment of all land uses, the 1985 SAP mandates have not been followed. It was mandated in SAP that "Each land management division within ADNR and ADF&G will need to prepare detailed regional implementation programs built around the land-use designations and guidelines specified in this plan." So far, ADNR has only gone ahead with planning for annual timber sales, access improvements and timber marketing. We have no program for wildlife habitat, public recreation, or water quality. This is a bias favoring a special use.

- The current forest management process is flawed, leading to an unrealistic planning agenda.

For instance, the draft report "Economic Impact Potential for Forest Products in the Mat-Su Borough," prepared for DNR, is not adequate to responsibly plan a wood-products industry in the Valley. The report's timber harvest data base is incomplete, the forest acreage is incorrectly overestimated and the annual allowable harvest is miscalculated. Thus, all sorts of unrealistic and misleading assumptions could be made to advocate a large-scale intensive timber harvest program. And, of course, the existence of the current economic uses of the Valley is not addressed adequately. This certainly makes for a litigious situation.

All of this points to the need for a revision of our guiding plan.

There is a viable logging industry in the Valley now. Admittedly, it is hard to document the current use. Perhaps that should be the job of the state and borough, rather than creating pie-in-the-sky plans.

Borough consultants in their June 1989 report "Economic/Market Feasibility; Timber Sale Implementation; Timber Sale Contracts/Agreements," state that in the Mat-Su Borough there are annual timber sales of one to two million board feet each year on state lands, and the borough timber sale program has averaged over one million board feet annually and 12,000 to 13,000 cords of firewood.

Borough Assemblyman Ted Smith stated in a 1989 Spectrum article that 200,000 board feet in 1988 were harvested in the Valley.

Valley legislator and co-chairman of the House Resource Committee, Rep. Curt Menard stated in a

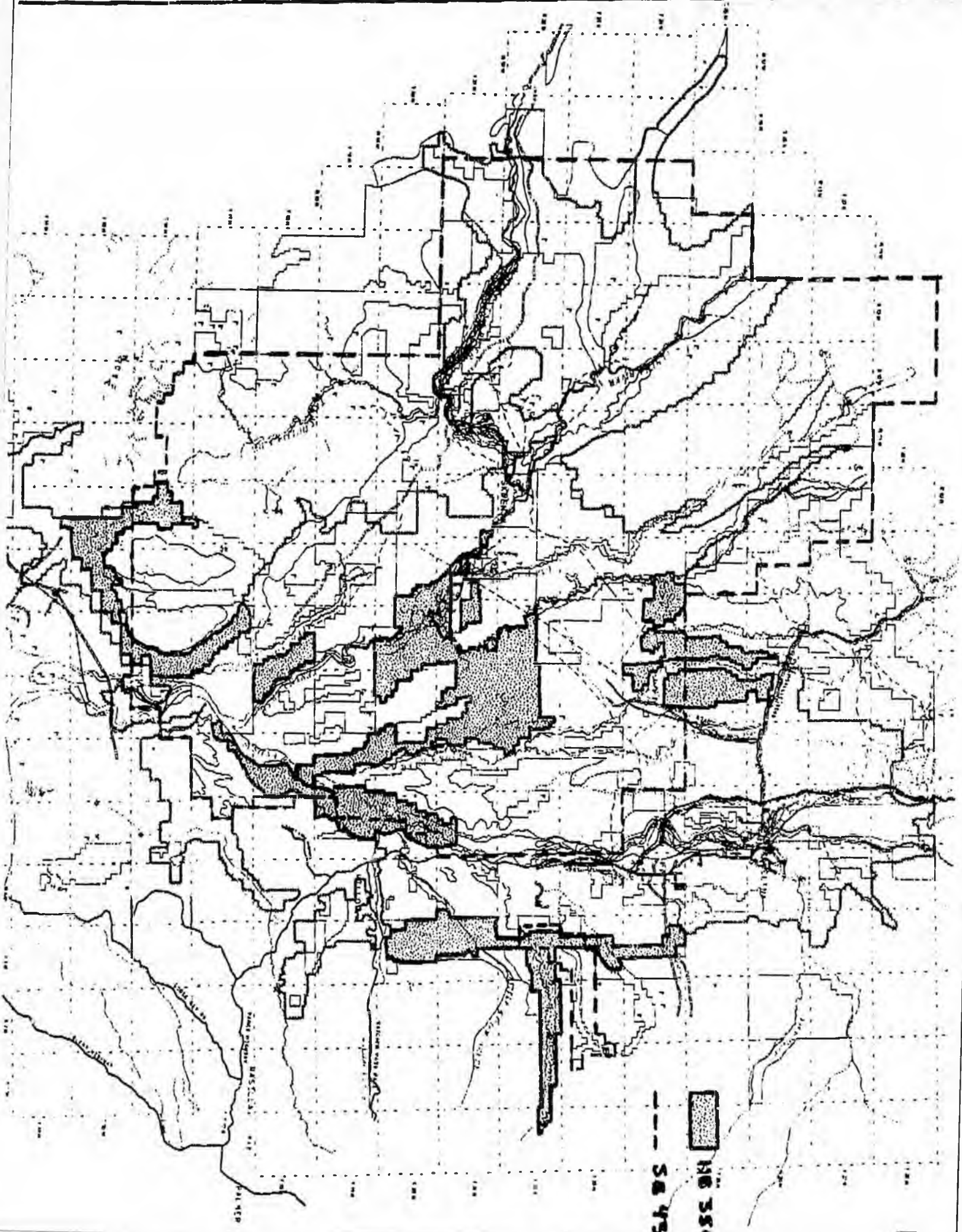
July 7, 1989 letter to the editor that "approximately 19 million board feet of timber are to be offered for sale in November 1989. This compares with 4.5 mbf in 1988 and 5-7 mbf in 1987. Moreover, there are currently 11 mbf of timber in the Mat-Su which have been contracted out for sale but have not been cut."

Whatever the statistical reality is, translate this into everyday language: logging is occurring now on public lands. The public is clearly saying through community council, comprehensive plan, and environmental group meetings that we do not need massive clearcut harvests and roads that favor corporations exporting our forests for chips. They are not saying "no" to logging, for there is a need for firewood, house logs and roughcut lumber in our communities.

Let us continue the present cutting agenda with better management and environmental improvements. Let us favor small independent loggers in the Valley and personal use for firewood and building materials. This benefits our communities, the Susitna Valley, and the Anchorage Bowl for many years to come.

The state constitution states that "Fish, forests, wildlife, grasslands, and all other replenishable resources" must "be utilized, developed, and maintained on the sustained yield principle." With responsible use and recognizing the limits of the land, the Susitna Valley has this now. Why won't the state and borough recognize this?

Becky Long is a Upper Susitna Valley resident active in land-use issues.



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FEB 20 1990

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Telecopy Cover Sheet

TO: Resources Committee  
FAX # 463-4867

Please copy to:

- ✓ Sen. Bettye Fahrenkamp
- Sen. Jalmar Kerttula
- Sen. Dick Eliason
- Sen. Steve Frank
- Sen. Rick Halford
- Sen. Arlis Sturgulewski
- Sen. Fred Zharoff

FROM: Kevin P. Adler  
11976 Hilderness Dr.  
Anchorage, AK 99516

Total to follow: 3 pgs      RE: SB 430

Kevin P. Adler  
11976 Wilderness Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99516  
345-4815 (wk)

February 19, 1990

Senator Mike Szymanski, Chairman  
Senate Community & Regional Affairs Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

**RE: SB 430 - SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA**

Dear Senator Szymanski:

Senate Bill 430 - Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area should NOT be passed. This essentially is a lock up bill, providing privileged use to the few. Not every Alaskan has the extra finances available for recreation in a remote area. SB 430 eliminates commercial timber harvest, oil & gas leasing, coal leasing and restricts road access development on state land. The Susitna basin should be managed as multiple use by the DNR. Existing managements plans accomplish this objective. The Susitna Area Management Plan, the Recreational Rivers (HB93) Management Plan, and the Susitna timber management plan (under development) were created with lengthy public review and comment periods. SB 430 is in direct conflict with these existing plans.

#### Mineral leasing

SB 430 provides for leasing of metallic minerals only if compatible with the remote recreational area management plan the bill mandates be created. Coal leasing and oil & gas leasing are eliminated within the boundaries of the remote recreation area created by the bill. The Susitna Basin has identified and potential coal resources. Oil & gas potential also exists within the Susitna basin. This is a poor management practice to restrict any future mineral resources the state has in this area. This sends a signal to the mining and oil companies that the state is not interested in developing it's mineral resources in the Susitna valley. The state already controls if, when and how any leasing development will occur on state lands.

#### Access restrictions

On the surface SB 430 permits reasonable access through the area, but prevents certain types of road access. Any publicly financed or maintained road is precluded if it connects with the interstate highway system. This is any road that may connect with the Parks highway, Petersville road and the road into the Nancy Lake Recreational Area. This also precludes a state backed private road, similar to the Red Dog road. Any future development in the area, requiring road access, would be subject to intense public and state scrutiny without the additional restrictions of SB 430.

Kevin P. Adler / SB 430  
February 19, 1990

page 2

One can not realize the full extent of the area included in this bill without drawing the area on a map. The area is bounded by the Susitna Flats State Game Refuge on the south, the Susitna River on the east, Denali National Park and Preserve on the north and the Alaska range uplands on the west. This essentially creates a "wildlife refuge" restricting access and resource development west of the Susitna River to the Alaska range from Cook Inlet to Denali National Park. By drawing the area on a map, a separate area appears east of the Parks highway near Caswell and continues along the North Fork Kashwitna River, totaling 23,680 acres (T22N, R3W; T23N, R1W - R3W; Seward Meridian). This area east of Caswell, described in the bill, is identical to an area outlined in an inquiry about road access to a mining property last year (spring 1989). A road access permit for this project was not issued at that time. The passage of SB 430 would: (1) preclude any use of state funds for construction or maintenance of a road in this area for any reason, and (2) may preclude even any future private development of a road in this area if found incompatible with "remote recreation and wildlife habitat values". This is a blatant attempt to block access for any future resource development in this area or east of this area. The same underlying philosophy of preventing future resource development on state lands is applied to the entire area described by SB 430.

RS 2477 right of way routes are rights the state needs to aggressively assert. What impact will SB 430, with its access restrictions, have upon asserting the state's RS 2477 rights in the proposed Susitna Remote Recreation Area. How can I be assured that the state will pursue RS 2477's if the state is unwilling to construct or even maintain roads in this area.

The present or future value of any mineral lands within or across from this area could also be impacted by the access restriction.

#### Lost job opportunities

The Mat-Su Borough currently has a depressed economy. Restriction of resource development in the valley, now and in the future, translates into lost job opportunities to the residents of the Mat-Su Borough and to the residents outside of the borough.

#### Timber restrictions

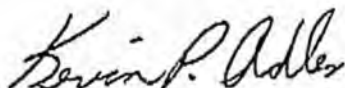
The Susitna Area Plan identified areas for potential commercial forest harvest. Public response prompted a suspension of commercial timber harvest and initiated development of a timber management plan, without legislative interaction.

Much concern is being expressed over the winter moose kill along the Alaska railroad. An opinion by Jim Page, state forester, in the February 7, 1990 edition of the Anchorage Times (p. B-5) concisely identifies the problem and offers a solution. Past events, fire and development created areas of moose browse along the railroad and Parks highway, increasing the moose population and concentrating the moose in these areas. The

vegetation in these areas is growing beyond the reach of the moose. The solution is not to study the problem and feed the moose, but to create additional moose browse areas away from the railroad. New browse is created when the land is cleared, by fire or by logging. It appears that the Fish and Game is not effectively managing the moose in the area. ADF&G should be endorsing logging in the Susitna basin as a management tool for increasing and enhancing the moose habitat.

State lands were selected not only for recreation and wildlife values but also for mineral, timber and oil & gas resource values. These lands should be managed for all resource values. Any resource development that would occur in this area would be in the future and subject to public review and scrutiny through existing laws, regulations and management plans. Senate Bill 430 is unnecessary. I am opposed to the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,



Kevin P. Adler, P.E.

Copy:

COMMUNITY & REGIONAL AFFAIRS Committee

Sen. Mike Szymanski, Chairman  
Sen. Steve Frank, Vice-chairman  
Sen. Al Adams  
Sen. Drue Pearce  
Sen. Pat Pourchot

SENATE - RESOURCE Committee

Sen. Betty Fahrenkamp, Chairman  
Sen. Jay Kerttula, Vice-chairman  
Sen. Dick Eliason  
Sen. Steve Frank  
Sen. Rick Halford  
Sen. Arlis Sturgulewski  
Sen. Fred Zharoff

Becky Gay, Resource Development Council  
Steve Borell, Alaska Miners Association

Feb. 13, 1990

FEB 20 1990

Honorable Bettye Farhrenkamp,

Please defend Alaska's "Lost Coast" - The Icy Cape-Cape Suckling region from the continued mismanagement and illegal logging.

This unique area has Nontimber resources that far outweigh any value from clearcutting forests.

Please support House Bill 346.

State Game Refuge status would certainly be appropriate for this land.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Lucille Merrill*

Lucille Merrill  
P.O. Box 702  
Wrangell, AK. 99929

Feb. 15, 1990

PO Box 2075  
Wrangell, AK 99929

Dear Representative Davidson,

I would like to thank you for introducing House Bill 346, "An Act establishing a Yakstaga State Game Refuge". At the rate the State of Alaska is cutting the area, your bill may be the only way to preserve any sort of real multiple-use in the area, i.e. subsistence, commercial fishing, tourism and recreation. No more timber harvest (like the existing 13 mile long clear-cut!) can be done without compromising the other forest uses.

The DNR seems to be trying to outdo the Forest Service in disregard for public opinion, resource mismanagement, and fiscal irresponsibility-- wasting the states money. lack of public hearings, a 75% drop in goat populations, and give-away prices for old-growth spruce have been a few examples of how the DNR has been mismanaging the Yakataga forest.

Please do whatever you can to get HB 346 out of the House Resources Committee and passed into law as soon as possible. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Branson



copies to: Senator Bettye Farenkamp  
Senator Dick Ellison  
Senator Jay Hertula  
Senator Mike Szymanski  
Representative Gene Kubink  
Governor Steve Cowper

Feb. 17, 1990

FEB 20 1990

Peter Branson  
PO Box 2074  
Wrangell, AK 99979

Dear Representative Davidson,

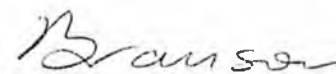
I would like to thank you for introducing House Bill 346, "An Act establishing a Yakutat State Game Refuge". At the rate the State of Alaska is cutting the areas, your Bill may be the only way to preserve any sort of real multiple-use in the area, i.e. subsistence, commercial fishing, tourism and recreation. No more timber harvest (like the existing 13 mile long clear-cut!) can be done without compromising the other forest uses.

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Please do whatever you can to get HB 346 out of the Game Resources Committee and passed into law as soon as possible. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Branson



copies to: Senator Bettye Marenkoff  
Senator Dick Eliason  
Senator Jay Bertala  
Senator Mike Szymski  
Representative Gene Kubick  
Governor Steve Cowder



**WILDLIFE  
FEDERATION  
OF ALASKA**

The Alaska Affiliate of the  
National Wildlife Federation

February 9, 1990

FEB 20 1990

The Honorable Bettye Fahrenkamp  
Chair, Senate Resources Committee  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

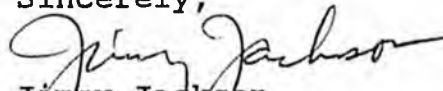
The Wildlife Federation of Alaska supports legislation establishing the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

The Susitna Valley is now used by members of WFA, and thousands of additional Alaskans, for numerous and diverse activities--fishing, hunting, boating, skiing, dog mushing and other activities. It is also the site of hundreds of recreational cabins of the residents of nearby cities--cabins which offer the possibility for city-dwellers to get into the Alaska we all love. All of these activities and uses are at risk fro proposals for extensive timber harvests in that area.

Advocates of large scale timber harvest, who wish to establish a "forest products industry" in Southcentral Alaska, fail to realize that the highest and best use of the Susitna Valley--from an economic as well as a recreational perspective--requires that the present character of the valley be maintained. The area now supports a huge recreation industry--primarily hunting and fishing--which caters to both Alaskans and tourists from outside. These people go to the Susitna Valley because it is easily accessible from nearby cities and towns and, most importantly, because of its wilderness quality, particularly when judged by lower-48 standards. Extensive logging in the area and creation of an industry associated with mills, will destroy this aspect of the valley. The present economy associated with the region--an economy which is stable, long-term and totally compatible with the environment--would be destroyed for the new economy which would destroy the existing resource.

The legislation designating the area as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area is needed in order to preserve the current character of the valley. The legislation which has been introduced protects all existing uses of the Valley, and even provides for future limited and compatible expansion of existing activities. We urge you to support this important legislation.

Sincerely,

  
Jimmy Jackson  
President

cc: Senator Dick Eliason  
Senator Rick Halford  
Senator Arliss Sturgulewski  
Senator Fred Zharoff

Dec. 8, 1989

Jean and Harry Holt  
HCO1 BOX 6472  
Palmer, AK 99646

Sen. Bettye M. Fahrenkamp,

We want to address our interest regarding the scale of logging in the Susitna Valley. We find it admirable a large group of concerned citizens, Susitna Valley Association, SVA was formed. We truly believe if SVA was not formed, the Valley would be headed for disaster. We seriously hope the state agencies and legislators take the opportunity provided to them of SVA's input in the state's decision on this most important issue affecting the Valley.

Thank you,  
Jean and Harry Holt

leg.  
— welcome  
— comments on  
any legislation

④ recreational industry

JAN 31 1990

Jan 27, 1990

Honorable Betty Farhenkamp  
Senate Resource Committee Chairman  
Senate P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Ak 99811

Dear Ms Farhenkamp,

As a 41 year resident of Skwentna I am very concerned about the effort to cram the Susitna Timber Sale down the throats of people who have already demonstrated that they don't want it.

After attending a Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 1990 meeting at the Skwentna School in which it was unanimous in the support of SVA's Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area Bill I strongly urge you to support and co-sponsor it. Our meeting was hampered by 38° below zero temperatures and fog in Anch. that prevented many property owners from attending but phone conversations with them showed their support for the SVA bill.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Joseph F. Delia

Joseph F. Delia  
Box 41  
Skwentna, Ak  
99667



Honorable Betty Farhenkamp  
Senate Resource Committee Chairman  
Senate P. O. Box V  
Juneau, Ak.  
99811

JAN 31 1990

Hon. Betty Farhenkamp  
Chm. Senate Resources Comm.  
Senate P. O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Mrs. Farhenkamp:

The Susitna Timber Sales has been the topic of conversation in our area for a long time. The impact it would have on our lives is not taken lightly. People relaxed when Gov. Cowper said it wouldn't be forced on an area who are so opposed to it. Now, here we go again.

I absolutely support SVA'S Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area Bill. It would be my hope our representatives would support the lifestyles of those the timber sale would most affect, rather than a few in urban areas. You, as a co-sponsor, would send a vital message to others to respect the will of the people.

Sincerely,

Norma Helia  
Skwentna, Alaska 99667.

## SUMMARY OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA PROPOSAL

**PURPOSES** - The purposes of the SVRRA is to perpetuate and enhance the present character and existing uses of a portion of the Susitna Valley. Specifically, the SVRRA has six main purposes:

1. Protection and maintenance of fish and wildlife populations and habitat;
2. Continued public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
3. Continued remote recreation while protecting natural integrity and scenic values;
4. Continued remote commercial recreation in a quality environment;
5. To perpetuate and enhance the remote character upon which the recreational uses and community lifestyles depend; and
6. To allow additional public uses in a manner compatible with the above purposes.

**ALLOWED ACTIVITIES** - Addresses only activities on state lands. Except as noted in the next section, all existing uses would be allowed, including:

1. Personal-use timber sales for individuals and commercial facilities.
2. Adequate and feasible access to private land, existing mining claims, borough land, and other valid occupancies.
3. Local roads not connected with the existing interstate highway system.
4. Trails.
5. Construction of commercial recreation and tourism facilities.
6. Land disposals.
7. Mineral leasing.

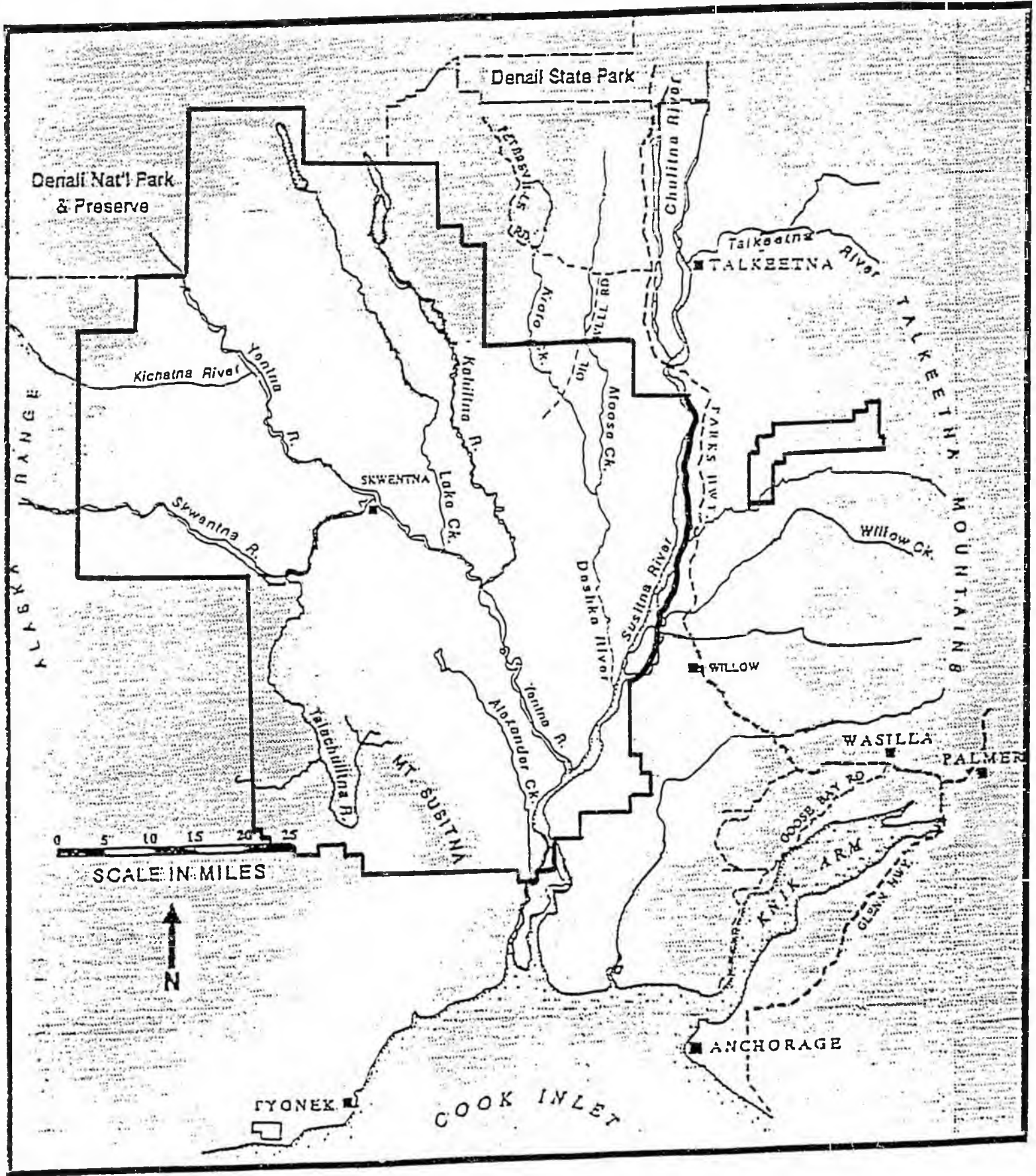
The legislation assures that traditional access, both motorized and nonmotorized, such as by boat, plane, ATV, snowmachine, dogsled, snowshoes, skis, etc., will continue.

**INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES** - the following activities would not be allowed:

1. Commercial logging on state land. (Existing commercial firewood sale areas are all outside the SVRRA boundaries and would not be impacted.)
2. Publicly financed or maintained roads connected to the highway system.
3. Mining claims. (Valid existing rights would continue.)

**MANAGEMENT** - The SVRRA will be managed by DNR, through a management plan, requiring public review and comment. ADF&G has management responsibilities for fish and wildlife resources. The commissioner of DNR may determine that a use is incompatible or needs to be modified, but only after public review and comment.

# SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA



## SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

### ECONOMIC SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES

Which will be Impacted by Susitna Valley Logging

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> which service the Valley	
Combined gross income for 1987 (10 of 38)	\$4,000,000
Combined value of businesses (10 of 38)	\$11,400,000
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> in the Valley	
Combined gross income in 1987 (23 of 52)	\$3,340,000
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b>	
Combined value of businesses (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)	\$1,500,000
<b>COMMERCIAL FISHERIES</b> (from Susitna Drainage harvest)	
Estimated ex-vessel value in '86: \$10,664,716	
Total sales generated in Alaska due to this harvest	\$17,703,428
(Does not include value of processing of fish.)	
<b>SPORTFISHERIES</b>	
Value to Southcentral Alaska of sportfishing on Susitna Valley streams in 1986	\$10,420,000
<b>ANCHORAGE HOTEL/MOTEL ROOMS</b>	
Value of Susitna related hunting and fishing to the Anchorage Hotel/Motel business	\$5,104,080
Value to Anchorage of impacted Hotel/Motel wages	\$1,660,500

### EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> (10 of 38)		
39 Full time + 106 Part time =145 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	75
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> (23 of 52)		
Total employees: 125		
Estimated 46 Full time and 79 Part time		
	Full time equivalent	73
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b> (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)		
18 Full time + 8 part time = 26 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	21
<b>HOTEL/MOTELS</b>		
Number of employees to service related rooms		
	Full time positions	90
	Total employees:	386
	Total full-time equivalent employees:	259

### PRIVATE PROPERTIES

Number of privately owned parcels within the area being considered for timber harvesting	13,685
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# Valley economy stands at fork in road

Anchorage Daily News Sunday, January 28, 1990

By CHARLES WOHLFORTH  
Daily News reporter

**P**ALMER — On the lonely Palmer Hay flats, where frigid wind from the Knik Glacier builds dunes of snow, a line of cars two hours long passes in the dark every morning and every night like an endless desert caravan.

But instead of bearing Persian rugs or Oriental spices, this caravan brings a far more valuable commodity to the Matanuska Valley: people who make money in Anchorage and spend it here.

Commuters provide half the wealth keeping the stagnant Matanuska-Susitna Borough economy alive, and it appears likely that most of the Valley's growth will come from commuter paychecks, too. They contribute more than 10 times the money produced by agriculture, mining, logging, tourism and all other Valley basic industries combined.

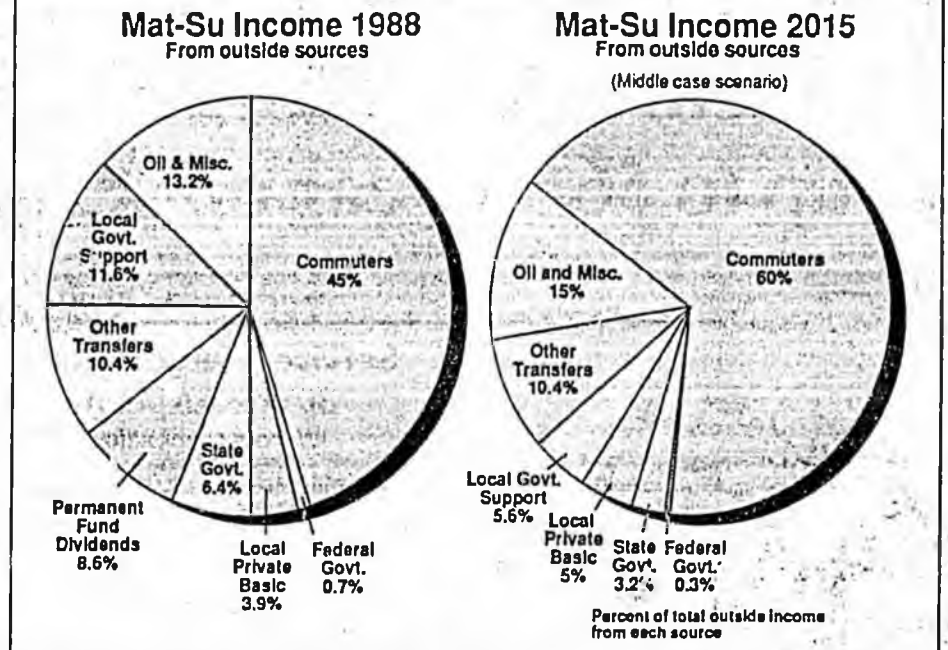
That analysis came last year from Scott Goldsmith and Eric Larson of the University of Alaska Institute of Social and Economic Research. Even the state's permanent fund dividend program brings in twice the wealth of the Valley's basic industries, and so do government social service programs, according to their report for the state Department of Transportation.

The Valley's main function is to provide bedrooms. According to a recent survey, people who work elsewhere want their bedrooms in the Valley because of the isolated, rural lifestyle.

But despite evidence that keeping those bedrooms full of commuters will determine the area's future economic health, a cadre of borough leaders would rather the people who sleep in them didn't commute. They want a return to the frontier Valley and its economy of rough-handed work like logging, mining and farming, its fast growth, and its wide-open development.

They don't think that approach puts the current commuter economy at risk.

## What Will Power the Mat-Su Economy



Sources: I.S.E.R., Alaska Dept. of Transportation, Mat-Su Borough

Anchorage Daily News/Don Tullous

If they are wrong, the stakes of the gamble are high. Paychecks of Anchorage and the North Slope commuters produce 45 percent of the Valley's income. The local industries produce less than 4 percent of its income.

Goldsmith and Larson predicted that commuters will become even more important if the Valley is to grow. Even though they assumed a huge ski resort at Hatcher Pass and a coal mine at Sutton both will be built soon, by the year 2015 they expect commuters to bring in 60 percent of the income, compared to 5 percent for basic industry.

But the economists said commuter income is not a sure thing. It depends on commuters wanting to live in the Valley. And a growing number of residents say the way for the Valley economy to succeed is to plan its future so the quality of living there that attracts commuters is protected.

For instance, when debate turned to a major timber operation in the Valley, the borough commissioned a public opinion survey to find out how residents feel about

logging. The survey showed that 79 percent want logging to stay small, as it is now. Six percent supported the borough's goal of attracting large, outside timber developers.

Despite that kind of public sentiment, the borough government's economic program is devoted entirely to increasing resource and industrial development. The borough wants to rid itself of dependence on commuters and has pushed hard for large-scale timber development. Borough assembly members say they want commuters to stop commuting and work in the Valley in a self-sufficient economy.

Politicians say commuters import political apathy, lack community spirit, and spend too little time with their families. Their children need expensive schooling, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it because they are in Anchorage.

Still, commuters are a dominant economic force, and there is mounting evidence that most don't support wide open, frontier-style development.

Talkeetna, Chase, Chickaloon and the central core have begun efforts to manage their own development, saying the best way to boost the borough economy is to keep the Valley a pleasant place to live. They criticize the borough's attempts to launch big development projects at the expense of stable, basic government.

Environmentalists have organized and gained clout. One group plans to fill an empty Wasilla storefront with an office of the Alaska Center for the Environment, "in the belly of the beast," as one of them joked.

The group claims to represent a silent majority.

Some day a million people will live in the heart of the borough, between Palmer and Wasilla, if the future unfolds the way Bob Vroman predicts. When that happens, today's strip development along the highways won't bother anyone, he said, because similar development will fill in the areas between.

Vroman was a development activist in the old days of borough politics, when bad roads prevented commuting. Today he is part of a group working to plan the future of the core area.

He remembers formation of the borough in 1964. The economic problems have not changed. The Sutton coal mine had closed. The Matanuska Maid creamery had moved to Anchorage. Lower shipping costs from Outside were making Valley agriculture less competitive. The area seemed to be losing its economic reason to exist.

Vroman was borough chairman. He set to work drafting a comprehensive plan to attract industry to the Valley. It took years to write and was finally published in 1970.

The borough sent copies of the plan all over the country, and received inquiries about timber and industrial development, Vroman said. A dairy project on Point MacKenzie was proposed and a Texas millionaire leased borough land to build an enclosed, futuristic city on the point.

But at the same time Vroman was working on another project that ultimately changed the Valley far more. He was a construction engineer, and he helped lay the deep gravel foundations of the highway across the swampy flats, which makes Anchorage less than an hour's drive from Palmer and Wasilla.

Oil was discovered at Prudhoe Bay, and as the state's population grew, commuting workers from Anchorage and the North Slope helped super-heat the Valley's economy. The population of the borough increased from 7,400 in 1970 to 44,230 in 1987.

Most of the new residents were commuters and people working for businesses that survived on commuter dollars.

In their study, Goldsmith and Larson asked why people with jobs in Anchorage were willing to drive 40 miles each way to work. The survey found the main attractions were low housing costs, large lots and clean air.

Anchorage and Mat-Su residents were asked how much cheaper a house has to be in the Valley to make the commute worthwhile. Answers settled around 40 percent — a comparable house would have to cost 40 percent less in the Valley for most people to choose to commute. The study said Valley housing is now about 50 percent cheaper.

But the government has to provide good roads and protect the lifestyle that attracts commuters if it wants to keep them, the economists said.

"I've talked to a bunch of people, and they all want that — they want to protect their lifestyle," said Bob Gilfilian, who owns an engineering firm and serves with Vroman on the Core Area Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. "Most of the people here want their rural-urban thing. They're on their one acre, but they don't want their neighbor to put in a cow barn."

Gilfilian said the borough could help the economy by

aiding residents who, like him, want planning to protect their piece of suburbia.

"People like myself — entrepreneurs — are looking at what can be done with what we've got here," Gilfilian said. "I don't see any help coming from the local government or the state. They're not creating work out there."

"I think the borough government has its place to make sure the community will be stable. I'm not talking about creating jobs, but just making it possible for business to exist."

Instead, he and others said, the borough pursues big development projects, which might be good, but leave the basic business of government undone. Even Vroman, who is as pro-development as they come, criticizes the borough assembly for chasing rainbows.

"Over the last 10 years, the borough has shotgunned everything," Vroman said. "They've tried to be all things to everybody. Everyone who comes in, they get on with them, and then someone else comes in, and bang, they're off with them. They go from one thing to the other, and leave all these things lying here like unpopcorn. And it's left everyone in the community divided."

Vroman himself was part of the borough's biggest 180-degree shift. In 1984, the borough drafted a comprehensive plan that residents interpreted as a move to begin zoning. Vroman helped lead a successful fight against the idea. Zoning opponents voted in a pro-development assembly and threw Borough Manager Gary Thurlow out of office. The planning department became the development services department, then changed back to planning in 1988.

But the borough's new emphasis on industrial and resource development hasn't led to much actual development.

The assembly built a road — at a cost of nearly \$1 million — to the water at Point MacKenzie in hopes of

putting a port there to export timber and other resources. It formed a port commission and asked voters to approve \$25 million in bonds to build the port.

Voters narrowly turned down the measure, and a study later showed the port would be speculative and unlikely to break even. But the borough is still pushing it.

In 1987, the state proposed a massive timber sale in the Susitna Valley. Borough officials have supported large-scale logging on borough land.

But an alliance of cabin owners, guides and rural residents rose up and blocked the state's timber. Studies by the state and borough since then have shown that a large-scale timber industry in the Valley probably isn't possible because the land available doesn't produce enough wood.

Trees in the Valley take 50 to 100 years to grow large enough to cut. Some potential timber has been reserved for wilderness or is in private hands, and much of what is left is swamp.

Ted Smith, a contrarian assembly member from Willow and former state forester, said the Valley could support only a small timber industry.

Various studies on the Valley's trees have produced widely varying estimates of how much lumber they could produce. But using optimistic standards of how much wood grows on each acre, and assuming it takes 80 years for cut trees to grow back, the 450,000 acres of state and borough land that studies show might be available could produce no more than 18 million board feet a year. By comparison, a new sawmill being built in Seward will be able to handle 80 million board feet a year.

Other basic industries also show little chance of a boom.

Small vegetable farmers are making a living selling produce to Anchorage grocery stores, but the dairy industry, unable to produce milk for a competitive price,

is in shambles. Only two dairy farmers are still in business except on the state-subsidized Point MacKenzie Project. Almost all the farms on the project have collapsed or are being run by the state.

A huge ski resort planned by a Japanese company for state land in Hatcher Pass appears unlikely to happen soon. The company never did as much work on the idea as borough and state officials. The company asked for an additional year before it has to do anything more because a study showed Japanese skiers are not interested in coming to Alaska.

There is still hope that a coal mine will reopen in Sutton, but borough officials say it may not be economically practical unless the borough and state governments buy a train to move the coal to the port in Seward.

The borough's Overall Economic Development Program, which the assembly approved earlier this month, is aimed almost entirely at developing five "major economic sectors," which it defines as forestry, agriculture, coal and hardrock mining, marine port developments, and tourism.

The federally mandated plan was written by the borough staff. It represents the views of the assembly, which passed it with words of praise, rather than the broad-based citizen's committee that had been required by the federal government. Although the plan identifies the committee members as co-authors, one member said he had never seen it and another is listed only by her last name.

Borough economic development specialist Dan Slaby admitted that he ran short of time to prepare the plan and did most of the work himself.

Slaby said there is no conflict between resource development and lifestyle issues such as outdoor recreation and open space. He said opposition to logging is instead based on a mistaken concept of man's relation to nature.

"I think this goes back to fairy tale mythology," Slaby said. "I think it goes back to the Garden of Eden, and people thinking that nature is in some way pure and perfect and man's involvement will just destroy it. . . . Nature is a constant struggle against death, a struggle to live, and only man has been able to overcome that."

Most of the assembly was elected after the economy went bad, and economic development was the constant theme of election campaigns. Although most Valley residents have not lived here long enough to remember a time when the area had its own self-sustaining economy, those who voted installed a pro-development assembly that wants the local jobs of the past to come back.

"This is the first time anyone in our family has had to leave the state to make a living," Assemblywoman Eleanor Malapanes said. "And that's in generations."

Borough Mayor Dorothy Jones said resource development will help commuters, too, by providing jobs in the Valley so they don't have to commute. She and assembly members say development doesn't have to conflict with the rural pleasures of living in the Valley.

But groups like the new Center for the Environment and Susitna Valley Association don't agree.

"There is a growing number of conservationists in the Valley," said Mike Bronson, a commuter and one of the new center's board members. "It's the amenities that attract people to the Valley — besides the cheap housing — like the natural surroundings."

The people running the borough don't agree, he said, because they belong to a small group that stands to profit from resource development.

"I think that is a very important element of our local politics," Bronson said, "that the people who are the most likely to derive direct

benefit from real estate speculation are also the most likely to sit on the boards and commissions that will make decisions on that."

Three of the seven members of the borough assembly hold real estate licenses, and a fourth has large land holdings.

Malapanes owns Double Eagle Real Estate Investments. She said real estate dealers bring important skills to the assembly, planning commission and platting board. But she agreed that their interests differ from Bronson's.

"It really scares me to have this be a bedroom community," Malapanes said. "That was a reason why I ran for the assembly, because I was hearing people saying all we have to be is a bedroom community for Anchorage."

Commuters have children who need to be educated, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it, she said.

"It means that the local taxpayer — the property owner — is going to have to pick up more and more of the burden of educating children."

□  
But what do the people of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough really want?

In the last election, which included the hot port issue, only 29 percent of registered voters voted. That amounted to 5,443 ballots, or one for every nine residents.

Community leaders on every side of the issues say it is difficult to get anyone involved. Neighborhoods are diffuse and populated by commuters too tired to go to meetings after coming home from Anchorage.

"You can almost isolate yourself here," said Richard DeBusman, a high school teacher and one of the organizers of the new Center for the Environment office. "There's not a lot of cohesiveness in the community. There is the old guard who sticks together, but the rest of the newcomers are not cohesive. It's a real problem,

because a small group of people can get a lot of power easily."

He and other environmentalists say the apathy has hurt them rather than their foes. They say those who stand to make money from development have taken roles in the government, while those who want planning and protection of their lifestyle say nothing until they are directly threatened.

The state's timber sale proposal gave birth to the anti-logging Susitna Valley Association, which DeBusman said still has 600 members in the Valley.

"People come out and buy a house and find out it's next to a gravel pit, and then they cry out for planning," Smith said. "And when you get enough people who do that, you get planning. I think we're getting to that point."

Wasilla Mayor John Stein said Wasilla doesn't want smokestack industry and prefers tourism to logging. But the city council recently voted to offer tax incentives to new industries that come to town.

Stein, Vroman, Gilfilian and others said developers need planning, too, because they now are afraid to act for fear of unpredictable reactions from their potential neighbors.

"As it is now, development is afraid to come in because they don't know what the rules are," Stein said.

Even the borough's pro-development economic plan points to the need for a more cohesive community. One of its goals is to, "Encourage the formation of a Borough identity through clarification of community values, prioritize community development goals, and creation of a community image integrated with a Borough identity."

Slaby translated. "Everyone's kind of lived their own life and had the leeway to hold their own views without having to worry about the affect on anyone else," he said. "We need to pull the community together."

## WHAT IS THE SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION?

The Susitna Valley Association formed in January 1988, in opposition to large state timber sales that were being proposed in the core of the Susitna Valley. The association formed primarily for three purposes:

- first, to serve as a contact for the state and Mat-Su Borough on timber harvesting plans for the Susitna Valley,
- second, to serve as spokesperson on this issue when necessary and appropriate, and
- third, to serve as a clearinghouse for dispersal of timber-related information to interested individuals and groups.

The association has grown into a coalition of over 4300 individuals, numerous businesses, and 69 organizations. Some of those organizations are, in turn, coalitions. There are active chapters in Wasilla, Talkeetna, and Anchorage. Over 700 SVA people are valley residents, and 27 percent of the coalition organizations are Mat-Su groups.

The association is broad-based, representing a wide diversity of interests. In addition to people who own property in the Susitna Valley, there are people with business interests such as commercial fishermen, guides and outfitters, river charter services, lodge owners, air taxi operators, people in the tourism industry, and business people who support those businesses. There are people with recreation interests such as pilots, boaters, hunters, fishermen, skiers, sightseers, bikers, mushers, snowmachiners, and photographers. There are environmentalists and conservationists; people with health interests, and public land policy interests. And simply people who think large-scale logging in proximity to Southcentral Alaska's largest population centers will create unacceptable negative impacts. The interests and concerns are as varied as the individuals involved. Clearly, opposition to proposed timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley is a far-reaching issue of deep public concern that involves the entire community.

Dated: January 1990

Susitna Valley Association  
9600 Sialom Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99516  
346-1943

## SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION, TOURISM AND FISHERY VALUES

### Brief Background Information

The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), met with disastrous results in an attempt to hold a large-scale timber sale in the Susitna Valley two years ago. As a result, DNR went into a planning mode, and is currently in the process of writing a "forest management plan" for the area. The plan is called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP).

All lands in the valley below 1000' in altitude, a total of over 2 million acres, are being analyzed for commercial timber harvesting potential. The goals of the SRFP are to identify the location and volume of the commercial timber, determine how to access it, and establish guidelines for harvesting it. It is not a park plan; it is a forestry plan. The plan is required to take into consideration other forest values as they relate to forestry, but the focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

The public will not be offered a range of land management options for the valley because other options, or alternatives to logging, have not been considered and analyzed. People will not even have the option to approve or disapprove of the plan to log the Valley, but will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed guidelines for doing it.

### Economic Values of Remote Recreation, Tourism, and Commercial Fisheries in the Susitna Valley

The Susitna Valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area which also supports a valuable commercial fishery. A highly complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities has evolved which is supported by thousands of people and which channels millions of dollars into the local economies. Following is a synopsis of various valley activities and resource uses which the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) has compiled:

Real estate. Over the past twenty years the state has encouraged recreational use of the Susitna Valley by selling thousands of properties in state land disposals in the area, mostly for recreational purposes. Just within the SRFP planning area, there are 17,609 private properties, and many more still for sale. (Borough Tax Assessment Office, 12-19-89) These are widely scattered throughout the valley. Land sales were a high priority of the state and borough during the '70s in the form of various land disposal programs, and even earlier with the Open-to-Entry program, homesteading and remote parcel distributions. As one would expect, this resulted in the formation of a potent constituency for protecting those values that attracted people to the area. The property owners have a vested interest in their lands and cannot be expected to remain silent on what happens in the valley. The assessed value of the private property is \$14.8-million.

Lodges. According to the Department of Fish and Game, there are 52 lodges which operate in the Susitna Valley, most of them remote. SVA has surveyed 23 of the lodges. Based on that survey, the total gross income for the 52 lodges was estimated at \$7.5-million, with a total employment of approximately 283 people. All but two of the lodges surveyed were owned and operated by Alaskans. 93% of their clients were from out-of-state, bringing new dollars into the Alaskan economy.

Air taxi services. 38 air taxi charter services presently fly clients into the valley for recreational activities and flightseeing. They service lodges, year-around residents, recreational cabin owners, and their own remote camps. 24 of those companies are based in Anchorage, and 14 in the Borough. Based on an SVA survey of ten of the companies, a total combined gross income derived from servicing the Susitna Valley in 1987, for only those 10 companies, was \$4-million, with employment of 145 people. The companies estimated 74.5% of their clients were non-residents. (Note that 28 of the companies are not included in the above figures.)

Commercial fishery. The entire Susitna drainage serves as a vast spawning and fish rearing habitat for a highly productive commercial fishing industry. According to the ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, the direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish reared in this drainage is between \$8-million and \$11-million per year. In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska attributed to this harvest, excluding processing, was just under \$18-million.

Sportfishing. The ADF&G Division of Sport Fisheries established that 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10.4-million. 84 percent of those days was spent at streams with no road access. The lack of roads, rather than being a barrier, was very likely

what attracted people to the area. It also indicates the complex economic network which exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. According to Fish and Game, salmon stocks in the Susitna Basin are already fully allocated.

**Moose and bear hunting.** The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated by ADF&G at up to \$18.9-million dollars. This includes activities of game guides and outfitters, as well as the independent hunters.

**Recreational pilots.** There are over 5000 registered pilots in the Anchorage area and 800 in the Mat-Su Borough. The Anchorage pilots own a total of over 2000 airplanes. SVA surveyed 208 of the pilots and found that the Susitna Valley was their destination 81 percent of the time. Based on data from our survey, the total value of the airplanes based just in Anchorage can be estimated at \$90-million. Total plane related expenditures for 1987 was estimated at \$7.4-million.

**Hotel expenditures.** According to a study by the Alaska Hotel/Motel Owners Association, approximately 3 percent of the occupied rooms in Anchorage are related to clients traveling to or from hunting and fishing destinations in the Susitna Valley. The economic value of these rooms is \$6.8-million.

**Tour companies.** Tour operators sell the Susitna Valley as an accessible "Alaska wilderness experience". The valley is marketed for independent and adventure tours such as flightseeing trips, riverboat fishing and camping, sportfishing and hunting, remote lodge vacations, and rafting trips.

The valley is also an important component of the large package tours. According to information SVA received in 1988, Westours and Princess Tours had purchased and were renovating 14 railroad dome cars at an investment of \$8-million. These dome cars travel through the east side of the Susitna Valley. The tour companies are anticipating related gross revenues during 1990 of over \$100-million dollars.

**Other users.** The Alaska Boaters Association estimates there are approximately 20,000 boats in the Anchorage area, a high percentage owned to access the Susitna Valley streams. There are 20 to 30 riverboat charter services doing business on the streams of the valley. Many activities such as river freight services, mushing, skiing, trapping, and snowmachining remain to be quantified.

**Related services.** Also to be taken into consideration are the local businesses in adjacent communities that are economically supported by these activities and industries; the multiplier factor. These factors would take into account such items as the purchase of construction materials; maintenance costs of buildings and equipment; advertising; insurance; purchase and maintenance of airplanes,

boats, motors, and snowmachines. It would include employee expenses; gas, oil, and propane; generators; radio equipment; food and supplies; purchase of camping equipment, guns, fishing gear, and clothing; fish and game packing and processing; taxidermy services; and money spent at eating and drinking establishments when going to and from the valley.

### The Potential for the Remote Recreation and Tourism Industries in the Susitna Valley

The number of tourists coming to Alaska is expected to increase by 10 percent a year; to Denali by up to 18 percent. The Alaska Railroad has been growing almost 10 percent a year in passengers and has added six new cars. Both the large tour companies and the railroad are marketing new tour packages for flightseeing, boating, and fishing out of Talkeetna, which is expected to be a growth area.

Princess Tours is designing new land tours to extend the company's cruises. The state is planning to construct a new lodge in Denali State Park. Lodges, air taxi services, and river charter businesses say their businesses have grown by at least 200 percent during the past 2-3 years. One company which primarily markets in Europe, brought 450 to 500 Europeans over this past summer to stay at their lodge and to float Alexander Creek. These people also rented RVs and did independent touring. A tour company which caters to Japanese clients is looking for a small lodge in a "primitive" area to accommodate eight clients per week for next summer. An Australian tour agent stated that his company had sold \$1.6-million dollars of Alaska adventure tours.

According to Westours, Alaska is increasingly becoming the traveler's destination of choice, and the emphasis is shifting from Southeastern to the Interior. Much of this change is in response to the companies marketing strategies to encourage repeat visitors. One lodge owner reported 67 percent of his business at Lake Creek during the summer of '89 was repeat business, clients who have stayed at the lodge before. They like what they've found and will pay to come back.

Economists have stated that Alaska needs to discover what it has that is unique . . . and market it. What Alaska does have in abundance, and what people come to Alaska to experience, and will pay to come back for, is quality "wilderness". Very few other places have it, and it's becoming scarcer all the time. Scanning through Alaskan magazines and travel brochures, it becomes apparent that advertisers consider "wilderness" to be a highly marketable commodity. There is economic value in it, especially coupled with the growing interest in outdoor adventure and nature tours, as well as the renewed interest in the environment.

For the industries in the Susitna Valley previously discussed, the perception of wilderness or remoteness is a critical factor in the marketing of the valley activities. As world populations continue to increase, that commodity will become more and more valuable. However, wilderness as a marketable commodity quickly loses its value once roads go in and clearcutting takes place. It will not be possible to go backward and regain it once it is gone. Large scale commercial logging is not compatible with remote recreation and tourism. And, the incompatibility becomes even more pronounced in an area such as the Susitna Valley where the primary orientation is from the air.

The borough and state are at a crossroads in deciding the most appropriate use of the Susitna Valley lands. The type of tourism discussed focuses on a low volume/high dollar approach. It focuses on a "working" wilderness, not a "hands-off" wilderness. But, the success and continuation of the existing businesses is dependent on not crossing the threshold into high volume/low dollar. The latter may be appropriate along well-traveled roadways, but there are other areas where it is more economically astute to go the other direction, thereby providing the full recreational spectrum.

#### Limitations of DNR's Current SRFP Planning Process as it Relates to Remote Recreation and Tourism.

A basic flaw of the SRFP planning process is that it does not recognize or evaluate the economics of the existing remote recreation and tourism industries, or their potential. It does not evaluate whether or not these industries are compatible with large scale commercial logging and related roading such as being proposed. Nor does it evaluate whether the development potential of the remote industries could ever be realized if the proposed logging and roading activity goes forward. Finally, it does not balance any of these competing values against the expected return from logging, which itself has never been determined in this process.

The SRFP advances a management plan for only "forestry", independent of management plans for the other designated land uses, even though the necessity for concurrent planning for all uses was stressed in the Susitna Area Plan.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Development was asked to do an economic feasibility study of the wood products industry in the valley, and was to address the other resource values in the process. This was not done. Instead, the department conceded that the data necessary to address the economics of the other uses was incomplete, and there was not time, personnel, or money available to acquire the data.

In the spring of '88, the legislature passed a \$30,000 budget increment with the following stipulation, "It is the intent of the legislature that the Department work with all interested parties to conduct an economic and environmental analysis of the Mat-Su Timber sale which includes but is not limited to the economic effects on the guiding industry, commercial and sport fisheries, lodges, tourism and recreational uses." This was not done.

The SRFP, if adopted, will provide a blueprint for logging and roading the valley, complete with an annual allowable cut determination. By so doing, and by not identifying and analyzing other competing and conflicting values, the plan will predispose the valley to logging. Since a "forestry plan" will be the only management plan the state has developed, it will obviously be the plan that will be advanced.

Without the pertinent information regarding other values, SVA contends it will not be possible for the state to make an informed comparison to determine the highest and best use of the public resources in the Susitna Valley. With hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in existing investments and income at stake, and with no research into the potential of those existing investments, this does not seem like a responsible approach to land use management. Rather than introducing a new and conflicting industry, perhaps the state would be wiser to promote, protect, and enhance industries that are already in place, successful, and growing.

(DATED: December 30, 1989)

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### Is the Necessary Volume Available for a Wood Products Industry in the Valley?

Timber industry representatives, as well as DCED, have stated that a minimum of 50-million board feet a year would be needed for a successful wood products industry in the Susitna Valley.

According to the Division of Forestry, in the Susitna Valley it takes an average of 367 acres to produce 1-million board feet of timber. This calculation is based on an average volume of 940 cubic feet of wood per acre, and a conversion factor of 2.9 board feet per cubic foot. The volume is not comparable to Southeast timber.

In the Susitna Valley, 18,350 acres would have to be harvested per year to produce 50-million board feet. That's equal to 1 1/2 Point McKenzies being cut and accessed every year. Over an 80-year rotation, almost 1.5-million acres of commercial timber would be needed from the valley to meet this demand.

The Susitna Valley simply does not have that volume of timber. There's not even a third that volume; and what is there is spread out over a 2-million acre area. The SRFP has identified 450,000 acres with commercial potential that is in a land-use designation that would allow forestry as one of the uses. But not all that acreage is available for forestry. Much of it is in areas where "forestry" is only a secondary use, and must not conflict with the primary uses. In some cases "forestry" is allowed, but only for local personal use. Buffers for wetlands must be discounted from the timber base. Mitigation measures to minimize conflict with other values will further reduce the base. The final volume will be substantially less than the 450,000 acres being analyzed. The forest lands will not be contiguous and much of it will not be economically accessible.

In short, the Susitna Valley Association believes that, while existing small-scale timber harvest can and should continue in certain areas to accommodate commercial firewood sales and personal use wood lots, large-scale commercial harvesting is out of the question. The resource simply isn't there.

# SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

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A "forest management plan" is not a plan for managing all uses of the forest. It is a plan which focuses upon logging the forest, and regrowing it to be logged again. The focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

**What is the Susitna Valley:** The valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area that also supports a large and successful commercial fishery. It is located just a short distance across Cook Inlet from Anchorage, and has developed a very complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities.

All areas of the valley below 1000' in altitude, over 2,000,000 acres, are being analyzed by DNR for commercial logging. In this area, there are 52 remote lodges, 38 air taxi businesses, 20 to 30 riverboat charter services, and 13,685 private properties.

**Fundamental issue:** Incompatibility of large scale commercial timber harvesting and related roading with existing land uses and resources in the valley.

Remote recreation and tourism values are economically and culturally important to Alaskans. Roading and logging are incompatible with the continuation of these wilderness-based values.

What degree of the economically successful existing uses would have to be sacrificed to develop a timber industry? Some of the state's own studies have determined that certain other industries would likely be displaced. Would we be trading existing jobs for speculative forestry jobs?

**Crucial questions not being addressed:** The public has not yet had the opportunity to address the crucial question of whether or not it approves of large-scale commercial logging as the highest and best use of the forest resources in the Susitna Valley. Or whether or not the scale of logging, or the type of timber management being proposed, is compatible with the other forest uses in the area. Rather than being asked if they approve of having the area logged, people will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed method for doing it.

What DNR sees as the state's mandate for logging is not what the public perceived when the Susitna Area Plan was prepared, nor is it a mandate that the public wants now. Alaskans feel the scale of proposals being advanced by the state and borough, for both logging and roading, threaten the long established and successful land use patterns in the valley. They believe the trade-off that would be required is not justified either economically or socially.

## ADDITIONAL ISSUES

### Existing economic values which must be considered.

- 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10,420,000. Eighty-four percent of those days was at streams with no road access indicating a complex economic network exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. (ADF&G)
- The direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish spawned and reared in the Susitna Valley is \$8-11,000,000 per year. (ADF&G) In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska due to this harvest, excluding processing, was more than \$17,700,000.

- The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated at up to \$18,900,000. (ADF&G)
- The Susitna Valley is the destination of choice by 81 percent of the recreational pilots flying float planes. (Susitna Valley Association survey)
- 13,685 private properties are located within the area being analyzed for timber harvests. (Mat-Su Borough tax records)
- Additionally, the basin is heavily used for hunting, trapping, boating, camping, rafting, cross-country skiing, snowmachining, and dog-mushing.

### **Costs.**

- Massive state subsidies would be necessary to provide access for the timber industry. . .and further, to maintain that access.
- Studies are establishing that stumpage value of available timber is not high enough to cover associated costs of timber harvesting, processing, shipping, reforestation, and roading. Should the state heavily subsidize the creation of jobs for a wood products industry if the creation of those jobs would likely displace even more jobs in other industries?
- The state has acknowledged it has no standards for winter access in the Susitna Valley with its unique climatic conditions which often result in thawing conditions and extensive overflow problems. Yet DOF has stated much of the logging would be done in the winter under these conditions. Funding for research would be imperative to develop the standards necessary to protect the extensive valley wetlands?
- What level of timber harvesting, and related wood products industry, would be commercially viable? Is there really a sufficient timber base that would be accessible and available?

### **Small-scale logging.**

- Even with the existing small-scale timber harvesting that is going on now, as it expands into the valley, will the state and Mat-Su borough develop and enforce meaningful controls that will allow it to remain compatible?
- At what point does small scale become large scale?
- Once a mill is built, would the industry continue to expand because we are locked into feeding the mill to the detriment of other pre-existing industries. (See separate paper on Suggested Alternatives.)

### **Planning process.**

- The DNR planning process advances a management plan for only "forestry", independent of management plans for the other designated uses, resulting in a lop-sided planning process.
- The state has acknowledged a major lack of information regarding the value of remote recreation and tourism in the Susitna Valley, and that they do not have the time, personnel or money to acquire the data. New data is being acquired, however, on the wood products industry. As a result, the SRFP process is proceeding without adequate and balanced data.
- In order to do a responsible economic feasibility study of the logging industry, it is critical that DNR also address the negative impacts to the other uses, meaning they must be identified and evaluated.

### **In conclusion:**

SVA believes the state and municipalities should concentrate on further promotion of the Susitna Valley as a prime forest-dependent, wilderness-based tourist and recreation area with a growing and healthy commercial and sportfishing industry.

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## **LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS**

The Susitna Valley Association communicates with its approximately 4300 individual members through a newsletter mailout and through periodic Updates to 68 organizations. These organizations have all expressed a desire to have information concerning the status of the Department of Natural Resources' Susitna Regional Forest Plan planning process. Many of these organizations, in turn, incorporate information from the SVA Updates into their respective newsletters. Following is a list of the current member organizations:

AKPIRG  
Alaska Air Carriers Association  
Alaska Airmens Association  
Alaska Boating Association  
Alaska Center for the Environment  
Alaska Environmental Lobby  
Alaska Flyfishers Association  
Alaska Hotel and Motel Association  
Alaska Outdoor Council  
Alaska Professional Sportsmens Association  
Alaska Professional Hunters Association  
Alaska Professional Sport Fishing Association  
Alaska Sportfishing Association  
Alaska Survival  
Alaska Visitors Association  
Alaska Wildlife Alliance  
Alexander Property Owners  
American Lung Association  
Anchorage Audubon  
Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Anchorage Recycling Center  
Anchorage Waterways Council  
Arctic Bicycle Club - Mountain Bikers  
Chase Community Council, #1  
Chase Community Council, #2  
Clean Air Coalition  
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association  
Cook Inlet Fisheries Coalition  
Cook Inlet Professional Sport Fishing Association  
Denali Citizens Council  
Flathorn Property Owners Association  
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, Alaska Chapter

Susitna Valley Association Organizations  
Page 2

Friends of the Earth  
Goodpaster River Property Holders Assn.  
Iditabike Organizing Committee  
Iditarod National Historic Trail Advisory Council  
Iditarod Trail Blazers, Knik Chapter  
Kachemak Bay Citizens Coalition  
Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association  
Kenai River Sportfishing Association  
Knik Kanoers & Kayakers, Inc.  
Mat-Su 99's  
Mat Valley Sportsmen's Assn.  
National Audubon Society  
National Wildlife Federation  
National Wildlife Refuge Ass'n.  
North Pacific Fisheries Association  
Northern Alaska Environmental Center  
Northern District Setnetters of Cook Inlet  
Nunam Kitlutsisti  
Prince William Sound Conservation Alliance  
Rolejo Lake Association  
Salcha River Property Owners Association  
SE Alaska Conservation Council  
SE Alaska Seiners Association  
Shirley Lake Homeowners Association  
Sierra Club, Alaska Chapter  
Skwentna Community Council  
Skyensu Property Owners Association  
Susitna Basin Charter Operators Association  
Susitna Valley Lodge Association  
Talkeetna Chapter, Susitna Valley Association  
Tokosha Citizen's Council  
United Cook Inlet Drift Association  
United Fishermen of Alaska  
Upper Cook Inlet Drift Assn.  
Wasilla Chapter, Susitna Valley Association  
Wildlife Federation of Alaska

(Dated: January 1, 1990)

**SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION**  
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**Suggested Alternatives to a Large-Scale Commercial  
Timber Industry for the Susitna Valley**

SVA proposes that the state and municipalities encourage and support the continuation and further promotion of the Susitna Valley as a prime forest-dependent, wilderness-based tourist and recreation area with a growing and healthy commercial and sportfishing industry. Furthermore, this type of development is compatible with the residential communities and the thousands of privately owned properties which already exist in the affected area.

SVA proposes that, in those areas where commercial timber harvesting is determined to be appropriate, the state limit support to the development of a small local timber industry. SVA is not opposed to this type of industry, provided that:

- timber sales are planned on a site specific basis, so that impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, private property, and other competing resource uses are fairly and adequately considered,
- good forest management, including reforestation, is practiced,
- environmental controls are enforced,
- access for timber extraction must take into consideration that existing uses have developed around, and are dependent upon, nonroad-oriented recreation,
- where temporary roads are used, the roads will be constructed according to standards developed specific for climatic conditions in the Susitna Valley,
- the sales are not escalated in number to equal the size of large proposals, and
- that money is appropriated up-front to cover the costs of responsible sale preparation, field monitoring, enforcement, reforestation, and putting roads to bed when indicated.

Logging could be moderately expanded, with appropriate forest management practices, while remaining compatible with, and complementing, existing uses of the Susitna Valley. The annual allowable cut would need to be determined based on not less than an 80-year rotation basis, until such time that it is proven that the rotation time in the Valley is shorter. . . not can be shorter, but is shorter. The public must be involved in determining what access will be allowed.

SVA does not believe Forest Management Agreements are appropriate for use in the Susitna Valley. The current use patterns of this area, plus the multiple-use implications, are far too complex to be turned over to a private resource development corporation for long-term management.

Based on the above criteria, SVA is willing to work with the agencies to attempt to find a designated timber base for an appropriate sized local timber industry. We fully understand the need for that industry to have some degree of certainty that they will have trees to harvest in the future, and how much. By the same token, many SVA members who are employed in the wilderness-dependent recreation industries need to know where the loggers won't be harvesting. They too, need some degree of certainty for their future.

Dated: September 1989

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# Straight talk on evolving forest management plans

1-27-90  
By BECKY LONG

Let us have some straight talk on the two current evolving forest management plans that will affect Susitna Valley residents and users.

The state and borough plans are blueprints for logging and road access. The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) plan, called Susitna Regional Forest Plan, is planning timber harvests for some 450,000 acres. Public hearings should occur in 1990. The Mat-Su Borough plan, called Borough Multiple Use Forest Management Plan, covers about 112,000 acres in 14 forest management units. Public comment was due Dec. 26. After that, the plan still will go through the Borough Planning Commission and the Borough Assembly, with its attendant public hearings.

I respectfully want to propose to the governor and the Mat-Su Borough administration that these timber harvest plans be put on hold until the Susitna Area Plan (SAP) is revised publicly in 1990. SAP is the guiding plan for land management decisions. Signed into law in 1985, the plan does call for major revisions and amendments if needed. The public has never been asked if they want large-scale commercial logging on their state and borough public lands. This crucial public policy question can be resolved through the 1990 revision. The governor's office and the borough administration are under a lot of criticism for these plans.

There is a multi-million dollar industry in the Susitna Valley now. People are not going to sit back and allow the tourism, recreation, hunting and fishing economy, that they have invested in and built their homes and communities around, to be threatened for the sake of a few logging jobs subsidized



by the state and borough.

Specifically, a 1990 public revision of SAP is needed for the following reasons:

- Since SAP was signed in 1985, land-use patterns have evolved into social and economic conditions with different demands on public lands than envisioned in SAP. Data, which has been gathered by the Habitat Division and the Susitna Valley Association, shows this. State and borough agencies continue to ignore this data in their professional planning. Thus, the public is proposing a special legislative designation, the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, in order to recognize and protect these outstanding public values that support Valley economies, and have been ignored by the agencies.

- To the detriment of all land uses, the 1985 SAP mandates have not been followed. It was mandated in SAP that "Each land management division within ADNR and ADF&G will need to prepare detailed regional implementation programs built around the land-use designations and guidelines specified in this plan." So far, ADNR has only gone ahead with planning for annual timber sales, access improvements and timber marketing. We have no program for wildlife habitat, public recreation, or water quality. This is a bias favoring a special use.

- The current forest management process is flawed, leading to an unrealistic planning agenda.

For instance, the draft report "Economic Impact Potential for Forest Products in the Mat-Su Borough," prepared for DNR, is not adequate to responsibly plan a wood-products industry in the Valley. The report's timber harvest data base is incomplete, the forest acreage is incorrectly overestimated and the annual allowable harvest is miscalculated. Thus, all sorts of unrealistic and misleading assumptions could be made to advocate a large-scale intensive timber harvest program. And, of course, the existence of the current economic uses of the Valley is not addressed adequately. This certainly makes for a litigious situation.

All of this points to the need for a revision of our guiding plan.

There is a viable logging industry in the Valley now. Admittedly, it is hard to document the current use. Perhaps that should be the job of the state and borough, rather than creating pie-in-the-sky plans.

Borough consultants in their June 1989 report "Economic/Market Feasibility; Timber Sale Implementation; Timber Sale Contracts/Agreements," state that in the Mat-Su Borough there are annual timber sales of one to two million board feet each year on state lands, and the borough timber sale program has averaged over one million board feet annually and 12,000 to 13,000 cords of firewood.

Borough Assemblyman Ted Smith stated in a 1989 Spectrum article that 200,000 board feet in 1988 were harvested in the Valley.

Valley legislator and co-chairman of the House Resource Committee, Rep. Curt Menard stated in a

July 7, 1989 letter to the editor that "approximately 19 million board feet of timber are to be offered for sale in November 1989. This compares with 4.5 mbf in 1983 and 5-7 mbf in 1987. Moreover, there are currently 11 mbf of timber in the Mat-Su which have been contracted out for sale but have not been cut."

Whatever the statistical reality is, translate this into everyday language: logging is occurring now on public lands. The public is clearly saying through community council, comprehensive plan, and environmental group meetings that we do not need massive clearcut harvests and roads that favor corporations exporting our forests for chips. They are not saying "no" to logging, for there is a need for firewood, house logs and roughcut lumber in our communities.

Let us continue the present cutting agenda with better management and environmental improvements. Let us favor small independent loggers in the Valley and personal use for firewood and building materials. This benefits our communities, the Susitna Valley, and the Anchorage Bowl for many years to come.

The state constitution states that "Fish, forests, wildlife, grasslands, and all other replenishable resources" must "be utilized, developed, and maintained on the sustained yield principle." With responsible use and recognizing the limits of the land, the Susitna Valley has this now. Why won't the state and borough recognize this?

*Becky Long is a Upper Susitna Valley resident active in land-use issues.*

## FORUM

## Wilderness means jobs, lifestyle in Talkeetna

By PAUL BRATTON

**T**ALKEETNA — "Make jobs, not more wilderness."

I first saw this bumper sticker plastered on a fancy Cadillac parked in Wasilla. Redcorp and other timber industry promoters are distributing this to promote their philosophy.

In Talkeetna we don't have many Cadillacs or any Redcorp bumper stickers, but if we did plaster a slogan on our Super Cubs, fishing boats, pickups, or dog sleds, it would read "Wilderness produces our jobs."

Commercial fishing and processing employs more people in Alaska than any other private industry. I make my living gillnetting salmon and herring. There's no place on this Earth that has been able to maintain a healthy salmon fishery once the wilderness is gone. There's no reason to believe Alaska would be an exception.

But you don't have to look out to the coast to see the jobs that the Susitna basin wilderness produces. I've been around Talkeetna for 17 years and have seen a few changes, but the major one is the development and growth of a wilderness-based recreation economy. In the early '70s, Ray Genet guiding climbers and a couple air taxis flying them was about it.

Now I couldn't begin to list all the air taxis, riverboat charter services, guides, outfitters, tour operators, and other businesses that depend upon the tourism and outdoor recreation economy.



People in Talkeetna didn't just sit around waiting for the state or borough to develop a ski area or park hotel or timber industry to hand them a subsidized income. Instead they built an economy using renewable natural resources but not destroying those resources.

Local initiative found the niches where an individual, family, or small business could survive and make a profit.

Today this economy is threatened with ruin by the state and borough's reckless attempts to create timber industry jobs at any cost.

In coming weeks the Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission will hold public hearings on a plan to encircle Talkeetna with blocks of land dedicated to commercial timber harvest. That means road construction and clear-cutting on some of the most valuable wildlife habitat and remote recreation areas in our community.

There is no surer or quicker way to destroy the community character and wild country that makes Talkeetna an economically viable community.

This isn't just one man's opinion. At a half-dozen community meetings over the past three months I have yet to hear a single resident support the borough's timber plan. In 17 years I've never seen this kind of unanimity before.

Unfortunately, this community consensus hasn't deterred the borough's single-minded drive to implement widespread clear-cutting in the Upper Susitna Valley. This is especially distressing as more than 150 area residents are now participating in the Talkeetna and Chase Comprehensive Planning processes to determine appropriate land uses and development directions for our community. Many who have dedicated their energies to this planning effort view the unseemly rush to impose clear-cutting units here as a slap in the face to community self-determination.

In this age of perestroika, when people all over the Earth are insisting on their right to determine their own destinies, the borough appears to be telling Talkeetna that we have little choice but to accept the dictates of a handful of special-interest promoters and logging bureaucrats.

I know the timber industry consultants, pressure groups, and promoters along with their friends in government will not believe it but they occupy exactly the same position that the Communist Party had in Eastern Europe until recent weeks.

When I made this analogy at a planning

commission meeting, some found it objectionable. But I contend the comparison is valid. I am not ascribing evil motives merely pointing out that this group occupies the position of a party elite certain they know better than those of us who, from and on the lands, they intend "develop."

In contrast, the community comprehensive planning process is a fine example of decentralized Jeffersonian democracy. It may be slower and seem awkward, but in the long run it is the only way excellent decisions can be made about the proper use of public lands. I encourage borough residents to attend hearings and contact planning commission members to stop the clear-cutting juggernaut which threatens to raze down our forests.

I hear that Palmer, Wasilla and Houma are talking about pulling out of the borough. In Talkeetna people are beginning to talk about incorporation if the borough attempts to impose their timber-cutting plans on our community.

Unless the borough learns to listen to its citizens, rather than just a handful of special-interest promoters, borough officials may one day find themselves administering a borough only the size of Rhode Island.

Paul Bratton is a Talkeetna resident.

Susitna Valley  
assn



**ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, INC.**

3 33-710-01143 EP JUNEAU, AK 99801  
(907) 463-3830

P.O. Box 34097  
Juneau, Ak. 99803  
(907) 463-3830

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Ed Grasser, Director  
Legislative Affairs

RE: Susitna Valley Association's proposed legislation

DATE: February 5, 1990

Recently you received a packet of information from the Susitna Valley Association supporting legislation for a remote recreational parcel in the Susitna River Drainage. Within the packet were listed several organizations which purportedly participated in the drafting of this proposal. The Alaska Outdoor Council, along with several member affiliates were so listed.

In order to clarify any misconceptions which may or may not have been inferred by the presence of our organization on SVA's list, we would like to inform you that we currently are not in support of their proposal, nor did we participate in any of their discussions leading to this proposal. Also, several of our member affiliates have indicated they are currently opposed to SVA's proposed legislation.

We regret any inconvenience or misconception SVA's inclusion of our name on this proposal may have caused. We appreciate your consideration of our concerns on this matter and look forward to a more constructive level of participation on this legislation after our members have had time to relate their concerns and comments to us.

cc: Member Clubs

## MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION SERIAL NUMBER 90- 014

"A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDING THAT THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE OPPOSE THE CREATION OF THE PROPOSED SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA."

WHEREAS, legislation has been proposed to create a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the State and Borough through a open public planning process adopted the Susitna Area Plan as management guidelines for public lands within the Susitna Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan does not recommend the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, approximately fifty-five percent of all State lands within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are already classified a Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat lands; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will severely retard the State's and Borough's efforts to diversify their economies by halting all forms of development including tourism; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will subvert the rationale for past decisions for selecting lands under the Municipal Lands Entitlement program by rendering the lands selected under this program useless for the uses they were selected for; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will provide an economic windfall to existing property (lodge) owners by restricting competition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough strongly opposes the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area and respectfully recommends that the Alaska State Legislature oppose this legislation.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough this 6 day of February, 1990.

Dorothy A. Jones  
Dorothy A. Jones  
Mayor  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

ATTEST:

Linda Dahl  
Linda Dahl  
Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

SUBJECT: Proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area Legislation

For Agenda of: 02/06/90

No. AM90-034

ATTACHMENTS: Proposed Legislation Resolution 90-014

Route to:	Dept/Committee/Individual	Initials	Remarks
	(Please review & return to originator)		
1	Planning Director	JD	Originator
	Borough Assessor		
	Public Works Director		
2	Finance Director	RJS	
3	Borough Attorney	IMJ	
4	Borough Manager		
	Mayor		

STATEMENT The Susitna Valley Association (SVA) and several environmental organizations, e.g., Sierra Club, have proposed legislation that would establish a remote recreation unit within the Susitna Basin. It is expected that Senator Rodey will introduce the legislation during the last week of January, 1990; a House sponsor was not identified at the time this memorandum was written.

The proposed legislation, if adopted, would not allow commercial timber harvesting, land disposals, mining nor the construction of publicly financed roads within the Susitna Valley. The restrictions, especially the restrictions on road construction, will severely restrict the

FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE) FISCAL IMPACT? YES/NO  
 AMOUNT REQUESTED \$ 0 at this time FUNDING SOURCE \_\_\_\_\_  
 FROM ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_ PROJECT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 TO ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_ PROJECT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 VERIFIED BY: R. Moore CERTIFIED BY: [Signature]  
 DATE: 1-29-90 DATE: 1-24-90

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Borough Administration respectfully recommends that the Borough Assembly strongly oppose the proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area legislation.

APPROVED BY: [Signature]  
Donald L. Moore  
Borough Manager

economic development of the Borough in all phases of the economy including tourism and recreation. The proposed legislation violates and subverts the public land use classification process undertaken by the State and Borough through the Susitna Area Plan. Moreover the proposed legislation will convey an economic windfall on existing property (lodge) owners since entry by new lodge owners via existing and future land disposals will not be allowed. The proposed legislation, if adopted, would also subvert the land selection decisions made by the Borough since the Borough would not be allowed to use the lands for the reasons it selected them. Finally, a cursory analysis of present land use classifications (see Table 1) within the Borough indicates that approximately 55% of State lands within the Borough are already classified as either Public Recreation (20%) or Wildlife Habitat (35%) and very little as Forest Management (6%) and Agriculture (1%); therefore, it does not appear that additional remote recreation lands are needed.

**RECOMMENDATION** The Borough Administration respectfully recommends that the Borough Assembly strongly oppose the proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area legislation.

TABLE I  
STATE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS  
IN MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

(ACRES X 1000)

	PUBLIC RECREATION	WILDLIFE HABITAT	FOREST MANAGEMENT	SETTLEMENT	AGRICULTURE	TOTAL
WILLOW SUB-BASIN PLAN	16.6	371.0	66.5	5.5	44.5	504.1
SUSITNA AREA PLAN (1)	1,555.1	3,126.6	521.5	4,391.2	26.1	9,620.5
LEGISLATIVELY DESIGNATED:						
GOOSE BAY STATE GAME REFUGE		10.9				10.9
PALMER HAY FLATS		26.0				26.0
SUSITNA FLATS		300.8				300.8
MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	16.6	101.7	85.1			203.4
WILLOW MOUNTAIN CRITICAL HABITAT		23.0				23.0
DENALI STATE PARK	421.1					421.1
NANCY LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA	22.7					22.7
WILLOW CREEK STATE RECREATION AREA	3.6					3.6
HATCHER PASS PUBLIC USE AREA	5.1					5.1
SIX RECREATION RIVERS	240.9					240.9
TOTAL	2,281.7	3,960.0	673.1	4,396.7	70.6	11,382.1
PERCENT	20.0%	34.8%	5.9%	38.6%	0.6%	100.0%

Note: (1) Includes 4,391,244 unverified acres in Settlement - this is based on conversation with DNR personnel regarding survivor classifications.  
Includes 19,897 unverified acres in Agriculture - total Agriculture figure is based on narrative in plan.

Willow Sub-Basin Plan, Susitna Area Plan and Matanuska Valley Moose Range figures include many areas with more than one primary designation.

All figures for Willow Sub-Basin Plan taken from narrative of plan except Public Recreation. Public Recreation taken from information supplied by DNR personnel.

SUMMARY OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA PROPOSAL  
11-2-89

1. PURPOSE - the purpose of the SVRRA is to perpetuate and enhance the present character and existing uses of a portion of the Susitna Valley. Specifically, the SVRRA has five main purposes:

- a. Protect and maintain fish and wildlife populations and habitat;
- b. Perpetuate and enhance public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
- c. Perpetuate and enhance remote recreation while ensuring the scenic and natural integrity of the area;
- d. Perpetuate and enhance continued remote commercial recreation in a quality environment;
- e. Protect and perpetuate the remote character upon which present and future recreational use and community lifestyles depend.

2. ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES - except as noted in (3) below, all existing uses would be allowed, including:

- a. Personal use logging, including house logs and firewood for private or commercial facilities;
- b. Local roads not connected to the existing road system;
- c. Adequate and feasible access to private lands, existing mining claims, or other valid occupancies;
- d. Traditional means of access.

3. INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES - the following would not be allowed:

- a. Commercial logging;
- b. Future land disposals by the state;
- c. Publicly financed and/or maintained roads connected to the highway system and intended for use by highway vehicles.
- d. Exploration, development, and the extraction of minerals (except for valid existing rights).

4. MANAGEMENT - The following management considerations apply:

- a. Management of the area will be by DNR, with ADF&G being responsible for management of fish and wildlife resources;
- b. A Management Plan is required to be prepared by DNR with the consultation of ADF&G, and with public review and comment;
- c. The commissioner of DNR may prohibit or restrict incompatible uses, after public review and comment.

DISCUSSION DRAFT

11-2-89

For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area."

SECTION 1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this act is to establish the area described in this act as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. The Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area is established to

(1) manage, protect, and maintain fish and wildlife habitat so that traditional public uses of fish and wildlife populations may continue on a sustained yield basis;

(2) perpetuate and enhance public enjoyment of fish and wildlife and their habitat including fishing, hunting, trapping, viewing, and photography;

(3) perpetuate and enhance remote recreation including camping, boating, cross-country skiing, dogsledding, hiking, flightseeing, snowmobiling, and all-terrain vehicle use, while ensuring the scenic and natural integrity of the area;

(4) perpetuate and enhance continued remote commercial recreation, including air taxi and flightseeing services, lodges, guided hunting and fishing, adventure tours, riverboat charter services, and commercial operations supporting these industries, in a quality environment;

(5) Protect and perpetuate the remote character which has historically attracted people to the area, and upon which present and future recreational uses and community lifestyles depend;

(6) allow additional public uses of the area in a manner compatible with the purposes specified in (1) - (5) of this section.

SECTION 2. MANAGEMENT. (a) Management of the surface and subsurface estate within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area is the responsibility of the commissioner. The commissioner shall adopt and may revise a management plan for the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area after public hearings. With regard to the management of land within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area described in this act, the commissioner shall consult with the Department of Fish and Game in the adoption and revision of the management plan.

(b) The Department of Fish and Game is responsible for the management of fish and wildlife resources and public use of fish and wildlife in the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area consistent with the purposes of this act. Nothing in this act

shall be construed to prohibit the Department of Fish and Game from engaging in protection and maintenance of the fish and wildlife habitat within an area described in this act. The Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fish and Game shall have necessary access for fish and wildlife management, research, and enforcement purposes.

(c) Subject to valid existing rights, the commissioner shall not dispose of the surface estate in state land within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(d) Consistent with the purposes of this act and the management plan adopted under this act, the commissioner may allow the construction and operation of commercial recreation and tourism facilities, by

(1) leasing land under AS 38.05.070; or

(2) contracting for the construction and operation of a facility under AS 36.30 so long as the facility is not in competition with a private facility or enterprise.

(e) Publicly financed and/or maintained roads connected to the public highway system and intended for use by vehicles designed and licensed for highway travel shall not be constructed within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(f) The commissioner shall not dispose of timber under AS 38.05.110 - 38.05.120, AS 41.15, or AS 41.17 within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. The commissioner may permit the harvesting of timber for personal use, including house logs and fuelwood for private or commercial facilities.

(g) Subject to valid existing rights, the commissioner shall not allow for exploration, development, and the extraction of minerals under AS 38.05.135 -- 38.05.275

(h) The commissioner shall give such rights as may be necessary to ensure adequate and feasible access to private lands, existing mining claims, or other valid occupancies within or effectively surrounded by the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. Such access rights shall be subject to regulations to protect the natural and other values of the land and water within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, and does not necessarily mean access by road. The construction of roads to provide access shall not be allowed unless the commissioner determines other modes of access are not adequate or feasible.

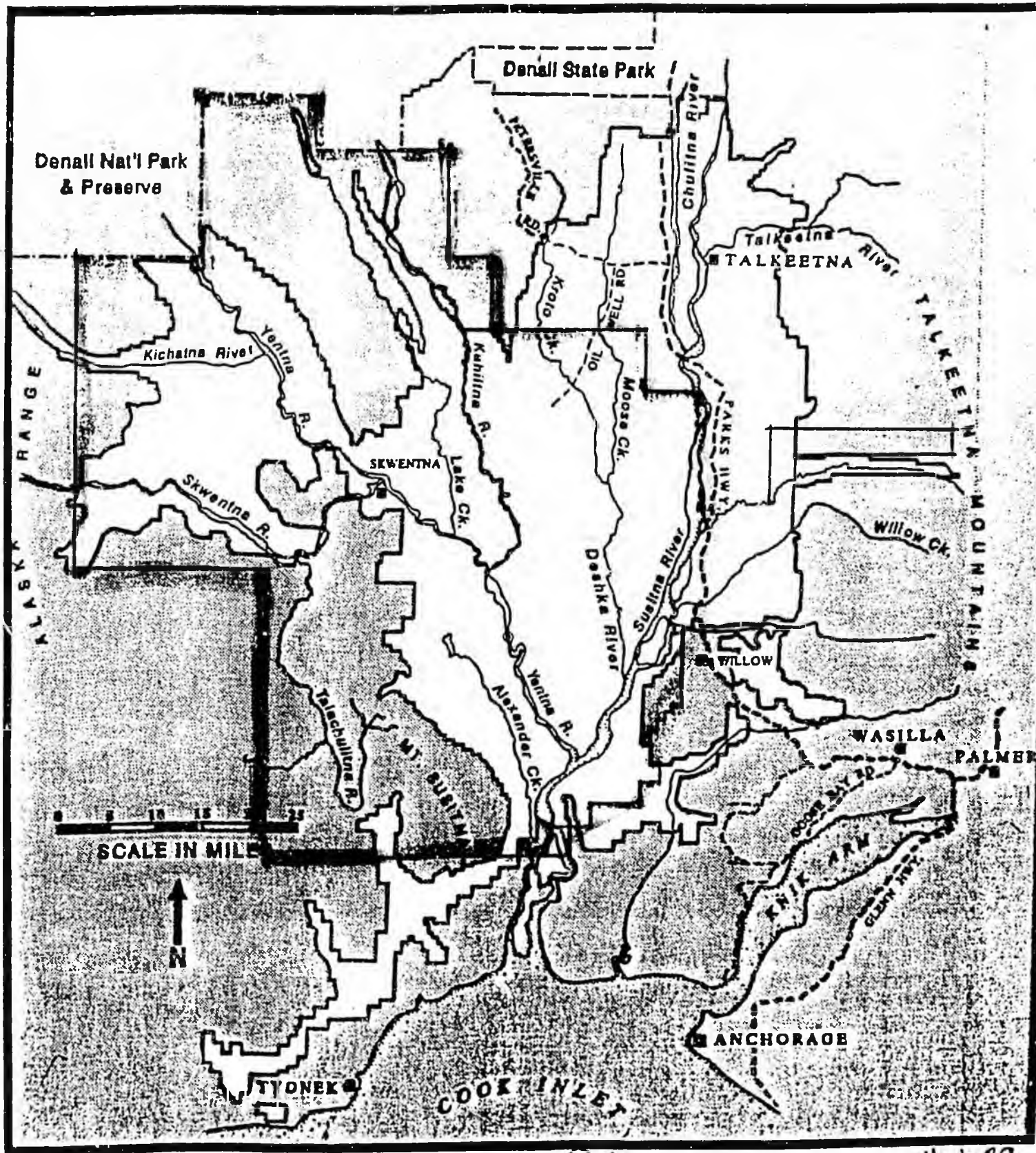
(i) The commissioner shall allow traditional access to the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area by motorized or nonmotorized means of transportation to private land, and interests in private land, and for lawful sport and subsistence hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreational purposes in a manner that is compatible with the purposes specified in this act. The commissioner and the commissioner of fish and game may jointly develop guidelines for traditional access.

(j) Except as provided in this section, the commissioner may not restrict lawful sport and subsistence fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(k) The commissioner may determine a use is incompatible with the purposes of this act only after public hearings. If the commissioner determines that a use is incompatible, the commissioner shall state,

- (1) each determination of incompatibility;
- (2) the specific area where the incompatibility is determined to exist;
- (3) the time within which the incompatibility is determined to exist; and
- (4) the reasons for each determination of incompatibility.

SECTION 3. SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA. The vacant and unappropriated state-owned land and water and the state land and water acquired in the future, excluding the Recreation Rivers and Recreation River Corridors described under AS 41.23.500, that lie within the boundaries described in this section are designated as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, are reserved for all uses compatible with their primary function as public remote recreation land, and are assigned to the commissioner for control and management:



# Legislative Designation Needed To Protect Susitna Valley

Stretching from Cook Inlet on the south to Mt. McKinley on the north, and from the Talkeetna Mountains on the east to the Alaska Range on the west, the Susitna Valley is a vast expanse of lakes, rivers, wetlands, muskeg, meadows and forests rich with wildlife and fish. The area has long been popular for hunting, fishing, boating, skiing, flightseeing, wildlife viewing, and a myriad of other outdoor recreation pursuits. Due to its proximity to the population centers of Southcentral Alaska, the Susitna Valley is used extensively by residents and visitors alike who are seeking, at relatively little expense, the wilderness experience for which Alaska is internationally known.

A significant segment of the economy of Southcentral Alaska relies on these remote recreational and tourism activities in the Susitna Valley. Daily, large numbers of planes leave Lake Hood in Anchorage to ferry recreationists, private property owners, and supplies to wilderness lodges, remote cabins, or favorite fishing holes. Tourists leave their hotels for a day of flightseeing. Boaters put in at Susitna Landing or at the boat ramp in Anch-

orage to access the Big Susitna, Little Susitna, Deshka, Yentna, Skwentna, and Kahiltna Rivers, as well as Alexander and Lake Creeks.

This substantial and growing remote recreation industry pumps tens of millions of dollars into the Alaska economy every year. The 52 wilderness lodges alone contributed approximately \$10 million to the economy in 1987; about 93% of these dollars were brought to the economy in 1987; about 93% of these dollars were brought in from outside of Alaska. Approximately 38 air taxi and flightseeing businesses service the Susitna Valley, with an economic impact estimated at \$13 million annually. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Susitna Valley anglers contributed over \$10.4 million to the Alaskan economy in 1986; in 1987 the area supported a total of 242,850 angler days, with 83.6% of those days spent at lakes and streams with no road access. In 1989, bear and moose hunting could result in as much as \$18.9 million worth of activity according to ADF&G. The value of hotel and motel rooms in

Anchorage occupied in relation to hunting and fishing in the Susitna Valley was \$6,764,580 in 1987. Tour operators also contribute substantially to the economy.

In spite of the economic and cultural importance of the Susitna Valley as a world renowned remote recreation area, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is continuing its pursuit of logging and road-building through the preparation of the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP). Although initiated in response to the overwhelming public opposition to a large timber sale proposal two years ago, the SRFP will provide a blueprint for logging and will sidestep the question of whether logging major portions of the Susitna Valley is consistent with the public interest.

Therefore, the Sierra Club Alaska Chapter has joined with other organizations and individuals of the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) in calling for the legislative designation of a portion of the Valley as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. As envisioned by the SVA, the Remote Recreation Area would provide protection for the Valley's established remote recreation, tourism and subsistence uses by placing certain restrictions on future land disposals by the state, commercial logging, future mining claims, and publicly financed roads connected to the existing highway system within the designated area. Although the exact wording of the bill is still being hammered out, the intent of the proposed legislation is to perpetuate the existing economic base and current use patterns of the Susitna Valley. Legislative designation is the only way in which long term protection of the spectacular remote recreation values of the Susitna Valley can be achieved.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION SERIAL NUMBER 90-09

"A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOROUGH ASSEMBLY OPPOSE SENATE BILL 430 WHICH AUTHORIZES THE CREATION OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA."

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WHEREAS, legislation has been proposed to create a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the State and Borough through an open public planning process adopted the Susitna Area Plan as management guidelines for public lands within the Susitna Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan does not recommend the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 430 subverts the Susitna Area Plan planning process; and

WHEREAS, approximately fifty-five percent of all State lands within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are already classified as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat lands; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will severely retard the State's and Borough's efforts to diversify their economies by halting all forms of development including tourism; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will subvert the rationale for past decisions for selecting lands under the Municipal Lands Entitlement program by rendering the lands selected under this program useless for the uses they were selected for; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will provide an economic windfall to existing property (lodge) owners by restricting competition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough strongly urges the Borough Assembly to oppose the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Planning Commission of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough this 5th day of February, 1990.

ATTEST:

Twila Carney  
Twila Carney  
Planning Clerk

John Duffy  
John Duffy  
Planning Director  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(SEAL)

SB430



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# GABBERT'S CAMP

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February 15, 1990

FEB 26 1990

Senator Fahrenkamp  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau AK 99881

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp,

I spoke to your aide, Nancy, on the telephone on January 29 of this year, to voice my support to SB 430, and to support the current proposals to amend and approve the Forest Practices Act as they are written. I am worried that the proposals will be changed to delete the mandatory buffers on streams. The buffers, 100 feet on all stream, 200 feet on Salmon streams are absolutely essential to the maintainance of the flora and fauna not only where cutting would occur, but downstream of any cutting also.

I have been a resident of Alexander Creek for 8 years, my husband and myself own and operate a sport fishing and hunting lodge that has been in business for 20 years. My lifestyle and my livelihood depend upon the preservation of this area. Clear cutting would be detrimental to the economy of this area, as well as the wildlife habitat.

Please vote YES on SB 430. Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Cathy Gabbert*  
Cathy Gabbert

Paul & Cathy Gabbert & Family  
2nd West Bend  
Alexander Creek, Alaska 99695  
(907) 733-2371

## Briefings

### SUSITNA PLANNING PROJECTS

- DNR Area plans
- Briefing: Susitna and Willow Area Plans
- Briefing: SB 430 (Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area)
- Briefing: Susitna Regional Forest Plan
- Citizens' Advisory Committee for forest plan
- Briefing: Susitna State Recreation Rivers Management Plan
- Susitna Recreation Rivers Plan brochure
- Briefing: Kashwitna Management Plan

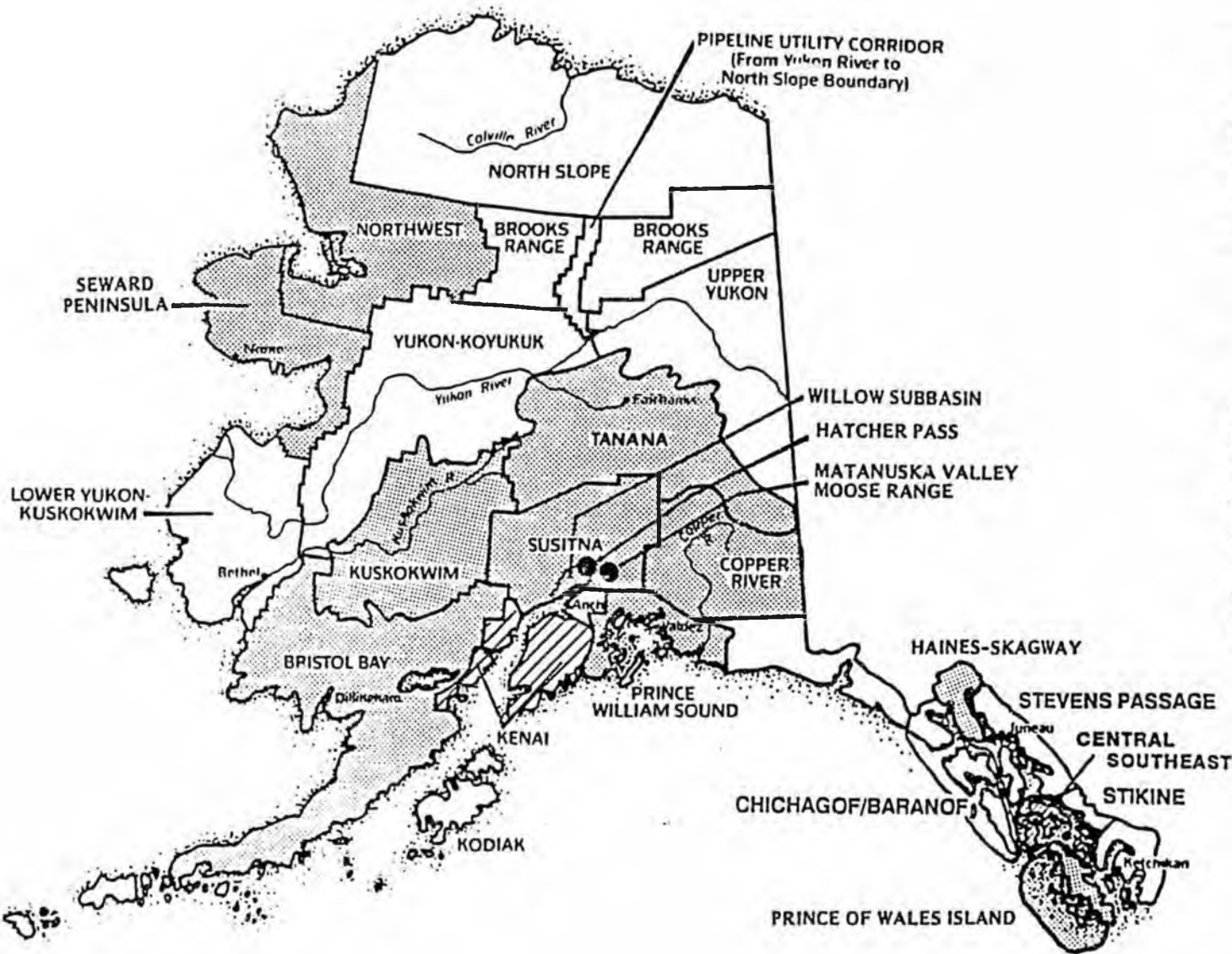
February 15, 1990



ALASKA Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

Figure 3.

# Alaska Department of Natural Resources AREA PLANS



### AREA PLANNING STATUS

- Completed area plans
- Area plans in progress
- Not scheduled for area plans at this time

December, 1989



Alaska Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

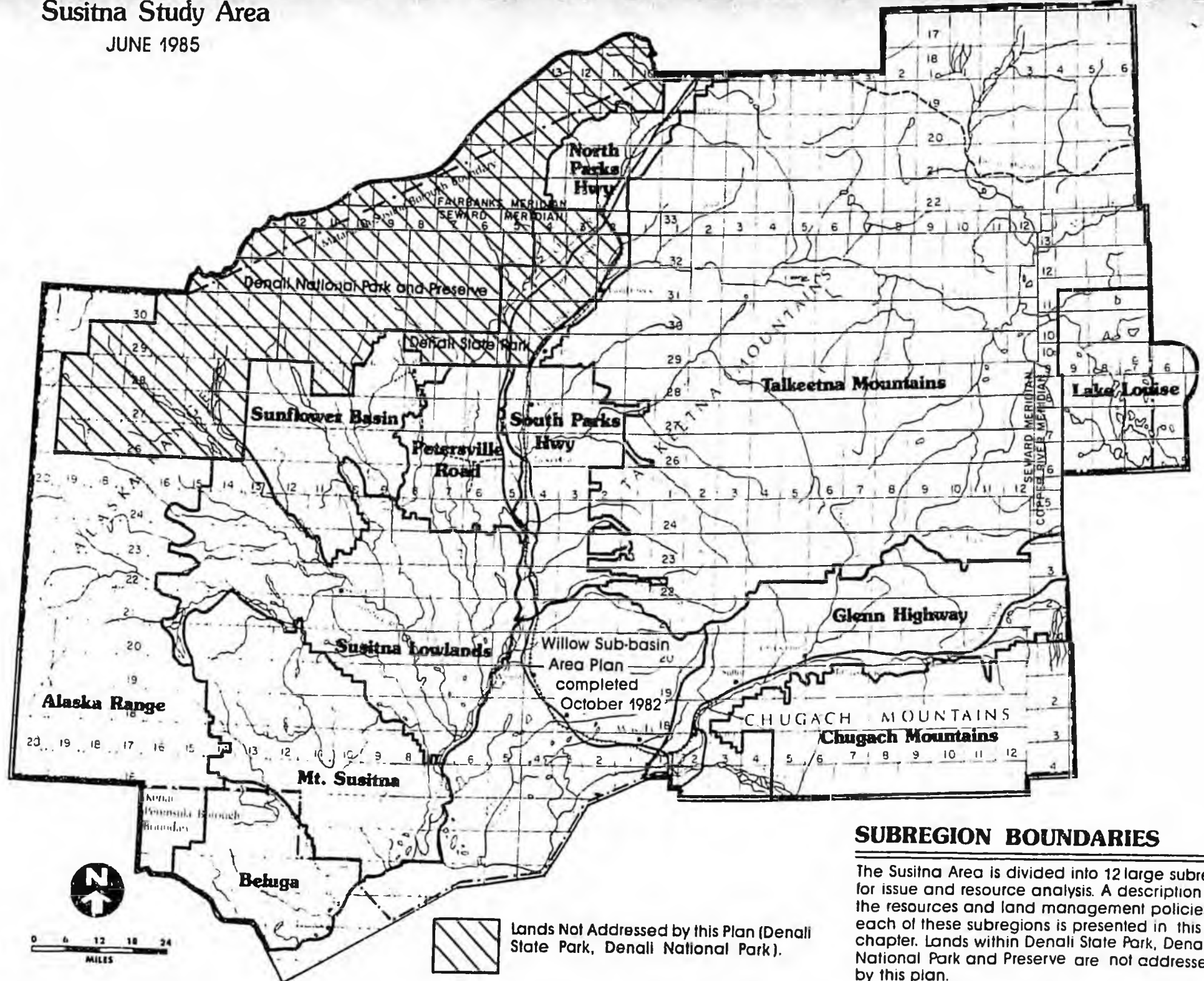
February 12, 1990

## SUSITNA AND WILLOW AREA PLANS

<b>Purposes</b>	Designate main uses of state and borough lands Establish guidelines to ensure that multiple uses occur compatibly Coordinate use of state and borough lands
<b>Area</b>	15.8 million acres of land in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Tyonek areas including: -- 9.5 million acres of state land -- 600 thousand acres of borough land
<b>Process</b>	Issues identified by public and agencies Information gathered by state, borough, and federal agencies Alternatives reviewed by public Draft plan reviewed by agencies Draft plan reviewed by public Final plan adopted by DNR, DFG, and Mat-Su Borough in 1985
<b>Participants</b>	Planning team: DNR, DFG, DOT&PF, Mat-Su Borough Cooperating agencies: USDA Soil Conservation Service, BLM, Kenai Borough Public: 40 public meetings, written + oral comments, meetings with groups
<b>Major Decisions</b>	Designated primary and secondary land uses Established land use guidelines to keep multiple uses compatible Identified 105,000 acres for future disposals Identified 50,000 acres for agriculture, including agric. homesteads Established stream, lake, trail, and wetland buffers in land disposal areas Identified areas open to new mineral entry and leasehold location; closes lands along some streams and sensitive habitats to mineral entry Recommended State Recreation Rivers (adopted), Nelchina Public Use Area (adopted), Susitna State Forest (HB 356 in committee), and legislative designation of trumpeter swan nesting areas, Susitna-Yentna Public Use Area, addition to Susitna Game Flats, and recreation sites. Recommended transportation corridors to support land use designations Classified land as required by AS 38.04.065 Established process for modifying the plan
<b>Update Process</b>	Plans are updated about every five years. The first update for the Susitna Area Plan is scheduled to begin in 1990. The Susitna and Willow plans will be combined during the update. The update process will be done with the interagency planning team and public review.  The process will review guidelines, land use designations, legislative recommendations, and proposed settlement and agriculture areas to determine where changes are needed. It will also update land status and develop guidelines for commercial leasing.

# Susitna Study Area

JUNE 1985



## SUBREGION BOUNDARIES

The Susitna Area is divided into 12 large subregions for issue and resource analysis. A description of the resources and land management policies for each of these subregions is presented in this chapter. Lands within Denali State Park, Denali National Park and Preserve are not addressed by this plan.

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT HAS  
NOT BEEN FILMED BUT IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE ORIGINAL  
FILE

# Susitna Area Plan




## PRIMARY SURFACE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

This map shows generalized land use designations. Only the primary surface designations are shown. The primary uses are not the only uses that will be permitted; the large majority of publicly retained lands are multiple use areas where a variety of other uses, including mining, are allowed. Information on the management of subsurface resources including boundaries of areas open and closed to mining are shown on the Subsurface Designation Map. See also Chapter 2 for land management guidelines that apply to the whole planning area and Chapter 3 for a complete statement of management intent for each location.



### LEGEND

#### LAND SALE AREAS






##### SETTLEMENT

-  Past State Subdivision Sales and Remote Parcel Offerings  
In these areas most land suitable for development has already been sold.
-  Other Past State Remote Parcel Offerings  
In these areas a large portion of the developable land is available for additional settlement
-  Future State and Borough Land Disposals

##### AGRICULTURE



-  Past State and Borough Agricultural Sales
-  Future State and Borough Agricultural Sales

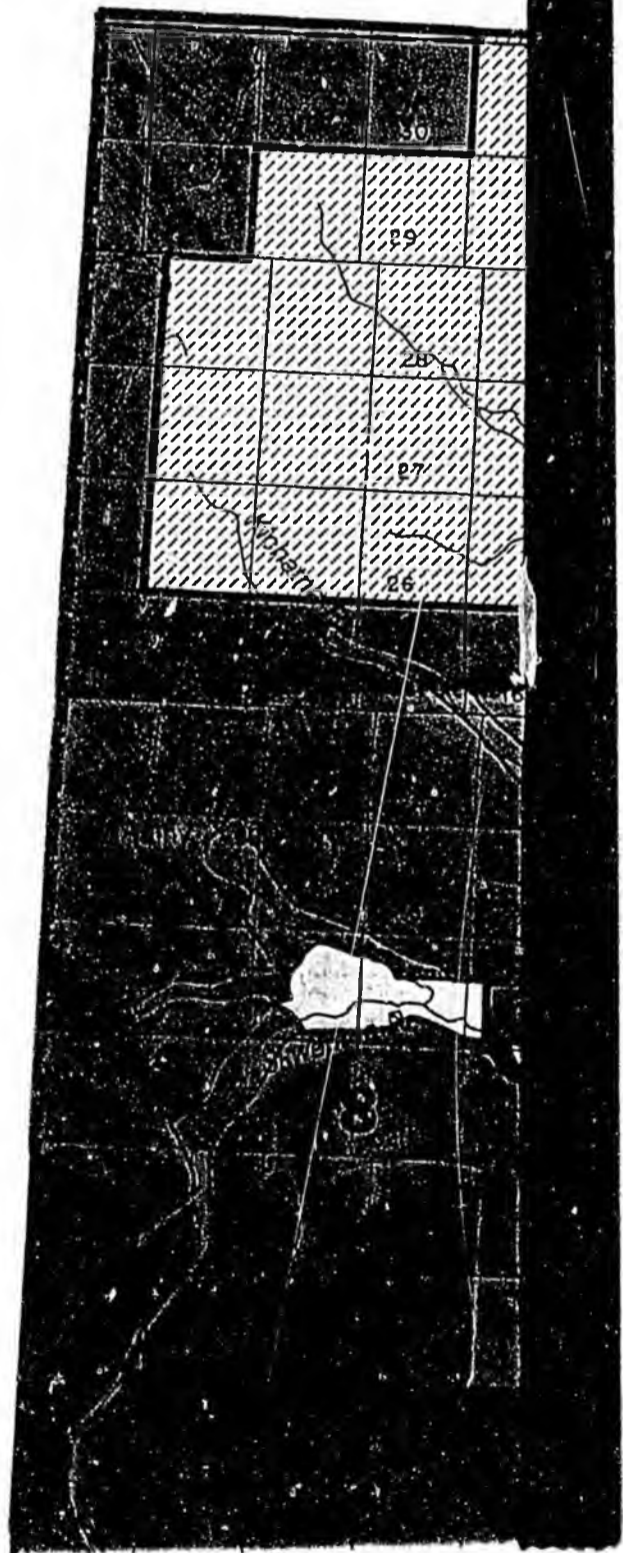
#### PUBLIC LANDS

-  Forestry/Public Recreation/Water Resources/Wildlife Habitat
-  Public Recreation/Water Resources/Wildlife Habitat
-  Areas With a Surface Land Use Designation of Minerals, Oil and Gas or Coal.  
These types of designations can be applied either as the only designation in an area or in addition to any other surface designations
-  Areas Designated by the Legislative for Special Uses
-  Areas Proposed by this Plan for Legislative or Administrative Designation for Special Uses (e.g., state forests, recreation rivers, wildlife refuges)  
Only the top priority areas are shown on this map. See Chapter 4 for a full list of all such areas.

#### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND LAND BANK AREAS

Resource management (high value) and borough land bank lands are, respectively, state and borough lands with multiple values including agriculture, settlement, forestry, fish and wildlife and recreation. In the near term these areas will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use including forestry, wildlife habitat, recreation and mining. In the future they will be evaluated to determine their best long term use. Resource management (low value) lands are areas with no identified high value resources.

-  Resource Management (High Value)
-  Resource Management (Low Value)



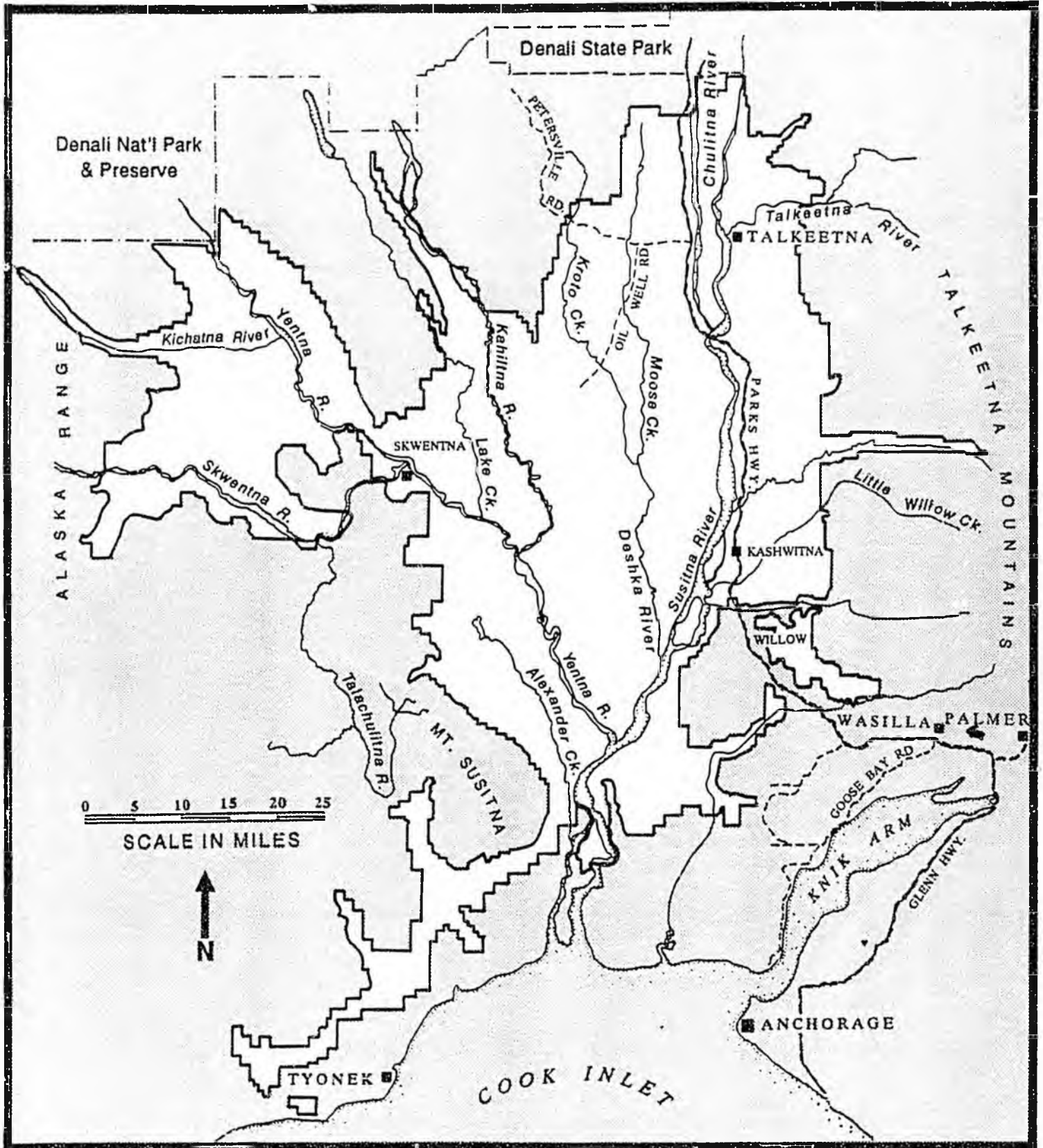


Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Land and Water Mgmt.  
Land and Resources Section  
Box 107005, Anchorage, Alaska 99510 • 907-762-2660

February 12, 1990

- Purposes** Determine the areas available for timber harvesting  
Set the rules for timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley  
Determine the volume of timber available for harvest
- Area** 2 million acres total area in the lowlands of the Susitna basin and Tyonek area  
1 million acres of state land with designations allowing timber harvest  
400,000 acres of designated state forest land with mixed forests, cottonwood, or closed white spruce forest
- Process** Issues identified winter 1988  
Planning begun spring 1988  
Data collection summer, fall, winter 1988  
Develop regional guidelines 1989  
Develop site-specific guidelines winter 1990 - **CURRENT STEP**  
Public review of draft proposal spring 1990  
Final plan summer 1990
- Participants** Planning team  
DNR Forestry, Land & Water, Parks, Agriculture  
Dept. of Fish and Game  
Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities  
Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Technical advisors -- US Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Citizens' Advisory Committee -- representatives of 80 interest groups, local governments, corporations, and legislative offices
- General public -- meetings on issues and draft proposals, newsletters, briefings to interest groups, phone calls and letters
- Major Issues** Rules for timber harvesting  
Fish and wildlife habitat and water quality  
Recreation, tourism, and scenery  
Access development  
Coordination with adjacent landowners  
Public involvement
- Current Step** Regional guidelines on habitat, recreation, cultural resources, access, and landowner issues are drafted. Planning team is developing guidelines for site-specific issues. Draft plan will be presented to the public in spring 1990.

# SUSITNA REGIONAL FOREST PLAN BOUNDARY



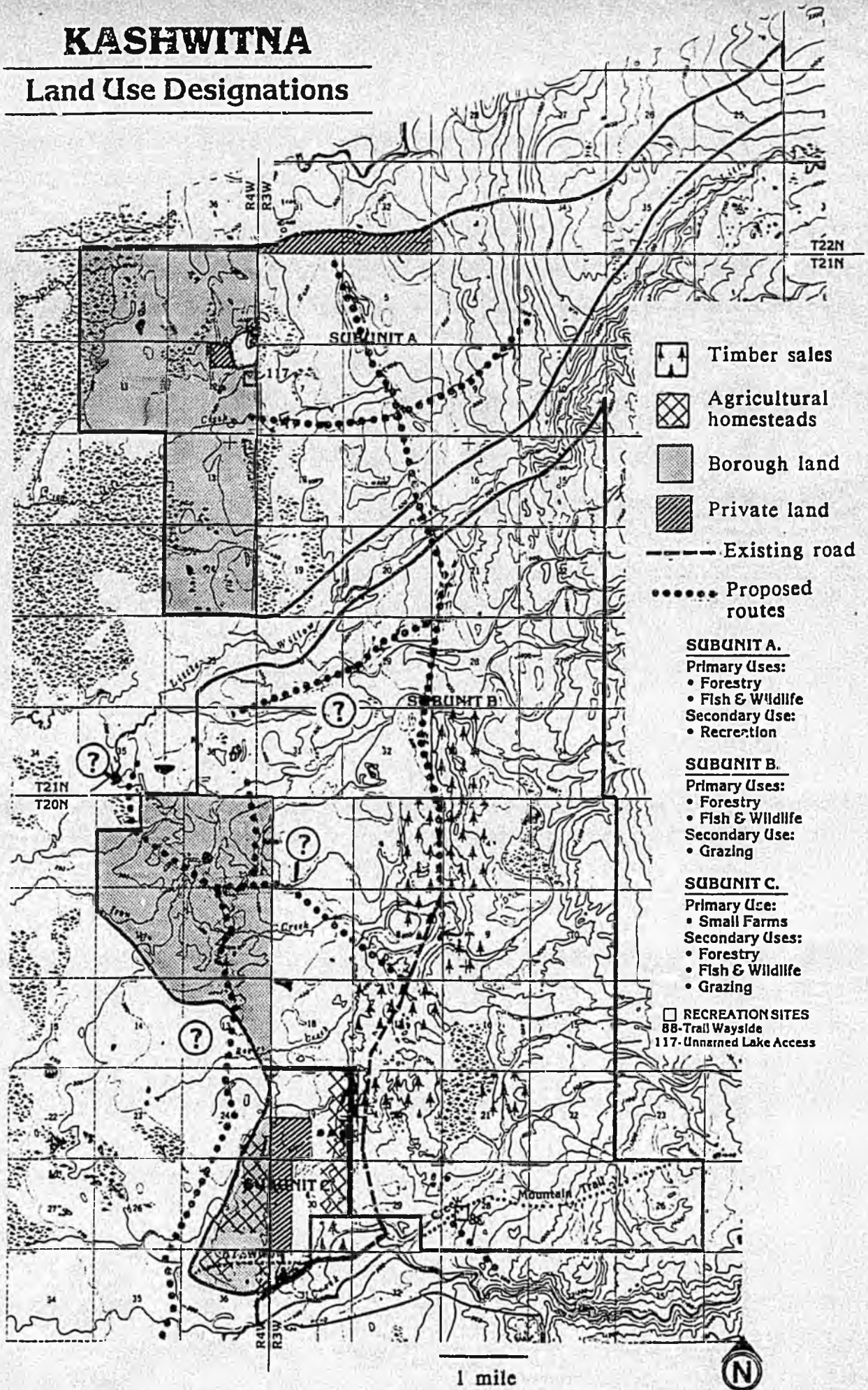
February 12, 1990

## KASHWITNA MANAGEMENT PLAN

<b>Purposes</b>	Required by Willow Subbasin Area Plan to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Schedule timber and farm sales</li><li>2. Design roads</li><li>3. Minimize conflicts between land uses.</li></ol>
<b>Area</b>	Lowlands between Willow Creek (Hatcher Pass road) and Kashwitna River Approximately 21,000 acres of state land, 6,500 acres of borough land, and 700 acres of private land.
<b>Process</b>	Issues identified by Willow Subbasin plan Information gathered through Susitna Regional Forest Plan Resolution of issues begun October 1989 Agency review draft - <b>CURRENT STEP</b> Public review of draft plan spring 1990 Final plan June 1990
<b>Partici- pants</b>	Same groups as for Susitna Regional Forest Plan Planning team: DNR, DFG, DOT, DEC, Mat-Su Borough Citizens' Advisory Committee with representatives of 80 interest groups General public will review plan at public meetings in spring 1990
<b>Major Proposals</b>	<u>Access</u> Routes for main N-S road and year-round road access to borough lands and agricultural homestead areas Routes for temporary access to timber harvest areas Routes for ATV access to Willow Mt. Critical Habitat Area Summer ATV use on designated trails only  <u>Agriculture and timber sales</u> Eight agricultural homesteads proposed for sale in 1991 Existing timber sales will continue; additional sales will be scheduled through the DNR 5-year timber sale schedule No timber harvest within 500' of main road; selective cutting only within 1/4-mile of main road Susitna Regional Forest Plan guidelines will apply  <u>Recreation</u> Recreation study of boating and fishing prior to bridging Little Willow Creek Recreation sites on northern lake and southern ATV trailhead  <u>Grazing</u> Guidelines to keep grazing compatible with wildlife habitat and forestry
<b>Next Step</b>	Summarize agency and advisory committee comments and hold public meetings

# KASHWITNA

## Land Use Designations

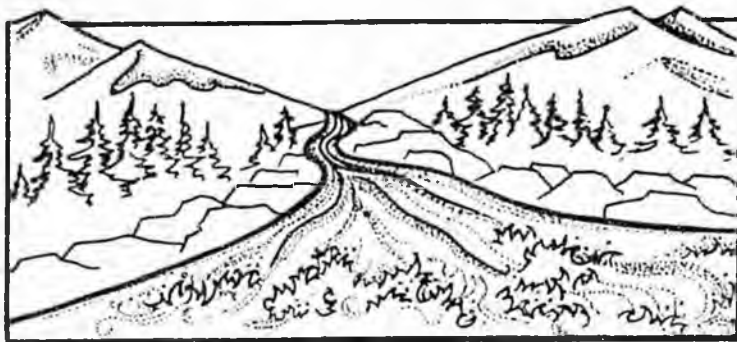


# Susitna Regional Forest Plan - Citizens' Advisory Committee

Record#	FIRST	LASTNAME	ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE ZIP
	CHARLIE	AKERS	FISH & GAME ADV COUN	PO BOX 1	PALMER	AK 99645
	JUDITH	ANDREGG	SUSITNA VALLEY ST PARK	CITIZEN'S ADV BOARD	BOX 1472	PALMER AK 99645
	WALT	BEGALKA	ALASKA LOGGERS ASSOC	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BUX 6600	KETCHIKAN AK 99901
	GREG	BELL	AK LOGGERS ASSOC	VALLEY SAWMILL	6231 OLD SEWARD HWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	DUKE	BERTKE	SUSITNA VALLEY LODGE	OPERATOR'S ASSN	4801 AIRCRAFT DR	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	TROY	BLAYLOCK	YEN-SU PROP OWNERS		5208 COPE ST	ANCHORAGE AK 99518
	G G "JERRY"	BOOTH	BOARD OF FORESTRY		139 E 51ST AVE	ANCHORAGE AK 99505
	TERRY	BRADY	ALASKA HUSKY WOOD		2900 BONIFACE #672	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	WALTER	BRIGGS	COOK INLET REG	PLANNING TEAM	8820 BANJO CIRCLE	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	DANA	BROCKWAY EXEC DIR	AK VISITORS ASSN		PO BOX 102220	ANCHORAGE AK 99510
	MIKE	BRONSON	WASILLA CHAPTER	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN.	PO BOX 2176	PALMER AK 99645
	WAYNE	BURKHART PRES	MAT-SU CONV & VIS BUREAU		191 EAST SWANSON	WASILLA AK 99687
	GEORGE	CARTE'	MAYOR CITY OF PALMER		231 W EVERGREEN	PALMER AK 99645
	JIM	CARTER	WASILLA CHAM OF COMMERCE		PO BOX 286	WILLOW AK 99688
	DAVE	CLINE VICE-PRES	NATL AUDCBON SOC	AK REG OFFICE	308 G ST SUITE 219	ANCHORAGE AK 99501
	JOE AND NORMA	DELIA	SKWENTNA COMM ASSOC		SKWENTNA	AK 99667
	DENNIS	DEVORE	CHASE AREA REP		PO BOX 362	TALKEETNA AK 99767
	GENE	DICKASON	ROLEJO LAKE ASSOC		3130 LOCHWOOD CIR	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	JACK	DICKERSON	MAT VALLEY SPORTSMEN		PO BOX 712	PALMER AK 99654
	CARL	DIXON	RIVERSONG LODGE		SKWENTNA	AK 99667
	DAN	DORRAN	REDCOR	C/O ALAGCO	SRB 7814	PALMER AK 99645
	BILL	DUGDALE PRES	AK HOTEL AND MOTEL ASSC		PO BOX 104900	ANCHORAGE AK 99510
	PAULA	EASLEY	DEPT OF DEV & PLANNING	MUNI OF ANCHORAGE	PO BOX 196650	ANCHORAGE AK 99519
	BILL	EASTHAM	MAT-SU MOTOR MUSHERS		HCO-3 BOX 8286	PALMER AK 99645
	RUTH	EDMONDSON EXE DIR	COALITION FOR BOREAL	FOREST DEV	6821 SHERWOOD AVENUE	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	JOHN	EVANS	TYONEK NATIVE CORP		4433 LAKE OTIS PKWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99507
	JOE	EVANS	BOARD OF FORESTRY		4741 SO PARK BLUFF DR	ANCHORAGE AK 99516
	LOREN	FLAGG	KENAI PENIN FISHER ASSN		BOX 546	SOLDOTNA AK 99669
	DIANE	FRANK	TOKOSHA CITIZEN'S COUN		2224 TURNAGAIN PKWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99517
	CHRIS	GOLL	AK PROF SPORTFISHING ASSN		4127 RASBERRY ROAD	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	REP MARY	GRISCO	SIERRA CLUB AK CHAPTER		PO BOX 202045	ANCHORAGE AK 99520
	ROBERT E	HARRIS	DEPT ADMINISTRATOR	CITY OF WASILLA	290 E HERNING AVE	WASILLA AK 99687
	GENE	JENNE	TALKEETNA CHAMBER OF COM		TALKEETNA	AK 99676

DOROTHY	JONES MAYOR	MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH		PO BOX B	PALMER	AK	99645
SUSIE	KAISER	COOK INLET COALITION		PO BOX 110381	ANCHORAGE	AK	99511
STEVE	KALLICK ASSOC DIR	SE AK CONSER COUNCIL	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BOX 021692	JUNEAU	AK	99802
CAL	KERR	KERR AND ASSOCIATES		PO BOX 111293	ANCHORAGE	AK	99511
DR DAVID	LAW	ALASKA FLYFISHERS		300 E FIREWEED	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
GARY	LEE	BOARD OF FORESTRY		C/O DOYON 201 1ST AVE	FAIRBANKS	AK	99701
DEAN	LITTLEPAGE	IDITAROD NATL HIST TRAIL	ADV COMMITTEE	PO BOX 230983	ANCHORAGE	AK	99523
BOB	LOESCHER CEO	SEALASKA CORP	BOARD OF FORESTRY	1 SEALASKA PLAZA STE 200	JUNEAU	AK	99801
ROBERT	LOISELLE PRES	KLUKWAN FOR PROD INC	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BOX 2077	JUNEAU	AK	99803
BECKY	LONG	AK SURVIVAL		BOX 344	TALKEETHA	AK	99686
RON	MCNEESE	MAT-SU PROP OWNERS ASSOC		PO BOX 128	PALMER	AK	99645
PEPPER	MERCURIO	UPPER COOK INLET DRIFT	ASSOC	HC 2 BOX 550	KASILOF	AK	99610
JAMES	HINTON	FLAT HORN LAKE ASSN		PO BOX 190121	ANCHORAGE	AK	99519
MARCELLA P	PADIE	MAYOR CITY OF HOUSTON		PO BOX 940027	HOUSTON	AK	99694
ROSE	PALMQUIST	MAT-SU BOROUGH ASSEMBLY	MAT-SU BOROUGH	PO BOX 1608	PALMER	AK	99645
JEFF	PARKER PRES	WILDLIFE FEDERATION OF AK		3111 C STREET	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
JOHN	PECKHAM	BOARD OF FORESTRY		BOX 9579	KETCHIKAN	AK	99901
LARRY	PEET	BIG LAKE CHAMBER OF COMM		PO BOX 520067	BIG LAKE	AK	99652
ANDY	PENYAK	AK BOATING ASSOC		9608 DINAAKA DRIVE	EAGLE RIVER	AK	99577
MIKE	PERYAM	AK FRONTIER TRAPPERS ASSN		#C 32 BOX 6637 B	WASILLA	AK	99687
DREW	PESNELL	KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		PO BOX 240225	ANCHORAGE	AK	99524
ART	PETERSEN	UPPER SUSITNA SOIL &	WATER CONSERVATION DIST	HC BOX 562	WILLOW	AK	99688
ALAN	PHIPPS STATE LNDS DIR	AK CENTER FOR THE ENV		700 H STREET SUITE 4	ANCHORAGE	AK	99501
JOHN W	PICKERING	KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		PO BOX 240225	ANCHORAGE	AK	99524
TAMMY	PITTS	BIG LAKE CHAMBER OF COMM		PO BOX 520067	BIG LAKE	AK	99652
RUSS	REDICK	AK SPORTFISHING ASSN		3605 ARCTIC BLVD #800	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
LOISANN	REEDER PRES	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN		9600 SLALOM DR	ANCHORAGE	AK	99516
JIM	RICHARDSON	COOK INLET CHAPTER	AK SOC OF AM FORESTERS	3339 WENTWORTH	ANCHORAGE	AK	99508
CINDY	ROBERTS EXEC OFF	WORLD TRADE CENTER ANCH		2001 CHURCHILL DRIVE	ANCHORAGE	AK	99517
ANN	ROTHE	NATL WILDLIFE FEDERATION	AK REG OFFICE	19049 WHIRLWAY ROAD	EAGLE RIVER	AK	99577
SUSAN	RUDDY	NATURE CONSERVANCY THE	AK FIELD OFFICE	601 W 5TH STE 550	ANCHORAGE	AK	99501
HENRY	RUST	AK AIR CARRIERS ASSN	C/O RUST'S FLYING SER	PO BOX 190325	ANCHORAGE	AK	99519
GEORGE	SAMPSON	BOARD OF FORESTRY		119 GRUENING WAY	FAIRBANKS	AK	99712
JIM	SEELY	ROLEJO L ASSN		4340 SEELEY CT	ANCHORAGE	AK	99502
ROBERTA	SHELDON	TALKEETHA CHAPTER	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN	PO BOX 292	TALKEETHA	AK	99676
TED	SMITH	MAT-SU ASSEMBLY	BOARD OF FORESTRY	PO BOX 1026	WILLOW	AK	99688
LARRY	SMITH	SC REG COUN OF FISH &	GAME ADV COMM		FRITZ CREEK	AK	99603
RON	SOMERVILLE	AK OUTDOOR COUNCIL		3780 MCGINNIS DR	JUNEAU	AK	99801
JOHN	SPALDING	AK AIRMAN'S ASSN		6445 IMLACH WAY	ANCHORAGE	AK	99502

DONALD	STANDIFER	TYONEK NATIVE CORP		4433 LAKE OTIS PKWY	ANCHORAGE	AK	99807
JOEL	STEFANSKI	MAT-SU LOGGERS ASSN		HC01 BOX 6031A	PALMER	AK	99645
JOHN	STURGEON	KONCOR	BOARD OF FORESTRY	3501 DENALI STE 202	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
JIM	SYKES	CHASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL		309 GAYLENE CIR	ANCHORAGE	AK	99504
JOHN	THOMAS	BOARD OF FORESTRY		BOX 8282	KETCHIKAN	AK	99901
DICK	TINDALL	RESOURCE DEVELOP COUNCIL		PO BOX 100516	ANCHORAGE	AK	99510
BILL	TULL	PALMER CHAMBER OF COM		634 S BAILY STE 201	PALMER	AK	99645
CYNTHIA	WATSON PRES	GREATER WASILLA CHAMBER	OF COMMERCE	PO BOX 871826	WASILLA	AK	99687
JACK	WILLIS	SUSITNA BASIN CHARTER APT	C/O AK REC SER	HC 32 BOX 6525-75	WASILLA	AK	99687
RON	WOLFE	KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		PO BOX 34659	JUNEAU	AK	99803
DICK	ZOBEL CHAIRMAN	WASILLA SOIL & WATER	CONSERV DIST	2640 WASILLA-FISHOOK RD	WASILLA	AK	99687



## Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

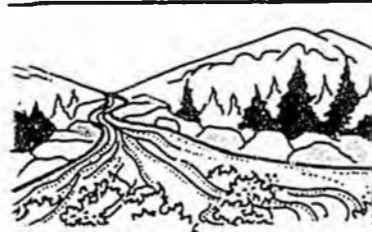
Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Land and Resource Section

### Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

- Purpose** To decide how to manage state land and water in corridors along six recreation rivers: Little Susitna River, Deshka River (including Moose and Kroto creeks), Talkeetna River, Lake Creek, Talachulitna River, and Alexander Creek.
- Area** 260,000 acres and 460 river miles along six river systems  
238,000 acres of state-owned land and water  
15,000 acres of borough-owned land  
2,700 acres private land
- Schedule** Issues identified winter (1988-1989)  
Data collection and draft resource assessment written (summer 1989)  
Public reviews alternatives (winter 1989)  
Agencies review draft plan (summer 1990)  
Public reviews draft plan (fall 1990)  
Final plan (winter 1990)  
Legislature reviews plan (winter, spring 1991)
- Participation** Planning team: representatives from Dept. of Natural Resources divisions of Land & Water, Parks, Forestry, Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Geological & Geophysical Surveys, and Mining; Dept. of Fish and Game; Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities; Dept. of Environmental Conservation; Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and City of Houston
- Technical advisors: National Park Service
- Citizens' advisory board: 11 members appointed by the governor's office representing user groups; 2 members appointed by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough
- General public: 3 rounds of public meetings, meetings with interest groups, letters and phone calls
- Major Issues** Levels of allowable development, including lodges, airstrips, and seasonal tentcamps  
Access, including boating, roads, and off-road vehicles  
Public facilities, including campgrounds and day use areas  
Implementation, including user fees, project priorities, field staff, enforcement, and additional regulations
- Current Step** Public reviews alternatives in series of eight public meetings. Comments will assist planning team and advisory board in developing an agency review draft plan by May, 1990

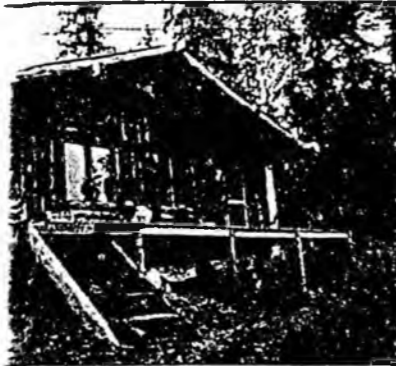
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AVAILABLE IN THE ORIGINAL  
FILE

# Susitna Basin



## Recreation Rivers Management Plan

Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Resource Allocation Section  
3601 C Street  
Pouch 10-7005  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7005



### Introduction

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is preparing a management plan for state-owned land and water in southcentral Alaska. The purpose of the plan is to manage state land and water located in corridors along six recreation rivers: Little Susitna River (including Moose and Kroto creeks), Lake Creek, Talachulitna River, and Lake Creek. Anyone interested in these areas is encouraged to participate in the planning process.

The waters in the recreation rivers corridors are entirely state owned. Most of the land is state or borough owned. However, there are scattered private parcels of land that date back to the state open-to-entry and Bureau of Land Management homesteading programs. Large-scale state and borough land sale areas are not included in the river corridors.

Management Area.....	266,470 acres
State owned.....	240,910 acres
Borough owned.....	21,260 acres
Private.....	4,300 acres



### Why do we need a plan?

In 1983, the Alaska legislature passed the Recreation Rivers Act. This act established six "recreation rivers" and placed them in public ownership in perpetuity, with a general management intent. The purposes of the plan are maintenance and enhancement of recreation in the corridors for recreation; management and maintenance of fish and wildlife resources on a sustained yield basis; con-

### How will the plan be done?

The Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan will take about two and one-half years to prepare. It will be developed by a planning team and an advisory board.

The planning team includes representatives from state agencies that manage state resources, including the departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Game, Environmental Conservation, and Transportation and Public

### Steps in the process

1. **Identify Issues**  
Hold public meetings to identify issues and concerns in the river corridors. (December 1988)
2. **Gather Information**  
Collect information about natural resources, present and past land use, land ownership, and the local economy. (Occurs throughout planning process)
3. **Develop Draft Plan**  
Develop a draft plan based on information gathered. (Summer 1989)
4. **Public Reviews Draft Plan**  
Hold public meetings to provide the public the opportunity to comment on the draft plan and identify parts that need to be changed. (Summer 1990)
5. **Prepare Final Plan**  
Review agency and public comments and revise the plan. The plan is prepared for publication. (Fall 1990)

# Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

The Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan includes corridors approximately one-mile wide along six rivers. The corridors include scattered parcels resulting from past state and federal dispersed land sale programs. The corridors exclude large blocks of private land resulting from concentrated state and borough land sales.

