

**SJR**

**17**

# SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

## First Committee of Referral

DATE: 2/20/97

FURTHER:

Date of 5-Day Notice: 3/6/97  
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED  
IN TO OFFICE: 3/10/97

Judiciary Committee considered

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 17

Relating to challenging the environmental and economic integrity of Alaska timber as Christmas decor for the United States Capitol.

and recommends:

- be replaced with \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- adopt previous \_\_\_\_\_ CS \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_)
- attached amendment(s)
- adopt Letter of Intent by \_\_\_\_\_ Committee
- further referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

- Senate Bill:**
- same title
  - new title
- House Bill:**
- same title
  - technical title
  - new: SCR# \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNING DO PASS	DP	OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS	NR	DNP	AM
Mike Miller	✓	<i>[Signature]</i>			
Sean P. Powell	✓	<i>[Signature]</i>			
Grace	✓				
CHAIR: <i>[Signature]</i>	✓	CHAIR:			

**NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal
S. Jud	3/10	✓	

**PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTE(S):\***

Department	Date	Zero	Fiscal

APPROPRIATION -- no fiscal note

\*include fiscal notes accompanying Governor's bill

# FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA  
1997 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. SJR 17

Revision Date 3/10/97 Dept. Affected N/A  
 Title "No Christmat Trees for Federal Capitol" BRU \_\_\_\_\_  
 Component \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sponsor Senator Taylor  
 Requester \_\_\_\_\_ Component Serial No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 98	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES</b> [ 1 ]						
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Menial Health						
1091 Designated Program Receipts						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY97) cost: 0.0

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

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

This resolution has no fiscal impact on state agencies.

Prepared by Senate Judiciary Committee  
 Division \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approved by Senator Robin Taylor, Chairman *Robin Taylor*  
 Agency Senate Judiciary Committee

Phone 465-3717  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date 3/7/97

PREPARER TO PROVIDE ALL DISTRIBUTION COPIES TO GOVERNOR'S LEGISLATIVE OFFICE

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**SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**ADDITIONAL  
INFORMATION FOR**

**SJR 17  
"No Alaska Christmas Tree for  
Federal Capitol"**

Alaska State House of Representatives  
Twentieth Legislature  
First Session

RCS# 121  
Item 9

03-10-97  
12:18:47

CSHJR 24 (RES)  
Third Reading  
Final Passage

Yeas:	34	Austerman, Barnes, Berkowitz, Brice, Bunde, Cowdery, Davis, Dyson, Foster, Green, Grussendorf, Hanley, Hodgins, Hudson, Ivan, James, Joule, Kelly, Kohring, Kookesh, Kott, Kubina, Martin, Masek, Mulder, Ogan, Phillips, Porter, Rokeberg, Ryan, Sanders, Therriault, Vezey, Williams
Nays:	5	Croft, Davies, Elton, Kemplen, Nicholia
Excused:	0	
Absent:	1	Moses

# Alaska State Legislature

*Chairman,*  
Judiciary Committee

*Member,*  
Resources Committee  
Rules Committee  
Committee on Committees



State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182  
(907) 465-3873  
Fax: (907) 465-3922

352 Front Street  
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901  
(907) 225-8088  
Fax: (907) 225-0713

*Senator Robin L. Taylor*

## Sponsor Statement

### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 17

**SJR 17 was introduced to call national attention to the callousness of the Clinton administration in asking the people of Southeast Alaska to provide Christmas trees from the Tongass National Forest to decorate the federal Capital.**

**This resolution recognizes that what would normally be an honor is instead an affront to the working people of Southern Southeast, thousands of whom have been made jobless by the anti-timber policies of the Clinton administration.**

**To further compound this insult, the Clinton/Gore administration is asking school kids, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, timber-dependent communities and their elected leaders to pay the cost of participating in what can only be termed an insensitive farce.**

**This is the same administration that ignored the efforts of the Alaska congressional delegation and the Alaska State Legislature to protect the livelihoods of the workers, families and towns of the Tongass.**

**This is the same administration whose policies led to the closure of the region's two pulp mills and largest saw mill, costing thousands of jobs.**

**The three US Forest Service supervisors of the Tongass National Forest say the opportunity to provide trees to decorate the nation's Capital "a great moment for Alaska".**

**Sponsor Statement - SJR 17**

**Page Two**

**SJR 17 makes it clear the Twentieth Alaska State Legislature considers this "opportunity" to be insensitive, callous and insulting. It calls upon President Clinton and Vice President Gore to find another source for its 1998 Christmas decorations.**



United States  
Department  
of Agriculture

Forest  
Service

Alaska Region

Tongass National Forest

File Code: 1600

Date: January 28, 1997

Gall Phillips, Speaker of the House  
Mail Stop 3100  
State Capitolard Street  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

RECEIVED

JAN 31 1997

Ans'd.....

Dear Speaker Phillips:

Southeast Alaska has been given an honor and an opportunity - and a challenge. We would like to invite you to share in it.

The Tongass National Forest has been chosen to provide the Capitol Holiday Tree in 1998. This marks the first time the state of Alaska has been chosen for this honor. This tree will be a gift to all the people of America from the people of Southeast Alaska. Decked with thousands of ornaments made by children and adults from across Southeast, this tree will stand proudly in front of the nation's Capitol, to be enjoyed by Washington, DC, residents and visitors alike.

Along with the honor of providing the Capitol Tree comes the opportunity to generate national publicity about the people and resources of Southeast Alaska. Perhaps even more important, it is an opportunity for the diverse people living and working throughout the Tongass to come together on a project. Everyone can participate. Not only will we provide a 60-65' tree to shine over the Capitol lawn, we will also provide up to 60 smaller trees to decorate administrative and congressional offices. Thousands of ornaments will also be made and sent with the trees.

The honor and the opportunity are also the challenge. Never before has the Capitol Tree had so far to travel. Never have the logistics of coordination and transportation been so unique. Never have the participating communities been so physically isolated one from another as in Southeast Alaska.

This is not solely a Forest Service project. Because this tree and everything that goes with it are indeed from all the people of Southeast Alaska and because your organization represents people from one end of Southeast to the other, your participation will contribute greatly to the success of this effort. We'd like you to be part of a core group to lead the project. The Forest Service is available to provide technical support and coordination with the people in Washington who will receive and put up the tree and with people who have helped with the trees in the past. The core group will bring their organizational skills, imagination, and local and corporate contacts together to make this a great moment for Alaska.

We ask that you or your representative work with a core group to provide overall project management - from developing a theme and logo, to involving individual communities in ornament making and fund raising, to working out the best way to get the trees and ornaments (with the accompanying publicity and good will) across the country. As with any project of this scope, the core group won't do all the work. Their job is to organize it, keep it on track, and make sure Alaska is proud when the Speaker of the House throws the switch to light up the Alaska tree in December 1998.



Gail Phillips, Speaker of the House

2

Merrily Jones of our Petersburg office has agreed to take the lead for the Forest Service and will be our representative to this core group. She'll help get the core group up and running. Once the group is organized, Merrily will share information from project coordinators of the last several years and also do her share of the group work.

Please contact Merrily at 907-772-5801 with your response by February 10. That will give the core group time to get started before the summer rush makes it difficult to put the project in motion.

We look forward to working with you to bring the spirit of Southeast Alaska to the people of America.

Sincerely,

  
ABIGAIL R. KIMBELL  
Forest Supervisor  
Stikine Area

  
GARY A. MORRISON  
Forest Supervisor  
Charham Area

  
BRADLEY E. POWELL  
Forest Supervisor  
Ketchikan Area

- Letter sent to:
- Association of Alaska School Boards
  - Boy Scouts of America
  - Girl Scouts, Tongass Council
  - Society of American Foresters
  - Southeast Alaska Tourism Council
  - Southeast Conference
  - Southeast Mayors' Association
  - Governor, State of Alaska
  - President of the Senate, State of Alaska
  - Speaker of the House, State of Alaska
  - Tlingit-Haida Central Council



# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

## News From The Senate and House Majorities

State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801  
Actuality line: 1-800-478-6540

Ken Freeman (907) 465-3804  
Wendy Lindskoog (907) 465-4582  
web site: <http://www.akrepublicans.org>

### Legislative Resolution Opposes Use of Tongass Trees For Clinton Christmas Focuses Attention on the Plight of Tongass Families

For Immediate Release: February 20, 1997

Contact: Ken Freeman (907) 465-3804  
Wendy Lindskoog (907) 465-4582

**JUNEAU -** Calling it hypocritical of the Clinton Administration to harvest timber from the Tongass National Forest for use as Christmas trees in Washington D.C., Representative Bill Williams (D-Saxman) and Senator Robin Taylor (R-Wrangell) Thursday announced they will introduce resolutions in the Senate and House Friday opposing this policy directive.

"Maybe this resolution will get the Clinton Administration's attention. Vice President Al Gore has stated that they have 'saved the Tongass'. At what cost? There are more than trees and animals in the Tongass, there are people. The increase in domestic violence and other negative socio-economic affects of our mill closures are unacceptable," said Williams, Chair of the House Transportation Committee.

Recent policy directives from the Clinton Administration have directly resulted in the closure of Alaska's two largest pulp mills and has put thousands of Alaskans out of work.

"The lack of a reliable timber supply threatens two additional sawmills and could eliminate hundreds of more timber jobs adding to those that have already vanished in the last 4 years," said Senator Taylor. "We are still pushing for a level of timber supply that will keep our industry alive."

Responsible timber harvesting in Southeast Alaska has resulted in less than 4% of the Tongass being logged since 1900.

-more-

2-2-2-2-2

"The Clinton Administration is sending the message that careful harvesting of our trees is not acceptable to provide jobs for the people of Southeast Alaska, yet should be allowed to decorate the White House and the halls of Congress," said Taylor. "This is an affront to those rendered jobless by the recent mill closures!"

"We request that the Clinton Administration find another source for the 1998 White House Christmas tree festivities in light of the social and economic hardship forced upon Alaska's unemployed timber workers," said Williams. "The human cost of 'saving the Tongass' hasn't seemed to matter to the President and others who won't let anything stand in the way of their zeal to 'save us' from ourselves, and that is wrong."

Williams and Taylor said that if Clinton decides to go ahead with his plan to harvest trees in the Tongass, it should be done with full public comment and a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement that is the established industry standard.

**Broadcast Note: Audio actualities are available by calling 1-800-478-6540.**

###

February 28, 1997

Senator Robin Taylor  
Alaska State Senate  
State Capitol, Interdepartmental Mail Stop: 3101  
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Senator Taylor:

We recently received a copy of the Alaska State Legislature News From The Senate and House Majorities, focusing on the Legislative Resolution opposing use of Tongass trees for President Clinton's Christmas. We commend you for introducing this resolution.

One of us grew up in the timber country of Oregon and have seen what the effect the so called "spotted owl" concern has done in that area, in fact all throughout the Pacific Northwest. We know of many families who have suffered extreme hardships over the timber closures and restrictions. Many of these families are close family friends and even relatives. This deliberate attack on the timber industry has been a terrible setback not only to those directly associated with the timber industry but has had a trickle down effect throughout the economy of the areas resulting in small business closures and some towns almost literally becoming ghost towns. It concerns us terribly to see this now happening in Alaska. The policy directives from the Clinton Administration has impacted too many Alaskans, unfairly and without cause. With statistics supporting that only 4% of the Tongass has been logged, there is no reason for these closures and the resulting impact on peoples lives.

Now they have the nerve to say they want to supply themselves with Christmas trees from the Tongass for their own personal enjoyment, while families that they have impacted may not even be able to have a Christmas Tree or be able to put anything under one for their families. How hypocritical of them!! We say, no, don't let them get away with this. If Vice President Al Gore wants to 'save the Tongass', as he has been quoted; then we suggest that someone give him some bailing wire, a roll of artificial turf, and let him make a fake Christmas Tree for the Clinton Administration's enjoyment. It's pretty hypocritical of them to even think of cutting trees anywhere to decorate for a few short weeks and then burn it or throw it away...if they truly believe in what they preach!!

Thank you for this resolution and we are copying this to all Representatives and Senators from our Valley area so they can hear our concerns. As well, we will be sending a POM to every Legislator asking for their YES votes to your resolution.

*Roy J. Burkhardt*  
*E. June Burkhardt*

Yours truly,

Roy J. And June Burkhardt, P.O. Box 204, Willow, AK 99688 (907)495-6337  
Fax: (907)495-6338 E-Mail: rjburk@alaska.net

cc: Representatives Beverly Masek, Scott Ogan, and Vic Kohring  
Senators Lyda Green, and Rick Halford

---

Mr. Roger  
319 Riverside Dr

Laber

Support 262-9797

Soldotna AK 99669

Distribution Affiliation Reg Voter  
60 Y

Date POM Sent  
02/24/97

Constituency  
N

Bill Number  
SJR 17

Response

Subject

CONCUR THAT CHRISTMAS TREES SHOULD NOT BE CUT FROM THE TONGASS. PASS A RESOLUTION THAT RECOMMENDS TO PRES. CLINTON THAT HE OBTAIN AN ARTIFICIAL CHRISTMAS TREE FROM ONE OF HIS FOREIGN POLITICAL DONORS WHICH WOULD HELP SAVE TREES ON ALL OUR FEDERAL LANDS.

---

TO: SEN. ROBIN (HOOD) TAYLOR ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE  
STATE CAPITOL, JUNEAU, AK. 99801-1182

FROM: MARSHA GEORGE 907-225-2490  
PO BOX 7175 KETCHIKAN, ALASKA 99901

DATE: 1-24-97

RE: WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS TREES - FROM THE TONGASS

AN HONOR? EXCUSE ME? A SLAP IN THE FACE IS WHAT THIS IS!

IS THIS SUPPOSED TO BE THE STRAW THAT BREAKS THE CAMEL'S BACK?  
I DON'T BELIEVE IT IS IRONIC THAT THE WHITE HOUSE CHOSE THE TONGASS  
(SHERWOOD FOREST) TO SELECT CHRISTMAS TREES. I THINK IT IS A  
DELIBERATE, "IN YOUR FACE" ACTION BY A PERVERTED ADMINISTRATION WHO  
ARE NOW GETTING THEIR JOLLIES BY "RUBBING SALT" IN OUR WOUNDS.

AND WHO IS SUPPOSED TO PAY FOR THIS DUBIOUS HONOR? ANSWER: AN  
ENDANGERED SPECIES (PEOPLE OF THE TONGASS). WHAT GALL.

TALKING TO JOHN CAREY OF THE KETCHIKAN FOREST SERVICE OFFICE, HE  
SAID MOST LIKELY THE TREES WOULD COME FROM THE KETCHIKAN RANGER  
DISTRICT. COINCIDENCE? I THINK NOT.

STEVE SAMS, ALSO OF THE KTN. FOREST SERVICE OFFICE WAS QUOTED IN  
THE KTN. DAILY NEWS ARTICLE "TREE TREK" 1-17-97 THAT HE ANTICIPATES  
ALL THE COMMUNITIES, THE STATE AND MANY ENTITIES THROUGHOUT SOUTH-  
EAST ALASKA WILL PARTICIPATE IN PROVIDING TREES AND FINANCING THE  
PROJECT.

SINCE WHEN DO FOREST SERVICE "IMPORTS" SPEAK FOR ALASKANS? LET ALONE  
VOLUNTEER OUR POCKETBOOKS FOR SLICK WILLIE'S TREES. WHEN I TALKED TO  
HIM HE SAID THE ARTICLE HAD MANY INACCURACIES. HE DENIED THAT THE TREES  
WERE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE. HE SAID THEY WERE FOR THE NATION'S CAPITOL.  
DID I MISS SOMETHING HERE? AND ALL THESE ALMOST 40 YEARS I THOUGHT  
THE WHITE HOUSE WAS THE CAPITOL. DUMB ME! SO I REREAD THE ARTICLE.  
IT WAS VERY SPECIFIC EVEN TO WHICH ROOMS IN THE WHITE HOUSE THE TREES  
WOULD OCCUPY. SO WHO'S RIGHT MR. ROBIN HOOD? IS THE DAILY NEWS CORRECT  
OR MR. SAMS?

I TOLD YOUR RECEPTIONIST WE NEED TO HAVE A "BOSTON TEA PARTY" AND  
SHE RESPONDED, "YOU MEAN A BOSTON TREE PARTY". MAN SHE'S GOOD. I  
HOPE YOU PAY HER WELL.

I HAVE A SUGGESTION TO THE FOREST SERVICE AS TO THE PERFECT  
ENTITIES TO FOOT THE TAB. I'M SURE THAT T.C.S. (TONGASS CRACKPOT  
SOCIETY) OR SEACC (SOUTHEAST ALASKA CRACKPOTS & CREEPS) WOULD  
JUST JUMP FOR JOY AT THE HONOR. (SERIOUSLY)

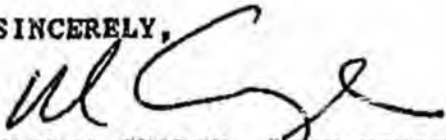
I WOULD BE INTERESTED IN YOUR IDEAS AS TO HOW TO STOP THE WHITE HOUSE FROM "HAVING THEIR CAKE" (TONGASS LOCKUP) AND "EATING IT TOO" (CHRISTMAS TREES). FOR THAT MATTER, WHEN ARE WE GOING TO HAVE HEARINGS TO REVERT OWNERSHIP OF THE TONGASS TO ALASKA?

I'M SURE GOV. KNOWLES WILL BE QUICK TO VOICE HIS SUPPORT FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE TONGASS AND USE HIS OFFICE TO FORMALLY PROTEST THIS "INSULT TO INJURY". AFTER ALL HE'S DONE TO/FOR US, I'M SURE HE REALIZES THIS IS THE LEAST HE CAN DO.

ALL SARCASM AND PUNS ASIDE, I BELIEVE EVERY COMMUNITY IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA SHOULD FORMALLY PROTEST. DO WE TAKE LEGAL ACTION? THE USFS SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE AN EIS STATEMENT. TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE DAMAGE TO THE MORALE THAT WOULD BE SUFFERED BY AN ENDANGERED SPECIES (PEOPLE OF THE TONGASS), THIS EIS SHOULD TAKE ABOUT TEN YEARS. (HA HA) (IN REF. TO TLMP-TONGASS LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS 10 PLUS YEARS UNDER REVISION) (AFTER ALL, FAIR IS FAIR)

IT IS SAD THAT BEING CHOSEN TO PROVIDE CHRISTMAS TREES TO THE NATIONS CAPITOL IS NO LONGER AN HONOR. IN REFERENCE TO AND IN CONTRADICTION OF THE EDITORIAL BY NIKKI MURRAY JONES IN THE KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS ON JAN. 18TH 1997 ENTITLED "THANK-YOU, MAYBE", I DO NOT WELCOME THE PROSPECT OF CONTRIBUTING TO OUR NATIONAL CELEBRATION. YES IT HAS COME DOWN TO POLITICS AND WHO'S IN THE WHITE HOUSE. HOW CAN MR. CLINTON (EVIL PRINCE JOHN) AND "ALGORE" (SHERRIF OF NOTTINGHAM) THINK FOR A MOMENT THAT THEY CAN TAKE OUR JOBS AND THEN "HONOR" US BY TAKING THE VERY TREES THAT PUT BUTTER ON OUR TABLE FOR DECORATING PURPOSES. YES IT HAS COME DOWN TO POLITICS AND WHO'S IN THE WHITE HOUSE. NOT BY OUR DOING MIND YOU, BUT BY A TOTALLY CORRUPT ADMINISTRATION. MR. CLINTON AND "ALGORE" SHOULD HAVE BEEN "HONORED" LONG AGO BY IMPEACHMENT.

SINCERELY,

  
MARSHA GEORGE, "THE HOUSEWIFE"

ENC. COPIES OF KTN. DAILY NEWS ARTICLE 1-17-97 "TREE TREK" BY NIKKI M. JONES AND EDITORIAL 1-18-97 "THANK-YOU, MAYBE". LEW WILLIAMS EDITORIAL "END OF THE WEEK" 1-18-97, LAST 7 PARAGRAPHS REGARDING FOREST SERVICE AND CHRISTMAS TREES.

PS. PETITION ANYONE? PUBLIC SURVEYS? ANY TAKERS? NEWSPAPERS, CITY COUNCILS, ASSEMBLIES, PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES? I WOULD SUGGEST THE PUBLIC CALL YOUR NEWSPAPERS, RADIO STATIONS, COUNCIL MEMBERS, MAYORS, REPRESENTATIVES ETC. A PROTEST CALL TO THE FOREST SERVICE?

CC TO: PRES. BILL CLINTON (EVIL PRINCE JOHN)  
ALGORE (SHERRIF OF NOTTINGHAM)  
ENVIRON. QUALITY-KATHLEEN MCGINTY  
SEC. OF AGRICULTURE-DAN GLICKMAN  
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE-JIM LYONS  
USFS TONGASS REGIONAL FORESTER-PHIL JANIK  
USFS KETCHIKAN AREA SUPERVISOR-BRAD POWELL  
US SENATOR FRANK MURKOWSKI  
MURKOWSKI PRESS SECRETARY-CHUCK KLEESCHULTE  
US SENATOR TED STEVENS  
US REP. DON YOUNG  
GOV. TONY KNOWLES  
C.A.R.E. (CONCERNED ALASKANS FOR RESOURCES AND ENVIRONM.)  
ALASKA FOREST ASSOCIATION  
KETCHIKAN DAILY NEWS  
PEOPLE FOR THE WEST  
T.C.S. (TONGASS CONSERVATION SOCIETY)  
SEACC (SOUTHEAST ALASKA CONSERVATION COUNCIL)  
JUNEAU EMPIRE  
ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS  
ALASKA JOURNAL OF COMMERCE  
FAIRBANKS DAILY NEWS MINER  
KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BORO MAYOR-JACK SHAY  
PETERSBURG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
CITY MAYORS OF:  
KETCHIKAN, WRAGELL, SITKA, JUNEAU,  
METLAKATLA, SKAGWAY, PETESBURG, HAINES

Vol. 62 No. 14, (USPS 293-940), 14

# Tree trek

## Tongass source for 1998 Capitol Christmas trees

By NIKKI MURRAY JONES  
*Daily News Staff Writer*

Christmas 1998 will bring snow, short nights, sparkling lights and a 4,000-mile trek across the United States with 60 trees.

The Tongass National Forest has been picked by the White House to provide the trees and decorations for the nation's capital holiday celebration, say organizers.

The call is for trees ranging from the largest one, 65- to 75-foot tall, for the Capitol Building to smaller ones for use in various Washington, D.C., locations, said Merryly Jones, spokeswoman for the Sitka Area of the U.S. Forest Service. Trees will likely come from the Sitka, Chatham and Ketchikan areas of the forest, she said.

The honor of providing trees rotates throughout the National Forest system, said Steve Sams, recreation staff officer for the Ketchikan Area Supervisor's Office. In 1996, trees came from Utah and this year they'll come from the Black Hills National Forest that straddles South Dakota and Wyoming. In 1999, trees will be sent from the Nicolette National Forest in Wisconsin, he said.

The trees can come from other sources, as well, such as private land, Native corporation land and state and borough land, said Sams. He anticipates that all the communities, the state and many entities throughout Southeast Alaska will participate in providing trees and financing the project, he said.

Washington Christmas decorating requires two tall trees (one as a backup) for the Capitol, an 18-foot tree for the White House's Blue Room, a variety of

See 'Christmas trees,' page A-3

## Christmas trees

trees for the White House front fall, various other trees for other parts of the White House and trees in the Supreme Court Building, Senate Dining Room and other offices.

The White House tree is delivered by horse-drawn cart the Friday after Thanksgiving, said Chuck Kleeschulte, press secretary for Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska.

"It's a great honor to be selected," Kleeschulte said.

Transporting the trees will be a logistical feat. And traditionally, there are ceremonies at various cities along the way, said Paul McIntosh, in charge of public affairs for the Ketchikan Area Forest Service.

Forest Service officials met by teleconference this week to begin planning. The Petersburg Chamber of Commerce also is involved.

Organizers will form committees to handle tree selection, transportation, financing and ornaments, said Sams.

One of the questions to be answered is what kind of tree to send. The most attractive, the Sitka Spruce, doesn't keep its needles well, he said.

Trees are put up in Washington right after Thanksgiving and stay up through New Year's Day, said Kleeschulte.

"It will be up to a subcommittee to decide that," Sams said. One possibility would be a fir tree, although not many grow in Southeast Alaska, he said.

No taxpayer funds can be used for taking the trees to Washington. Other sources will be sought because it will be costly, said Annabeth Burick, director of the Petersburg Chamber.

"If someone wants to offer us their plane to fly the trees to Washington, we'll take it," she said.

The region also is expected to provide ornaments. They can be made by groups, school children and others interested in making them, said Sams.

Organizers said they are still gathering information for the project.

Ketchikan Daily News

Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 18-19, 1997

### Editorial

# Thank you, maybe

Thank you, maybe.

Southeast Alaska and the Tongass National Forest have been honored by the Clinton Administration as sources for the 1998 Christmas trees for the Capitol Building and White House.

While Southeasterners might appreciate the honor, it is one met by many with mixed feelings.

On the one hand, we have millions of acres of federal, state, private and local government land from which to select the 65-foot and shorter trees for the nation's capital. On the other hand, the federal portion, which makes up most of Southeast Alaska, has been the target of political controversy that has undercut a once-thriving timber industry in the region.

Also, one wonders at the politics that allow cutting from a national forest the 60 trees needed for Christmas decorating when the region's timber industry has been blasted for cutting trees to create jobs and a stronger economy. And certainly, the tallest trees needed will have to come from old-growth areas, the most controversial area of environmentalist focus.

Of course, 60 trees out of this huge region is literally on a par with a sapling compared to a forest.

The cost is another factor which might make Southeasterners check their checkbooks. We know it will be expensive to transport the trees across country to Washington, D.C. Transport by land seems the most likely way since the trek traditionally includes ceremonies at various sites along the way. Taxpayer dollars can't be used, so the region will have to find money from private sources such as individuals, communities, non-profit groups and regional organizations.

Utah's recent experience makes us a little leery. That state provided the trees for the White House's 1996 holiday decorating. That same year President Clinton created a huge national monument in the state without public process. Does he have any surprises in store for Alaska?

Then there's the question of what kind of trees to send. Hemlocks are too thin, cedars are too droopy and Sitka spruce, while beautiful, lose their needles easily. Foresters have suggested a fir but the final decision will rest with the committee charged with that job.

Despite the political controversy and the challenges attached to the task, we still welcome the prospect of contributing to our national celebration. The honor of decorating the nation's capital goes beyond politics and beyond whoever occupies the Oval Office. And whether we agree with President Clinton's national policies or not, he still stands for an office that we respect and support.

So, come Christmas 1998, Washington, D.C., the Capitol Building, the White House and other areas will be transformed by Tongass trees. It will be a sight worth seeing.

← NIKKI MILLER, JONES

LEW WILLIAMS SR. ↓

\*\*\*\*\*

The Forest Service reported this week that the White House has asked for 60 Christmas trees from Tongass National Forest for the 1998 Christmas season.

Juneau-based Greatland radio reporter Pete Carran read the story on the air and then he couldn't resist an editorial comment; "I can't wait to hear what Wrangell Senator Robin Taylor has to say about that."

Broadcast and print reporters usually refrain from editorial remarks in news, especially Carran, who does a good newscast each weekday on KTKN. But this was too good to miss.

We couldn't wait either so we asked Taylor. He said he hoped Vice President Al Gore didn't take the trees out of the allowable cut when the White House is finished manipulating the Tongass Land Management Plan to satisfy environmentalists.

He also said that it is ironic that the White House asks for trees from an area where it has decimated the economy by preventing people from cutting trees for a living.

But wait until Taylor hears the entire story. A Forest Service official in Ketchikan, Steve Sams, says he anticipates that all communities, the state and many entities throughout Southeast will participate in the honor of providing the trees and financing the project.

Has he located a Gore-supporting Buddhist Temple in Southeast?

1-18-97

Alaska State House of Representatives  
Twentieth Legislature  
First Session

RCS# 121  
Item 9

'03-10-97  
12:18:47

CSHJR 24 (RES)  
Third Reading  
Final Passage

Yeas: 34 Austerman, Barnes, Berkowitz, Brice, Bunde,  
Cowdery, Davis, Dyson, Foster, Green,  
Grussendorf, Hanley, Hodgins, Hudson, Ivan,  
James, Joule, Kelly, Kohring, Kookesh,  
Kott, Kubina, Martin, Masek, Mulder, Ogan,  
Phillips, Porter, Rokeberg, Ryan, Sanders,  
Therriault, Vezey, Williams

Nays: 5 Croft, Davies, Elton, Kemplen, Nicholia

Excused: 0

Absent: 1 Moses