

HB446

file

(11)

HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT  
FURTHER REFERRALS:

Date Referred: February 28, 1992

Date of Committee Action: 3/2/92

The FINANCE Committee considered:

HB 446

HOUSE BILL NO. 446

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TAG AND FEE

"An Act relating to the wildlife conservation tag and to entry onto state game and wildlife sanctuaries, state game refuges, state range areas, and fish and game critical habitat areas; and providing for an effective date."

RECOMMENDATIONS: [ ] the same title  
be replaced with CS HB 446 (RES) [ ] a new title

[ ] have attached amendments(s)

[x] do pass

[ ] do not pass

[ ] no recommendations

[ ] individual recommendations

[ ] additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

ADOPTS: \_\_\_\_\_ letter of Intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S): (Dept)

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Dept/Date)

[ ] fiscal impact \_\_\_\_\_

[x] fiscal note(s) FISH game 2/28/92

[ ] zero fiscal note \_\_\_\_\_

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

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	DNP	NR	AM
<i>J. Ulmer</i> Ulmer	x	<i>Thomas Barnes</i> Barnes		x	
<i>Mark Boyer</i> Boyer	✓	<i>Bob Phillips</i> Phillips		✓	
<i>Tammy Brown</i> BROWN	✓	<i>Bob Sharp</i> Sharp		✓	
<i>Thomas Koponen</i> Koponen	✓	<i>Ed Mallean</i> Mallean		x	
<i>Greg Jacko</i> JACKO	✓				
<i>Mike Navarre</i> NAVARRE	✓				

*Mike Navarre S.D.A.*

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 446 (RESOURCES)  
IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA  
SEVENTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Offered: 2/28/92  
Referred: Finance

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES ULMER, Grussendorf, Koponen

A BILL  
FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act relating to the wildlife conservation tag and to entry onto state game and  
2 wildlife sanctuaries, state game refuges, state range areas, and fish and game critical  
3 habitat areas; and providing for an effective date."

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

5 \* Section 1. FINDINGS. The legislature finds that

6 (1) the diversity of wildlife species in Alaska and the size of Alaska make wildlife  
7 management extremely expensive;

8 (2) the growth in Alaska's human population has placed pressure upon wildlife habitat  
9 and wildlife populations and has increased demand for use and appreciation of wildlife;

10 (3) the Board of Game and other resource management agencies need current, accurate  
11 wildlife population and human use data for regulatory and planning purposes;

12 (4) the quality and extent of wildlife information provided by the Department of Fish and  
3 Game have a direct effect on the types and levels of human use of wildlife that are allowed;

4 (5) the cause of wildlife conservation would benefit from money generated by a wildlife

1 sanctuaries, state game refuges, state range areas, and fish and game critical habitat areas where  
2 possession of a valid hunting license may substitute during open hunting seasons for a wildlife  
3 conservation tag.

4 (f) The revenue received from the sale of wildlife conservation tags may be appropriated  
5 by the legislature to the department for programs that benefit nongame species of wildlife,  
6 threatened and endangered species of wildlife, wildlife education, and wildlife viewing. In this  
7 subsection,

8 (1) "nongame species" means a species of wildlife that may not be taken under  
9 a hunting or trapping license; and

10 (2) "wildlife" means a species of bird, amphibian, reptile, or mammal, including  
11 a feral domestic animal, found or introduced into the state, except domestic birds and mammals.

12 (g) The department may contract with a person to perform the responsibilities of the  
13 department under this section to provide a wildlife conservation tag. Contracting under this  
14 subsection is governed by AS 36.30 (State Procurement Code), except that a contract may include  
15 provisions for advance payment or reimbursement for services performed under the contract.

16 \* Sec. 4. AS 16.20.130 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

17 (b) A person may not enter the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary without having in  
18 the person's possession a proof of purchase of a wildlife conservation tag.

19 \* Sec. 5. AS 16.20.150 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

20 (e) A person may not enter the Stan Price State Wildlife Sanctuary without having in the  
21 person's possession a proof of purchase of a wildlife conservation tag.

22 \* Sec. 6. AS 16.20.170 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

23 (b) A person may not enter the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary without having in  
24 the person's possession a proof of purchase of a wildlife conservation tag.

25 \* Sec. 7. This Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. CSHB 446(res)  
*published 2-28-92*

Revision Date: 2/25/92

Department Affected: Fish and Game

Title: An Act relating to the wildlife conservation tag and sanctuary entry

BRU: Wildlife Conservation

Sponsor: Representative Ulmer

Component: Wildlife Conservation

Requestor: House Resources

COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 

0	4	7	3
---	---	---	---

Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES	4.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL	5.9	5.9	5.6	5.9	6.2	6.4
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	10.4	9.4	8.1	9.4	9.7	9.9

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

REVENUE FUND SOURCE: 1004	37.0	45.0	50.0	55.0	60.0	65.0
------------------------------	------	------	------	------	------	------

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	10.4	9.4	8.1	9.4	9.7	9.9
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER FUND SOURCE:						
TOTAL	10.4	9.4	8.1	9.4	9.7	9.9

POSITIONS:

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

Estimate of current year impact: No FY92 impact.

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

See attached page.

Prepared By: Diana Ground Phone: 465-4190

Division: Division of Wildlife Conservation Date: 2/25/92

Approved by Commissioner: *Steve Amurville* for

Agency: Department of Fish and Game Date: 2/25/92

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. Fin., Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB/DBR, Gov. Legis. OSC., & Impacted Agency(ies).

FISCAL ANALYSIS of CSHB 446(res)

The bill analysis is based on the following assumptions:

1. the fee for the wildlife conservation tag is \$10.00.
2. voluntary sales will start at 500/annum; double in the second year; and increase by 20 percent annually through FY98.
3. sales of tags to visitors at Round Island (Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary) will remain constant at 200/annum; at Pack Creek at 1000/annum; and applicants for McNeil Sanctuary viewing permits will increase from 2000 to 3500/annum through FY98.
4. half of all tags sold will be by license vendors with the other half sold by state agency offices.

No new positions will be required for this program. In the first year (FY93) approximately .2 man-months of an existing Wildlife Biologist position will be needed to establish the program; thereafter 1.5 man-months will be needed to continue the program. In addition, .5 man-months of a Data Processing Clerk I position will be necessary to handle application requests, fill orders from vendors, etc. Other operating costs will be for printing of the tags, distribution to vendors, promotional materials.

Revenue to fund this program would consist of program receipts.

# Alaska State Legislature

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



### REPRESENTATIVE FRAN ULMER

MEMORANDUM

February 28, 1992

TO: All Members  
House Finance Committee

FROM: Rep. Fran Ulmer

RE: CSHB 446 (Resources) - "wildlife conservation tags"

-----  
HB 446 is on the Consent Agenda for Monday, March 2, 1992. Revenues generated under this legislation would come from program receipts.

HB 446 would accomplish the following:

- \* allow the sale of wildlife conservation tags for visiting the state's game refuges, sanctuaries and other areas.
- \* allow the production of a patch, stamp, decal or other emblem to be sold with each tag, so visitors can show they're supporting wildlife conservation in Alaska.
- \* require that the money from the sale of the conservation tags would be earmarked for wildlife conservation purposes.
- \* require permits for entry to the Stan Price Sanctuary, the MacNeil River Sanctuary, and the Walrus Island Sanctuary.
- \* allow the Commissioner to add other areas to the tag program, including state refuges, ranges and critical habitat areas.
- \* Provide the Commissioner with the authority to set the fees.

Groups and individuals representing a wide spectrum of environmental, conservation and hunting interests have expressed support for the concept of fees for non-consumptive uses.

HB 446 is the result of a cooperative effort between my office, wildlife conservation supporters, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Governor's office.

Thank you for your prompt consideration of this legislation.



# ALASKA DISCOVERY

369 South Franklin Street • Juneau, Alaska 99801 • (907) 586-1911 • Fax: (907) 536-2332

Representative Fran Ulmer  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

February 18, 1992

SUPPORT FOR H.B. 446 - WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TAG

Dear Fran:

Thank you for introducing HB 446. The idea to create this type of user-pay program for nonconsumptive users of wildlife has been discussed for many years, and we applaud your effort to put it into place.

We wish to suggest some changes in the bill to make it easier for tourism companies to serve as vendors for the wildlife tag on a voluntary basis to our customers. Alaska Discovery has been in touch with literally dozens of other companies who would like to support State wildlife viewing programs by selling a wildlife tag or "license" to our customers. These visitors enjoy Alaska wildlife opportunities, but don't directly contribute to their funding.

HB 446 should make it clear that the wildlife conservation tag is to be made available through all State Fish and Game license vendors to the public to purchase on a voluntary basis, as part of the Fish and Game license form. The intent is to direct Fish and Game to add the wildlife conservation tag as one of the check-off options on the regular license form in addition to "sport hunting," "sport fishing" or "trapping." In this way all of the public currently purchasing licenses will have the option of also voluntarily purchasing a wildlife conservation tag. In addition, all other individuals who wish to support the tag program can go to any license vendor and purchase just the tag. This would allow companies such as ours the ability to become a license vendor and make the conservation tag (along with sport fishing licenses) available to all our customers.

The Southeast Alaska Watchable Wildlife Committee will be meeting specifically to discuss this bill on April 22, and we expect the full endorsement of its members who represent a wide spectrum of recreation, tourism and government agency interests.

Sincerely,

Ken Leghorn  
co-owners

KJ Metcalf

Dennis Kelso

Memorandum

TO: Representative Ulmer

FROM: Geron Bruce *Geron*

DATE: February 20, 1992

SUBJECT: Amendments proposed by Department of Fish and Game to HB  
446

Sec. 1

(6) programs that benefit nongame species of wildlife, threatened and endangered species of wildlife, wildlife education, and wildlife viewing would be enhanced by money generated by a wildlife conservation tag.

The purpose of this amendment is to clarify the intent of the bill inasmuch as state statutes identify endangered species but not threatened ones.

Sec. 3

(d) The proof of purchase of a wildlife conservation tag entitles the purchaser, after complying with other applicable statutes and regulations, to apply for a reserved, non-transferable permit for access by lottery in those areas where such a permit is required. Where a reserved non-transferable permit for access is not required, the proof of purchase of a wildlife conservation tag entitles the purchaser, after complying with other applicable statutes and regulations, to enter state game and wildlife sanctuaries, and as identified by the commissioner by regulation, other [STATE] land designated as state game refuges, state range areas, and fish and game critical habitat areas. During open hunting seasons in the areas identified by the commissioner by regulation, possession of a valid hunting license substitutes for a wildlife conservation tag.

The purpose of these amendments are:

1) to allow hunters to continue to enter those lands where hunting is allowed during open hunting seasons without purchasing a wildlife conservation tag, as long as they have purchased a hunting license. During periods when these lands were closed to hunting, anyone entering these areas would have to purchase a wildlife conservation tag.

2) by deleting the word "state" on line 25, the commissioner would have the discretion to require visitors to state game refuges established under AS 16.20.030 to purchase wildlife conservation tags.

3) by requiring purchase of tags by persons who "apply for a reserved, non-transferable permit for access by lottery," the department could enhance program revenues considerably. For

example, based on last year's figures, 1800 rather than 250 tags would be sold annually at McNeil.

Sec. 3

(e) The revenue received from the sale of wildlife conservation tags may be appropriated by the legislature to the department for [WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PURPOSES] programs that benefit nongame species of wildlife, threatened and endangered species of wildlife, wildlife education, and wildlife viewing.

*This amendment would ensure that the use of revenue is not diverted to purposes other than those stated under the legislature's findings in Sec. 1, (6) above.*

Sec. 3 (f) The department may contract to others the performance of the department's responsibilities to provide a wildlife conservation tag. Contracting under this subsection is governed by AS 36.30, except that a contract may include provisions for advance payment or reimbursement for services under the contract.

*This new subsection would permit the department the option of subcontracting the program in the same manner as elements of the waterfowl conservation program are contracted. This parallels language authorizing the waterfowl conservation stamp program under AS 16.05.826(c).*

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE ULMER

NAME: BOB DEWITT/VICE PRESIDENT  
TITLE: KETCHIKAN SPORTS AND WILDLIFE CLUB  
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 5100  
CITY: KETCHIKAN, AK ZIP: 99901  
PHONE: 247-2351

BILL NO: HB 446

SUBJECT: WILDLIFE CONSERVATION TAG AND FEE

MESSAGE: THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE KETCHIKAN SPORTS AND WILDLIFE CLUB WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR SUPPORT IN HB 446. GOOD GAME MANAGEMENT COSTS MONEY.

PCID: 08180624  
DATE: 92/02/19  
TIME: 18:06:24  
LIONAME: KETCHIKAN LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES REPRESENTATIVES SENATOR

C.DAVIS	TAYLOR	JONES
CARNEY	DAVIDSON	
FINKELESTEIN	HUDSON	
IVAN	LEMAN	
LINCOLN	HOYER	
ZAWACKI	BARNES	
BOYER	BROWN	
JACKO	KOPONEN	
LARSON	MACLEAN	
NAVARRE	R.PHILLIPS	
SHARP		

... insurance program  
... already is encour-  
... assistance on Capitol Hill

... in a cross-country flying pro-  
... moving his health care package.  
The centerpiece of Bush's plan is  
Please turn to Health, Page 8

... Medicare taxes from state and mu-  
... nicipal employees is included in

... aid today. Those who want work  
Please turn to Workers, Page 3



ASSOCIATED PRESS

... after a C-130 slammed into a restaurant in Evansville, Ind., this morning.

# Plane hits restaurant

... noon news conference.  
... nderburgh County coro-  
... initially reported 28 had  
... later revised the number  
... saying the original report  
... from confusion about the  
... people on the plane.  
... Lockheed C-130 military  
... from the Kentucky Nation-  
... crashed into the rear of a  
... restaurant and the north side  
... of the Inn, spraying fire for  
... 100 feet. A tower of black  
... smoke was visible for miles.  
... 11 people were injured.  
... over the service station  
... and real loud and shook the  
... building hard and broke some  
... windows.  
... Please turn to Crash, Page 8

**C-130 Hercules**  
Medium to long-range military transport built by Lockheed

**AT-A-GLANCE**

<p><b>LENGTH:</b> 97 ft. 9 in. (29.79m) <b>HEIGHT:</b> 38 ft. 3 in. (11.68m) <b>WINGSPAN:</b> 132 ft. 7 in. (40.41m) <b>ENGINES:</b> Four T56 turboprops <b>CRUISE SPEED:</b> 340 mph (547 km/h)</p>	<p><b>RANGE:</b> 2,450 miles (3,943 km) <b>CREW:</b> 4 on flight deck <b>CAPACITY:</b> 92 troops or 42,673 lb. (19,356 kg) <b>FLIGHT:</b> Since 1954</p>
--	--

**OTHER:** This airplane can be fitted with skis and various loads can be carried under the wings. Over 1,870 have been delivered in more than 50 versions in 60 nations.

\*Range with maximum payload

Source: Jane's World Aircraft Recognition Handbook APC/YNM/Grav

# Pay as you look

## Bill would require state fee to view some wildlife sanctuaries

By DIRK MILLER 2-6-92  
THE JUNEAU EMPIRE

Visitors to the Pack Creek brown bear viewing area on Admiralty Island would be charged a state fee under a bill designed to capture revenue from those who come to view rather than harvest the state's wildlife.

Rep. Fran Ulmer, a Juneau Democrat, introduced the bill Wednesday with the backing of Gov. Walter J. Hickel's administration, environmental and sportsmen's groups.

The bill would require visitors to purchase a wildlife conservation tag before entering the Stan Price State Wildlife Sanctuary near Pack Creek, the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary in Cook Inlet or the Walrus Island State Game Sanctuary at Bristol Bay.

It gives the commissioner of Fish and Game the authority to set the cost of the tag and allows the revenues to go toward wildlife conservation programs. Other viewing areas could be added to the tag program in the future.

"This is a step in the right direction for the viewing, non-consumptive use public to participate in programs that address their interest," said Dick Bishop of the Alaska Outdoor Council. Bishop said the council's board would take an official position on the bill later this month.

"It's definitely headed in the right direction, it's a question of whether the details are correct," he said.

The bill has to work its way through two House committees before it can reach the full House for a vote, with Senate action then to follow. The legislative session is scheduled to end in about 14 weeks.

The Alaska Environmental Lobby Inc., a coalition of 19 Alaska environmental organizations, has come out in favor of Ulmer's bill.

"I think people feel a little bit like it's about time," said Marna Schwartz, the lobby's executive director. "At last, one of the most valuable aspects of Alaska's wildlife resource has been recognized."

Ulmer and the Hickel administration had been working on separate versions of the wildlife bill, and later decided to pool their efforts to produce the version Ulmer

Please turn to Fee, Page 8

# Exempted from wetlands regs

... at the urging of Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alas-  
... companies and other pro-development groups,  
... in August decided that states that have

... able that minimization would satisfy  
... development on the North Slope, but  
... I am not satisfied that is the case,"  
... said Anne Brown, senior environ-

## Mineral closures

# Crash...

Continued from Page 1  
windows. Then it hit the restaurant and there was a thud," said a Drury Inn employee who declined to give his name.

"The wing was sticking out of the back of the JoJo's at first. But since then it must have melted down because we can't see it," he said.

At midafternoon, the fire was out except for some smoldering spots. Firefighters were soaking debris with foam to prevent any reignition of fuel-soaked areas.

About one-fourth of the restaurant was destroyed by the impact of the plane; damage to the four-story hotel was largely caused by fire. The plane was destroyed; only the charred rear rudder was recognizable after the crash.

Most of the deaths appeared to be from fire or smoke inhalation, authorities said.

The 24-hour restaurant and motel are located on U.S. 41, about a mile from airport at this city of 125,000 at the southern tip of Indiana.

Capt. Phil Miller of the Kentucky National Guard said the guardsmen on the C-130 military transport plane were members of the 123rd Tactical Air Lift Wing based in Louisville, Ky., and were on a training flight.

Sandy Appler, director of marketing and public relations for Evansville Regional Airport, said the plane was making "touch-and-go" training maneuvers at the airport. During those maneuvers, the plane descends and barely touches the runway and then returns to the air, she said.

"It's a routine training maneuver," said Appler. "This was a large transport plane."

At least 11 people were being treated at Welborn and Deaconess hospitals, officials said. At least two of the victims had been inside the restaurant when the plane crashed, a Welborn spokeswoman said.

JoJo's manager Dennis Serio said the plane "came through the window. I got up and everyone was running toward the door. Walls were falling in.

# Wetlands...

Continued from Page 1  
tacted about the policy change said they disapprove of treating Alaska wetlands differently and were preparing for a long regulatory battle.

Pamela A. Miller, assistant regional director of the Alaska chapter of the Wilderness Society, complained that - unlike the publicly debated proposal to redefine wetlands - the 1 percent exception for Alaska had been crafted by top cabinet officials in near-total secrecy.

"I think it is a terrible move for Alaska's wetlands, and it shows the Bush administration is being less than straightforward about what it is doing," Miller said.

# Health...

Continued  
a system of tax credit reductions to help the poor come pay for health care of up to \$3,750 per family, the full credit, or you could be paid to a health insurance only to those below the line and anyone whose earnings are above the line would have to subtract from the deduction their own claim.

When fully phased in, the program will cost about \$1 billion a year, with the \$100 billion pinned to the first fiscal year, officials said.

Some 35 million Americans resenting 13 percent of the nation, do not have health insurance. The administration says that even if the proposal is adopted, some 4.9 million would remain uninsured.

Bush targeted Medicare for savings, saying the program would increase by 1 percent this year. He pledged, "We will not cut benefits."

House Majority Leader Gephardt, D-Mo., said "we will put more money into insurance companies, but will do nothing to cover coverage affordable or if you can't have access to quality care."

"The president's plan is a Band-Aid on a wound that needs radical surgery," said Dr. Joyce C. Miller, president of the American Medical Association. She said the plan is "a Band-Aid on a wound that needs radical surgery."

Bush lashed out at the plan sponsored by Democrats.

# Fee...

Continued from Page 1

sponsored. House Bill 446.

"We were both working on it in parallel courses," Ulmer said. "He (the governor) just has lots of bills to carry."

Dave Kelleyhouse, state Wildlife Conservation director, said the state spent \$325,000 on wildlife-watching programs last year. The revenues from tag sales could help fund more programs.

"There are a lot of projects in the wildlife-watching field that are just crying for funding," he said.

Hunters and fishermen have complained for years

that they pay for the management of fish and wildlife for their own use, while the viewing public sees it for free. Hunters and fishermen buy licenses and pay taxes when they purchase gear for their sport. More than 80 percent of the state's wildlife conservation budget comes from such fees.

In recent years, the trend toward wildlife watching has grown, Kelleyhouse said. In 1985, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey found that wildlife viewing nationally accounted for \$14 billion of the \$56 billion spent on activities associated with fish and game.

"People have a high value on being able to see wildlife in wild places," Schwartz said.

In Alaska, the study estimated that more than 288,000 people participated in wildlife watching in 1985.

# Closure...

Continued from Page 1

Creek Valley to Gold Creek. That possibility caused an outcry from independent miners. Echo Bay and mining advocates who were afraid such a closure would hamper Echo Bay or another mining company in developing future gold projects.

The city-borough assembly Monday also agreed a smaller mineral closure was in order. It approved of the state's revised 1,300-acre proposal, which primarily includes the Sheep Creek Valley, the site of some surface facilities and land above the A-J's ore body.

The federal Bureau of Land Management is conveying the acreage to the state as part of the statehood land selection process, and the state is developing a land-use plan for the area before completing the transfer.

"We feel confident that a mineral closure for this area prior to the state receiving title conveyance from BLM is necessary to

Association. "The magnitude of the Echo Bay project warrants this protection."

State officials have said that if some type of mineral closure isn't put in place, any claims in the area would become active claims when BLM hands over the land to the state. By closing the area to mineral entry, all claims would be invalidated and future claims blocked.

The proposed mineral closure does not include the A-J ore body, which Echo Bay leases from the municipality and Alaska Electric Light & Power Co.

Echo Bay had requested a much smaller mineral closure than the state's first proposal, to ensure that only lands required for mine operation would be affected.

The state's revised proposal of 1,300 acres is more in line with what the company had in mind. Echo Bay spokesman David Stone said today. "We're pleased to see that it has been reduced," he said.

Ron Schonenbach, regional

Echo Bay also has requested a "sunset clause" that would allow mineral entry in the closed area after five years.

"It's something that we've considered, but the more we've talked to the folks and to Echo Bay, they are not pushing that issue very hard," said Schonenbach. "We just want to get the smaller area closed ... and then take a look at the interest in that area on an annual basis."

Environmental groups, meanwhile, are remaining fairly quiet about the issue, but say they are keeping track of it.

Schonenbach said his department will accept public comments on the revised mineral closure until Feb. 14. After that, the director of the Division of Mining and the Division of Lands must sign off on the plan before it heads to Natural Resources Commissioner Harold Heinze for final approval, he said.

Municipal staff originally supported the larger closure for its protection of Gold Creek, which supplies much of Juneau's public

# Worker

Continued  
on or after that date p required under federal

Under Bush's proposal would be extended to workers, regardless of date. In addition, the state has to contribute an amount, as it already does for employees hired after the

Bush's Medicare plan apparently would affect municipal and federal workers wide, but municipal workers would not be affected because they already have their own pension plan, said Kathy Huston of the state payroll department.

The tax proposal posed by the Alaska Teachers Association, which has about 8,600 state workers, is a major business move in Maunin.