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SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT
FIRST COMMITTEE OF REFERRAL

DATE: 2/13/91

FURTHER: Finance

Date of 5-Day Notice: _____
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED
INTO OFFICE: _____

Resources Committee considered SB 124

Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

and recommended:

- replace with _____ CS _____ same title
- attached amendment(s) new title
- _____ letter of intent adopted

- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- further referral to _____

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):
Department(s)/Date:

Department(s)/Date:

fiscal note(s) _____

zero fiscal note(s) _____

appropriation-no fiscal note

Governor's bill w/fiscal note

SIGNING DO PASS:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Chair: Signature and Recommendation

STATE OF ALASKA

WALTER J. HICKEL, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

400 WILLOUGHBY AVENUE
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1796
PHONE: (907) 465-2400
FACSIMILE: (907) 586-2754

May 22, 1991

The Honorable Lloyd Jones, Chair
Senate Resources Committee
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Jones:

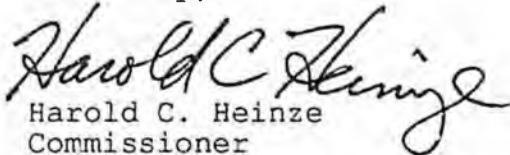
Subject: SB 124, which establishes a 2.1 million acre remote recreation area in the Susitna Valley.

Position: The Department of Natural Resources opposes this bill. Setting aside 2.1 million acres of land for remote recreation, before the state's land selection project is completed, would not be in the best interest of the people of this state. Establishment of this large, essentially roadless, legislatively designated area is also inconsistent with the state's Susitna and Willow Sub-basin area plans.

Background: This bill establishes an area to be managed for fish and wildlife habitat, human use of fish and wildlife, and remote recreation. The proposed Susitna Remote Recreation Area incorporates two-thirds of the acreage proposed by the Susitna Plan for a Susitna State Forest, and completely contains the Chelatna Public Use Area proposed in SB 23. Commercial timber sales and publicly financed or maintained roads connected to the state's road system would be prohibited within the remote recreation area. Without road access through this area, access to and development or use of surrounding areas will also be impeded.

Please let me know if you would like additional information about the area proposed for designation by this bill.

Sincerely,


Harold C. Heinze
Commissioner

cc: Committee Members
Senator Rodey
Senator Pourchot
Bruce Kendall, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Governor
Carl Rosier, Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
1991 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SB 124

Revision Date: 20-Mar-91 Department Affected: Natural Resources
 Title: Susitna Valley Remote Recreation BRU: Land & Water Management
Area Components: Land & Water Management
 Sponsor: Senator Rodey, Pourchot
 Requestor: Senate Resources COMPONENT SERIAL NO. 431

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97
PERSONAL SERVICES	132.2	228.4	228.4	96.2	96.2	96.2
TRAVEL	3.2	4.2	4.8	2.2	2.2	2.2
CONTRACTUAL	9.8	16.2	56.8	35.6	35.6	19.4
SUPPLIES	0.6	1.6	1.1	0.6	0.6	0.6
EQUIPMENT			7.6	1.6	1.6	7.6
LAND&STRUCTURES						
GRANTS,CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	145.8	250.4	298.7	136.2	136.2	126.0

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

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

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	145.8	250.4	298.7	136.2	136.2	126.0
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	145.8	250.4	298.7	136.2	136.2	126.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	2.0	4.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
PART-TIME	2.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of Current year impact: None

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary)

See Attached

Prepared by: Martha Welborn Phone: 762-2660
 Division: Land & Water Management Date: 20-Mar-91
 Approved by Commissioner: Harold Heinze Date: 20-Mar-91
 Agency: Department of Natural Resources

Distribution (by preparer) : Legislative Finance, legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB, & Impacted Agency(ies).

ANALYSIS

FY 92

100	Planning staff:		
	18A	\$ 54.6	
	16A	48.1	
	12A (1/2)	19.1	
	8A (1/3)	<u>10.4</u>	
		\$132.2	
200	Travel	\$ 3.2	Public meetings, reconnaissance, and fieldwork
300	Contractual	\$ 2.2	Publish introductory brochure
		2.2	Xeroxing, newsletters, misc.
		<u>5.4</u>	Resource assessment research
		\$ 9.8	
400	Supplies	\$ 0.6	Graphics and misc. supplies
	TOTAL	\$145.8	

FY 93

100	Planning staff:		
	18A	\$ 54.6	
	16A	48.1	
	12A (1/2)	19.1	
	8A (1/3)	10.4	
	Management staff:		
	16A	\$ 48.1	
	16A	<u>48.1</u>	
		\$228.4	
200	Travel	\$ 4.2	Public meetings, field work, enforcement
300	Contractual	\$ 3.2	Print resource assessment (150)
		7.6	Print agency review draft (300)
		2.2	Newsletters, xeroxing, etc.
		<u>3.2</u>	Public attitude survey, research
		\$ 16.2	
400	Supplies	\$ 1.6	Graphics and misc. supplies
	TOTAL	\$250.4	

FY94

100	Planning staff:	
	18A	\$ 54.6

	16A	48.1	
	12A (1/2)	19.1	
	8A (1/3)	10.4	
	Management staff:		
	16A	\$ 48.1	
	16A	<u>48.1</u>	
		\$228.4	
200	Travel	\$ 4.8	Public meetings, field work, enforcement
300	Contractual	\$ 7.6	Print public review draft (300)
		1.2	Print summary brochure of draft plan (2500)
		10.8	Print final plan
		1.6	Print final plan summary brochure (1500)
		8.6	Air & boat charter, vehicle rental for field staff
		<u>27.0</u>	Trail construction, information signs, etc.
		\$ 56.8	
400	Supplies	\$ 1.1	Graphics and miscellaneous supplies
500	Equipment	\$ 7.6	Equipment for field staff, incl. radios and 4-wheelers
	TOTAL	\$298.7	

FY 95

100	Management staff:		
	16A	\$ 48.1	
	16A	<u>48.1</u>	
		\$ 96.2	
200	Travel	\$ 2.2	Field work, enforcement, maintenance
300	Contractual	\$ 27.0	Trail construction, informational signs, etc.
		<u>8.6</u>	Air/boat charter and car rental
		\$ 35.6	
400	Supplies	\$ 0.6	Miscellaneous supplies
500	Equipment	\$ 1.6	Equipment maintenance
	TOTAL	\$136.2	

FY 96

100	Management staff:	
	16A	\$ 48.1

16A		<u>48.1</u>	
		\$ 96.2	
200	Travel	\$ 2.2	Field work, enforcement, maintenance
300	Contractual	\$ 27.0	Trail construction, informational signs, etc.
		<u>8.6</u>	Air/boat charter and car rental
		\$ 35.6	
400	Supplies	\$ 0.6	Miscellaneous supplies
500	Equipment	\$ 1.6	Equipment maintenance
TOTAL		\$136.2	

FY 97

100	Management staff:		
	16A	\$ 48.1	
	16A	<u>48.1</u>	
		\$ 96.2	
200	Travel	\$ 2.2	Field work, enforcement, maintenance
300	Contractual	\$ 10.8	Trail maintenance, informational signs, etc.
		<u>8.6</u>	Air/boat charter and car rental
		\$ 19.4	
400	Supplies	\$ 0.6	Miscellaneous supplies
500	Equipment	\$ 7.6	Equipment replacement and maintenance
TOTAL		\$126.0	

NOTES: Assumes all personnel are at step A. Figures are based on FY 91 costs for salaries and benefits.

Travel costs assume public meetings will be held in Trapper Creek, Talkeetna, Wasilla-Palmer, Willow, Cantwell, Sutton, Glacier View, Lake Louise, Skwentna, and Alexander Creek. Some planning team meetings will be held in Wasilla and Palmer. Includes per diem for overnights in Trapper Creek, Talkeetna, and Cantwell, and standby flight time for Skwentna and Alexander Creek.

Assumes plan will take three years. Implementation staff will begin work in year 2 of the plan (e.g., reviewing permit applications) and will gear up to a full program of field work and enforcement by year 3.

Assumes a three-year program to design and establish informational signs, and construct trails, campsites, and other facilities identified through the plan. Maintenance would continue in subsequent years.

Field staff transportation is by car to trailheads, then 4-wheeler, air charter, and boat charter. (Roads are prohibited in the 2.1 million-acre area under the legislation.) Field equipment costs include 4-wheelers and radios.

Position Title Natural Resource Manager I			No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 18A	Barg. Unit GGU	
Time Status PFT	Staff Months 12		Location Anchorage		Election District	
			Justification SB 124 requires a management plan for the 2.1 million acre Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. A detailed plan for this area will require 3 years work by a 2 1/2 person-planning staff led by an NRM I project manager plus other staff. The planning staff will be responsible for the compiling and analyzing resource, land use and economic information in the planning area; designing, conducting and documenting the citizen participation program; organizing and leading the interagency planning team; writing, editing and distributing resource reports and draft and final plans; and briefing commissioners, the governor's office and legislators on the planning process. Work will include travel for field reconnaissance and public meetings in nine communities. Existing planning staff are fully allocated to completing the state land selections project and the Kenai Area Plan.			
Type of Expenditure		Amount				
1	2	3				
Salary	38.6					
Benefits	16.0					
Premium Pay						
Other						
Total Personal Services		54.6				
Travel						
Contractual						
Commodities						
Equipment						
Other						
Total Cost		54.6				
Funding Source for Total Cost						
Federal Receipts	1002					
G. F. Match	1003					
General Fund	1004	54.6				
I-A Receipts	1006					
CIP Receipts	1061					
Other						
*Personal Services Salary and Benefits Costs are from PACS.						

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Natural Resources
 BRU Land and Water
 Component Land and Water

Page of
 Revised Date

FY 92

Position Title Clerk Typist III		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 8A	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status PPT	Staff Months 4	Location Anchorage		Election District
		Justification		
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary	6.7			
Benefits	3.7			
Premium Pay				
Other				
Total Personal Services				
Travel				
Contractual				
Commodities				
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		10.4		
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G. F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	10.4		
I-A Receipts	1006			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				

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Work will include travel for field reconnaissance and public meetings in nine communities.

Existing planning staff are fully allocated to completing the state land selections project and the Kenai Area Plan.

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Natural Resources
 BRU Land and Water
 Component Land and Water

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FY 92

Position Title Natural Resource Technical II		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 12A	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status PPT	Staff Months 6	Location Anchorage		Election District
		Justification		
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary	12.8			
Benefits	6.3			
Premium Pay				
Other				
Total Personal Services		19.1		
Travel				
Contractual				
Commodities				
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		19.1		
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G. F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	19.1		
I-A Receipts	1006			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				
*Personal Services Salary and Benefits from PACS.				

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Work will include travel for field reconnaissance and public meetings in nine communities.

Existing planning staff are fully allocated to completing the state land selections project and the Kenai Area Plan.

**Request For
New Position**

Agency Natural Resources
 BRU Land and Water
 Component Land and Water

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 Revised Date

FY 92

Position Title Natural Resource Officer II		No. of Positions 1	Range/Step 16A	Barg. Unit GGU																										
Time Status PFT	Staff Months 12	Location Anchorage		Election District																										
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type of Expenditure</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> <tr> <th>1</th> <th>2</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Salary</td> <td>33.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benefits</td> <td>14.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Premium Pay</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Personal Services</td> <td>48.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Travel</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contractual</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Commodities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equipment</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Cost</td> <td>48.1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Type of Expenditure	Amount	1	2	Salary	33.5	Benefits	14.6	Premium Pay		Other		Total Personal Services	48.1	Travel		Contractual		Commodities		Equipment		Other		Total Cost	48.1	Justification SB 124 requires a management plan for the 2.1 million acre Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. A detailed plan for this area will require 3 years work by a 2 1/2 person planning staff led by an NRM I project manager plus other staff. The planning staff will be responsible for the compiling and analyzing resource, land use and economic information in the planning area; designing, conducting and documenting the citizen participation program; organizing and leading the interagency planning team; writing, editing and distributing resource reports and draft and final plans; and briefing commissioners, the governor's office and legislators on the planning process. Work will include travel for field reconnaissance and public meetings in nine communities. Existing planning staff are fully allocated to completing the state land selections project and the Kenai Area Plan.		
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**Request For
New Position**

Agency Natural Resources
 BRU Land and Water
 Component Land and Water

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Position Title Natural Resource Officer II		No. of Positions 2	Range/Step 16A	Barg. Unit GGU
Time Status PFT	Staff Months 24	Location Wasilla		Election District
Type of Expenditure		Amount		
1	2	3		
Salary	67.0			
Benefits	29.2			
Premium Pay				
Other				
Total Personal Services		96.2		
Travel				
Contractual				
Commodities				
Equipment				
Other				
Total Cost		96.2		
Funding Source for Total Cost				
Federal Receipts	1002			
G. F. Match	1003			
General Fund	1004	96.2		
I-A Receipts	1006			
CIP Receipts	1061			
Other				
*Personal Services Salary and Benefits Costs are from PACS.				

Justification

SB 124 establishes a 2.1 million acre remote recreation area in the Susitna Valley. Managing this area for recreation will require 2 full-time positions to adjudicate requests for permits and leases, monitor and enforce recreation, tourism, and other commercial activities; construct and maintain recreation facilities such as trails and trailheads; and prepare public information materials about the recreation area.

Because the area is not road-accessible, field travel will be by charter plane, boat or ATV.

Existing staff in the Mat-Su Area Office are inadequate to responsibly manage the expected increase in public recreation and tourism activity in this area.

Request For
New Position

Agency Natural Resources
 BRU Land and Water
 Component Land and Water

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FY 92

Susitna Valley Association

9600 Slalom Drive Anchorage, Alaska 99516 346-1943

SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION/TOURISM

ECONOMIC SUMMARY

In 1987, the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) conducted an economic survey of existing activities and businesses which utilize the remote, roadless portions of the Susitna Valley. The results of this study confirm that the existing remote recreation and tourism industry is a major contributor to the economy of Southcentral Alaska.

AIR CHARTER SERVICES \$13 million/year

Estimated gross income for 38 services operating out of Anchorage, Big Lake, Palmer, Talkeetna, and Willow.

REMOTE COMMERCIAL LODGES \$10 million/year

Estimated gross income for 52 remote lodges throughout the Valley.

PRIVATE PILOTS \$ 7 million/year

Maintenance and operating expenditures for 2,000 planes.

HOTELS/MOTELS \$ 9 million/year

Income from 3% of occupied rooms in Anchorage during June-October.

SPORT FISHING \$11 million/year

From 1986 ADF&G figures for the Susitna Valley.

SPORT HUNTING \$20 million/year

From 1989 ADF&G estimate for bear and moose hunting in the Susitna Valley.

\$70 million/year*

* Due to the "overlap" of sport fishing and hunting figures with air charter, remote lodge, and hotel/ motel income figures, SVA estimates the total value of the existing Susitna Valley remote recreation and tourism industry to be between \$50 million and \$70 million per year. This does not include the economic activity generated by commercial fishing due to the harvest of fish spawned and reared in the Susitna drainage, which was estimated by ADF&G to be over \$17 million in 1986.



VALLEY BOARD OF REALTORS



500 E. Railroad Ave., Suite A • Wasilla, Alaska 99687

April 23, 1991

To: Senate Resource Committee:

Lloyd Jones
Richard I. Eliason
Steve Frank
Rick Halford
Fred Zharoff

From: Pam Bauder, Executive Officer

Re: SB 124

Pam Bauder

Enclosed is a copy of the Valley Board of REALTOR's Resolution #91-01, expressing strong opposition to Senate Bill 124 (Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area).

This Resolution was introduced at our General Membership meeting on April 17, 1991 and was unanimously approved by a quorum of our voting membership.

We urge you to oppose this issue and to take action to see that it does not pass. Thank you.



VALLEY BOARD OF REALTORS



500 E. Railroad Ave., Suite A • Wasilla, Alaska 99687

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP RESOLUTION #91-01

WHEREAS, the 174 active members and 32 affiliate members of the VALLEY BOARD OF REALTORS are very concerned over the potential establishment of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area; and

WHEREAS, there is legislation which has been introduced into the Alaska State Legislature creating a Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area; and

WHEREAS, there presently exists a plan which establishes guidelines for land-use in the Susitna Valley; and

WHEREAS, these guidelines are known as the Susitna Area Plan approved by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the State of Alaska; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan does not recommend further creation of another remote recreation area; and

WHEREAS, fifty-five (55) percent of all lands in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are presently classified as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat lands; and

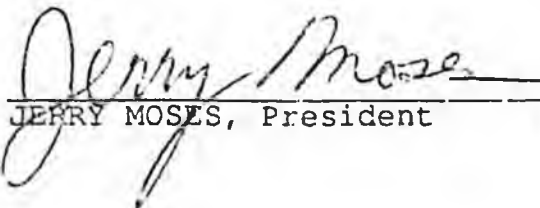
WHEREAS, classification of additional lands will create a virtual lock-up of these lands to environmentally sound resource development and provide unfair economic advantages to existing property owners and tour operators; and

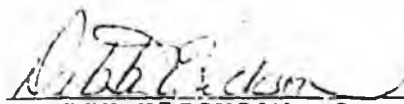
WHEREAS, establishment of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will undermine past processes of selecting lands under the Municipal Lands Entitlement program by making those lands previously selected virtually useless for the uses they had been selected for.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the VALLEY BOARD OF REALTORS most strongly oppose Senate Bill 124 and urge the members of the Alaska Legislature to deny its passage.

Presented to and passed by a quorum of the voting members of the Valley Board of REALTORS on this the 17th day of March, 1991.

ATTEST:


JERRY MOSES, President


DEBBIE ERICKSON, Secretary

Talkeetna Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 334
Talkeetna, Alaska 99676

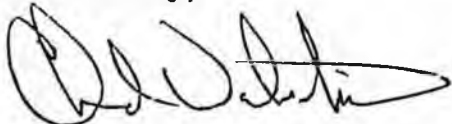
Susitna Valley Association, Wasilla Chapter
P.O. Box 2176
Palmer, AK 99645

Dear Sirs or Madam,

The Talkeetna Chamber of Commerce endorses the concept of Senate Bill No. 124. We feel that there are some items that still need work in the bill, however the aim of the bill is sound. We must do what we can to protect this valley. The push for large scale commercial logging in our area is a item of great concern. The preservation of this area is necessary both for recreation and tourism.

Any updates on the progress of this bill would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad F. Valentine', written in a cursive style.

Chad F. Valentine
Vice President, Talkeetna Chamber of Commerce

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA

CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

July 16, 1991

Loisann Reeder
President, Susitna Valley Association
9600 Slalom Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99516

Loisann,

Senate Bill #124 has been reviewed by the MSCVB Board. Our organization endorses and supports the Susitna Valleys rich wildlife and remote wilderness areas. We wish to acknowledge the Susitna Valley among the strongest markets within the visitor industry. No clear consensus was reached by the MSCVB board on this critical piece of legislation. However, MSCVB is concerned about nurturing remote recreation opportunities. Please let us know if there are other ways to assist in a state wide and borough-wide TOURISM PLAN.

Cathy Dunbar
Executive Director

cc: Mike Bronson, President Wasilla Chapter
Roberta Sheldon, President Talkeetna Chapter
Bill Elander, ACVB
Mat-Su Delegation
Dorothy Jones, MSB Mayor

Reeder.mem

FEB 20 1991

P. O. Box 3197
Palmer, Alaska 99645
February 12, 1991

Lloyd Jones, Chairman of the Senate Resource Committee
Alaska State Legislature
P. O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Jones:

RE: Legislation Regarding the Creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area

I whole-heartedly support the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area.

Many tourists are drawn to this area because of its "remote" nature. The
building of roads and logging in this area would mean economic disaster to
those who make their livings due to the remoteness of the area.

We have a lot to be proud of in Alaska. Many of the states in the lower 48
have sacrificed their remote areas to development. In many ways, it is
our lack of development that attracts people to our state every year (an
economically feasible industry...tourism). Why destroy a feasible industry
for one that is not?

Again, I strongly support the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,



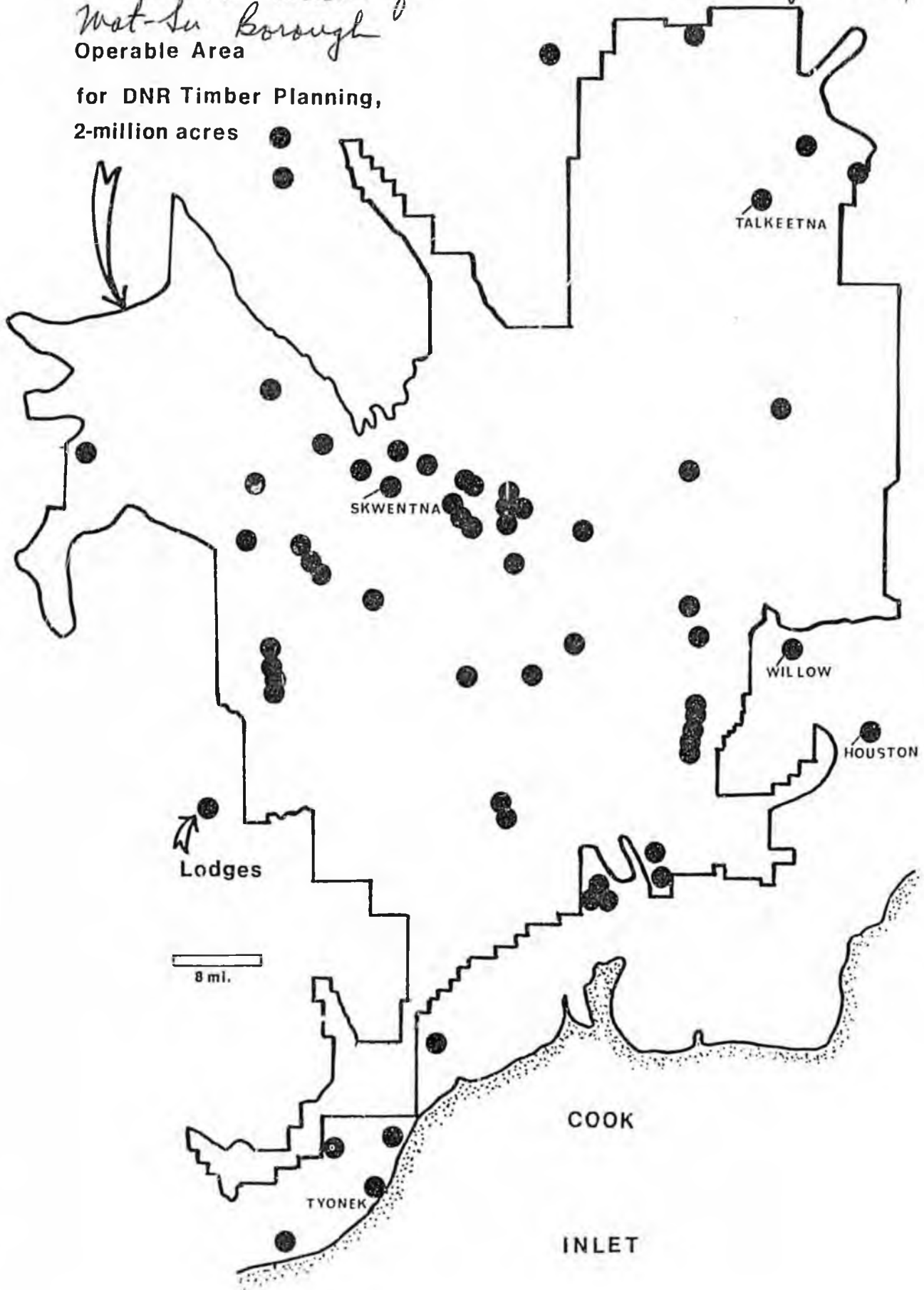
Cathy Teich
(907) 376-2157

cc: Mat.-Su Borough Assembly

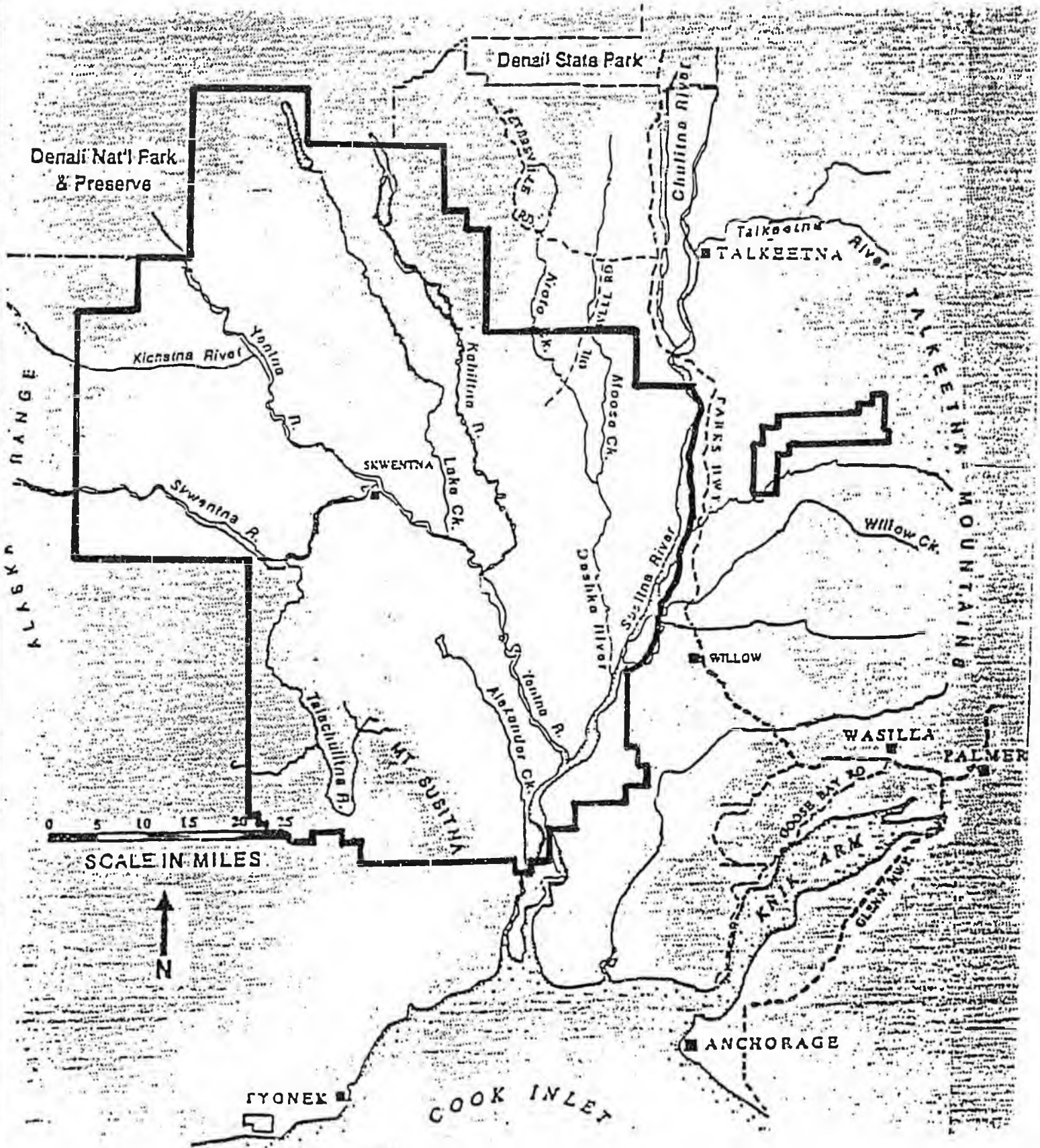
Remote Fishing Lodges
in Susitna Basin of
Mat-Su Borough
Operable Area

for DNR Timber Planning,
2-million acres

Mike Benson March 8, 1991
Palmer for SB 124



SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA



Susitna Valley Association

9600 Slalom Drive Anchorage, Alaska 99516 346-1943

SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION/TOURISM

ECONOMIC SUMMARY

In 1987, the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) conducted an economic survey of existing activities and businesses which utilize the remote, roadless portions of the Susitna Valley. The results of this study confirm that the existing remote recreation and tourism industry is a major contributor to the economy of Southcentral Alaska.

AIR CHARTER SERVICES Estimated gross income for 38 services operating out of Anchorage, Big Lake, Palmer, Talkeetna, and Willow.	\$13 million/year
REMOTE COMMERCIAL LODGES Estimated gross income for 52 remote lodges throughout the Valley.	\$10 million/year
PRIVATE PILOTS Maintenance and operating expenditures for 2,000 planes.	\$ 7 million/year
HOTELS/MOTELS Income from 3% of occupied rooms in Anchorage during June-October.	\$ 9 million/year
SPORT FISHING From 1986 ADF&G figures for the Susitna Valley.	\$11 million/year
SPORT HUNTING From 1989 ADF&G estimate for bear and moose hunting in the Susitna Valley.	\$20 million/year

	\$70 million/year*

* Due to the "overlap" of sport fishing and hunting figures with air charter, remote lodge, and hotel/ motel income figures, SVA estimates the total value of the existing Susitna Valley remote recreation and tourism industry to be between \$50 million and \$70 million per year. This does not include the economic activity generated by commercial fishing due to the harvest of fish spawned and reared in the Susitna drainage, which was estimated by ADF&G to be over \$17 million in 1986.

MAR 4 1991

March 2, 1991

PO Box 2176
Palmer, Alaska

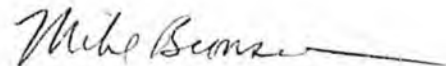
Senator Lloyd Jones
Chair Senate Resources Committee
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Senator Jones,

At your convenience, I would appreciate hearing your views on SB 124, for a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, if I could stop by your office on Friday morning, March 8.

As I indicated in an earlier letter, I urge you to schedule early consideration of this bill before the Resources committee.

Thank you,



Mike Bronson

February 24, 1991



PO Box 2176
Palmer, Alaska
99645

Senator Lloyd Jones
Chair Senate Resources Committee
State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Senator Jones,

Please consider SB 124 to establish the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. I would appreciate your scheduling it for a Resource Committee hearing as soon as possible.

Quite a few people in my area are anxious to see the Remote Recreation Area put in place. The main purpose of the bill is to protect the current valuable recreation uses of the area. Its main effect is to preclude the state's plans for large-scale logging; it has no affect on the state's current rules for mining, land disposals, or fish and game harvesting, however. Most of the use of the remote parts of the Susitna Valley is by the 50 lodges in the area, sportfishermen, other recreationists, and the hundreds of private landowners. These interests are both long-standing and widespread in the Susitna Basin west of the road system and want a dedicated land base free of the prospect of large timber sales.

Continued small state timber sales near the roads, together with a dedicated Susitna Remote Recreation Area, is the best way to satisfy the demand for both local wood products and remote commercial and personal recreation. Like others who have been using the Susitna Valley, I want to see the state's timber sales restricted to sites closer to the highway system. I have floated and flown through the Susitna Valley and I appreciate that I can still jump off the end of the road so close to my home in Wasilla. The large timber sales currently allowed under state land use plans are inappropriate because they (1) are not economic, and (2) they would directly detract from current businesses and other users in the Susitna Basin. In contrast, smaller timber sales near the road system, which is the current practice and which continue at the rate of about 70 acres per year, is feasible and does not threaten the more valuable recreation uses to the west.

Sincerely,

Mike Bronson



February 1991

NEWSLETTER

Summary of Public Comments

Dear Citizen,

The process of developing guidelines to protect and manage the forest resources of the Susitna Valley has been difficult and controversial. Managing state lands and forests to provide jobs, habitat, wood, recreation areas, and other benefits is a fundamental part of the Department of Natural Resources' mission. As the public comments show, this is not an easy task, but it is important to the people who live, work, and play in the Susitna Valley. We greatly appreciate your input and help throughout this project.

This report summarizes public comments on the public review draft of the Susitna Forestry Guidelines. Comments were gathered from public meetings, letters, comment sheets provided at the meetings, and phone calls. Public meetings were held in Alexander Creek, Anchorage, Wasilla, Willow, Skwentna, Talkeetna, Trapper Creek, and Tyonek from January 5 to January 19, 1991. The public comment period was open from mid-December to January 28, 1991.

The summary is organized into two sections. The first section gives an overview of the "hot topics". These are the issues that were most commented on and the most controversial. The second section highlights other important comments that were received. Please understand that we will consider any advice, no matter what its source, no matter how unconventional. If it makes sense for managing state lands, we'll use it. If it does not make sense it would be irresponsible for us to use it. We will send you a copy of all public comments and responses to the comments along with the notice proposing adoption of the final guidelines.

Over 185 people attended the public meetings and many comments were recorded. More than 115 written comments were received, along with a few phone calls.

If you have any questions on this summary, or on the planning process, please contact:

Martha Welbourn, Project Manager
Department of Natural Resources,
Division of Land and Water
P.O. Box 107005
Anchorage, AK 99510-7005
(907) 762-2660



Once again, we appreciate your comments on the draft and look forward to working with you to complete the guidelines.

The following topics are the ones that are most controversial. Most of the comments addressed these subjects. The "hot topics" include large-scale timber harvesting and increased road construction, the boundary between Phase I and Phase II land, the Susitna Area Plan update, and harvesting near private land.

■ *Timber Harvesting and Road Building*

Many of the comments focus on large-scale timber harvesting and increased access and road building. Most said that if any timber harvesting takes place, that it should be locals doing the harvesting, and Alaskans benefitting from this economically, not outside interests.

Almost all the comments received on large harvesting projects are against it. A few support increased harvesting within the constraints of the guidelines, and a few support increased harvesting without the restrictions that the guidelines will impose. Most requested that "large-scale" and "small-scale" be given a definition in terms of acreage. Most comments support continued small-scale operations with the benefits staying in the local communities. These same individuals generally do not feel that any type of large-scale operation is compatible with the valuable recreation/tourist industry that the valley supports. Commenters often stated that they came to the valley to escape large development and like the valley's wilderness character.

Many of the comments state that increased road building will adversely affect the remote/wilderness characteristic of the valley that brings tourists there from all over the world. These individuals support continued small-scale operations close to existing road systems. Others feel that harvesting should be allowed in remote areas of the valley. They say the timber access roads will allow more tourists to visit and experience the resources of the Susitna Valley, plus allow small-scale operators to earn a living and contribute to the valley's economy. A few feel that more road access will make it possible for everyone, not just those with an airplane, snowmachine, or money, to see this part of Alaska.

■ *Phase I and Phase II Boundary*

Another area that received numerous comments was the location of phase I and phase II boundaries, what is considered as remote, and changing of the boundaries. Several individuals state that "remote" and "near existing access" need to be clearly defined.

Most of the people commenting on this issue feel that everything west of the Big Susitna River and south of the Petersville Road should be included in Phase II

where new timber roads will not be allowed for the next 10 years. Many people feel that it is okay to have commercial operations within 5 miles of existing road systems. A couple of individuals feel that by allowing logging to occur in remote areas, the new roads will encourage economic growth and allow equal access for all. Several say that listing remote areas within phase I encourages development before benefits have been identified.

■ *Susitna Area Plan Update & Economic Study*

Many people support using the Susitna Forestry Guidelines to regulate harvesting, if harvesting is allowed. Others see the guidelines as a plan to harvest vast portions of the Susitna Valley. However, many agree that the Department of Natural Resources still needs to decide where harvesting is and is not allowed. Since the Susitna Area Plan update will address this issue, many urge the Department of Natural Resources to update the plan immediately. Some want areas removed from forestry designations, while a few want new forestry areas added. A few comments urge the Department of Natural Resources to complete the Susitna Area Plan update before the Susitna Forestry Guidelines are implemented. A few pointed out that the Susitna Forestry Guidelines update should incorporate any new resource material available.

Many people feel that a comprehensive economic study should be completed before the Susitna Forestry Guidelines are implemented. This study should address the cost/benefit ratio of logging compared with the cost/benefit ratio of recreation/tourism in the Susitna Valley. Most of these commenters feel that an economic study will show that large-scale logging is not an appropriate use.

■ *Private Land*

We received many comments about rules for notifying private landowners about nearby timber sales. All who commented said that the 1/4-mile notification radius is too small. Suggested distances necessary are from 1 mile to 10 miles, with 2 miles being the most frequently mentioned minimum.

Many commented that a 200-foot buffer that allows single-tree selection is not enough to protect private land. Many suggest a no-cut buffer of 200 feet or greater surrounded by a single-tree selection buffer. A few feel that no buffer is necessary because state land is land for all, not for individual property owners. Several people requested a better definition for single-tree selection. How many single trees can loggers select in these areas? Blowdown is a concern for a few if harvesting is allowed adjacent to private land.

OTHER IMPORTANT TOPICS

Comments were received on a wide range of topics that are very important but less controversial. Topics not listed here include timber on agricultural lands, use of experimental forests, protection of wetlands, and fire as a management tool. These topics will be included in the list of comments and the planning team will respond to all comments.

■ *Fish and Wildlife*

Fish and wildlife protection and enhancement is a concern to many people. While most comment that timber harvest, and the associated new growth, will benefit animals such as moose, some support maintaining old growth forest for animals such as marten. Proper fire management was mentioned several times as a method to ensure quality moose habitat.

Comments concerning harvesting and buffers around bald eagle nests are split. Some feel that the 330-foot buffer is adequate, while others feel that it should be larger and that harvests should be limited to times when there are no eagles present.

■ *Forestry*

While most commenters support sustained yield management, some question whether or not this is practical in boreal forests. Others think that up to 400 acres per year can be harvested sustainably.

Funding and enforcement issues were raised several times. Most of those that commented on this believe that enforcement is not currently adequate and should be stricter. Participants questioned how the Department of Natural Resources and Division of Forestry will fund enforcement activities. They also ask how enforcement will be carried out, who will do the enforcement, and what the penalties will be for those not following the guidelines.

Most of the comments received concerning the timber base state that the quality of timber in the Susitna Valley is generally poor, that the timber base given in the Susitna Forestry Guidelines is substantially higher than it actually is, and that any harvesting, other than small-scale operations, will not be economically feasible. Commenters recommend excluding resource management lands, buffers along rivers, lakes, and streams, and other no-cut areas from the summary of lands that can be harvested.

Comments on rotation length are split on whether or not the Susitna Forestry Guidelines' rotation lengths are realistic. Some feel that they are good, others feel that they are optimistically short, while some feel that they are too long and should be based on the type of product desired (wood chips, for example). Some mention that little information ex-

ists concerning rotation periods in northern climates and that more research is needed.

■ *Personal Use Wood*

Most of the individuals that commented on personal use areas feel that they are a good idea and would like more such areas. A few feel that user fees for personal use wood are too low and do not pay for the costs of managing such areas, and that increased commercial harvest will provide for more personal use wood through clean-up efforts. A few said that fees are too high in remote areas.

■ *Recreation*

A lot of folks commented specifically on recreation. Most of these state that large-scale logging and remote or wilderness recreation are not compatible. Folks generally feel that road building, associated with logging, will destroy the very thing that recreational users seek. A few individuals feel that the Forest Practices Act is more than enough to protect recreational uses.

■ *Buffers Around Rivers, Lakes, and Streams*

Most people who commented on buffers along waterways favor increasing the no-cut buffer. Suggested buffer widths range from between 200 feet to 1 mile. Individuals generally feel that protection of visual quality and fish and wildlife values requires a larger buffer. A few feel that the state should not restrict their management capabilities by setting definite buffer widths, and should not be stricter than the Forest Practices Act.

■ *Timber Sale Design*

Almost all of the comments on harvesting techniques oppose clear cutting and recommend selective cutting or single-tree harvesting instead. Reasons given for opposing clear-cutting are damage to scenic quality, incompatibility with tourism, and environmental degradation.

Of comments made on pesticide use, half think that pesticides should be prohibited from use. Some say that pesticides should be used only if absolutely necessary. One states that buffers around waterbodies should be increased and that more studies are needed regarding pesticide use.

Comments on reforestation are split. Some feel replanting is necessary to improve the quality of second growth, some feel more data is needed on reforestation, and others oppose introduction of exotic species for reforestation.

Summary of Public Comments

NEWSLETTER

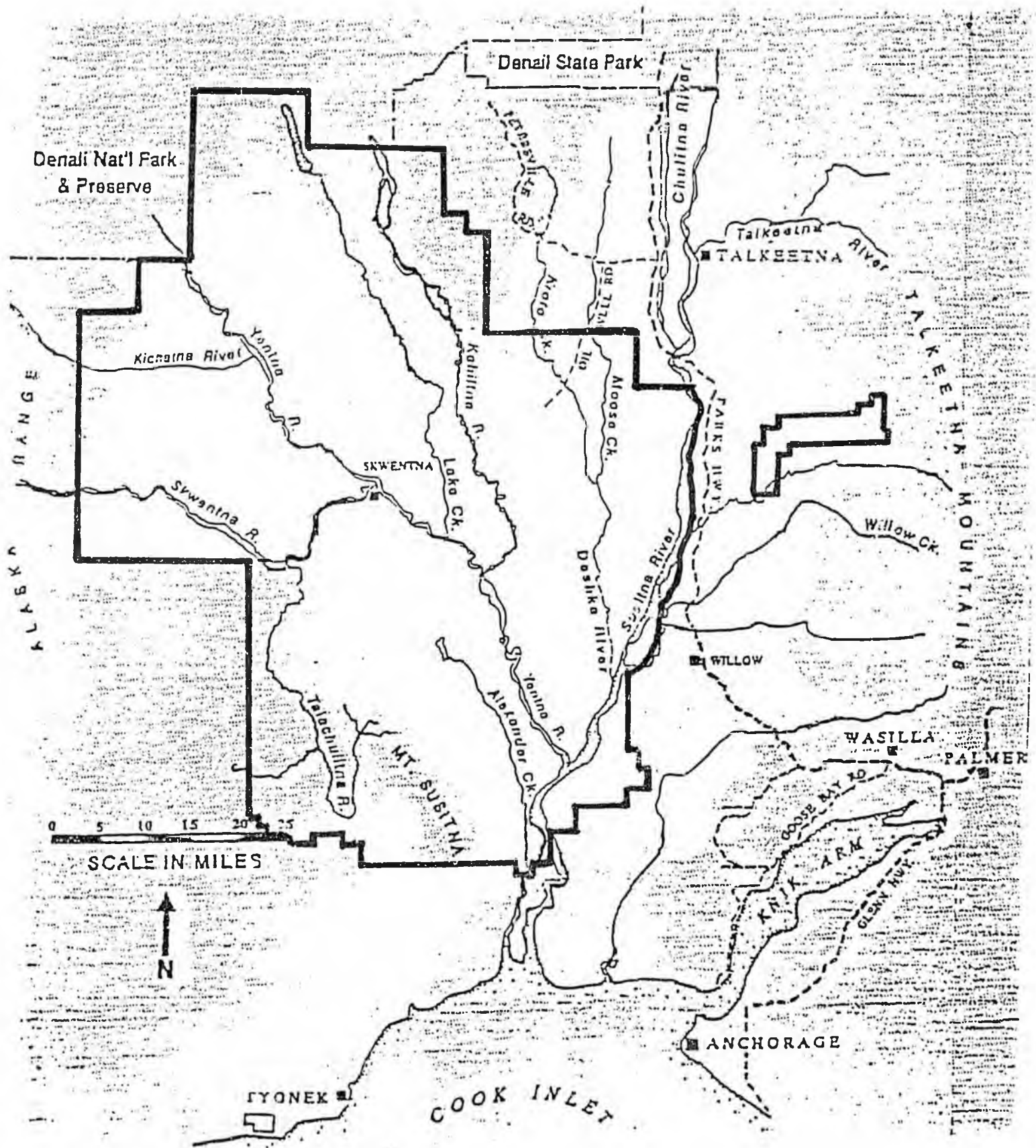


Alaska Department of Natural Resources
Land & Resources Section
P.O. Box 107005
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7005

BULK RATE
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ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

MIKE BRONSON
PO BOX 2176
PALMER AK 99645

SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA



600 East Glenwood
Wasilla, Ak. 99687
February 25, 1991

MAR 2 1991

Lloyd Jones, Chairman of the Senate Resource Committee
Alaska State Legislature
P. O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Jones:

RE: Legislation Regarding the Creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area

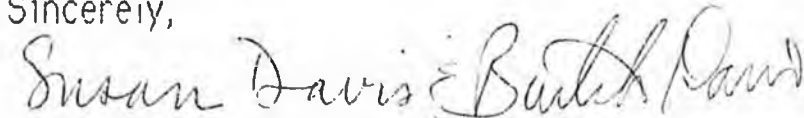
I whole-heartedly support the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area.

Many tourists are drawn to this area because of its "remote" nature. The
building of roads and logging in this area would mean economic disaster to
those who make their livings due to the remoteness of the area.

We have a lot to be proud of in Alaska. Many of the states in the lower 48
have sacrificed their remote areas to development. In many ways, it is
our lack of development that attracts people to our state every year (an
economically feasible industry...tourism) Why destroy a feasible industry
for one that is not?

Again, I strongly support the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote
Recreation Area. Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,



Susan and Burtch Davis
(907) 373-5091

cc: Mat-Su Borough Assembly

February 21, 1991

PO Box 2176
Palmer, Alaska
99645

Senator Lloyd Jones
Chair Senate Resources Committee
State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Senator Jones,

Please consider SB 124 to establish the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. I would appreciate your scheduling it for a Resource Committee hearing as soon as possible.

Quite a few people in my area of Palmer and Wasilla are anxious to see the Remote Recreation Area put in place. Its main effect is to preclude the state's plans for large-scale logging in the forested areas outside of the existing road network. The bill has no affect on the state rules for mining, land disposals, or fish and game harvesting. The main purpose of the bill is to protect the current valuable recreation uses of the area, both in the form of the 50 lodges in the area and by sportfishermen, other recreationists, and the hundreds of private landowners out there. These interests represent long-standing and intense uses of the Susitna Basin west of the road system.

Like these people, I want to see the state's timber sales restricted to sites more accessible by the highway system. I have floated and flown through the Valley and I appreciate that I can jump off the end of the road so close to my home. Large timber sales out there are inappropriate because they (1) are not economic, and (2) they are a direct detriment to the current users. Cutting on state lands in the Mat-Su Borough has been about 70 acres per year over the last 10 years, according to Jim Eleazer of the Division of Forestry. In my opinion, this acreage and much more is available near existing roads where local loggers have been cutting for a long time.

Sincerely,


Mike Bronson

376-3642

SEN. JONES

SENATOR CURT MENARD, MEMBER

3-7-91

SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PO BOX V

JUNEAU, AK 99811

RE: SB 124

DEAR CURT,

THANK YOU FOR THE RESPONSE TO MY MESSAGE REGARDING SENATE BILL 124, THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION BILL.

FIRST, I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO YOU THAT I OPPOSE THIS BILL AND THAT I DO NOT SPEAK FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

I AM COMMENTING AS A CONCERNED CITIZEN, A VOTER, & A CONSTITUENT.

HERE ARE MY CONCERNS:

PAGE 1, LINE 7 - WHAT WILL THIS BILL PROTECT FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT FROM? WHAT IS THE THREAT? IS IT FEAR OF LOGGERS, RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, MOBS FROM ANCHORAGE OR LOS ANGELES?

THE FOREST PRACTICES ACT DOES A DANDY JOB OF PROTECTING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT WITHIN 300 FEET OF STREAMS. THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME'S HABITAT DIVISION DOES A GREAT JOB OF PROTECTING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ELSEWHERE. I DO NOT SEE THE NEED FOR THIS AREA TO BE PROTECTED BEYOND EXISTING STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES. PERHAPS

PAGE

THE SPONSOR (SENATOR RODEX) COULD ELABORATE ON THE NEED FOR PROTECTION.

I AGREE THE STATE'S RESOURCES MUST BE MANAGED AND MAINTAINED, BUT THIS BILL PROHIBITS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT! I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE WORD "PROTECT" BE REMOVED FROM LINE 1 AND THE WORDS "AND FOREST RESOURCES" BE ADDED AFTER THE WORD "HABITAT".

PAGE 2 LINES 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29 - THIS LANGUAGE IS DISCRIMINATORY BECAUSE IT PROHIBITS THE DISPOSAL OF TIMBER FOR COMMERCIAL USE UNLESS IT IS SOLD TO INDIVIDUALS AND COMMERCIAL FACILITIES FOR HOUSE LOGS AND FIREWOOD BY NEGOTIATED PERSONAL USE SALES. THE NATURAL RESOURCES ON THIS PARCEL BELONG TO ALL ALASKANS, NOT A SELECT FEW. I BELIEVE THOSE RESOURCES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE TO ALL, WITH SPECIAL PRIVILEGES FOR NONE. THERE IS A TERM FOR THE TYPE OF MANAGEMENT THIS BILL ESPOUSES - IT'S CALLED EXCLUSIONARY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

PAGE 2, LINES 30, 31 PAGE 3 LINE 1 - WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF WOODLOTS FOR LOCAL USE IN REMOTE COMMUNITIES? HEALTHY FORESTS ARE NO ACCIDENT SENATOR, AND PROPER FOREST MANAGEMENT COSTS THE GOVERNMENT MONEY. ARE THE SELF INTEREST GROUPS WHO ARE PUSHING THIS BILL GOING TO MANAGE, OR PAY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF, THEIR WOODLOTS?

PAGE 2

FINALLY, IN VIEW OF THE PUBLIC OUTCRY
AGAINST THIS BILL LAST SESSION BY VALLEY
RESIDENTS WHEN IT WAS LABELED SB 430,
I AM INSULTED BY IT'S RE-INTRODUCTION
THIS SESSION.

I HAVE TAKEN NOTE THAT IT WAS NOT
INTRODUCED BY A VALLEY LEGISLATOR EITHER
TIME, AND I URGE YOU TO VOTE NO ON THIS
BILL. IT IS POOR PUBLIC POLICY TO LOCK
UP A LARGE RESOURCE BASE FOR A SELECT FEW.

SINCERELY,

Steven P. Stube

Po BOX 521155

1316 LK, AK 99652

992-7760

CC: SENATE RESOURCE COMMITTEE

SENATOR KERTUQA

REP. CARNEY

REP. LARSON

SENATOR RODEY

Susitna Valley

Susitna Valley Association
9600 Slalom Drive • Anchorage AK 99516 • 346-1943
P.O. Box 292 • Talkeetna AK 99676
P.O. Box 2176 • Palmer AK 99645

March 21, 1991

Senator Lloyd Jones
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area (SB 124)

Dear Senator Jones:

The purpose of SB 124, a bill to establish the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, is to continue, and to enhance, the multitude of economic activities that currently exist in the Susitna Valley. The bill would create stability for the area by giving businesses and communities the confidence to make long term commitments toward their future.

This legislation would allow all the myriad of existing activities to continue, including all forms of traditional motorized and non-motorized access. It would also allow personal-use timber sales for individuals and commercial facilities, establishment of community wood lots, vegetation management for habitat enhancement, adequate and feasible access for all occupancies, construction of commercial recreation and tourism facilities, land disposals, and mining. Management of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area would be by the Department of Natural Resources, with management of fish and wildlife by the Department of Fish and Game.

The Susitna Valley is an intensively used, year-round, remote recreation area that also supports a highly successful commercial fishery. It is a multiple use area that has developed a very complex pattern of business opportunities that channels millions of dollars into the Mat-Su, Anchorage and Kenai economies. The area is rich in fish and wildlife and scenic values. Although the valley lies only a short plane hop, boat trip, or snowmachine ride from the urban centers of southcentral Alaska, it provides a surprisingly remote experience for hundreds of thousands of residents and tourists alike.

It is this same area that the state has been analyzing during the past three years for large-scale commercial logging and related road building; uses which would have serious negative impacts on the broad variety of successful industries, activities, and communities currently co-existing in the valley. During those three years the public has repeatedly and consistently voiced its opposition to commercial logging and roading for this area, and has supported those provisions reflected in SB 124. We ask that you join us in supporting this legislation.

Loisann Reeder, President, Susitna Valley Association
Mike Bronson, President, Wasilla Chapter, Susitna Valley Association
Roberta Sheldon, President, Talkeetna Chapter, Susitna Valley Association

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. It has evolved into an organization that strongly supports the recreation and tourism values of the Valley, and opposes commercial timber harvesting where it conflicts with those values.

The association formed primarily for three purposes:

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

The association has grown into a coalition of over 4400 individuals, numerous businesses, and 67 organizations. 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 commercial timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley is a far-reaching issue of deep public concern that involves the entire community.

Dated: March 1991

Susitna Valley Association 9600 Slalom Drive Anchorage, AK 99516 346-1943
Susitna Valley Association, Wasilla Chapter P.O. Box 2176 Palmer, AK 99645
Susitna Valley Association, Talkeetna Chapter P.O. Box 292 Talkeetna, AK 99676

MAR 14 1991

2521 Banbury Dr.
Anchorage, AK. 99504
March 14, 1991

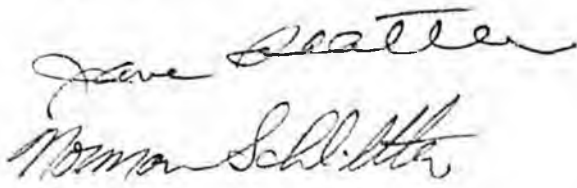
Senator Lloyd Jones
Chair, Resources Committee
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK. 99811

Dear Sen. Jones;

We are writing to request your support of SB 124 re: the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. As property owners in the Mat-Su Borough, we are greatly disturbed by the Department of Natural Resources plan for large scale commercial logging of this area. The wilderness characteristics of this popular area must be preserved for the continued use, enjoyment and growth of tourism and recreational uses. The large scale logging as now planned is simply not compatible with these uses. In addition to causing a large amount of environmental damage, the economic ^{benefits} of logging are relatively short-lived, while the benefits of tourism and recreational uses can last indefinitely. These uses currently provide approximately \$50 million per year to the economy of south central Alaska. Let's not kill the goose that laid the golden egg.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,



Jane Schlittler
Norman Schlittler



APR 2 1991

HIGHWAY USERS FEDERATION OF ALASKA

P.O. BOX 92065 ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99509-2065

March 25, 1991

The Honorable Lloyd Jones
State Senate
P.O. Box V (MS 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: HUFA

Dear Senator Jones:

This letter regards S.B. 124 "An Act Establishing the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area."

Wording in the proposed legislation seems intent on another lock-up of lands primarily for use by few. Exclusion of main access road corridors could have a disastrous impact on future needed development related to energy and other resources.

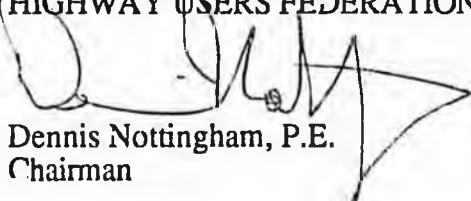
Presently, for example, there are at times no access to the Beluga Power Plant--a prime source of power to the Railbelt. HUFA has proposed for some time an access road to Beluga shown as Road No. 3 on the enclosed brochure.

Legislation that would limit "common sense" as related to transportation should not be considered and we recommend no action on S.B. 124.

Should you have any questions relating to this or other transportation issues, please contact me at (907) 561-1011, or write to 1506 West 36th Avenue, Anchorage, Alaska 99503.

Sincerely,

HIGHWAY USERS FEDERATION OF ALASKA



Dennis Nottingham, P.E.
Chairman

DN/dt/89072

Enclosure



n o r t h s t a r

r i v e r b o a t s e r v i c e s

P.O. Box 870728 • Wasilla, AK 99687 • (907) 373-6086

March 27, 1991

Senator Lloyd Jones
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Jones:

I have again reviewed the Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan and I wonder what in the world we're doing. I backtracked to November of 1988 and read "Why do we need the Plan?". It states in part "The purpose of the legislation are maintenance and enhancement of land and water in the corridors for recreation; management, protection and maintenance of fish and wildlife populations and habitat on a sustained basis; continued recreation and economic uses".

What we are looking at today is a plan which prohibits the use of hundreds of certain boats on hundreds of miles of rivers and streams. The plan also restricts hunting, use of firearms and equal access to the resource. I fail to see the enhancement of recreation and economic uses in that.

For all these years, most of the affected streams such as the Talkeetna, Deshka, Lake Creek, and the Little Su have done great in dictating how far a boater would go with a particular boat. Yet the plan now is to outlaw many boats on these streams for miles and miles.

I fail to see the "enhancement" of my "recreation: in this, in fact, I feel discriminated against simply because of the type of boat I have been using for years. I plan to keep using my boat and I am opposed to regulations which prohibit that use.

Therefore, at this time I am asking that you support Senate Bill #166. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jeffrey L. Bowman

SENATOR JONES
SB 124

MAR 22 1991

Mail Drop

Page 4, The Frontiersman - Friday, March 22, 1991

Flush timber bill

Editor:

The Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Bill, known as Senate Bill 430 last session, and Senate Bill 124 this session has reared its ugly head once again.

This bill is the epitome of exclusionary resource management because it reserves the state forest resource on a huge tract of public land for the exclusive use of a few.

Sen. Pat Rodey, an Anchorage legislator, sponsored Senate Bill 124 because it is such poor public policy that none of our Valley legislators would introduce it.

This bill is the product of paranoid preservationists. For example, there is language in the bill that protects fish and wildlife habitat. But the bill does not indicate what the resource is to be protected from. The Susitna Forest Guidelines and existing statutes provide for the protection of habitat and streams without the passage of this bill.

This bill discriminates against everyone who does not dwell in or own land within the designated area because it prohibits the sale of timber unless it is sold to individuals and commercial facilities for personal use. This bill also prohibits the construction of roads necessary for resource development in the future.

I believe passage of this bill will take the Valley one step closer to being like Anchorage with a park on one side and the ocean on the other. It will also turn resource managers into resource police to keep the people who need the resource from accessing it.

Last session the public spoke out loud and clear against the adoption of this bill in testimony to the Senate Community and Regional Affairs Commit-

tee because they do not want more land locked up by political pressure from self-interest groups.

This bill is in the Senate Resources Committee. I encourage everyone to contact the committee members and ask that they vote no on SB124 and to put it where it belongs and flush it. The committee can be contacted at 465-4907.

*Judy Bryan
Big Lake*



Alaska Center for the Environment

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March 14, 1991

Sen. Lloyd Jones
P.O. Box V
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area (SB 124)

Dear Sen. Jones:

I appreciated the opportunity to meet with you and Paula Terrel on March 6 to discuss the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area bill. Passage of this legislation would ensure the future of the \$50 million remote recreation and tourism industry, while allowing for reasonable growth in the local timber industry. The bill is supported by a broad coalition of businesses, interest groups, property owners, and other individuals.

The requirements for an economically feasible, moderately sized value-added wood products industry, as identified by the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, exceed the available timber resource in all of the Susitna Valley. However, according to recent resource data from the draft Susitna Forestry Guidelines, there is sufficient timber to allow for a ten to fourteen fold increase in existing Susitna Valley logging activities on state land outside the boundaries of the Area. Essentially, SB 124 ensures a future for the existing remote recreation and tourism industry while providing for growth in the existing timber industry.

We look forward to additional discussions with you and your staff about this issue.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Alan Phipps
State Lands Specialist

SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA

Senate Bill 124

WHY DO WE NEED THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA?

- The fish, wildlife, and scenic values of the roadless Susitna Valley support thriving remote recreation, tourism, and fishing industries worth over \$50 million a year to the Southcentral economy.
- Legislative designation as a "Remote Recreation Area" would greatly enhance the marketability of the Susitna Valley as a tourism and recreation destination, and would refocus the management emphasis from timber extraction to maintaining a healthy forest ecosystem which will protect the spectacular natural values critical to tourism.
- Recent data produced by the state shows there are not sufficient timber resources in the Valley to support a medium or large-scale value-added logging and wood processing industry.
- Comment during the recent Susitna Forestry Guidelines public meetings revealed overwhelming support for the continuation of the existing community lifestyles and resource uses, as well as the existing means of access, for the remote areas of the Susitna Valley.
- The Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area legislation will provide the legislative direction necessary for reasonable expansion of the local timber industry while ensuring the survival of the existing remote recreation and tourism industry.

WHAT IS THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA?

A portion of the state lands within the Susitna Valley would be legislatively designated as a "Remote Recreation Area".

Management: State lands would continue to be managed for multiple-use by the commissioner of the Dept. of Natural Resources, with management of fish and wildlife by the commissioner of fish and game.

Logging: The existing local logging industry would be able to expand on borough and private lands as well as state lands identified along the existing road system in the eastern and northern portions of the Valley. The harvest of timber on state lands which are actually located within the Remote Recreation Area boundaries would be limited to negotiated personal use sales for house logs and firewood for individuals and commercial businesses. Additional local wood needs would be met by individual use permits and establishment of community woodlots.

Moose: Vegetation management for habitat enhancement would not be precluded.

Traditional access: All means of traditional motorized and nonmotorized access would continue.

Non-traditional access: Road construction would be limited to local community roads not connected to the highway system. However, access to private and borough land, including road access if necessary, would be ensured. A potential transportation corridor which lies south of the proposed boundaries would not be affected.

Management plan optional: A management plan may be developed by the commissioner of DNR if necessary (1) to provide guidance for mining, access, facilities, and future land disposals, (2) to provide for the determination of incompatible uses, or (3) to authorize the construction and operation of commercial facilities on state lands.

The establishment of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will enable Alaskans to optimize the economic, social, and environmental benefits from state lands in the Susitna Valley.

