

**HB**

**79**

<TARGET><BILL>HB 79</BILL><SUBJECT>HB  
79</SUBJECT><COMM>HRES28</COMM></TARGET>

# Fiscal Note

State of Alaska  
2014 Legislative Session

Bill Version: HB 79  
Fiscal Note Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Identifier: HB079-DNR-DOF-1-21-14  
Title: SUSITNA STATE FOREST; SALE OF TIMBER  
Sponsor: RLS BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR  
Requester: House Resources

Department: Department of Natural Resources  
Appropriation: Land & Water Resources  
Allocation: Forest Management & Development  
OMB Component Number: 435

**Expenditures/Revenues**

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below. (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY2015 Appropriation Requested	Included in Governor's FY2015 Request	Out-Year Cost Estimates					
			FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>								
Personal Services								
Travel								
Services								
Commodities								
Capital Outlay								
Grants & Benefits								
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>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

**Fund Source (Operating Only)**

None							
<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>	<b>0.0</b>

**Positions**

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

**Change in Revenues**

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**Estimated SUPPLEMENTAL (FY2014) cost:** 0.0 *(separate supplemental appropriation required)*  
*(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)*

**Estimated CAPITAL (FY2015) cost:** 0.0 *(separate capital appropriation required)*  
*(discuss reasons and fund source(s) in analysis section)*

**ASSOCIATED REGULATIONS**

Does the bill direct, or will the bill result in, regulation changes adopted by your agency? No  
If yes, by what date are the regulations to be adopted, amended or repealed? N/A

**Why this fiscal note differs from previous version:**

Updated for 2nd session to accurately reflect FY2015 and out year costs.

Prepared By: <u>John 'Chris' Maisch, Director</u>	Phone: <u>(907)451-2660</u>
Division: <u>Division of Forestry</u>	Date: <u>12/05/2013 09:00 AM</u>
Approved By: <u>Joe Balash, Commissioner</u>	Date: <u>12/05/13</u>
Agency: <u>Department of Natural Resources</u>	

## FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

STATE OF ALASKA  
2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB079

### Analysis

This bill would establish a new State Forest and broaden the options for negotiated timber sales on state land. Implementation of this bill will not require new positions or funding. The Division currently already manages land classified for forestry use by regional area plans and the Division of Forestry has an active timber management program in place.

The bill will have no short-term impact to the revenue stream, but will provide for long-term increases in forest productivity and subsequent increased timber revenues.

#### I. Susitna State Forest

This bill would establish the Susitna State Forest in the Matanuska and Susitna Valleys from state land presently classified for forestry management by the two area plans for the region. These lands are currently managed by the Department of Natural Resources for timber harvest and other multiple uses. Legislative designation of these lands as a State Forest will ensure the long-term availability of a timber supply for local commercial and personal use, support economic opportunities for the region's communities, improve access to the parcels, and retain the land in state ownership for multiple uses. The State Forest will also support the growing interest in wood energy projects in local communities. These projects require a long-term, sustainable wood supply.

The proposed State Forest includes 33 parcels totalling approximately 763,200 acres in 14 large management blocks. The Susitna State Forest would become part of the State Forest system managed under AS 41.17.200-.230 and the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (FRPA, AS 41.17) which is designed to protect fish habitat and water quality, and ensure reforestation. A state forest management plan would be prepared and adopted through a public process as required by AS 41.17.230.

#### II. Negotiated timber sales

This bill would expand the conditions under which the state could offer negotiated timber sales under AS 38.05.110 and .118. Under the existing statutes, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may not offer negotiated timber greater than 500 thousand board feet unless the sale area has high unemployment, underutilized manufacturing capacity, and an underutilized timber supply that will lose value due to insects, disease, fire, or conversion to nonforest uses. These criteria prohibit larger negotiated timber sales in many areas of the state that are actively managed for forestry, and where there is high demand for wood for timber products and biomass energy. This bill would allow DNR to offer negotiated sales statewide within the limits of the sustained yield supply, and subject to a best interest finding under AS 38.05.035.

While it is anticipated that for most timber sales, a competitive bid process will continue to be in the best interest of the state, this bill would enable DNR to better respond to the economic realities and variability in the forest sector.



Alaska Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

**Briefing Paper**  
**HB 79: Susitna State Forest; Sale of Timber**  
**Division of Forestry**  
**February 24, 2014**

**OVERVIEW.** This bill would create a State Forest in the Susitna Valley and expand the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) authority to offer negotiated timber sales statewide.

### **SUSITNA STATE FOREST**

**Background:** DNR manages 9.5 million acres of state land in the Matanuska and Susitna valleys under the Matanuska-Susitna and Southeast Susitna area plans. This bill would establish the Susitna State Forest from land that the plans classify for forestry and DNR manages for timber harvest and multiple use. Remaining state land in this area is designated for land sales, agriculture, recreation, water resources, and fish and wildlife habitat, including over 3.1 million acres of legislatively designated state parks, refuges, and public use areas. The proposal excludes lands that are priorities for the state's land disposal program. It is consistent with the area plans, and was recommended by the Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force. The proposed State Forest includes approximately 763,000 acres of land in 33 parcels (see chart).

**Purpose:** Legislatively designating a State Forest would ensure that large tracts of land will remain available for long-term forest management. DNR is committed to long-term management that:

- maximizes the sustainable supply of timber from the state timber base;
- develops access and encourages a broad range of uses on State Forest land, including motorized uses; and
- provides economic and recreational opportunities to the communities, businesses, and residents of the region.

The State Forest would help meet the growing regional demand for state timber sales and personal use firewood harvesting. Local mills depend heavily on state timber for their raw materials. Interest in logs, chips, and wood pellets for commercial, public school, and residential space heating also continues to expand.

Active forest management provides forest stands with a variety of ages to support diverse and healthy wildlife habitat. It also helps reduce wildland fire risk by breaking up large expanses of hazardous fuel types and encouraging regeneration by less-flammable hardwood species.

**State Forest Management:** The proposed Susitna State Forest would be managed as part of the State Forest System under AS 41.17.200-.230. State Forest land would continue to be open for public use and access, including wildlife habitat management and harvest and recreational activities. The State Forest would be managed consistent with the management intent under the current area plans. Changes to management intent would require public and interagency review through adoption of a State Forest Management Plan under AS 41.17.230. The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17.010 - .955.) would apply to management activities on the forest. The Act is designed to protect fish habitat and water quality, and ensure reforestation. A forest inventory was completed in 2010 for approximately 75% of the acreage and work is ongoing to complete the project. An interim forest inventory report and maps are available at <http://forestry.alaska.gov/whatsnew.htm>.

**Public Outreach:** DNR has conducted extensive outreach on this proposal. In addition to meetings on the area plans, DNR held community meetings in 2012 in Palmer, Trapper Creek, and Willow; hosted two webinars; and briefed the Mat-Su Borough Assembly, Houston City Council, the Board of Forestry, and the two local Fish and Game Advisory Committees, and made a presentation at a legislative town meeting in Wasilla.

<b>PROPOSED SUSITNA STATE FOREST</b>			
<b>Parcel</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>General Location</b>	<b>Block</b>
<b>Susitna-Matanuska Area Plan</b>			
P-13a	18,100	Kroto Creek East	East Petersville
P-13b	49,600	Kroto Creek West	West Petersville
P-13c	3,300	Amber Lake	West Petersville
U-26a	35,400	Yentna River West	Yentna
R-03a	6,500	Nakoshna River	Yentna
R-03b	33,600	Skwentna River North	West Skwentna
U-26b	15,500	Skwentna River North	West Skwentna
R-03c	5,100	Hayes River	West Skwentna
M-07a	24,200	Canyon Creek	South Skwentna
M-07b	187,000	Mount Susitna	Mount Susitna
M-07c	2,500	Theodore River	Mount Susitna
M-07d	5,800	Alexander Creek West	Alexander Creek
U-24a	10,300	Alexander Creek East	Alexander Creek
U-04a	500	Kroto Slough	Susitna
U-04b	155,800	Kahiltna River	Susitna
U-07e	104,100	Skwentna Village	East Skwentna
B-10	15,200	Yenlo Creek	East Skwentna
S-35	12,800	South Fork Montana Creek	Talkeetna
<b>Southeast Susitna Area Plan</b>			
U-01a	1,200	Sheep Creek North	Talkeetna
U-01b	6,500	Sheep Creek South	Kashwitna
U-01c	5,800	Kashwitna River	Kashwitna
U-01d	13,900	Little Willow Creek North	Willer-Kash
U-01e	18,600	Willow Creek North	Willer-Kash
U-01f	10,800	Deception Creek	Houston
W-01g	600	Houston	Houston
H-06a	800	Houston	Houston
H-06b	3,000	Houston	Houston
P-03	600	Little Susitna North	Houston
P-02	1,600	Little Susitna North	Houston
S-03a	300	Deshka Landing	Red Shirt Lake
S-03b	13,300	Deshka Landing South	Red Shirt Lake
S-03c	700	Susitna Village	Red Shirt Lake
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>763,000</b>		

## NEGOTIATED TIMBER SALES

**Background:** The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may offer timber sales either competitively or through negotiation. However, negotiated sales larger than 500 thousand board feet may only be offered in areas with high unemployment, excess manufacturing capacity, and an underutilized allowable cut of timber. These criteria prohibit larger negotiated timber sales in many areas of the state that are actively managed for forestry, and where there is high demand for wood for timber products and biomass energy. This bill authorizes DNR to offer negotiated timber sales statewide within the limits of the sustained yield supply, and subject to a best interest finding.

Competitive bid timber sales are the preferred sale method under most conditions. However, negotiated sales provide the ability to tailor some sales to the needs of local processors in areas that lack competitive interest, or where there is competition from round log export markets in a region with a constrained timber supply. The latter situation exists in Southern Southeast Alaska where the state is a small landowner compared to the Tongass National Forest and the state's full allowable cut is a critical source of logs for the remaining sawmills. The state has long had a policy of balancing local jobs and manufacturing against the higher monetary returns of export timber sales. Local milling jobs and round log export businesses are both important to the region, but most state timber is currently sold for domestic use. All timber sales, including negotiated sales, must comply with the Constitutional requirement to manage state timber for sustained yield.

**Proposed changes to Title 38 timber sale provisions:** This bill would

- Clarify that the DNR commissioner may determine which applicable sale method is in the best interest of the state for each timber sale (AS 38.05.110).
- Allow DNR to offer negotiated timber sales for up to 25 years statewide. Currently, they are restricted to areas of high unemployment, excess manufacturing capacity, and excess allowable cut, which limits them to remote areas.
- Specify that negotiated sales must comply with the requirements for Forest Land Use Plans (AS 38.05.112) and Five-year Schedules of Timber Sales (AS 38.05.113). This ensures that large negotiated sales are developed with adequate notice to the industry and general public, and necessary site-specific design.
- Clarify that DNR may negotiate sales to wood fiber users, including biomass energy producers, in addition to wood product manufacturers.

**Review to date:** The proposed changes implement recommendations from the final report of the Alaska Timber Jobs Task Force. The Board of Forestry unanimously endorsed the Task Force report with the caveat that any changes in forest management must continue to provide adequate protection for fish habitat and water quality, ensure reforestation of harvested land, and fully comply with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act. The proposed bill complies with the Board's caveat.



Alaska Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

## Sectional Analysis

**HB 79: Susitna State Forest; Sale of Timber**  
**Division of Forestry**  
**February 24, 2014**

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**Section 1** amends AS 38.05.110, related to the sale of timber and timber receipts amount, to add new subsection (c) clarifying that the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) may determine which applicable sale method is in the best interest of the state for each timber sale.

**Section 2** amends AS 38.05.118(a) to allow DNR to offer negotiated timber sales to a local manufacturer of wood products or a user of wood fiber for up to 25 years statewide upon finding that the sale is in the best interest of the state. Specifies that negotiated sales must comply with the requirements for Forest Land Use Plans (AS 38.05.112) and Five-year Schedules of Timber Sales (AS 38.05.113) to ensure that large negotiated sales are developed with adequate notice to the industry and general public, and necessary site-specific design. For negotiated sales, AS 38.05.115 related to limitations and conditions of sale and AS 38.05.120 related to disposal procedures through sealed bids or public auction would no longer apply.

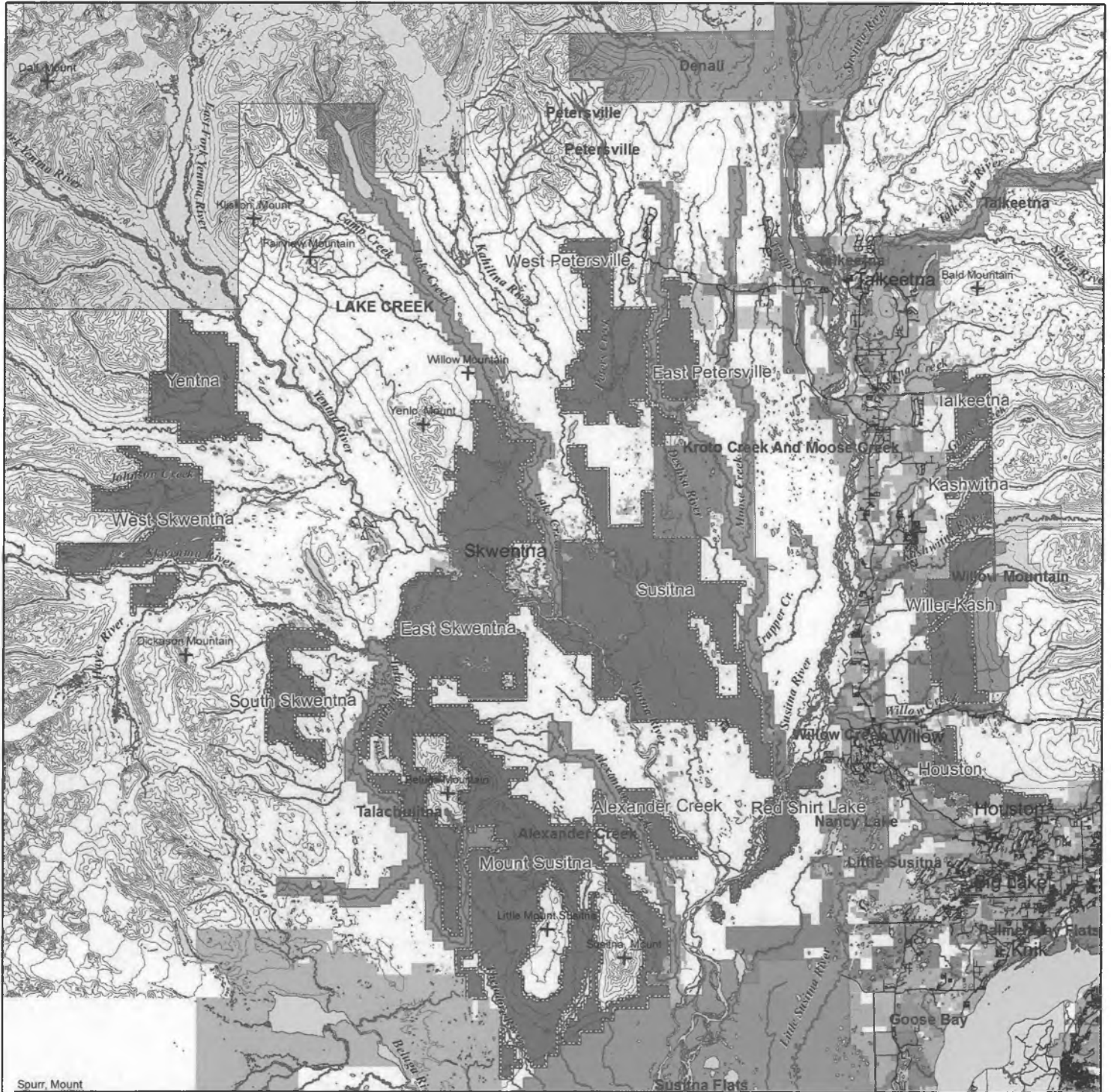
**Section 3** amends AS 41.17, related to forest resources and practices, to add a new section to article 6 creating the Susitna State Forest. This section designates state-owned or acquired land and water lying within the listed parcels as the Susitna State Forest. It requires the commissioner of DNR to prepare a management plan for the forest, and authorizes the commissioner to establish transportation corridors within the forest.

**Section 4** repeals AS 38.05.118(c), removing the restrictions that negotiated sales of timber are only allowed in areas of high unemployment, excess manufacturing capacity, and excess allowable cut.

**Section 5** amends uncodified law specifying that Sections 1, 2, and 4 of this Act apply to sales of timber on state land made on or after the effective date of this Act.

**Sections 6 and 7** set effective dates for different sections of the bill. Sections 1, 2, and 4 would be effective immediately. The other sections would be effective July 1, 2013.

# Susitna Valley State Forest Blocks



<b>Land Ownership</b>		<b>Proposed Susitna Valley State Forest Blocks</b>	
	Private Lands		
	ANCSA Native Corporation		
	Matanuska Susitna Borough		
	University of Alaska, Alaska Mental Health Land Trust		
	Federal Government		
	State of Alaska		Legislatively Designated Areas

0 5 10 20 30  
Miles  
scale = 1:750,000

Alaska Dept of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry  
Forest Resources Program  
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1450  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Land Ownership information provided by the Matanuska Susitna Borough Information Technology Department, January 2012.



# RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Growing Alaska Through Responsible Resource Development

Founded 1975  
Executive Director

Rick Rogers

2013-2014 Executive Committee

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L.F. "Len" Horst, Sr. Vice President

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Thomas Mack

John MacKinnon

Stephanie Madsen

Karen Matthias

Sam Mazzeo

Ron McPheters

James Mery

Eddie Packee

Lisa Parker

Judy Patrick

Charlie Powers

Shannon Price

Glenn Reed

Mike Satre

Keith Silver

Lorali Simon

John Sturgeon

Jan Trigg

Doug Ward

Ex-Officio Members

Senator Mark Begich

Senator Lisa Murkowski

Congressman Don Young

Governor Sean Parnell

February 21, 2014

Representatives Eric Feige and Dan Saddler  
Co-chairs, House Resources Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Bill 79, Susitna State Forest

Dear Representatives Feige and Saddler:

The Resource Development Council (RDC) is writing to support House Bill 79, which would create the Susitna State Forest on 763,200 acres of state land west of the Parks Highway.

RDC is a statewide, non-profit, membership-funded organization founded in 1975. The RDC membership is comprised of individuals and companies from Alaska's oil and gas, mining, timber, tourism, and fisheries industries, as well as Alaska Native corporations, local communities, organized labor, and industry support firms. RDC's purpose is to link these diverse interests together to encourage a strong, diversified private sector in Alaska and expand the state's economic base through the responsible development of our natural resources.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) currently manages 9.5 million acres of state land in the Matanuska and Susitna Valleys. The bill would establish the Susitna State Forest from land classified for forestry – lands managed by DNR for timber harvest and other multiple uses. Remaining land is designated for other uses, including land sales, recreation, water resources, agriculture, and fish and wildlife habitat. Over 3.1 million acres is protected in legislatively-designated state parks, refuges, and public use areas.

The establishment of the Susitna State Forest would ensure that large tracts of land would remain available for long-term forest management that maximizes the sustainable supply of timber from the state timber base; develops access and encourages a broad range of uses on state forest land, including motorized uses; and provides economic and recreational opportunities to communities, businesses, and residents.

It would allow the Division of Forestry to more actively manage lands and vegetation to promote a variety of forest ages, which in turn would maximize the sustainable supply of timber from the state timber base and provide for more diverse and healthy habitats for wildlife. In addition, active management would also help reduce wildfire risk.

The Division of Forestry would manage the state forest for a long-term supply of timber to help meet growing regional demand for state timber sales and personal use firewood harvesting. The state forest would also help meet increasing demand for logs, chips, and biomass feedstock for commercial, public school, residential space heating, and wood pellet manufacturing. Local processors depend on a stable long-term supply of state timber for their raw materials. In fact, a dependable long-term supply is required to justify major private investment in processing and manufacturing facilities or expansion of such facilities.

An enhanced long-term timber supply would not only help support the forest products industry, it would create new jobs, and provide important economic opportunities to local communities, businesses, and residents.

There has been some concern expressed by local residents and user groups that the proposed forest may block public access and traditional uses. RDC would not be supporting this bill if that were indeed the case. RDC has a long history of fighting for and preserving access to both federal and state land for the responsible development of natural resources, economic development, job creation, recreation, and traditional uses, including motorized uses. We would be writing in opposition to the bill if it were yet another impediment to access.

DNR is serious about developing access to a newly-designated state forest in the region, including an all-season road to the Little-Su, as well as a permanent bridge crossing. Clearly, the forest would be open for public use and enhance access, wildlife habitat management and harvest, and recreational activities.

Public access on state forests is typically greater than on other state land because active timber management requires expansion of the road system. Access is a major focus of the state forest planning process as plans provide detailed guidance on road design, construction, and maintenance. In fact, DNR has a demonstrated track record of providing access in state forests, with design and management tailored to the resource management needs of each forest.

It is important to keep in mind that HB 79 would establish a new state forest from state lands presently designated for forest management. The Susitna State Forest would be managed consistent with the management intent under the current Susitna Matanuska and the Southeast Susitna Area Plans. Alaska's Forest Resources Practices Act would apply to management activities on the forest and is designed to protect both fish habitat and water quality.

If established, Susitna would be the fourth state forest in Alaska after the Haines, Tanana, and Southeast State forests. These land units have demonstrated that legislatively-designated forests are a desirable means of ensuring timberlands are available for management while allowing access for other uses.

RDC supports HB 79 and believes the proposed state forest will be of much benefit to the local economy – creating and sustaining much needed jobs in the forest products industry while providing many other opportunities, including public access that doesn't exist today for other multiple uses. We urge the committee to pass HB 79.

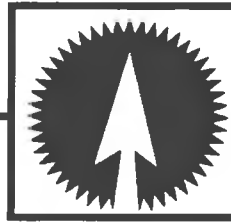
Sincerely,



Carl Portman  
Deputy Director

cc: Chris Maisch, State Forester  
Rep. Lynn Gattis  
Rep. Shelley Hughes  
Rep. Wes Keller  
Rep. Mark Neuman  
Rep. Bill Stoltze  
Sen. Mike Dunleavy  
Sen. Charlie Huggins

# Alaska Forest Association



111 Stedman Street  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
Phone: 907-225-6114  
Fax: 907-225-5920

February 21, 2014

Dear Governor Parnell,

The Alaska Forest Association (AFA) has been the primary timber industry association in Alaska since 1957. Our Association mission is to help restore and sustain a viable timber industry in Alaska and to insure our industry members operate their businesses in a responsible manner. AFA maintains a Health Insurance program, a Pension plan, a Scholarship program and AFA sponsors the Sustainable Forestry Initiative Program in Alaska

The Alaska Forest Association supports HB 79 – SB 28, which establishes a 763,200 acre Susitna State Forest. Enactment of this State Forest will foster the creation of additional jobs in this region, as explained in the 2012 Jobs and Timber Task Force report.

A stable supply of timber is a necessity for a successful wood manufacturing facility not just to enable financing, but also to attract and maintain a solid customer base. Different sizes, species and quality of trees are suitable for different wood products and a more substantial timber sale program would sustain the existing sawmills and could support more diverse wood products manufacturing facilities as well. Establishment of the Susitna State Forest will enable the State Division of Forestry to manage a larger, more reliable timber sale program that can increase the amount of timber manufacturing and related jobs in this region.

Over the last twenty years the Forest Service has downsized the federal timber sale program in Southeast Alaska by about 90%. Although the State currently manages only about 1% of the timberland in the region, the State timber sale program is very well managed and the State timber sales have allowed at least a few small, and one mid-size sawmill to survive. We are supporting efforts to significantly increase the size of the State Forests in Southeast Alaska because we have confidence in the States forestry program. We are similarly confident that the State will effectively manage the Susitna State Forest lands.

We also believe that the management requirements of the Alaska Forest Practices Act will insure that the water, fish and wildlife in the Susitna State Forest will be maintained and even enhanced, just as they have been in the State Forests in Southeast Alaska. Further, the access that will be provided by the timber sale program will provide additional opportunities for recreation, fire protection and other resource development projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Owen Graham  
Executive Director  
Alaska Forest Association  
111 Stedman Street  
Ketchikan, AK 99901



## Alaska Society of American Foresters

Cook Inlet Chapter  
Dixon Entrance Chapter  
Juneau Chapter  
Sitka Chapter  
Sitka Chapter  
Sitka Chapter  
Yukon River Chapter

**The Alaska Society of American Foresters (SAF)**

**Chapters: Cook Inlet, Yukon River, Dixon Entrance, Sitka, and Juneau.**

### **Resolution:**

**Members of the Alaska Society of American Foresters fully support the concepts and values of the Susitna State Forest. By legislatively designating this land as a State Forest, this will ensure that the land will remain available for long term forest management. The lands in the Forest will continue to be open for multiple uses including wildlife habitat, harvest, and recreational activities. This region, as well, will continue to retain the large open spaces of public lands.**

**The benefits of the State Forest are far reaching into the future. Our children's children will benefit from the Susitna State Forest.**

**Charles L. Sink, CF  
Chair- Elect Alaska State SAF**

**Chugachmiut Director Enterprise and Trust**

**March 15, 2012**

## Trevor Fulton

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**From:** Mark Stahl <denalinorthwest@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 24, 2014 9:48 AM  
**To:** Rep. Dan Saddler  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 28 – House Bill 79, Susitna State Forest

Dear Representative Saddler,

I would like to express my complete support for Senate Bill 28/House-Bill 79 creating the Susitna State Forest. This legislation takes a big step forward in ensuring the future of professional forest management in the Susitna valley.

Denali Log & Lumber (DLL) is a locally owned and operated sawmill and firewood company located in the upper Susitna valley near the junction of the Parks Highway and the Talkeetna Spur Road. DLL produces value-added wood products, such as spruce siding, cabin logs, beams, dimension lumber and split firewood, from local timber resources and sells these products to local residents. Since starting business in 2007, many of my customers and neighbors have stated how happy they are to be able to obtain products locally that are made from local resources rather than imported from the lower 48 or Canada and sold by a chain store.

The potential for growth is significant but hampered by the lack of a predictable and reliable timber resource base. The vast amount of public land in the Mat-Su Borough, largely seeing minimal or no professional management, is a detriment to a healthy, growing private sector. This is due to the unfortunate fact that the land-owning agencies are not making natural resources available that can be used to create needed products and family-wage jobs. There is simply too little private land in the Susitna valley to fill the void created by the lack of public sector management. Establishing a state forest would go a long way towards resolving this problem.

Being able to secure a stable, secure timber supply of several years duration would enable DLL and other wood products manufactures to more effectively plan for business expansion, hiring and financing. Numerous other benefits accrue to the public through active forest management. These include improved forest health, improved recreation and fire-fighting access, improved ability to manage future timber resources and improved wildlife habitat. Having state lands in the Susitna valley actively and professionally managed as a state forest will result in these and other benefits.

SB28/HB79 also provides for changes to Title 38 with respect to allowing DNR to negotiate timber sales larger than 500 thousand board feet. This change would put another tool in the hands of the DNR to manage its forests to meet local and regional needs. Attracting additional forest products or biomass capacity to the area would bring with it improved efficiencies of scale, accelerated conversion of the forest from its current unhealthy condition to a healthy, diverse and vigorous condition while offering spinoff benefits to new and existing small companies.

In addition to the establishment of the Susitna State Forest, I urge the legislature to increase funding of the Division of Forestry to establish a staffed, local field office so as to allow the Division to fully carry out its mission on the new state forest.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and urge the legislature to pass this bill this year.

Best regards,

Mark Stahl, Owner  
*Denali Log & Lumber*  
PO Box 212  
Milepost 100 Parks Hwy  
Talkeetna, AK 99676  
907-355-5813

March 16, 2014

Representative Dan Saddler  
State Capitol Room 104  
Juneau, Alaska 99801


Dear Representative Saddler:

I am writing to give both my, and my organization's support for the designation of Alaska State land to become the Susitna State Forest as proposed in Alaska House Bill (HB) 79, and Alaska Senate Bill (SB) 28. We are a group of Alaskans who enjoy the outdoors and wild places of Alaska, with an emphasis on the enjoyment of the natural beauty our State provides. We are all lucky to live here, and we should take these important steps to insure that these places will be conserved and managed properly for generations to come. By designating these lands as the Susitna State Forest, a plan can be put in motion to enhance habitat for birds, moose, and a diverse group of other forest creatures, as well as maintain a healthy forest by planned timber harvesting which supplies the industry with product, and provides for healthier forest regrowth. Fire danger and water quality concerns can also be greatly reduced when an active forest management plan is in place.

The benefits of this designation are significant in several ways and include economic benefits to surrounding communities, and with improved planned access, the land is able to be used for diverse activities by the public. With existing access to much of South Central Alaska already made difficult, keeping this land open and available for public use is important to do now, as once other designations for this land are made, it may well be very difficult to change the designation and procure such key properties which are so contiguous, and which allow for this added public access. And actually, we would like to see the boundaries of this proposed forest expanded, and be even more consistent and continuous, encompassing an even larger area if possible.

I respectfully ask for your support of the proposed HB-79. Recreational activity is a large part of the quality of life we are blessed with in Alaska, and a major reason many of us move to, and raise our families here. Keeping this tradition of well managed public lands is essential to our way of life and has been part of the fabric of our history. If established, the Susitna State Forest will be an important and indispensable part of Alaska's future. Please consider your support.

Sincerely,



Mike Fuller, President Alaska Chapter  
Ruffed Grouse Society  
6127 Magnaview Drive  
Eagle River, Alaska 99577

[mfuller@mtaonline.net](mailto:mfuller@mtaonline.net)

Dear Members of the Susitna Valley Legislative Delegation.

I am writing in support of HB 79 and SB 28, "An act relating to the sale of timber on state land; establishing the Susitna State Forest; and providing for an effective date." This act will put 763, 000 acres into permanent management for forest production, resource development as well as public access. The state forest system is truly a multiple use designation of state land.

State forests promote small business development and support existing small business in the wood products industry. They benefit the state's economy particularly in rural areas. Timber harvesting outfits, log truck drivers, commercial firewood cutters and value added processing businesses all benefit from state land being placed permanently into management for forest resources.

Also, given the high cost of heating oil, utilization of biomass as a fuel source has gained interest throughout the state. The Division of Forestry has identified this use of the forest resources and understands the benefits that Alaskans can gain by both supporting the fledgling biomass industry in the state and then ultimately reducing home heating costs for Alaskans.

By designating this land into the state forest system, development of infrastructure such as forest roads, bridges and drainages structures can be planned out for future management actions. Such forest planning does not make sense on general state land that could be classified for an incompatible use. Also by designating this land into the state forest system, professional foresters can conduct silvicultural activities that improve the timber resource, improve wildlife habitat, reduce risk of wildfire and ensure sustainability of the forest resource through reforestation techniques.

I hope you will support HB 79 and SB 28. It is a bill that will support an important industry in Alaska, improve public access into state land and ensures the sustainability of the forest resource.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Douse  
PO box 82303  
Fairbanks, AK  
99708



February 27, 2014

The Honorable Eric Feige and Dan Saddler  
Resources Committee Co-Chairmen  
Alaska State House of Representatives  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: House Bill 79 – Susitna State Forest

Dear Representatives Feige and Saddler,

The mission of the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce (Alaska Chamber) is to promote a positive business environment in Alaska. The Alaska Chamber represents hundreds of businesses, manufacturers and local chambers from across Alaska. Our members support legislation that updates and clarifies laws, provides regulatory certainty, and that generally improves Alaska's business climate. The Alaska Chamber supports House Bill 79 (HB 79).

The Alaska Chamber supports increasing responsible natural resources development and production. Creation of a fourth State forest, as proposed in HB 79, is an excellent way for the State to provide economic development and job growth opportunities in the region. Additionally water, fish and wildlife in the forest ensuring will be actively managed maintaining and even enhancing those resources. Finally, creation of the Susitna forest will provide increased access for recreation, fire protection and other resource development projects.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources currently manages 9.5 million acres of forest land in the Matanuska and Susitna Valleys. Of this land, timber management is allowed on approximately 2.1 million acres. Remaining land is designated for other uses, including land sales, recreation, water resources, and fish and wildlife habitat. Over 3.1 million acres is protected in legislatively-designated state parks, refuges, and public use areas.

The establishment of the Susitna State Forest would ensure that some land would remain available for long-term forest management. The Division of Forestry would manage the state forest for a long-term supply of timber to local processors and retain land in state ownership for other multiple uses. An enhanced long-term timber supply would help support the forest products industry, provide fuel for sustainable biomass energy projects, and create new jobs.

The Susitna State Forest would be managed consistent with the management intent under the Susitna Matanuska and the Southeast Susitna Area Plans. The Alaska Forest Resources Practices Act would apply to management activities on the forest and is designed to protect both fish habitat and water quality.



## ALASKA CHAMBER

The Alaska Chamber supports HB 79 because it will benefit the economy by allowing responsible resource development, increasing access for recreational, fire protection, and other economic development purposes all while maintaining and potentially improving the forest's water, fish, and wildlife resources.

Sincerely,

Rachael Petro  
President/CEO



# Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

House Resources  
Committee name

Committee on

HB 79  
Bill/Subject

dated

2/28/14

Signed:

NICK STEEN

Testifier

Ruffed Grouse Society

Representing (Optional)

Address

Phone number

## TESTAMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 79

On behalf of the members of South Central Alaska Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society and myself, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address this committee. We would like to express our conditional support for HB 79. As currently written, the bill is comprised of fourteen noncontiguous parcels of land. We urge you to expand the boundaries to include all unencumbered State land, draining into Cook Inlet, between Beluga Lake and the Southern boundaries of Denali National and State Parks.

We support a forest designation for this area because we feel it is important to keep this land in public ownership for the recreational use of our ever expanding population centers of South Central, to guarantee continued space for wildlife and to retain the character of the land most of us came to Alaska to experience. In our opinion a state forest is the least restrictive land designation that can be managed for everyone's benefit with the exception of those wishing to see land transferred to private ownership. As the population in South Central increases, the recreational demand can no longer be met by transfer of land to private ownership.

Historically, there have been numerous land disposal programs throughout the area under consideration. If you review a land ownership map of the area, you will see much of the waterfront land, lakes and rivers (the easy access points), has already been ceded to private ownership. These private inholdings will make access for timber extraction extremely difficult. Interspersing additional transfers of land to private ownership within the land designated for forest management makes no sense at all. Under the recently enacted "Susitna-Matanuska Area Plan" (SMAP), some of the areas we request be designated as state forest are slated for land disposal for cabin sites or agriculture. Transfer of land into private ownership as envisioned by the drafter's of our state constitution is laudable; however, as stated by the late Governor Hammond, it is the "ultimate lockup". Private ownership denies public use of that specific parcel, frequently controls access to adjacent public lands and with the NIMBY attitude, influences management of public lands within view of that land. This NIMBY attitude impacts the State's ability to manage timber resources,

wildlife resources and mining activities. We don't believe those who drafted our constitution envisioned the growth we've experienced.

A forest designation for this entire area, even though we recognize it is not all productive timber land, will provide uniform management guidelines throughout the area. Multiple land designations lead to conflicting use regulations. This causes confusion on the part of the users, unintentional violation of regulations or outright contempt and disregard for those regulations. A forestry designation is, in our opinion, the least controlling land use pattern possible and will afford future generations the greatest opportunity to "experience" Alaska as those of us who have been here a day or two have.

If in the future, it is determined additional Wal Mart parking lots or McDonald's golden arches are a higher priority, the forest designation can be modified to accommodate the change. Whereas, returning private land to public ownership is difficult, time consuming and cost prohibitive.

In summation, to our knowledge, this is the last remaining large parcel of state land in South Central that can be set aside for public use and enjoyment. Effective management of timber resources enhances wildlife populations, such as moose, ruffed grouse and a wide variety of song birds, creates an industry utilizing a renewable resource, that improves the economic basis of our community while supporting the demand for recreation areas to hunt, fish, trap, snow machine, hike, and otherwise enjoy the out of doors. We recommend this bill be passed, but expanded as outlined.

South Central Alaska Chapter, The Ruffed Grouse Society

Presented by Nick Steen

Alaska Miners Association Testimony HB79

Good afternoon. My name is Deantha Crockett, and I am Executive Director of the Alaska Miners Association. AMA began in 1939 (so 2014 celebrates our 75th Anniversary!) and is the umbrella association for Alaska's mining industry. Our members include small, family-run placer operations, to large-scale hardrock mines, to coal mines, to exploration projects, and all vendors and contractors that support Alaska's mines.

I'm grateful to follow two experts on Alaska Forestry in John Sturgeon and Owen Graham and I'd really just like to echo their statements regarding the importance of State action to revitalize and promote the timber industry.

AMA would like to be on the record as supporting this bill. Not only do we believe in the need for a stable timber supply, we believe in Alaska's forestry practices and feel that the industry has responsibly harvested timber here for many, many years.

The industry has certainly faced struggles in our federally-managed forests over the past few decades, so we applaud state efforts to promote the timber industry and foster jobs.

For AMA in particular, we welcome the possibility of a State Forest and the advances in infrastructure and activity that the timber industry could bring to an area that has tremendous mineral potential. Placer gold (small-scale mine operations), hardrock mineral deposits, and coal reserves are plentiful in this area of the state. I've preached the benefits of mining to you all many times, so I'll spare you just this once, and summarize by saying that increasing the economic diversity in this area through resource development is a win-win scenario.

I did not submit a letter prior to today's hearing but will make sure to submit my testimony to the committee staff right now.

Thank you.

# **Proposed Susitna State Forest Management Plan Framework**

## **Executive Summary**

**March 20, 2014**

**State of Alaska**

**Department of Natural Resources**

**Division of Forestry**



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## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### **Purpose of the Susitna State Forest**

The 687,000 acre Susitna State Forest will be managed as part of the State Forest System under AS 41.17.200-.230. While the primary purpose for the Susitna State Forest is timber production, these state lands will continue to be open for public use and access, including wildlife habitat management and harvest and other recreational activities. These uses are protected for the long-term, as these state lands will be retained in state ownership. The state forest boundaries were designed to encompass forested lands with the potential for commercial value. Public access to state forest lands will increase over time as new forest roads are constructed.

AS 41.17.200-.400 provides additional direction on the management of the state forest. The law directs the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to prepare a management plan for the state forest that "must consider and permit the uses described in AS 38.05.112(c)." These uses include:

- "commercial timber harvesting, including related activities;"
- "harvesting of forest products for personal use;"
- "fish and wildlife habitat, including"
  - "identification and protection of important wildlife habitat;"
  - "retention of riparian, wetland, and ocean-shoreline vegetation critical for fish and wildlife habitat;"
  - "the use of silvicultural practices, commercial timber harvest, and related activities to maintain and enhance the quality of fish and game habitat;"
- "uses of forest land for non-timber purposes, including"
  - "recreation, tourism, and related activities;"
  - "mining, mining claims, mineral leaseholds, and material extraction;"
  - "uses of fish and wildlife;"
  - "other resources and uses appropriate to the area, including compatible traditional uses;"
- "water quality," and "watershed management."

### **Management Overview**

Initially, the Susitna State Forest will be managed consistent with the management intent found within the current Matanuska Susitna and Southeast Susitna area plans. Changes to management intent require public and interagency review through adoption of a State Forest Management Plan under AS 41.17.230. The Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act (AS 41.17.010 - .955.) applies to timber management activities on the forest. The Act is designed to protect fish habitat and water quality, and ensure reforestation occurs after a timber harvest.

Long-term, the forest will be managed for multiple uses and the sustained yield of renewable resources. DNR will manage the State Forest to maintain the range of forest types and stand ages characteristic of the forest in South Central Alaska to

- sustain the full range of resources and uses of the forest,
- ensure a high level of productivity of renewable resources,
- contribute to the regional economy and employment, and
- perpetuate biological diversity.

Decisions on managing the State Forest will be made in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations, and in consideration of biological, economic, and social conditions. The public will be involved in these decisions through planning processes and public review of the Division of Forestry's Five Year Schedule of Timber Sales and Forest Land Use Plans prior to conducting timber sales. See also the "Citizens' Advisory Committee" described in Chapter 4.

### **Relationship of this Plan to Other DNR Plans**

Until the Department of Natural Resources' Commissioner formally adopts the new Susitna State Forest Management Plan, the 1991 Susitna Forestry Guidelines, along with the Matanuska Susitna and Southeast Susitna area plans, will guide forest management on these state lands. Upon adoption, this forest management plan will replace the Susitna Forestry Guidelines and the two area plans' management intent for these legislatively designated areas. The Alaska Interagency Wildland Fire Management Plan will guide the level of fire suppression activities taking place within the state forest.

### **Planning Process**

The Susitna State Forest Management Plan is the product of extensive outreach to the public and various levels of government agencies. The planning process is outlined below:

1. Public and agencies identified issues (scoping).
2. Public-agency working groups developed recommendations to resolve the issues.
3. Interagency planning team prepared a draft plan
4. Draft plan was reviewed by the public; community meetings held
5. Final plan was prepared.
6. Commissioner adopts Management Plan; Division of Forestry implements plan

To assist with plan implementation, and future plan revisions, this new management plan establishes a "Citizens' Advisory Committee" modeled after the twelve member committee created for the Tanana Valley State Forest. Details are located in Chapter 4.

## **Chapter 2 Forest-wide Management Policies**

### **Introduction**

This chapter contains management policies for major resource or land use categories affected by the plan: timber management and protection, fish and wildlife habitat, public access and recreation, subsurface materials, private lands and transportation.

### **Timber Management and Forest Protection**

- Actively manage the State Forest to provide for production, utilization, and replenishment of timber resources through silvicultural practices. Ensure a high level of sustained productivity of timber by maintaining a mosaic of forest types and stand ages. This strategy will also sustain other renewable resources that depend on forest vegetation.
- A forest inventory was completed in 2010 for approximately 75% of the acreage and work is ongoing to complete the project.
- Consistent with AS 41.15.010 and AS 41.15.020, forest resources in the forest will be protected from destructive agents commensurate with the values needing protection.

### **Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

- The wildlife management objective of the Susitna State Forest is the production of wildlife for a high level of sustained yield for human use through habitat improvement techniques to the extent consistent with the primary purpose of this state forest.
- Ensure access to public lands and waters to promote or enhance responsible public use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife resources. Access improvements should be designed to match the public use objectives for the area under consideration.
- Enhance the value of habitat to fish and wildlife species through vegetation manipulation, including burning, crushing, timber harvest, and other management practices.

### **Transportation System and Trails**

- Ensure continued opportunities for public use of important recreation, public access, and historic trails of regional and statewide significance.
- Assist in establishing local trail systems that provide access to community recreation areas; protect or establish trail corridors to meet projected future use requirements and protect current use.
- As all areas of the forest are brought into active management the transportation system will

be expanded by using a variety of road systems. At some point in the future, all areas will have access via an all season or winter road system.

- Develop a transportation system that has the lowest possible long-range cost, including construction, operations, and maintenance. Avoid unnecessary duplication of transportation facilities; consider West Susitna Surface Access Reconnaissance Study.
- Develop a transportation system with minimal adverse impact on the environment, aesthetic and cultural features, and other users. See Conceptual Transportation Plan map at end.

### **Public Access and Recreation**

- The plan's goal is to maintain, enhance, or provide adequate access to publicly-owned land and resources within the state forest.
- When an access route is constructed for resource development, existing public access will not be displaced or rendered unusable by new construction. Various uses of resource development roads shall not restrict the purpose for which the roads were constructed.
- Where feasible and within the limits of available funding, full public rights of access should be provided when roads are constructed by state or local governments for purposes other than forest operations. Perpetual exclusive easements should be acquired and recorded when the state acquires access rights across property in other ownerships adjacent to the State Forest.
- Recreational use of the State Forest is recognized and protected in the State Forest enabling legislation, AS 41.17.230(a), consistent with the purpose of the establishment of the State Forest (AS 41.17.200).

### **Subsurface Materials**

- Make metallic and nonmetallic minerals, coal, oil and gas, materials, and geothermal resources available to contribute to the energy and mineral supplies and independence of the United States and Alaska. All lands that are open to mineral entry are multiple use areas where mineral development will be accommodated and encouraged. There are no proposed mineral closures within the forest.

### **Private Land**

- The management goal is to minimize negative impacts of State Forest activities on adjacent private land.
- During the public review process for the proposed activity, DNR will attempt to contact all private landowners whose land adjoins a proposed timber sale area, road, or other state-initiated development project.

## **Chapter 3 Management Policies for Each Block and Parcel**

### **Introduction**

The primary purpose for the Susitna State Forest is timber production, and this primary purpose extends to each of the management units. Unique characteristics and other special concerns for each of the forest's twenty units will be discussed within the management policies for the unit. In addition, each unit's existing resources and uses will be listed and described, when present, e.g., cultural resources; fish and wildlife habitat; private or leased lands; scientific resources; subsurface resources; timber; and transportation and access. Management guidelines for each unit will address: minerals; recreational facilities; streamside management; timber sales; trails and transportation.

In general, forest units closest to existing surface transportation will be developed first for timber production that serves the area's timber operators and for meeting local demand for firewood. Timber will generally be accessed by winter roads and ice bridges. Public access may be enhanced seasonally with winter timber roads, and year-round when all-season mainline timber roads are constructed.

See the Proposed Susitna State Forest Map at end of plan for locations of the following forest blocks. The table below lists the name of each forest block, its size in acres, and its timber inventory expressed as volume in cubic feet.

<b>Forest Block</b>	<b>Size in Acres</b>	<b>Timber Volume (cubic feet)</b>
East Petersville	18,100	22,061,683
West Petersville	52,900	47,653,894
Yentna	41,900	34,959,849
West Skwentna	54,200	40,802,010
South Skwentna	24,200	6,988,020
East Skwentna	119,300	100,022,217
Mount Susitna	189,500	171,371,881
Alexander Creek	16,100	18,230,484
Susitna	156,300	161,152,244
Red Shirt Lake	14,300	16,380,251
<b>Totals</b>	<b>686,800 acres</b>	<b>619,622,534 cubic feet</b>

## **Chapter 4 Implementation**

### **Agency Land Management Responsibilities**

Agency responsibilities for land management within the Susitna State Forest remain largely the same as those for other State lands. The chief exception is that the Division of Forestry has overall land management authority within state forests. The Division of Forestry will coordinate multiple use planning in the State Forest and is responsible for timber management. The DNR Division of Mining, Land and Water will continue to be responsible for adjudicating land and water use applications and mineral permitting within the state forest.

### **Citizens Advisory Committee for Susitna State Forest**

A Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) for the Susitna State Forest (SuSF) is established by this plan. The Committee, in an advisory capacity, will provide recommendations to the Division of Forestry on forest management issues on state forest lands. The Committee does not conflict with the Board of Forestry established by Alaska Statute 41.17.041. The Committee's purpose is to:

- Review and provide Committee recommendations to the Division of Forestry on updates and amendments to the SuSF Management Plan and Five-Year Schedules of Timber Sales (including reforestation and transportation schedules). Site specific Forest Land Use Plans (FLUPs) will be made available to each member for review, during the established review period, however, the Committee is not required to make recommendations on these documents.
- Provide a forum for gathering public opinion on management of state forested land, help to develop a regional consensus on forest management, and provide management recommendations to the Director, Division of Forestry. When consensus cannot be reached on a Committee recommendation, the Committee should forward the majority's recommendation and any different views not represented by the majority's recommendation to the Division.
- Review issues and activities on DNR-managed forested land and recommend management policies to the Director, Division of Forestry.
- Help disseminate information about the SuSF to the public.

Each member should represent the full range of interests within his or her constituency. All CAC members should work to establish two-way communications with other groups and individuals within the interest they represent. Members are expected to bring their constituencies' interests and concerns to the CAC. However, when the Committee makes recommendations, all members should act in consideration of the whole community and the statewide public interest, not just the interest of their immediate constituency.

The CAC consists of the following twelve members appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Director, Division of Forestry. The term of office is three years. The Director, Division of Forestry will make committee appointments so that four expire each year on a revolving basis. The Director, Division of Forestry will review all applications received from individuals seeking appointment to the CAC without requiring recommendations from the current committee.

***SuSF Citizens' Advisory Committee constituencies.***

<b>Seat</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Forest Industry	Represents businesses involved in harvesting and/or processing timber resources.
Value-Added Processing	Represents businesses involved in the manufacture of finished wood products and minor forest products.
Environmental Interests	Represents environmental organizations and individuals with environmental interests.
Private Forest User	Represents the incidental forest user for consumptive and non-consumptive activities including subsistence and personal use.
Forest Science	Represents the forest science community. Background should include training, experience and a current knowledge of multiple forestry specialties related to forest ecosystem management to insure adequate representation of the forest science community. Representative should be a forest scientist not currently employed by a state agency other than the University.
Native Community	Represents both individual Alaska Natives and Native organizations in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough area who use the forest or will be directly impacted by forest management actions.
Recreation	Represents the non-commercial users who visit the forest and take advantage of both consumptive and non-consumptive benefits for pleasure and enrichment of life.
Tourism Industry	Represents the commercial operators who directly use forest lands as well as those whose customers are incidentally exposed.
Fish and Wildlife Interests	Represents the full range of interests in fish and wildlife, including sport, and commercial users.
Mining Industry	Represents organizations and individuals involved in the mineral exploration, extraction, and processing industries.
Mat-Su Borough Government	Represents the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's interests.
Other Local Government	Represents, on a rotating basis, one of the local governments or community councils located within or adjoining the State Forest.

When appointing CAC members, the Director, Division of Forestry will seek region-wide geographic representation. The CAC will elect its own presiding officer. The CAC will adopt its own by-laws subject to approval by the Director, Division of Forestry.

## **Process for Reviewing Applications for Permits, Leases, Rights-of Way**

For timber sales, the Forest Land Use Plans will identify proposed access routes and materials sites both within and outside the Susitna State Forest. Temporary routes will be authorized by the Division of Forestry through the FLUP process. Long-term routes will be authorized through a right-of-way (ROW). The Division of Forestry will identify the proposed ROW in the FLUP. Following FLUP review, DOF will submit the ROW application to the Division of Mining, Land and Water (DMLW) to authorize and record the route on the status plats.

Other land management proposals may be initiated by other agencies or private individuals and may include requests for rights-of-way, commercial leases, timber or material sales, or permits for mineral activity, trapping cabins, or grazing. The following process will be used to review these permit or conveyance requests. All applications for use of State Forest land, including mining or prospecting, will be forwarded to the South-central Regional Office of the Division of Mining, Land and Water. The Division of Mining, Land and Water will distribute applications for review by agencies, including the Coastal Regional Office of the Division of Forestry. The Division of Forestry will review applications for consistency with this plan and other existing laws and policies. The Division of Forestry will then return applications to the Division of Mining, Land and Water with stipulations for processing. The Division of Forestry may also require additional review of applications after interagency or public comment. Although preliminary decisions or final findings will continue to be made by the Division of Mining, Land and Water, applications must be consistent with the stipulations given by the Division of Forestry. No permits, leases, disposals, or rights-of-way will be authorized for use of State Forest land that are not consistent with stipulations from the Division of Forestry.

For mining operations, temporary routes will be authorized by the DMLW through its Miscellaneous Land Use Permit (MLUP). For long-term routes, DMLW will issue a ROW.

### **Plan Modification**

The land use designations, policies, implementation actions, and management guidelines of this plan may be changed periodically as new data and new technologies become available and as changing economic, social, and environmental conditions place different demands on public lands.

#### ***A. Review***

The plan will be reviewed when significant new issues suggest revisions are necessary. An interagency planning team chaired by the Division of Forestry will coordinate this review at the request of the Department of Natural Resources Commissioner. The plan review will include meetings with interested groups and the general public.

#### ***B. Procedures for Plan Changes***

Three kinds of changes are allowed by regulations in 11 AAC 55.030. "A revision to a land use plan is subject to the planning process requirements of AS 38.04.065. For the purposes of this section and AS 38.04.065, a 'revision' is an amendment or special exception to a land use plan as follows:"

1. "An 'amendment' permanently changes the land use plan by adding to or modifying the basic management intent for one or more of the plan's subunits or by changing its allowed or prohibited uses, policies, or guidelines."

A proposal to remove an area from the commercial timber base, to harvest the timber from an area where it is prohibited, or to close an area not identified in this plan to mineral entry are examples of changes requiring amendment. However, amending the Forest Practices Regulations, for example, and inserting those changes in this plan do not require an amendment of the plan. Amendments require public notice, public hearings, and approval by the Commissioner. Amendments may be proposed by agencies, municipalities, or members of the public. Requests for amendments are submitted to the Coastal Regional Office of the Division of Forestry. The Director of the Division of Forestry determines what constitutes an amendment or just a minor change.

2. "A 'special exception' does not permanently change the provisions of a land use plan and cannot be used as the basis for a reclassification of the subunit. Instead, it allows a one-time, limited-purpose variance of the plan's provisions, without changing the plan's general management intent or guidelines. For example, a special exception might be used to grant an eligible applicant a preference right under AS 38.05.035 to purchase land in a subunit designated for retention in public ownership. A special exception might be made if complying with the plan would be excessively burdensome or impractical or if compliance would be inequitable to a third party, and if the purposes and spirit of the plan can be achieved despite the exception."

3. "A minor change to a land use plan is not considered a revision under AS 38.04.065. A 'minor change' is a change that does not modify or add to the plan's basic intent, and that serves only to clarify the plan, make it consistent, facilitate its implementation, or make technical corrections. Authority: AS 38.04.065, AS 38.04.900, AS 38.05.020, AS 38.05.300."

## Appendices

### Glossary

**Allowable cut:** The volume of timber that may be cut from a forest under optimum sustained- yield management (Stoddard and Stoddard, 1987).

**Diameter at breast height (DBH):** The diameter of the stem of a tree measured at breast height (4.5 feet) from the ground. On sloping ground, the measurement is taken from the uphill side (Society of American Foresters, 1998).

**Forest land:** Land stocked or having been stocked with forest trees of any size and not currently developed for nonforest use, regardless of whether presently available or accessible for commercial purposes (AS 41.17.950 (5)). Regarding land classification, land classified "forest land" is land that is or has been forested and is suited for forest management because of its physical, climatic, and vegetative conditions (11 AAC 55.070).

**Ice bridge:** A bridge of ice across a lake, river, or stream, either natural or constructed to a specified thickness to safely accommodate specified vehicle loads.

**Multiple use:** The term "multiple use" as defined in the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act means:

1. The management of all the various resources of forest land so that they are used in the combination that will best meet the needs of the citizens of the state, making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related values, benefits, and services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustment in use to conform to changing needs and conditions;
2. That some land will be used for less than all of the resources; and
3. Harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources, each with the other, without significant impairment of the productivity of the land and water, with consideration being given to the relative values of the various resources, and not necessarily the combination of uses that will give the greatest dollar return or the greatest unit output (AS 41.17.950 (8)).

**Primary all-season road:** Regarding timber access, an all-season road which generally provides access to within five miles of timber resources. Built to a higher standard than secondary all-season roads

**Primary winter road:** Regarding timber access, a road built and used during the winter. Built to a higher standard than secondary winter roads. See also 'winter road'.

**Sawtimber:** Trees that will yield logs suitable in size and quality for the production of lumber. Spruce must be at least 9 inches and hardwoods 11 inches diameter at breast height.

**Scarification:** 1. Mechanical removal of competing vegetation or interfering debris, or disturbance of the soil surface, to enhance reforestation. 2. Chemical, mechanical, heat, or moisture treatment of seeds to make the seed coat permeable and improve germination (Society of American Foresters, 1998).

**Secondary all-season road:** Regarding timber access, an all-season road which generally provides access to within ¼ mile of timber resources. Built to a lesser standard than primary all-season roads, but to a higher standard than spur roads.

**Secondary winter road:** Regarding timber access, a road built and used during the winter. Built to a lesser standard than primary winter roads. See also 'winter road'.

**Spur road:** A short, low-standard road that supports a low level of traffic such as serving one or two landings (Society of American Foresters, 1998). Spur roads are generally built within harvest units.

**Stand:** A contiguous group of trees sufficiently uniform in age-class distribution, composition, and structure, and growing on a site of sufficiently uniform quality, to be a distinguishable unit (Society of American Foresters, 1998).

**State forest:** An area designated by the legislature and retained in state ownership in order to a) provide a base for sustained yield management of renewable resources; and b) permit a variety of beneficial uses (AS 41.17.950 (16)).

**State lands:** All lands, including shore, tide and submerged lands, or resources belonging to or acquired by the state (AS 38.05.965 (20)).

**Sustained yield:** The achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of forest land and water without significant impairment of the productivity of the land and water, but does not require that timber be harvested in a non-declining yield basis over a rotation period (AS 41.17.950 (17)). Another definition of sustained yield is in AS 38.04.910 (12) and should be applied in the context of AS 38.04 authorities and requirements.

**Water bar:** A shallow channel or raised barrier of soil or other material laid diagonally across the surface of a road or skid trail to lead water off the road and prevent soil erosion (Society of American Foresters, 1998). Often used to put a road to bed.

**Winter road:** A road that can normally support regular logging vehicle traffic only during winter months that has a load-bearing capacity derived from a combination of frost, snow, or ice (11 AAC 95.900(90)).

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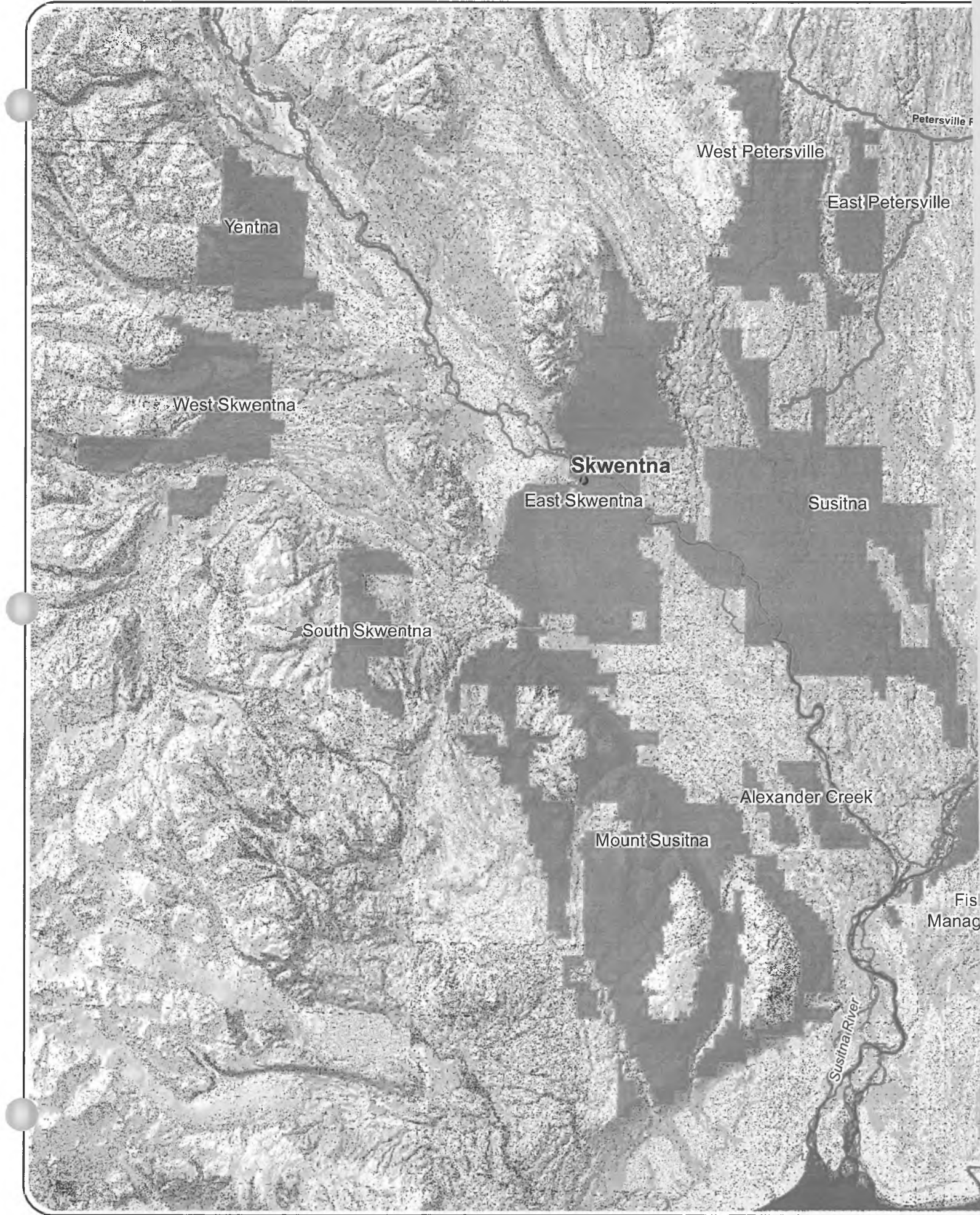
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## **Map of Proposed Susitna State Forest Blocks and Units**

## **Map of Conceptual Transportation Plan for the Proposed Susitna State Forest**



Yentna

West Skwentna

South Skwentna

Skwentna

East Skwentna

West Petersville

East Petersville

Susitna

Alexander Creek

Mount Susitna

Susitna River

Petersville F

Fis  
Manag

