

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1903-1900 00/2

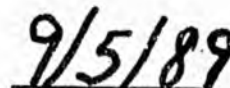
3591 HRES SB 30 - SB 35 467



RECORDS CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, an employee of the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the microfilm images on this microform are accurate reproductions of the original records of the State of Alaska as accumulated during the regular course of business, and that it is the established policy and practice of this State to microfilm its records and to dispose of the original records after microfilm reproductions have been made.


Signature of Camera Operator


Date

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South-Central Timber Development, Inc.

21 January 1986

Representative Richard Shultz
Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Representative Shultz:

Re: Opposition To Creation of Yakataga State Forest

This company has been under contract with the State of Alaska for timber at Icy Bay since 1969; we have a 20 year sale for 200 million board feet, known as "Icy Cape No. 1." In 1984, Roger Sullivan of Ketchikan was the high bidder for an additional 50 million board feet, which sale was designated as "Icy Cape No. 2." There has been a steady progression of timber cutting along the littoral from Icy Bay towards Cape Yakataga and the Suckling Hills beyond. This well forested state land runs for 75 miles along the beach of the North Pacific; its depth from the water's edge to the coastal mountains varies considerably.

Existing State laws are completely adequate for sustaining and encouraging a timber industry on the state's lands in this area. The device of a long-term contract enables a logger to obtain the necessary financing to conduct business in this remote location.

On the other hand, creation of a state forest will yield no additional timber or revenue, but it will necessitate the complete restudy and fresh classification of all lands currently appropriated to timber and other multiple use activity such as mining. If the Yakataga State Forest is created, it is entirely foreseeable that no timber activity will be allowed for a long period of time while the debate about proper classification is entered from all quarters of our diverse citizenry.

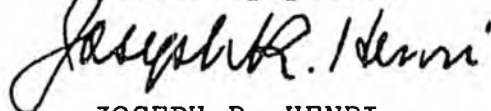
The land from Icy Bay to the Suckling Hills holds billions of board feet. There is no impediment to the state's contracting for the sale of that timber. The creation of the Yakataga State Forest will only impede or forestall the process; one thing it will do immediately is justify the hiring of more bureaucracy to properly plan and supervise this new creation.

Representative Richard Shultz
21 January 1986
Page 2

The State Forest is not needed. The State Forest will take the timber out of production for a long period and possibly forever.

At Yakataga, nothing is "broke." Let's not fix it!

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph R. Henri".

JOSEPH R. HENRI
President

JRH/df
cc: Governor Bill Sheffield
Mr. John Galea, ALA
Mr. Roger Sullivan

Alaska State Legislature



Senate

POUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-4907

SENATE LETTER OF INTENT FOR CS SB 30 (FIN)

The Yakataga State Forest will comprise most of the habitable state owned land in the area between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay along the north coast of the Gulf of Alaska.

The legislature recognizes that certain future demands for land in the Yakataga area may be beyond the criteria allowed in a state forest designation.

Therefore in this unique situation the legislature intends for portions of township 215 Range 17E to be managed within the Department of Natural Resources general land management program for future use.

ADOPTED IN SENATE 3/18/85

STATE OF ALASKA 1985 LEGISLATIVE SESSION
FISCAL NOTE

Revision Date: _____

REQUEST

Bill/Resolution No.: CSSB 30 (Fin)
Title: Yakataga State Forest

Sponsor: Eliason
Requestor: Senate Finance
Date of Request: 3/14/85

FISCAL DETAIL

Agency Affected: Division of Forestry - DNF
Program Category Affected: Resource Management
BRU, Program or Subprogram(s) Affected: Forest Management, Land & Water Resources

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

	FY 85	FY 86	FY 87	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90
OPERATING	0	0				
100 PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0				
200 TRAVEL	0	0				
300 CONTRACTUAL	0	0				
400 SUPPLIES	0	0				
500 EQUIPMENT	0	0				
600 LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0				
700 GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0				
800 MISCELLANEOUS	0	0				
TOTAL OPERATING	0	0				

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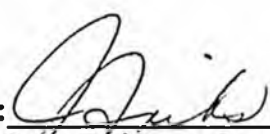
FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	0	0				
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0				
OTHER	0	0				
TOTAL	0	0				

POSITIONS:

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

ANALYSIS: Attach a separate page if necessary

Prepared By:  Phone: 465-4523
Division: Jan Faiks, Co-chairman Date: 3/14/86
Senate Finance Committee
Approved by Commissioner: _____ Date: _____
Agency: _____

Distribution (by Agency preparing fiscal note):

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

7/1/84

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE - SENATE

SENATOR RICHARD I. ELIASON

LABOR & COMMERCE COMMITTEE, VICE-CHAIRMAN
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, VICE-CHAIRMAN
FINANCE COMMITTEE
RESOURCES COMMITTEE



Done

PO BOX 143
SITKA, ALASKA 99835

POUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 485-4918

MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Adelheid Herrmann, Co-chairman
Representative Richard Schultz, Co-chairman
House Resource Committee

FROM: Senator Dick Eliason *Dick*

RE: Senate Bill 30 - An Act establishing the Yakataga State Forest

DATE: April 16, 1985

I would appreciate your consideration in scheduling CSSB 30(Fin) for a hearing before the House Resource Committee at the earliest possible time.

This legislation will establish the Yakataga State Forest along the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay. Designating this land as a state forest will commit the state to managing approximately 460,000 acres of state-owned land for multiple use under a long-term management plan. This plan will provide the long-term stability needed by users of resources that require large capital investments.

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 30 (Fin) excludes about 960 acres of fairly flat land located near the existing Yakataga airstrip for possible residential development. This land will be managed within the Department of Natural Resources general land management program for future use.

This legislation is very important to the management of our timber resource. I would appreciate it if CSSB 30(Fin) could be schedule for a hearing as soon as possible.

Thank you for your considerate attention.

SENATOR
ARLISS STURGULEWSKI

2957 SHELDON JACKSON
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99508
SENATE DISTRICT F, SEAT A

Alaska State Legislature



While in Juneau
FOUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 465-3318

Senate

MEMORANDUM

January 24, 1985

TO: All Members
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Senate Resources Staff *MSJ*

RE: SB 30 "An Act establishing the Yakataga State Forest; and providing for an effective date."

Senate Bill 30 would establish Yakataga State Forest along the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay. Maps are included in the attached packet.

All land affected by this bill is state owned. Designating this land as a state forest, will commit the state to managing the land for multiple use under a long-term development plan. This development plan will provide the long-term stability needed by users of resources that require large capital investments.

A summary of factual information from the State Forester and letters of support for creation of the forest are in the packet, as well as a position paper and fiscal note from the Department of Natural Resources. The letters of support are from last year; however, John Sturgeon, the State Forester, has told us that all these groups remain in support of the creation of the forest. The recent report by the Alaska Timber Task Force listed the creation of new state forests as a key recommendation and included Yakataga as a priority area.

We have attempted to notify all concerned parties of this hearing and we are not aware of any opposition to the creation of the Yakataga State Forest.

February 8, 1985

Physical and legal description of land excluded from the state forest by
proposed committee substitute for SB 30

About 960 gross acres, fairly flat with several minor glacial streams. Small resident moose population present. Vegetation varies from dense old-growth forest to cottonwood to grassy meadows. No mining claims are known. Access via public easement from Yakataga airstrip through about one mile of Chugach native land on an unmaintained roadway. The road ends at foot bridge just to the southwest in this section. Residential development would probably be dispersed throughout the exclusion area with any commercial activity likely to develop near the southwest corner. Based on existing information, this exclusion would probably have the least long-term impact on the resource values/development of the Yakataga State Forest.

Legal Description--in T21S R17E CRM

Sections 1-9; W1/2 Sec. 10; E1/2 Sec. 11; Sec 12-13; E1/2, SW1/4 Sec. 14; W1/2, SE1/4 Sec. 15; Sec. 16-36.

STATE OF ALASKA

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

POUCH M
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
PHONE:

January 22, 1985

The Honorable Arliss Sturgulewski
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

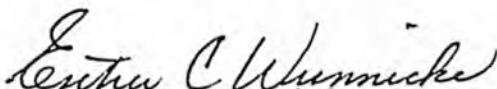
Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

The Department of Natural Resources supports the establishment of the Yakataga State Forest, as described in Senate Bill 30.

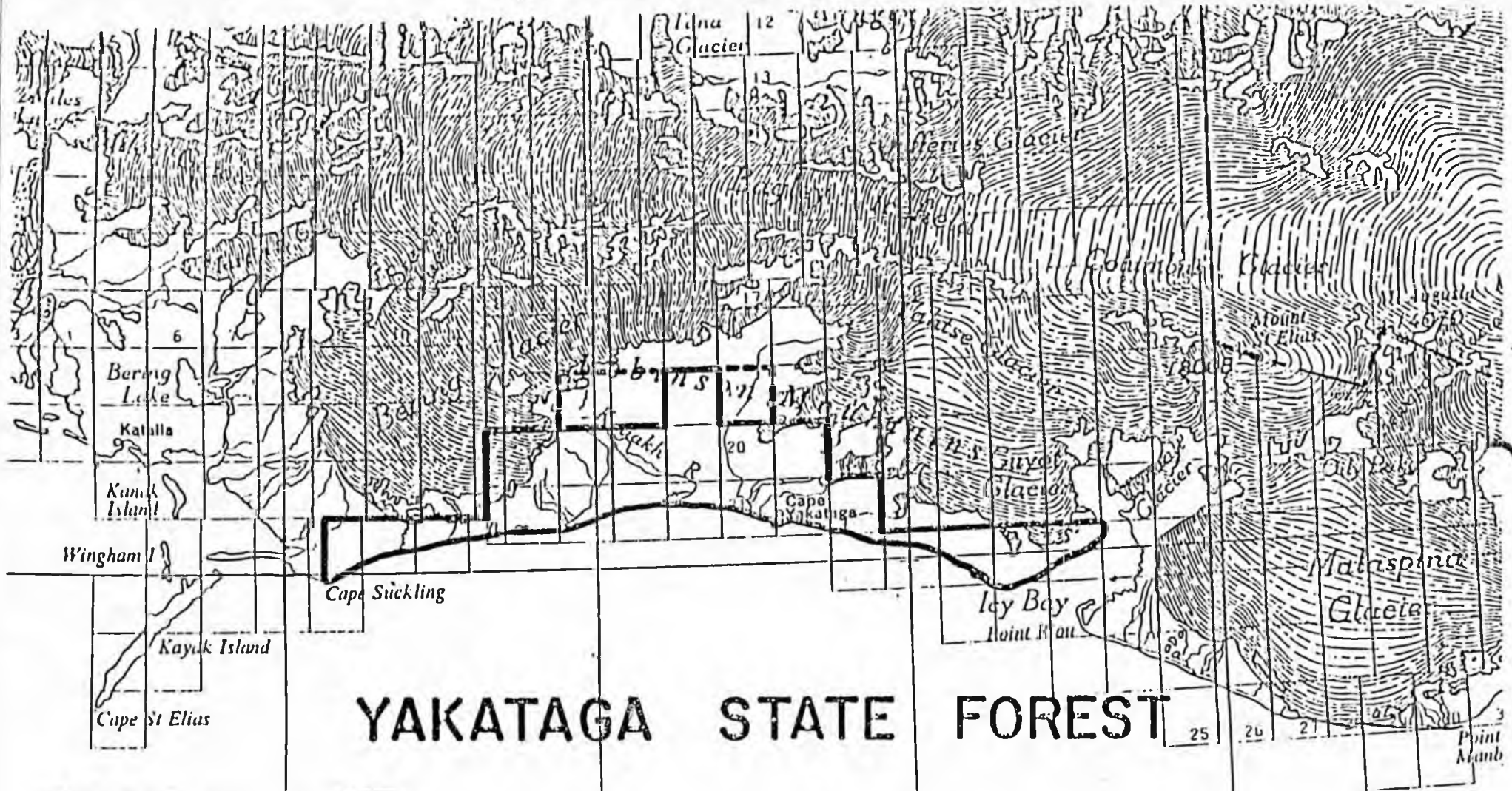
Section 1 amends AS 41.17, Forest Resources and Practices, to commit approximately 460,000 acres of state-owned land between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay to long-term retention and management for multiple use and sustained resource yields.

Section 2 requires the Commissioner to prepare a management plan for the forest which permits use of the forest for timber harvest, mining, mineral leasing and material extraction, recreation, wildlife and fisheries management, subsistence and other activities.

Sincerely,


Esther C. Wunnicke
Commissioner

cc: Ray Gillespie, Office of the Governor
Senate Resources Committee



YAKATAGA STATE FOREST



LOCATION MAP

- FOREST BOUNDARY
- ADDITIONS IF NATIVE RELINQUISHED

COOK INLET CHAPTER
JUNEAU CHAPTER
KETCHIKAN CHAPTER
YUKON RIVER CHAPTER
SITKA CHAPTER
STIKINE RIVER CHAPTER

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS

ALASKA SECTION



TESTIMONY OF THE ALASKA SECTION OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS ON SB30, CREATING THE YAKATAGA STATE FOREST

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE, MARCH 14, 1985 HEARING
JUNEAU, ALASKA

The Alaska Section of the Society of American Foresters (SAF) thanks you for the opportunity to present a statement concerning SB30, regarding the Yakataga State Forest. We have previously endorsed the creation of the Yakataga State Forest and now we would like to extend that endorsement to include development of a Yakataga State Forest Management Plan.

The Need for Development of a Yakataga State Forest Management Plan

Management of forest lands under the principles of multiple-use and sustained yield involves complex processes. There are many biological considerations concerning resource productivity and protection that must be addressed. There are aspects dealing with economic values for the forestry and associated resources. These economic aspects either directly or indirectly involve resource benefit/cost ratios and resource trade-offs. Coupled with this are the administrative aspects and legal restraints that must be followed. In essence, we recognize that to manage land for public purposes, thorough and well integrated plans need to be developed. The Alaska Section of the Society of American Foresters supports the use of funds and personnel to accomplish the development of a Yakataga State Forest Management Plan. We urge the adoption of a budget to support this planning effort.

Letters of
Support —

Presented by Calvin F. Bey, Chairman of Legislative Affairs Committee,
Juneau Chapter, Society of American Foresters.



Alaska Environmental Lobby, Inc.

~~410 6th Street, Suite 328~~ Juneau, Alaska 99801
204 N. Franklin St. Suite 3

907-586-2345

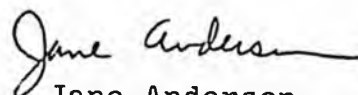
January 24, 1985

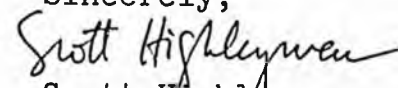
Senator Richard I. Eliason
State Capitol
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Eliason,

The Alaska Environmental Lobby would like to congratulate you on your recent introduction of SB-30 "An Act establishing the Yakataga State Forest". Setting aside acreage as forest land benefits all Alaskans by establishing multiple use management principles with a mechanism for public comment. The establishment of the Yakataga State Forest will help to insure the kind of quality environment Alaskans have a right to expect.

Please feel free to contact us at our Juneau office for further information on the Alaska Environmental Lobby's position on this or other pieces of legislation. We look forward to working with you on SB-30.


Jane Anderson
Staff Lobbyist

Sincerely,

Scott Highleyman
Executive Director

cc: Senator Jay Kerttula
Senator Vic Fischer

ALASKA CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT • ALASKA CHAPTER, SIERRA CLUB
ALASKA WILDERNESS GUIDES ASSOCIATION • ANCHORAGE AUDUBON SOCIETY
ARCTIC AUDUBON SOCIETY • DENALI CITIZENS' COUNCIL • FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY • KACHEMAK BAY CONSERVATION SOCIETY • KENAI AUDUBON SOCIETY
KODIAK AUDUBON SOCIETY • LYNN CANAL CONSERVATION • NORTHERN ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
SITKA CONSERVATION SOCIETY • SOUTHEAST ALASKA CONSERVATION COUNCIL

*
* DELIVER TO: JPOM *
* *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/04/85 TIME: 13:42 *
* FROM: FLORENCE CARNAHAN *
* SUBJECT: POM *
* PRINT DATE: 02/04/85 TIME: 13:43 *
* *

TO: SENATORS STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, COGHILL, ELIASON, V. FISCHER, HALFORD AND ZHAROFF

FROM: FRED M. HARNISCH 201 MEADOW CREEK, EAGLE RIVER, ALASKA 99577 (H) 694-2045 (W) 279-5541

RE: SB30

I WISH TO SUUPORT SB 30 WHICH CREATES THE YAKUTAGA STATE FOREST AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE THIS BILL MOVED THROUGH YOUR COMMITTEE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT.

*
* DELIVER TO: JPOM *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 01/29/85 TIME: 13:08 *
* FROM: PAULA GRAY *
* SUBJECT: POM-FAIRBANKS *
* PRINT DATE: 01/29/85 TIME: 13:09 *
* *

TO: SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

SENS: STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, ELIASON, ZHAROFF, HALFORD,
COGHILL, V. FISCHER

INTERIOR DELEGATION

SENS: BENNETT

REPS: FRANK, DAVIS, KOPONEN, M.W. MILLER, RINGSTAD

FROM: JOHN ZASADA
1551 LARUE
FAIRBANKS, AK, 99701

PHONE: 479-4160-H NO WK PH

RE: SB 30, YAKATAGA STATE FOREST

MSG: I SUPPORT THE YAKATAGA STATE FOREST AND URGE YOU TO
CREATE THE FOREST THIS SESSION.

*
* DELIVER TO: JFOM *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 01/29/85 TIME: 14:16 *
* FROM: PAULA GRAY *
* SUBJECT: POM-FAIRBANKS *
* PRINT DATE: 01/29/85 . TIME: 14:16 14 *
* *

TO: SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

SENS: STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, ELIASON, ZHAROFF, HALFORD,
COGHILL, V. FISCHER

INTERIOR DELEGATION

SENS: BENNETT

REFS: FRANK, DAVIS, KOPONEN, M.W. MILLER, RINGSTAD

FROM: CHRIS POLSON
834 GOLDFINCH ROAD
FAIRBANKS, AK, 99701

PHONE: 479-0170-H 474-7114-W

RE: SB 30, YAKATAGA STATE FOREST

MSG: I WOULD LIKE TO GIVE MY SUPPORT TO THE PASSAGE OF SENATE
BILL 30 FOR THE YAKATAGA STATE FOREST, RECOGNIZING ITS VALUE TO
THE STATE ALONG THE SAME LINES AS THE TANANA VALLEY STATE FOREST
AS INSURANCE THERE WILL BE A TIMBER RESOURCE FOR THE FUTURE.

*
* DELIVER TO: JFOM *
* *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 01/29/85 TIME: 10:40 *
* FROM: FLORENCE CARNAHAN *
* SUBJECT: FOM *
* PRINT DATE: 01/29/85 TIME: 10:40 *
* *

TO: SENATORS COGHILL, ELIASON, FAHRENKAMP, V. FISCHER, HALFORD,
STURGULEWSKI, ZHAROFF

FROM: DAN KETCHUM, 8830 CORDELL CIRCLE, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99502
248-4816

RE: SB 30 AND SUSITNA

I URGE YOUR SUPPORT OF ESTABLISHMENT OF YAKUTAGA AND SUSITNA
STATE FORESTS. SF SYSTEM PROVIDES BEST OPTION FOR ACTIVE,
EFFICIENT FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT WHICH WILL INSURE A FLOW OF
GOODS AND SERVICES FROM STATE OWNED FOREST LANDS TO ALASKANS.

YAKATAGA STATE FOREST
FACT SHEET

The establishment of a Yakataga State Forest will commit State-owned lands between Cape Suckling and Icy Bay to long term public retention to be managed for multiple use and sustained yields. There are about 460,000 acres within the area, of which an estimated 87,000 acres have more than 20,000 board feet per acre. These are among the most productive forest lands owned by the State and the timber resources are already being managed on a sustained yield basis. Commitment of the natural resources will have a beneficial effect on the economies of Yakutat and Cordova and will likely stimulate long term industrial and commercial development based on a standing sawtimber volume of 4.3 billion board feet with an estimated potential yield of the area of 20 million board feet (MMBF) per year. The annual revenue to the State at today's prices would be one to two million dollars with a total annual product value of 5 to 10 million dollars.

To date, 190 MMBF has been harvested within the proposed State Forest, all since 1970. An additional 49 MMBF was sold in 1983, to be harvested over the next five years. A jetty, log transfer facility, sort yard, logging camp, airstrip, and about 20 miles of mainline road were constructed by the previous logging operator. A DOF office and cabin were built by the State.

The DOF has arranged for multiple use management of the forested lands within the proposed State Forest. The Division has worked with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to protect important wildlife habitat. Also, the DOF has worked out a cooperative use agreement with DMEM and North Coast Mining Company for joint operation on mineral claims.

Provided by John Sturgeon, State Forester
Division of Forestry DNR

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES SOUTHCENTRAL DISTRICT
LAND PLANNING REPORT - YAKATAGA

Existing classification - None
Recommended classification - Forest

Proposed Classification

The proposed classification to Forest was requested by the Southcentral District Forestry Section to facilitate implementation of a sustained yield timber use program in the Yakataga area. The proposed Yakataga Forest area represents a relatively small but significantly rich area of spruce and hemlock forests on the Alaska gulf coast. The current estimate of sustained yield production per year from the Yakataga area is 25 million board feet on an eighty year rotation.

Location

The Yakataga area proposed for classification is located between the Suckling Hills on the west, Icy Bay on the east, the Gulf of Alaska on the south and Bering Glacier and the Robinson Mountains on the north (see attached location map). All lands are tentatively approved for patent to the State of Alaska.

The legal descriptions for the proposed Yakataga Forest area are:

Township 23 South, Range 21 and 22 East, C.R.M.
Township 22 South, Range 24 C.R.M., that portion on the West side of Icy Bay
Township 22 South, Range 19 through 23 East, C.R.M.
Township 21 South, Range 9 East, C.R.M. East of Chugach National Forest Boundry
Township 21 South, Range 10 through 19 East, C.R.M.
Township 20 South, Range 13 through 18 East, C.R.M.
Township 19 South, Range 16 through 17 East, C.R.M.
Total area, 480,530 acres.

Physical Description

The geomophology of the area is glacial in origin. Topography ranges from a series of glacial till benches at the foot of glaciated mountains between Cape Yakataga and Icy Bay to glacial outwash plains formed by Bering Glacier. Elevations range from sea level to 4,500 feet on Mt. Duktok.

The climate of the Yakataga Forest area is maritime. Temperatures are modified by the Gulf of Alaska and provide relatively mild winters and cool summers. The climate is similar to that of Southeast Alaska but is influenced by offshore winds in the summer and in the winter from the Interior of Alaska. These offshore winds occur for short periods of time resulting in a wider range of annual temperatures for this area as compared to Southeast Alaska. The annual precipitation averages 103 inches.

Physical Description (continued)

Based upon information provided in the Soil Conservation Service publication, Exploratory Soil Survey of Alaska, three major associated classes of soils are found within the proposed area; typic cryorthents, typic cryaquents, and typic cryofluents.

Typic Cryorthents occupy moraines close to steep mountains and large glaciers. Thick forests occupy well drained hillsides and wet treeless sloping valleys from peat accumulation. Elevations range from slightly above sea-level to about 1,000 feet. There is no permafrost in these soils, which are usually very stony and gravelly till with large boulders near the surface.

Typic Cryaquents occupy broad outwash plains which extend to the steep slopes of the coastal mountains. Elevations are between sea level and 200 feet. The plains are primarily sandy, waterlaid sediment with irregular areas of peat accumulating in shallow basins. The water table is often near the surface and flooding is common. Moraines consisting of gravelly till occur near the mountains. The principle vegetation is aquatic plants with forests of spruce and hemlock occupying the moraines. In general, intensive use of these soils is greatly restricted because of the high water table and frequent flooding. Many of these soils support coastal meadows that are used heavily by migrating birds for stopover areas and nesting sites.

Typic Cryaquents - Typic Cryofluents are a very gravelly, nearly level association of soils occupying outwash plains and alluvial fans in the northern coast of the Gulf of Alaska. Elevations are low, from sea level to 100 feet and the water table is generally near the surface. These plains consist mainly of outwash deposits covered with waterlaid sediment. Dense stands of spruce and hemlock occur on well drained sites where cool moist summers and mild winters promote high forest productivity. Aquatic vegetation such as sedges, mosses and willows dominate the wetter sites.

Resource ValuesFish and Game

The Yakataga area supports a wide variety of fish and game resources. A memo from the Commissioner of Fish and Game, Ronald Skoogs, to the Commissioner of Natural Resources, Robert LeResche, states that this area contains twenty-five anadromous streams. The drainages east of Cape Yakataga to Icy Cape contain mostly pink and coho salmon. These drainages are predominantly first order short drainages because of their very close proximity to steep glaciated mountains. The only drainage that currently

Fish and Game (continued)

supports a commercial fishery in this area is the Priest River. According to Commissioner Skoogs memo this river produces less than 1,000 fish annually for commercial purposes. The drainages west of Cape Yakataga to Cape Suckling are more important as a commercial fishery. Coho salmon still are present in the major drainages and are the main dollar producer. The two drainages that produce a major setnet fishery are the Kalikh which produce a coho escapement of 12,000 and the Tsiu-Tsiuat which produce up to 50,000 coho salmon. The proposed forest management program in Yakataga area could enhance the commercial shore fisheries by increasing access to fishery sites.

This area supports wildlife species such as black and brown bear, mountain goats, moose and small furbearers, such as muskrat, beaver, and martin. The major habitat of bear occurs within the areas west of Yakataga in the spring and summer and along the salmon streams in the fall. The major range of mountain goats are the steep mountains to the north along the coast between Cape Yakataga and Icy Bay.

Mineral Resources

This area has a potential for minerals, oil and gas. The area has had exploration for oil and gas in the late 50's and early 60's. This exploration and subsequent drilling required road construction and various improvements which are used currently by logging interests. No major producing wells were discovered. Interest in offshore drilling may be renewed under future Federal lease sales.

Based on a review of the mineral status plat, the dominant mineral of this area is gold. A potential for hard rock mineral exists but little or no serious prospecting has taken place. Gold mining in this area is placer with all recorded claims occurring on the beaches and up the White River drainage.

Archeology

The Division of Forest, Land and Water Management has made request for a historical analysis of the proposed area. The archeology data for this area is limited. The area was known as a major migration route for the natives from the interior to the Yakataga area. There are no known native settlements in this area.

Forestry

The principle type of overstory vegetation of the proposed area is a mixture of Sitka Spruce and western hemlock with a small volume of Alaska yellow cedar occurring above the 500 foot contour and cottonwood with red alder occurring within riparian zones.

Forestry (continued)

The Southcentral District through a combination of air photo interpretation, cruise and inventory techniques has estimated the total area of potential commercial timber to be 30,000 acres. The evaluation of commercial forest was based on any timber stand having a volume per acre of 20,000 board feet or greater.

Economic Impact

Fisheries

The fish resource of this area is small compared to other areas of the State, but should not be discounted due to local dependence on this resource. Using data supplied by Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the 1973 and 1979 fishing season in this area returned between \$251,000 and \$354,000 annually. Another factor to consider is the potential to support a larger fishery as transportation problems are solved.

Minerals

The only mineral being mined presently in the area is gold. The total dollar values returned to the local communities is difficult to determine due to the type of mining operations.

Wildlife

No data is currently available to determine a figure but it can be assumed, through recorded hunting visits, to be relatively low.

Recreation

Due to the remoteness and the poor climate conditions, this area has shown little recreational usage and the total dollar return is insignificant.

Forestry

The economic impact of sustained yield forestry management in the Yakataga area is significant. In funds returned to the State's general fund based on a 25,000,000 board foot allowable cut would be at least \$1,000,000 per year based on an average stumpage of \$40.00 per thousand board feet.

The cash flow returned directly to the local economy of the surrounding area based on Southcentral Timber Developments logging expenditures for 1979 is \$2,500,000.

Summary of Resource Values

The following resources are ranked according to the dollar return to the State and to the local economics annually.

1. Forestry \$3,500,000
2. Fishing \$ 354,000 - with fishing held to current levels
3. Minerals undetermined - value considered less than
Forestry or fishing
4. Recreation undetermined

Resource Conflicts

The following conflicts relate sustained yield forestry to other resource use.

Timber/Wildlife

The conflicts between forestry management will be kept to a minimum due to State and District forestry management practices and policies. A summary of these policies and practices are:

1. Timber will be harvested in a patch cut with staggered entries.
2. Leave strips or buffer zones will be left along all major drainages, which include all anadromous fish streams.
3. Special use area for wildlife will be identified by Alaska Department of Fish and Game before completing a timber sale.
4. All operations will take place according to Alaska Statutes 16.10.010 and 16.05.840.
5. All timber will be harvested and managed according to the Best Management Practices as outlined by the Forest Practices Act.
6. Limited harvesting of timber above the 500 foot contour.
7. All timber harvesting programs will be subject to comment by the Department of Environmental Conservation and Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Timber/Fisheries

The impact on commercial fisheries in this area will be low and with increased access to fishing sites could increase commercial fishing potential.

Timber/Mining

The impacts on mineral extraction will be low because of the subsurface character of minerals. Placer operations require little timber for operations. Timber operations could improve mining potential by increasing accessibility.

Timber/Recreation

Due to the inaccessibility of this area it's use for recreation purposes is limited. Therefore the impact of timber management on recreation resources will be low.

Coastal Zone Consistency

The Alaska Coastal Policy Committee's standard and guidelines and the Department of Natural Resources Forestry Practices Act have set operation standards and policies for coastal timber management programs.

Recommendations

The Southcentral District recommends this area be classified as Forest to facilitate a program of sustained yield management. The District further recognizes the potential forestry value of the area and recommends consideration be given to placing this region in the State forest system. As the designation as a State Forest is legislative and requires a significant portion of time the District supports, as an interim measure, declaration of this area as a Forest Reserve.

DENNIS R. THOMASON
District Classification Officer

August 12, 1980

RATIONALE FOR A STATE FOREST SYSTEM

Historically, the forests of Alaska have provided its inhabitants with building materials, fuel, recreational opportunities, diversity of wildlife and untold other benefits. Recent rapid shifts in ownership patterns and single-use allocations of that land have severely hampered public availability of these resources and stifled the development of a viable forest products industry, especially in the interior of Alaska.

The full impact of these encroachments on the public use of the land, if allowed to continue, will not be fully realized for years and possibly decades. Continued pressures to further reduce the publicly owned forest land available for multiple-use management is eroding this base.

It is in the best interest of the State to legislatively designate large tracts of primarily forested lands for long-term public retention and management for a multiplicity of resources, as envisioned by the framers of the Constitution of the State of Alaska.

Simple classification of the land as "forest" does not assure that this diversity of benefits, so needed by Alaska, will remain available for future generations.

Forest land in private ownership might well produce the forest products necessary for the development of the State, but not allow the use of the land for its other resource values by the general public.

A state forest system is a use-oriented concept. It would not only provide the incentive to develop a stable forest products industry capable of reducing the amount of lumber being imported to meet our needs (some 75% of the sawn lumber used in the Interior), but also provide access for hunting, fishing, camping, berry picking, etc. State forests are not a lockup, but a dependable year-after-year source of all the renewable resources of the State, for all the residents of the State.

A Juneau SAF member
will present the statement
March 16, 1984

Testimony of the Alaska State
Society of American Foresters on
SB 202, creating the Yakataga State Forest

Senate Resources Committee, March 16, 1984 hearing
Juneau, Alaska

The Alaska State Society of American Foresters (SAF) would like to thank Chairman Bettye Fahrenkamp and members of the Senate Resources Committee for the opportunity to testify before you. The Alaska SAF, comprised of 280 professional foresters in Alaska, is appreciative of the opportunity to present a statement in support of Senate Bill 202, creating the Yakataga State Forest.

We commend Senator Eliason for introducing this important bill, and appreciate the work that has been devoted to this measure. We believe that the dedication of carefully chosen state land to long-term multiple use management is essential for the further orderly development of the forest products industry and for a continuing supply of other public benefits that these lands can and do produce.

The Need a Multiple Use State Forest at Yakataga

Timber--Although Alaska is a large state with approximately 375 million acres, much of the state is not biologically capable of growing trees. Statewide, only about 30 million acres (8% of the total) meet the productivity test for commercial forest land; that is land that is capable of producing at least 20 cubic feet of usable wood per acre per year. These statistics are available from forest survey reports (Hutchison, 1967). Because of the relative scarcity of highly productive forest lands in Alaska, such lands need to be given careful consideration for inclusion in multiple use programs.

Forest inventories and timber harvesting were initiated in the 1970s by the State's Division of Forestry in the Icy Bay/Yakataga area. These were the first steps in forest management of the area. The forest survey found over 150,000 acres of commercial forest land, with about 104,000 acres of sawtimber within the proposed State Forest area, producing about 3,700,000,000 net board feet (International 1/4 inch scale) of timber.

The forests included in the area of the proposed Yakataga State Forest are some of the most productive in the state. The Yakataga area sawtimber stands average nearly 35,000 board foot per acre compared to the average of 27,000 for sawtimber stands throughout the rest of southeast Alaska. Many Yakataga area sawtimber stands produce over 60,000 net board feet per acre and some stands produce 80,000 net board feet per acre. Much of the higher volume per acre in the Yakataga area can be attributed to a combination of good timber sites and to the lack of decay in the stands.

Mining--The Yakataga State Forest area also has historic precedent established for mining. Gold mining has been an active enterprise in this area for decades and those interests need continued recognition, maintainance, and development.

Wildlife--Resident moose and goat herds in the proposed Yakataga State Forest area have provided excellent opportunities for hunting, photography, and aesthetic enjoyment. Management planning needs to be implemented to protect and enhance these natural resource values.

The establishment of the Yakataga State Forest is an excellent opportunity for true multiple use management. Plans of the State's Division of Forestry call for timber, mining, fish and wildlife habitat, and other natural resources all being used or maintained compatibly in a multiple use and sustained yield approach. Furthermore, this approach is consistent with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act.

SAF is encouraged by the stated intent and demonstrated commitment of the State's Division of Forestry to (1) sustained yield management of the timber, (2) cooperation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in the protection of wildlife habitat, and (3) active pursuit of a cooperative use agreement with mining interests in the proposed State Forest area.

A balanced land and resources management program, such as is evolving thru these efforts, will lead to sound economic development of the resources and the local communities, as well as provide protection for other natural resources of the area.

The Alaska Society of American Foresters strongly urges passage of Senate Bill 202.

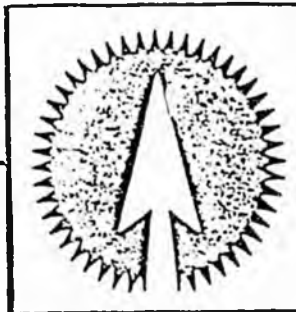
Literature Citation

Hutchison, O. Keith. 1967 Alaska's Forest Resource. U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Resource Bulletin PNW-19, 74 p.

Prepared by Vernon J. LaBau, State SAF Chairman

With review and comment from the Alaska Division of Forestry.

Alaska Loggers Association, Inc.



SB 202

February 24, 1984

111 STEEDMAN, SUITE 200
KETCHIKAN, ALASKA 99901
Phone 907-225-6114

Honorable Bettye Fahrenkamp
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Support
for last yrs
bill

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

The Alaska Loggers Association supports the establishment of Yakataga State Forest as proposed in Senate Bill 202. Inclusion of this area into the State Forest system will greatly benefit all the people of Alaska as well as the forest products industry.

The 460,000 acres in the proposed forest are among the most productive forest lands owned by the State of Alaska. These forest lands are already being managed on a sustained yield basis. Since 1970, 190 million board feet have been harvested. An additional 49 million board feet were sold in 1983. This will be harvested over the next five years. A commitment of this forest land to long term timber management will most likely stimulate more development in Yakutat and Cordova. The standing sawtimber volume of 4.3 billion board feet and estimated potential yield of 20 million board feet of timber per year would have a beneficial effect on the economies of both communities.

Establishment of a Yakataga State Forest would greatly benefit the people of Alaska by adding one more source of steady income to the State's income. The annual revenue to the State at today's prices would be one to two million dollars with a total annual product value of 5 to 10 million dollars.

An additional benefit of committing this land to long term public retention to be managed for multiple use and sustained yield is the assurance of a continuous source of timber to the forest products industry. At the present time, it is difficult for the State Division of Forestry to project an annual allowable cut since the timber land base has been so variable. Classifying this land as a State Forest would insure that this prime State owned timber land will be managed for its best possible uses and would allow the Division of Forestry to do more long range planning.

Again, Alaska Loggers Association fully supports the establishment of Yakataga State Forest and would appreciate your support of Senate Bill 202. Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Donald A. Bell
General Manager
ALASKA LOGGERS ASSOCIATION

DAB/mjh

cc: Alaska State Senators

SERVING ALASKA'S TIMBER INDUSTRY

Cordova Lands Coalition
Box 1183
Cordova, Alaska 99574

Feb. 26, 1984

Senator Richard Eliason
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Eliason,

We have recently heard that you have introduced a bill to create a State Forest in the Yakataga area. We would like to express our strong support for this action.

The Cordova Lands Coalition wrote you last year supporting the establishment of a Yakataga State Forest. We appreciate your continued efforts this year as well.

The Yakataga area is the best timber area remaining in State hands. It is also an area of rich wildlife and fisheries resources. So far, the bulk of the area has been little impacted by human use. This area would make a major impact on the State Forest timber base, helping to allow sustained commercial levels of timber harvest. At the same time, State Forest designation would promote multiple use management with protection of key wildlife and fisheries resources.

Thank you for sponsoring this bill to designate a Yakataga State Forest.

Sincerely,



Oliver Osborn
President



GREATER SITKA

Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

May 21, 1984

To: All Members of the House Resources Committee
House of Representatives
Alaska State Legislature

Reference: Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 202 (Finance)
Establishment of the Yakataga State Forest

The Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors urges your support of the above bill establishing a State forest in the Yakataga area. We heartily support all efforts toward the continuance of the forest products industry in the State of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Dave Knapp
President

DK:kf

cc: Senator Dick Eliason
Representative Ben Grussendorf

ALASKA SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FORESTERS
1123 Ril Circle
Anchorage, AK 99504

March 12, 1984

Senator Richard Eliason
Pouch V
Juneau, Ak 99811

Dear Senator Eliason,

The Alaska Society of American Foresters (SAF), comprised of 280 professional foresters in Alaska, is appreciative of the opportunity to present a statement in support of Senate Bill 202, creating the Yakataga State Forest.

SAF is a strong proponent of multiple use management, whereby all of the natural resources of a given area are managed in a planned and balanced manner. This is a written policy of SAF both at the State and National level.

Establishment of a State Forest at Yakataga is an excellent opportunity for true multiple use management. Plans of the State's Division of Forestry call for timber, mining, fish and wildlife habitat, and other natural resources all being used or maintained compatibly in a multiple use and sustained yield approach. Furthermore, this approach is consistent with the Alaska Forest Resources and Practices Act.

SAF is encouraged by the stated intent and demonstrated commitment of the State's Division of Forestry to (1) sustained yield management of the timber, (2) cooperation with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in the protection of wildlife habitat, and (3) active pursuit of a cooperative use agreement with mining interests in the proposed State Forest area.

A balanced land and resources management program, such as is beginning to evolve thru these efforts, should lead to sound economic development of the resources and the local communities, as well as provide protection for other natural resources of the area.

The Alaska Society of American Foresters strongly urges passage of Senate Bill 202.

Sincerely,



Vernon J. LaBau
State Chairman
Alaska Society of American Foresters

53202

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

P.O. BOX 3-2000
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802
PHONE: (907) 465-4100

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

March 2, 1983

The Honorable Richard I. Eliason
Senator
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Eliason:

In a recent letter, State Forester John Sturgeon indicated that you wished to know the Department of Fish and Game's position on the State Forest being proposed for the Yakataga area. I am pleased to inform you, that we are in complete support of such a concept, provided we are offered the opportunity to be an active participant in the management planning process.

The area being proposed for Forest designation contains significant fish and wildlife resources which we believe should be adequately protected during any land use activities which are eventually conducted. We have been working closely with the Department of Natural Resources on this issue, and I feel confident that our concerns will be addressed.

If I can provide you further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Don W. Collinsworth
Commissioner

cc: John Sturgeon, State Forester, ADNR
Paddy McQuire



City and Borough of Sitka

P.O. BOX 79 · SITKA, ALASKA · 99835

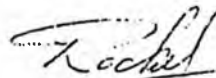
March 17, 1983

Senator Richard Eliason
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Dick:

Due to the fact that Sitka's economy is dependent on a healthy woods industry, you are encouraged to work with the Department of Natural Resources in order to define boundaries for a state forest in the Yakataga area.

Sincerely,


Fermin Gutierrez
Administrator

cc: Peter M. Huberth, ALP

League of Women Voters of Alaska

9151 Skywood Lane
Juneau, Alaska 99801
April 23, 1985

Rep. Adelheid Herrmann, Co-Chairman
Rep. Richard Shultz, Co-Chairman
House Resources Committee
Alaska Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: CS SB 30 (Fin): Yakataga State Forest

Dear Representatives Herrmann and Shultz:

The League of Women Voters of Alaska supports establishment of the Yakataga State Forest.

We have previously supported the development of a system of state owned forests, as a means of good resource management. For example, we lobbied in support of the bill which established the Tanana Valley State Forest; and last year we lobbied in support of the bill which would have established a Yakataga State Forest.

We think it especially important, however, to retain the provision that the management plan developed by DNR be submitted to the Legislature for approval. That provision appeared in an earlier version of the bill (CS SB 30 (Res)), but has disappeared from the version of the bill which is before your Committee. We would like to see your Committee restore the language which appeared in Section 2 of CS SB 30 (Res). Under that provision, following referral of DNR's proposed management plan to the Legislature, the management plan would be approved unless the Legislature adopted legislation disapproving it. Please note that such a provision would be consistent with the adopted language in AS 41.17.400(b), which requires a similar referral to the Legislature for the management plan DNR adopts for the Tanana Valley State Forest.

One of the reasons we are so concerned that this provision be restored to the legislation establishing a Yakataga State Forest is that we fear the management plan may allow the use of chemical herbicides in reforestation projects. We are against the use of chemical herbicides anywhere in Alaska, and especially by the State itself, on State-owned or managed lands.

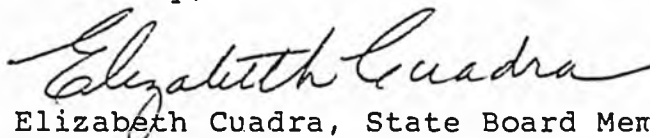
Rep. Adelheid Herrmann, Co-Chairman
Rep. Richard Shultz, Co-Chairman
April 23, 1985
Page -2-

The potential for this problem has most recently come to our attention in the context of the draft management plan for the Haines State Forest (see attached letter). Probably you are already aware of the controversy (and litigation) surrounding the use of chemical herbicides along the Alaska Railroad right-of-way.

We consider the question of use of chemical herbicides to be a serious public policy issue related to public health and valuable fish and game resources. This alone is reason enough to require that management plans for State forests be referred to the Legislature for review.

Thank you for considering our views on this matter.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Cuadra, State Board Member
(Natural Resources Portfolio)

Encl.

cc (w/out encl.): Committee Members (Wallace,
Sund, Thompson, Miller,
Cato, Pearce and Jenkins)

Commissioner Wunnicke (DNR)

Paula Ziegler, LWVAK President

League of Women Voters of Alaska

9151 Skywood Lane
Juneau, Alaska 99801
February 15, 1985

Mr. Paul Maki
Division of Forestry
Alaska Department of Natural
Resources
400 Willoughby Avenue
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Re: Haines State Forest: Draft Management Plan

Dear Mr. Maki:

We ask that the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, adopt an affirmative policy against the use of chemical herbicides, and that the final management plan for the Haines State Forest Resource Management Area incorporate an affirmative commitment that chemical herbicides will not be used in the Haines State Forest.

The League of Women Voters of Alaska has supported the development of a system of State owned forests, as a means of good resource management. For example, we lobbied in support of the bill which established the Tanana Valley State Forest; last year we lobbied in support of the bill which would have established a Yakataga State Forest and expect to do so again in this Legislature. However, we are deeply concerned about the use of broadcast chemicals (especially herbicides) anywhere in Alaska, by anyone, for any purpose.

We admire the candor with which the writers of the draft management plan raised the herbicides issue (page 9, right up front). Our answer to your question whether or not the State should ever use herbicides in the Haines State Forest is a resounding "no!" We consider the use of herbicides to be a threat to fisheries values, other wildlife values, and to the public health. Furthermore, this is one type of hazardous chemical problem we can avoid, since there are non-hazardous alternatives available. Those alternatives generally will turn out to be more labor intensive, and therefore appear less "cost effective" even if they provide much-needed temporary jobs for local people.

Mr. Paul Maki
February 15, 1985
Page Two

The (p. 9) discussion of decision structure for arriving at a (later) policy decision on use of herbicides places some emphasis on cost-effectiveness. Placing much emphasis on cost effectiveness would be a very dangerous approach to a policy decision in this context. Cost effectiveness analysis only asks the question (assuming the various alternatives are equally good in all other aspects) what is the least expensive means (in terms of dollars expended) of achieving the desired end? Cost effectiveness analysis is totally blind to the potential and hidden long term impact "costs" of diminished fisheries and other wildlife values, and potential impacts on public health. Even cost-benefit analysis has not progressed to the point where adequate emphasis can be placed on such values as public health.

Cost effectiveness analysis also omits entirely any consideration of social cost represented by the resources spent on litigation but which could be more desirably spent otherwise, if only a public policy decision more protective of public health and environmental values had been adopted in the first place. We refer, for example, to the litigation surrounding the silvicultural use of herbicides in Oregon, and along the Alaska Railroad right-of-way.

Alaska has enough hazardous chemical problems already, without adding one that can be avoided. We already have at least 90 uncontrolled, identified hazardous waste dumps, and we have the problem of removing friable asbestos from schools and other public buildings; the total public costs of remedial measures to abate these problems is going to be a very large dollar figure indeed.

Again, we ask that DNR adopt now, in writing, a binding commitment that it will not use herbicides in State forests, including the Haines State Forest. If this is done, we will be able to continue supporting the formation of additional new State forests, such as the Yakataga State Forest.

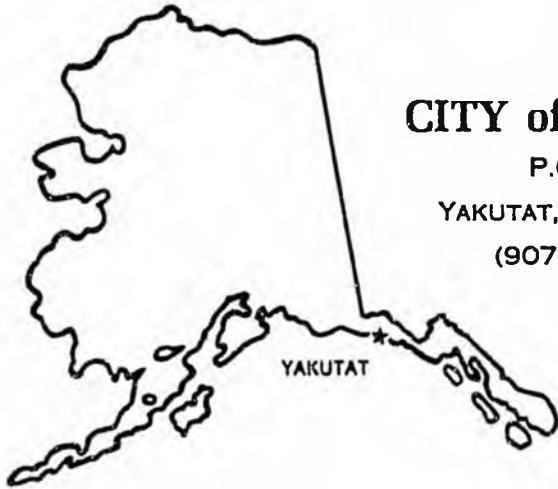
Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Cuadra
State Board Member
(Natural Resources Portfolio)

DEC:sd
cc: Governor Sheffield
Commissioner Wunnicke
John Sturgeon



CITY of YAKUTAT

P.O. Box 6

YAKUTAT, ALASKA 99689

(907) 784-3323

April 24, 1985

Honorable Adelheid Herrman
Honorable Richard Shultz
Co-Chairs
House Committee on Resources

Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V (Ms 3100)
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: SB 30 Creating a Yakataga State Forest

Enclosed is a copy of a resolution passed by the Yakutat City Council at its meeting of April 22, 1985. The resolution marks a change in the position of the City of Yakutat relative to SB 30.

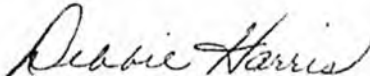
At first the City of Yakutat supported SB 30 as a way of gaining weight for local interests when decisions were being made for the Yakataga foreland area. Recently the City of Yakutat has begun considering annexation, borough formation, and the formation of a Coastal Resource Service area. We have come to realize that SB 30 and the creation of a Yakataga State Forest are a great disincentive to bringing those areas under any sort of incorporated local government. With the formation of a State Forest in the area we can no longer think of any incentives why Yakutat would initiate the formation of a local or regional government in that area, and it seems unlikely that any other group would form a borough if Yakutat did not.

It seems to us that the decision to establish a Yakataga State Forest might be a de facto decision that neither borough nor Coastal Resource Service Area will ever be formed in the Yakutat area. Certainly it will reduce the chances of that happening and will set back the time of its happening for many years.

SB 30.
Page Two.

In light of the State's long time policy encouraging the formation of local governments; and in light of its commitment to the formation of Coastal Resource Service Areas, we would urge the members of the House Committee on Resources to consider the potential impact of SB 30 on the Formation of both local government and Coastal Resource Service Areas. We urge you to consider Yakutat's reasons for changing its position from support of the proposed to opposition. We urge you to consider Yakutat Council Resolution 85-9 and to consider opposing the formation of a Yakataga State Forest.

Sincerely,
Larry Powell
Mayor



Debbie Harris
City Clerk

cc: Committee members
DCRA

CITY OF YAKUTAT, ALASKA

RESOLUTION NO. 85-9

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A YAKATAGA STATE FOREST.

WHEREAS, The Alaska Legislature is currently debating passage of SB 30 establishing a Yakataga State Forest; and

WHEREAS, The residents of Yakutat are traditional users of that commercial, sport and subsistence area which has been designated for inclusion in the Yakataga State Forest; and

WHEREAS, The community of Yakutat is currently considering both Coastal Resource Service Area and borough formation in the Yakutat area; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a state forest at Yakataga would be a clear disincentive to the formation of a borough in the area; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a state forest at Yakataga would be a clear disincentive to the formation of a Coastal Resource Area; and

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the State of Alaska to encourage the formation of boroughs and Coastal Resource Service Areas; and

WHEREAS, The establishment of a state forest at Yakataga would require the development of a state plan for the area in advance of a Coastal Resource Service Area being established, thus removing area uses from the purview of locally-elected body; and

WHEREAS, It is the policy of the state to support decision making at the local level; and

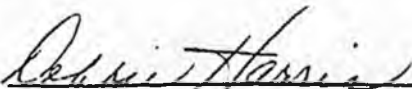
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Common Council of the city of Yakutat opposes the establishment of a Yakataga State Forest; and

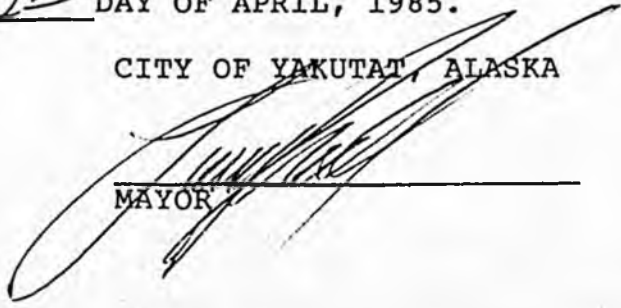
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Council urges the legislature of the State of Alaska to consider fully and completely the impact which the formation of a Yakataga State Forest will have on the potential formation of either a borough or a Coastal Resource Service Area.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 22nd DAY OF APRIL, 1985.

CITY OF YAKUTAT, ALASKA

ATTEST:


CITY CLERK


MAYOR

COOK INLET CHAPTER
JUNEAU CHAPTER
KETCHIKAN CHAPTER
YUKON RIVER CHAPTER
SITKA CHAPTER
STIKINE RIVER CHAPTER

ALASKA STATE SOCIETY
OF
AMERICAN FORESTERS



Cook Inlet Chapter

House Committee on Resources
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

February 22, 1985

Dear Committee Members:


The current legislative session provides another opportunity to assure that responsible, active management of the State's forested land is initiated. By this, I mean land management actions based on recognition of the presence and values of the various land resources and on objectives to preserve, protect, conserve, enhance, and harvest those resources as appropriate. The productive forest lands in State ownership need management if they are to provide the full range of products, services and amenities of which they are capable. A system of State Forests is provided for in the statutes. Appropriate units of forest land need to be added to the system, which now includes only the Haines and Tanana Valley State Forests.

Senate Bill 30 would add a Cape Yakataga Forest to the system. A bill, yet to be introduced, would add a Susitna Forest to the system. Both of those forests are of high priority because one contains the most productive forest lands in State ownership (Yakataga) and the other a portion of the forest land available in the Susitna River Basin where on half of the State's population resides.

Both provide excellent opportunities for wood production and growth, wildlife habitat enhancement and protection, dispersed recreation opportunities, and all of the additional benefits of forested land. The people of Alaska will receive the full benefits of public land ownership when those lands are actively and efficiently managed for multiple resource protection and use.

Your support of the establishment of these units of the State Forest system is needed. The Cook Inlet Chapter of the Society of American Foresters urges you to provide that support to speed passage of these bills.

Sincerely,


Zane J. Cornett
Chapter Chairman





RECORDS CERTIFICATION



I, the undersigned, an employee of the State of Alaska, do hereby certify that the microfilm images on this microform are accurate reproductions of the original records of the State of Alaska as accumulated during the regular course of business, and that it is the established policy and practice of this State to microfilm its records and to dispose of the original records after microfilm reproductions have been made.


Signature of Camera Operator


Date

S B

3 5

Bradley
5/9/85

Original sponsors: Kerttula and V.Fischer

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE
 2 HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SPONSOR SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL NO. 35 (Resources)
 3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
 4 FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION
 5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act creating the Nelchina Public Use Area."
 7

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

9 * Section 1. AS 41 is amended by adding a new chapter to read:

10 * CHAPTER 23. MULTIPLE USE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC RESOURCES.

11 ARTICLE 1. PUBLIC USE AREAS.

12 Sec. 41.23.010. PURPOSE. The purpose of AS 41.23.010 - 41.23.-
 13 040 is to establish the area described in AS 41.23.040 as the Nelchina
 14 Public Use Area. The Nelchina Public Use Area is established to

15 (1) protect and maintain fish and wildlife habitat, partic-
 16 ularly caribou calving areas, trumpeter swan nesting areas, and other
 17 important habitats for moose, Dall sheep, and brown bear so that
 18 traditional public uses of fish and wildlife populations may continue;

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

22 (3) perpetuate and enhance general public recreation in a
 23 quality environment;

24 (4) perpetuate and enhance additional public uses described
 25 in the Susitna Area Plan;

26 (5) allow additional public uses of the area in a manner
 27 compatible with the purposes specified in (1) - (4) of this section.

28 Sec. 41.23.020. MANAGEMENT. (a) Management of the surface and
 29 subsurface estate of the Nelchina Public Use Area is the responsibil-
 ity of the Department of Natural Resources. After adequate public

1
* 2 hearings the commissioner may designate incompatible uses and shall
3 adopt and may revise a management plan for the Nelchina Public Use
4 Area. With regard to the management of land within the central caribou
5 calving area described in AS 41.23.040(b), the commissioner shall
6 obtain the concurrence of the Department of Fish and Game in the
7 adoption and revision of the management plan. With regard to the
8 management of land within the public use area described in AS 41.23.-
9 040(c), the commissioner shall consult with the Department of Fish and
10 Game in the adoption and revision of the management plan.

11 (b) The Department of Fish and Game is responsible for the
12 management of fish and game resources and public use of fish and
13 wildlife in the Nelchina Public Use Area consistent with the purposes
14 of AS 41.23.010.

15 (c) The Nelchina Public Use Area shall be open to mineral entry
16 under AS 38.05.185 - 38.05.275, and the commissioner may adopt regu-
17 lations to achieve the purposes specified in AS 41.23.010. Each valid
18 existing right or permit shall remain valid and continue in full force
19 and effect according to its terms. Exploration, development, and
* 20 extraction of subsurface resources shall be allowed in a manner that
21 is compatible with the purposes specified in AS 41.23.010(1) - (4).

22 (d) The state may not acquire by eminent domain privately owned
23 land within or abutting state-owned land described in AS 41.23.040 but
24 may acquire privately owned land by purchase, exchange, or otherwise
25 for inclusion in the Nelchina Public Use Area.

* 26 (e) The commissioner may not manage the Nelchina Public Use Area
27 as a unit of the state park system.

28 Sec. 41.23.030. COMPATIBILITY OF USES. (a) Except as provided
29 in this section, the commissioner may prohibit or restrict incompat-
ible uses under the management plan adopted under AS 41.23.020 within

1 the state-owned land and water described in AS 41.23.040.

2 (b) Nothing in AS 41.23.010 - 41.23.040 prohibits the Department
3 of Fish and Game from engaging in rehabilitation, enhancement, and
4 development of fish and wildlife habitat within an area described in
5 AS 41.23.040.

* 6 (c) The commissioner may not restrict lawful sport and subsis-
7 tence fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation
8 of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game within the Nelchina
9 Public Use Area.

* 10 (d) The commissioner shall allow traditional access to the
11 Nelchina Public Use Area by motorized or nonmotorized means of trans-
12 portation to private land, interests in private land, and for lawful
13 sport and subsistence hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreational
14 purposes in a manner that is compatible with purposes specified in
15 AS 41.23.010(1) - (4).

16 (e) The Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fish
17 and Game shall have necessary access for fish and game management,
18 research, and enforcement purposes.

19 (f) If the commissioner determines that a use is incompatible
20 with one or more other uses in a portion of the Nelchina Public Use
21 Area, the commissioner shall state in the management plan adopted or
22 revised under AS 41.23.020

- * 23 { (1) each determination of incompatibility;
- 24 { (2) the specific area where the incompatibility is de-
- 25 { termined to exist;
- 26 { (3) the time within which the incompatibility is determined
- 27 { to exist; and
- 28 { (4) the reasons for each determination of incompatibility.
- 29 {

Sec. 41.23.040. NELCHINA PUBLIC USE AREA. (a) The vacant and

1 unappropriated state-owned land and water and the state land and water
 2 acquired in the future that lie within the boundaries described in
 3 this section are designated as the Nelchina Public Use Area, are
 4 reserved for all uses compatible with their primary function as public
 5 use land, and are assigned to the Department of Natural Resources for
 6 control and management.

7 (b) The land described in this subsection is the central caribou
 8 calving area:

- 9 (1) Township 5 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,
 10 Section 5
 11 Section 8
 12 Section 17;

- 13 (2) Township 6 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,
 14 Sections 4 - 5
 15 Sections 8 - 9
 16 Sections 16 - 17
 17 Sections 20 - 21
 18 Sections 28 - 29
 19 Sections 32 - 33;

- 20 (3) Township 7 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,
 21 Sections 4 - 5
 22 Sections 8 - 9
 23 Sections 16 - 17
 24 Sections 20 - 21
 25 Sections 28 - 29
 26 Sections 32 - 33;

- 27 (4) Township 8 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,
 28 Sections 4 - 5
 29 Sections 8 - 9

1 Sections 16 - 17

2 Sections 20 - 21

3 Sections 28 - 29

4 Sections 32 - 33;

5 (5) Township 9 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

6 Sections 20 - 22,

7 Sections 27 - 29

8 Sections 32 - 34;

9 (6) Township 10 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Merid-
10 ian, those portions of Sections 2 - 4 and 11 lying south of the Tyone
11 River and

12 Sections 9 - 10

13 Sections 14 - 16;

14 (7) Township 23 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian,

15 Sections 1 - 6

16 Sections 8 - 12;

17 (8) Township 23 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian,

18 Sections 1 - 14;

19 (9) Township 23 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian,

20 Sections 3 - 9;

21 Sections 17 - 20;

22 (10) Township 23 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian,

23 Sections 1 - 4;

24 (11) Township 23 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,

25 Section 6;

26 (12) Township 24 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,

27 Section 1

28 Sections 12 - 13

29 Sections 24 - 25;

- 1 (13) Township 24 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
2 (14) Township 24 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
3 (15) Township 24 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
4 (16) Township 24 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
5 (17) Township 24 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,
6 Sections 1 - 23
7 Sections 26 - 31
8 (18) Township 25 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
9 Sections 1 - 2
10 Sections 11 - 13
11 Sections 24 - 25
12 Section 36;
13 (19) Township 25 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
14 (20) Township 25 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
15 (21) Township 25 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
16 (22) Township 25 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
17 (23) Township 25 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian;
18 (24) Township 26 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
19 Sections 1 - 17
20 Sections 20 - 28
21 Sections 35 - 36
22 (25) Township 26 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
23 (26) Township 26 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
24 (27) Township 26 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
25 (28) Township 26 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
26 (29) Township 26 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian;
27 (30) Township 27 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
28 Sections 1 - 3
29 Sections 11 - 13;

- 1 (31) Township 27 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
2 (32) Township 27 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
3 (33) Township 27 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
4 (34) Township 27 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
5 (35) Township 27 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
6 (36) Township 27 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian;
7 (37) Township 28 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
8 Sections 1 - 6
9 Sections 8 - 17
10 Sections 21 - 28;
11 Sections 33 - 36;
12 (38) Township 28 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
13 (39) Township 28 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
14 (40) Township 28 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
15 (41) Township 28 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
16 (42) Township 28 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
17 (43) Township 28 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian;
18 (44) Township 29 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian,
19 Section 13
20 Sections 23 - 26
21 Section 36;
22 (45) Township 29 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
23 (46) Township 29 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
24 (47) Township 29 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
25 (48) Township 29 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
26 (49) Township 29 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
27 (50) That portion of Township 29 North, Range 11 East,
28 Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
29 (51) Township 29, North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,

- 1 Sections 3 - 9
2 Sections 16 - 21
3 Sections 28 - 34;
4
5 (52) Township 30 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
6 Sections 13 - 14
7 Sections 20 - 29
8 Sections 32 - 36;
9 (53) Township 30 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
10 Sections 1 - 3
11 Sections 8 - 36
12 (54) Township 30 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
13 (55) That portion of Township 30 North, Range 9 East, Seward
14 Meridian, lying southeast of the Susitna River;
15 (56) That portion of Township 30 North, Range 10 East,
16 Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
17 (57) That portion of Township 30 North, Range 11 East,
18 Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
19 (58) That portion of Township 30 North, Range 12 East,
20 Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna and Tyone Rivers;
21 (59) Township 31 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
22 Sections 13 - 14,
23 Sections 22 - 27
24 Sections 34 - 36;
25 (60) That portion of Township 31 North, Range 8 East, Seward
26 Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
27 (61) That portion of Township 31 North, Range 9 East, Seward
28 Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
29 (62) Township 31 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian, that
portion of section 31 lying southeast of the Susitna River.

1
2 (c) The land described within this subsection is the area of the
3 Nelchina Public Use Area that is outside of the central caribou calv-
4 ing area:

- 5 (1) Township 21 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
6 Section 1
7 Section 3, W1/2
8 Sections 4 - 9
9 Section 11, E1/2
10 Sections 12 - 13
11 Section 14, E1/2
12 Sections 16 - 20
13 Section 23, E1/2
14 Sections 24 - 27
15 Section 30;
- 16 (2) Township 21 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
17 Sections 1 - 26
18 Sections 29 - 30
19 Section 33, S1/2
20 Section 34, S1/2
21 Sections 35 - 36;
- 22 (3) Township 21 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
23 (4) Township 21 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
24 (5) Township 21 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
25 (6) Township 22 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
26 Sections 1 - 22
27 Sections 24 - 25
28 Sections 27 - 34
29 Section 36;
- (7) Township 22 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian;

- 1 (8) Township 22 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian;
2 (9) Township 22 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian;
3 (10) Township 22 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian;
4 (11) Township 22 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian;
5 (12) Township 22 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,
6 Sections 1 - 24
7 Sections 27 - 34;
8 (13) Township 23 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
9 (14) Township 23 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian;
10 (15) Township 23 North, Range 8 East, Seward Meridian,
11 Section 7
12 Sections 13 - 36;
13 (16) Township 23 North, Range 9 East, Seward Meridian,
14 Sections 15 - 36;
15 (17) Township 23 North, Range 10 East, Seward Meridian,
16 Sections 1 - 2
17 Sections 10 - 16
18 Sections 21 - 36;
19 (18) Township 23 North, Range 11 East, Seward Meridian,
20 Sections 5 - 36;
21 (19) Township 23 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,
22 Sections 1 - 5
23 Sections 7 - 36;
24 (20) Township 24 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
25 (21) Township 24 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
26 Sections 2 - 11
27 Sections 14 - 23
28 Sections 26 - 36;
29 (22) Township 24 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,

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Sections 24 - 25

Sections 32 - 36;

- (23) Township 25 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- (24) Township 25 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- (25) Township 25 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
- (26) Township 25 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,

Sections 3 - 10

Sections 14 - 23

Sections 26 - 35;

- (27) Township 26 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian;
- (28) Township 26 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- (29) Township 26 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- (30) Township 26 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
- (31) Township 26 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,

Sections 18 - 19

Sections 29 - 34;

- (32) Township 27 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian;
- (33) Township 27 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- (34) Township 27 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- (35) Township 27 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,

Sections 4 - 10

Sections 14 - 36;

- (36) Township 28 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian;
- (37) Township 28 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
- (38) Township 28 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
- (39) Township 28 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,

Section 7

Sections 18 - 20

Sections 29 - 32;

- 1 (40) Township 29 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian;
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3 (41) Township 29 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
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5 (42) Township 29 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian,
6 Sections 1 - 12
7 Sections 14 - 22
8 Sections 27 - 35;
9 (43) Township 29 North, Range 12 East, Seward Meridian,
10 Sections 1 - 2
11 Sections 10 - 15
12 Sections 22 - 27
13 Sections 35 - 36;
14 (44) Township 30 North, Range 3 East, Seward Meridian;
15 (45) Township 30 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian;
16 (46) Township 30 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
17 (47) Township 30 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian,
18 Sections 1 - 12
19 Sections 15 - 19
20 Sections 30 - 31;
21 (48) Township 30 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian,
22 Sections 4 - 7;
23 (49) That portion of Township 31 North, Range 3 East, Seward
24 Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
25 (50) That portion of Township 31 North, Range 4 East, Seward
26 Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;
27 (51) Township 31 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian;
28 (52) Township 31 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian;
29 (53) Township 31 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian, those
portions of Sections 2 - 4 and Sections 11 - 12 lying south of the
Susitna River, and

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Sections 5 - 10

Sections 15 - 21

Sections 28 - 33;

(54) That portion of Township 32 North, Range 4 East, Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;

(55) That portion of Township 32 North, Range 5 East, Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;

(56) That portion of Township 32 North, Range 6 East, Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;

(57) That portion of Township 32 North, Range 7 East, Seward Meridian, lying south of the Susitna River;

(58) Township 3 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian,
Sections 1 - 30

Sections 33 - 34;

(59) Township 3 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian;

(60) Township 3 North, Range 11 West, Copper River Meridian;

(61) Township 4 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian,
all sections except for portions of sections 20 and 29 described as
John Lake Subdivision (ASLS-82-190);

(62) Township 4 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian;

(63) Township 4 North, Range 11 West, Copper River Meridian;

(64) Township 5 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian;

(65) Township 5 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

Sections 1 - 4

Sections 9 - 16

Sections 19 - 36;

(66) Township 6 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian;

(67) Township 6 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

Sections 1 - 3

1 Sections 10 - 15

2 Sections 22 - 27

3 Sections 34 - 36;

4 (68) Township 7 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian;

5 (69) Township 7 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

6 Sections 1 - 3

7 Sections 10 - 15

8 Sections 22 - 27

9 Sections 34 - 36;

10 (70) Township 8 North, Range 9 West, Copper River Meridian;

11 (71) Township 8 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

12 Sections 1 - 3

13 Sections 10 - 15

14 Sections 22 - 27

15 Sections 34 - 36;

16 (72) That portion of Township 9 North, Range 9 West, Copper
17 River Meridian, lying south west of the Tyone River;

18 (73) Township 9 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Meridian,

19 Sections 1 - 4

20 Sections 9 - 16

21 Sections 23 - 26

22 Sections 35 - 36;

23 (74) That portion of Township 10 North, Range 9 West, Copper
24 River Meridian, lying southwest of the Tyone River;

25 (75) Township 10 North, Range 10 West, Copper River Merid-
26 ian, that portion of Sections 12 and 13 south of the Tyone River, and

27 Sections 21 - 28

28 Sections 33 - 36

29 * Sec. 2. Nothing in AS 41.23.010 - 41.23.040 as enacted in sec. 1 of

1 this Act may be construed to restrict the development and establishment of
2 the Susitna Hydroelectric Project.
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4 *(section 3 deleted)*
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Matanuska-Susitna Borough

BOX B, PALMER, ALASKA 99645 • PHONE 745-4801

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

LAND MANAGEMENT
745-9652

PLATTING
745-9650

PLANNING
745-9661

April 16, 1985

APR 19 1985

Honorable Jan Faiks
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: SSSB 35 - Nelchina Public Use Area

Dear Senator Faiks:

Attached is a resolution of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly supporting the establishment of a Nelchina Public Use Area. The area covered by SSSB 35 encompasses the major caribou calving grounds of the Nelchina caribou herd.

The Susitna Area Plan which was recently adopted by the Assembly called for the establishment of a Nelchina Public Use Area. That Plan had over 40 public hearings over a three year period and was a successful joint effort between the Borough and the Department of Natural Resources.

In addition to the Borough's support for this piece of legislation, both the Departments of Fish & Game and Natural Resources have indicated support for the bill. The sponsor substitute for SB 35 is now awaiting a hearing before the Senate Finance Committee, and we urge you to schedule a hearing this session.

If there is anything the Borough can do in the way of testifying or providing other support for this piece of legislation, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert J. Stickles".

Robert J. Stickles
Planning Director

mu

Attachment

cc: Senator Kerttula

AMENDED

Planning Director

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION SERIAL # 85- 21

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SUPPORTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NELCHINA PUBLIC USE AREA.

WHEREAS, Administration recommends establishment of Nelchina Public Use Area; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan has identified these lands for retention in public ownership to protect fish and wildlife resources, to provide recreation opportunities, and to permit exploration and development of mineral resources; and

WHEREAS, it should be the intent to insure the traditional and customary uses including, but not limited to, snow machining, use of swamp buggies, aircraft and power boats; and

WHEREAS, the Nelchina Public Use Area is consistent with the concept of the Talkeetna Mountain Special Use District; and

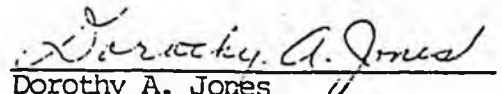
WHEREAS, legislative protection of these lands will insure long term retention in public ownership; and

WHEREAS, disposal of public lands within the Public Use Area will be prohibited; and

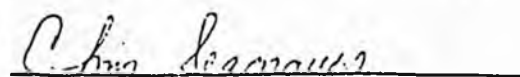
WHEREAS, adverse impact of mining on critical caribou calving areas will be regulated through the application of lease stipulations or State Land Use Permit guidelines proposed in the Susitna Area Plan.


NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough does hereby support the establishment of a Nelchina Public Use Area.

ACCEPTED AND APPROVED by the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough this 14th day of February, 1985.


Dorothy A. Jones
Borough Mayor

ATTEST:


Chris Seagraves
Borough Clerk

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

Gary Thurlow
Borough Manager



Alaska Environmental Lobby, Inc.

204 N. Franklin Street, Suite 3 Juneau, Alaska 99801

907-586-2315

THE NELCHINA PUBLIC USE AREA: SB35

The Nelchina Public Use Area encompasses 2.3 million acres of primarily state owned lands on the northeastern slopes of the Talkeetna Mountains. The area supports a variety of wildlife resources and recreational use. Wildlife includes caribou, moose, sheep, brown bear, black bear, wolf and wolverine as well as many species of furbearers, waterfowl, small game and unclassified game. Recreational use of the area includes hunting, fishing, backpacking, climbing, canoeing, whitewater rafting, ORV use, snowmachining, skiing, and panning for gold amongst others.

The Nelchina caribou herd, numbering 25,000, is the largest in Southcentral and due to its proximity to both Anchorage and Fairbanks, has been the most accessible caribou herd in Alaska since before statehood. Once numbering 70,000, the caribou are being impacted by increasing development pressures north of the Glenn Highway which is altering and removing lands from the habitat base and by the Trans-Alaska pipeline which bisects their traditional range. The calving grounds are the "center of habitation" for the herd which covers an area of about 1 million acres and makes up the core of the Nelchina Public Use Area. The herds are most vulnerable when moving to and using these grounds.

The Susitna Area Plan after over 40 public hearings during a 3 year process, has identified the Nelchina Public Use Area and has recommended it for immediate legislative designation. SB35 sponsored by Sen. Jalmar Kerttula would provide for the establishment of the Nelchina Public Use Area, the purpose of which would be to assure that these lands remain in public ownership and that area fish and wildlife populations and habitat as well as associated compatible recreational uses are perpetuated. It would also provide:

- ** DNR to be land managers and to develop a management plan with the concurrence of ADF&G who would manage fish and game resources.
- ** Mineral entry under regulations set up by DNR to achieve the area's purpose. Valid existing mining claims and multiple land use permits would remain valid and continue in full force.
- ** Traditional access for lawful sport and subsistence hunting, fishing and trapping.

The Alaska Environmental Lobby supports the establishment of the Nelchina Public Use Area and SB35 and will be closely monitoring the developments in this legislation.

Prepared by Mark Stasik, staff lobbyist for the AEL, 3/4/85

ALASKA CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT • ALASKA CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB • JUNEAU GROUP SIERRA CLUB • SITKA GROUP SIERRA CLUB
ANCHORAGE GROUP SIERRA CLUB • DENALI GROUP SIERRA CLUB • ANCHORAGE AUDUBON SOCIETY • ARCTIC AUDUBON SOCIETY
DENALI PENINSULA COUNCIL • ALASKA FRIENDS OF THE EARTH • JUNEAU AUDUBON SOCIETY • KACHEMAK BAY CONSERVATION SOCIETY
DENALI PENINSULA AUDUBON SOCIETY • KODIAK AUDUBON SOCIETY • LYNN CANAL CONSERVATION • ALASKA WILDERNESS GUIDES ASSOCIATION
SITKA CONSERVATION SOCIETY • NORTHERN ALASKA ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER • SOUTHEAST ALASKA CONSERVATION COUNCIL



Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities

Position Paper

WAR 2 2 1985

BILL NO: SSSB 35

APPROVED:

[Signature]
P. W. Mapp
Commissioner

TITLE: An Act Creating the Nelchina Public Use Area

DATE:

3/11/85

The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities has no objection to the creation of the Nelchina Public Use Area based on our understanding of SSSB 35. Our understanding is that SSSB 35 is creating a new category of State managed land use under Title 16 ("Fish and Game") of the Alaska Statutes. Further, it is our understanding that this is a new category of land use, and restrictions will be developed and adopted under a management plan to be done at a later time.

Based on these understandings, it is the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' position that the Department be a member of any group or body responsible for the development of the management plan for the Nelchina Public Use Area. Such membership will ensure that transportation related issues and concerns, as relate to the Department's responsibilities, are addressed to the fullest extent possible during critical stages of the management plan's development and implementation.

LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION OF THE NELCHINA CARIBOU CALVING AREA

Need for Designation

The Nelchina caribou herd is one of southcentral Alaska's most important wildlife resources. It is the largest caribou herd in southcentral Alaska, currently numbering about 25,000 caribou, and is expected to increase somewhat under continued conservative management, provided a habitat base is maintained. Due to its accessibility from Anchorage and Fairbanks, it has been the most intensively recreationally-hunted caribou herd in Alaska since before statehood. Even though hunting is now limited by permit, tremendous demand is expressed each year. More than 12,000 Alaskans applied for 1,900 Nelchina caribou hunting permits in 1984. The herd is also important in meeting the subsistence needs of Copper River Basin residents. Additionally, annual migrations often bring caribou near Nelchina highways where they provide people with otherwise uncommon wildlife viewing opportunities.

The Nelchina caribou range over an area of 20,000 square miles, annually moving to and from their calving and summer range in the Talkeetna Mountains to winter ranges in the Lake Louise Flats, across the Glenn Highway to Chistochina, and often as far east as the Wrangell Mountains near Nabesna. Although different winter ranges may be occupied from one year to the next, the calving grounds have been used every year since studies of the herd began in the 1950's. This consistent use is indicative of the importance of the calving area to

the herd. The calving grounds are the "center of habitation" for the herd, an area that meets the special needs of caribou after the long winter, where pregnant cows can find suitable habitat to give birth to and nurture their newborn calves. Over the great expanses of range covered annually by caribou, they are most vulnerable when moving to and using their calving grounds.

The Nelchina caribou will be affected by increasing development in their range. The Trans-Alaska oil pipeline has already bisected their range; the long term effects on the herd remains uncertain. The most significant new development on the horizon is the Susitna Hydroelectric project. If built, the impoundments may impede movements to and from the calving area, and disturbance associated with the project may displace caribou from some summer range. In addition, development of Native lands adjacent to the project and great increases in recreational uses in the vicinity of the impoundment are likely. Other actions also have the potential for adverse effects on the caribou: increased settlement, grazing, transportation corridors, and military operations have been proposed in the past. As development and use of the land in the upper Susitna and Copper River Basins increase, the cumulative effects will adversely affect the herd. If the state's goal is to maintain the Nelchina caribou herd, the most effective way to minimize these cumulative impacts with the least constraint on other land uses is to protect the calving ground where caribou are most vulnerable.

Area Proposed

The area proposed for legislative designation is located on the northern and eastern slopes of the Talkeetna Mountains (see enclosed map and legal description, Appendix 3). The area contains approximately one million acres and encompasses the primary calving grounds of the Nelchina caribou herd. The area is largely mountainous with rolling uplands covered by alpine herbaceous and subalpine shrubland vegetation. It is undeveloped except for small placer mining operations and a few cabins used for hunting and trapping. The area has no merchantable timber, no agricultural potential, and little commercial grazing capability, but it has substantial wildlands recreation values. The area supports considerable hunting effort directed at caribou, moose and brown bear, although hunting for moose, bears and sheep is more intense in the peripheral sections (see the Nelchina Public Use Area description, Appendix 1) where populations of these species are larger. In addition to big game hunting, the area receives use by small game hunters, trappers, sport fishermen, backpackers, and winter recreationists.

Options for Designation

The Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) believes legislative designation of this area is needed to permanently protect its special values. The form of designation is secondary to the considerations of ensuring long-term retention and management provisions protecting the Nelchina caribou population and other fish and wildlife resources and

associated public uses. The Nelchina caribou calving area can be designated separately, or in combination with surrounding lands with significant public use values. Several kinds of designation are possible including a public use area, a critical habitat area, a state game refuge, or some other new form of designation.

1. Calving area only. The central calving area is the most critical and important area requiring designation. The Susitna Area Plan has identified it, as meriting immediate legislative designation as a public use area, while recommending eventual designation for surrounding lands as an addition to the public use area. Preliminary draft legislation (Appendix 4) reflecting tentative agreements reached by the ADF&G and the Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) in the preparation of the Governor's South-central Recreation Action Plan would assign the area to ADNR for control, development and maintenance and would provide for ADF&G concurrence with a management plan to be prepared by ADNR for the area. The ADF&G's statutory/regulatory authority in the area would be limited to its general authorities for management of fish and game resources and public uses of fish and game. The ADF&G would rely on provisions of the management plan and on existing consultation procedures with ADNR to protect habitat and wildlife (especially caribou) from land uses potentially inimical to these resources in the area. If statutory authority for such protection by the ADF&G is desired, critical habitat designation would be appropriate. Other options would be to establish the area as a game refuge or create a new article in Title 16,

Chapter 20 for Fish and Game Public Use Areas containing language similar to that found in AS 16.20.050 and .060 (permitting authority).

2. Calving area plus public use area. The original proposed Nelchina Public Use Area, first considered by the legislature in 1980, contains approximately 2.3 million acres of land with exceptional wildlife and public use values (see enclosed map and description, Appendix 1 and 2). Although the final draft of the Susitna Area Plan recommends immediate legislative designation only for the central calving area of about one million acres (with subsequent designation of the remainder at some future date), the ADNR has indicated that it is not opposed to designation of the entire public use area at this time if that is the legislature's wish. Numerous public comments on the draft Susitna Area Plan have supported immediate designation of the larger area.

The enclosed draft bill can be used for either the central calving area or the larger public use area if the designation is to be as a public use area. If the legislature finds it desirable to accord the entire area special designation but feels it is appropriate to give the ADF&G some statutory authority in determining compatibility of land uses in the central calving area (beyond concurrence in a management plan), critical habitat or refuge designation or a new category of lands as suggested above could be established. One option that could be considered

is to have concurrent designation of the calving area as both part of a larger public use area and as critical habitat. Under this option, the entire area would be managed under the provisions of the public use area and the management plan developed jointly by the ADF&G and ADNR. At the same time, the critical caribou calving habitat could be protected when necessary under its critical habitat status.

TALKEETNA MOUNTAINS SUBREGION

The following section describes land use policy within the Talkeetna Mountain Subregion. It is divided into two parts. The first is an overview of resources and their management for the subregion as a whole. The second presents specific statements of management intent, land use designations, prohibited uses, and management guidelines for each of the subregion's three management units. The land use plan's proposals on two issues--the borough's Talkeetna Mountains Special Use District and the proposed Susitna Hydroelectric project--overlap several management units and are therefore presented in the first part of this subregion summary under the section on management summary. Maps showing land ownership in the subregion and boundaries of management units and subunits are presented at the end of the first part.

I. SUBREGION OVERVIEW

A. Background

The boundaries of the Talkeetna Mountains Subregion are the planning area boundaries on the north and east (these coincide with the boundary of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough), a line that approximates the northern edge of the Matanuska River drainage on the south, and on the west, a line that roughly follows the 2,500' contour. These boundaries generally encompass only the upper portions of the mountains. Lower-lying portions of river valleys which extend into the area such as the Talkeetna, Sheep, and Kashwitna are included in the adjacent subregions.

This subregion encompasses roughly 6 million acres, the majority of which is publicly owned. The northern half of the unit is primarily in federal ownership, the southern half is held by the State of Alaska. The state recently received tentative approval for nearly all of the approximately 80 townships (1,840,000 acres) of federal land it had selected in the southern half of the area. There are approximately 206,000 acres of Native selected and interim conveyed lands in the area. Most of these lands are located in the Susitna River - Stephan Lake area and in the East Fork of the Chulitna River drainage. These Native selected lands are very likely to be conveyed. In addition to private land held by Native corporations there are also numerous scattered small parcels held by private individuals. These holdings are generally of two types: state offered open-to-entry sites adjacent to fly-in lakes (primarily used for recreational purposes), and federally patented mining claims located in the Nelchina area, the Clearwater Mountains and other mining areas. See the ownership maps at the end of this section for more information.

Access to the periphery of the subregion is provided by two major highways -- the Glenn on the south, the Parks on the west. The only road access into the subregion is provided by the Denali Highway on the north. This highway traverses mostly alpine country in federal ownership from Paxson to Cantwell. The State Department of Transportation is presently working on improvements to the western end of this highway. A number of trails branch off from these highways and provide a measure of access into the mountains. Other means of access include landing strips, fly-in lakes, and boatable rivers.

Although most of this rugged area does not offer the potential for agriculture, forestry, or settlement found elsewhere in the study area, these limitations are well balanced by the region's rich fish and wildlife, recreational and mineral resources. This area is one of the most heavily used big game hunting areas in the state, offering moose, Dall sheep, bear, and caribou. The majority of the range of the 20,000 animals of the Nelchina caribou herd is located here. The area's many lakes and rivers offer excellent fishing for salmon, lake and rainbow trout, grayling and other species. The subregion offers literally millions of acres of alpine country for hiking, camping, skiing and climbing.

These same alpine areas have a rich and to a large degree unexplored potential for mineral development. Several areas -- Hatcher Pass, Nelchina and Valdez Creek -- are currently active producers of gold and other precious minerals.

The Alaska Power Authority recently applied to the Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC) for a license to build a major hydroelectric project on the Susitna River. Two dams are proposed for sites at Devil's Canyon and Watana. (More on this proposal below.)

B. Management Summary

The Talkeetna Subregion will be managed as a multiple use area emphasizing the uses that are most important in the area now: recreation, including hunting and fishing, protection of fish and wildlife habitat, and mining. Grazing, private recreational settlement (remote cabins), and personal use timber harvests are also uses appropriate in specific portions of this subregion. The vast majority of this rugged, mountainous area is expected to remain remote and very sparsely developed. Additional road access to the area and concentrated settlement on public lands will be contingent on a demonstrated need for such development in order to facilitate activities such as mining or dam construction.

1. Settlement

State and federal land disposals for private recreational settlement are a very low priority in this subregion. The state will issue permits for remote cabin sites in this subregion under the remote cabin permit program in limited, select sites. Should the proposed Susitna hydropower project be developed, state land will be available for a workcamp or other settlement uses associated with the construction and operation of the dams. Most of these hydro-project related uses, however, are expected to occur on lands presently in Native ownership. If road access into this area is provided as a result of the hydro project native lands are likely to be developed for private recreational purposes. Settlement may be an appropriate use on public lands adjacent to areas developed by the natives although no lands are designated for this purpose at this time. (Demand for private residential and commercial uses that may be associated with the project are discussed further under the section on Susitna hydro.) Residential development of public land also may occur in this unit concurrent with major mineral development. Any settlement in this subregion should be designed to maintain public access and protect fish and wildlife habitat and the area's high scenic quality--particularly where the activities occur within the highway corridors.

2. Agriculture

Grazing is the only agricultural use that is possible in this subregion. Grazing will be limited to an area several hundred thousand acres in size in the southwestern portion of the subregion. This area is relatively close to access and to land that could be used for farm headquarter sites. Management guidelines will be applied to grazing activities to ensure compatibility with wildlife.

3. Forestry

Although most of this unit is above timberline, major drainages (e.g., the Susitna and Talkeetna rivers) have personal use and perhaps commercial timber harvest potential. If major developments such as the Susitna hydro project occur there will undoubtedly be associated demands for structural timbers which could be met from these areas. In general, however, the state will set a higher priority on protecting the scenic, habitat, and recreational values of these forested areas rather than using these areas for commercial uses. Limited personal use harvests will be permitted in some areas.

4. Recreation/Fish and Wildlife

This subregion will be managed to protect its current status as one of the major game harvest areas in the state for moose, caribou and sheep. Streams will be managed to protect their recrea-

tion and commercial fishery values. The area also will be managed to maintain a full range of summer and winter recreation activities, including skiing, mountain climbing, hiking, and snowmobiling. Adequate access for these recreation purposes should be maintained in public ownership. Because the Talkeetnas are a highly scenic but still relatively gentle mountain range, the area is particularly suited for cross country hiking, skiing and snowmobiling. A system of trails running through this subregion should be identified and promoted. The state and borough should also seek funding to build and, if necessary, operate public use cabins along this trail system.

Construction of the Susitna Hydroelectric project also could provide increased opportunities for public recreation, primarily due to improved access. Any plans for recreation improvements in the subregion--for example a trails system--should be coordinated with recreation plans associated with the proposed Hydro project.

The plan recommends that the southeastern portion of the Talkeetna Mountains be legislatively or administratively designated as the "Nelchina Public Use Area" to protect the Nelchina caribou herd. This proposal would allow multiple use of the area, including mining, but would prohibit lands sales except for what might be required for resource development. (See Management Unit 3 for more details.)

5. Minerals

This subregion will remain open to mineral exploration and development and to oil and gas leasing. Mineral development, including necessary roads and workcamps, should be designed to minimize impacts on important wildlife and recreation values in this unit.

6. Access

The road/rail system that would provide access to the Susitna hydroelectric project is the only major access improvement being considered in the area. The Power Authority's proposed access route, described in the FERC license application, would provide access to the Watana Dam site from the Denali Highway via Deadman Creek. The Devils Canyon site would be provided with access via a railroad spur from near Gold Creek (on the existing RR line) and via a road on the north side of the Susitna River from the Watana site. A final decision on the planned access route will be made through the environmental impact statement review process.

7. Stream Corridors

The headwaters of many major streams lie in the Talkeetna Mountains. Management of these corridors will be determined on a case-by-case basis consistent with the management objectives for the more heavily used downstream segments of the rivers. In general, the objectives for the rivers originating in this subregion will be to protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and public access.

8. Susitna Hydroelectric Project

As mentioned, the two proposed Susitna hydroelectric dam sites are located within this subregion. The plan does not address any of the basic issues concerning the direct social, fiscal or environmental impacts of this project. This task is being addressed by the FERC licensing process and by the many state and federal agencies already working on the project. Several of the indirect impacts of the hydro project are, however, within the purview of the plan, and will be addressed here. (Note: Because the issues associated with the hydro project affect virtually the entire subregion, these issues will be discussed here for the whole subregion rather than within each of the three management units.)

Four issues addressed by the plan are mitigation lands, land ownership, and recreation and settlement associated with the project. Each are discussed below.

a. Mitigation Lands

Construction of the Susitna Hydroelectric project would have significant effects on terrestrial and aquatic habitats. One proposed method for mitigating the loss of wildlife habitat that would be inundated or disturbed by the hydro project is to designate and manage nearby lands in a way that compensates for this loss. The Alaska Power Authority estimates that roughly 20,000 acres of land would be needed to adequately compensate for the predicted loss of habitat lands.

No compensation lands have been depicted in this agency review draft plan. The Power Authority has prepared a description of the objectives to be met by identifying mitigation lands, criteria for selecting such areas, and lastly, identified a large pool of possible mitigation lands. This information is presented in Appendix 2. The final determination of mitigation strategies and, if appropriate, mitigation lands, will be done after the plan is complete.

b. Land Ownership

Nearly all of the land where the proposed dams, reservoirs, and associated facilities are planned to be located are selected by or interimly conveyed to Cook Inlet Region Inc. and its village corporations. If the hydro project is approved, the state has the option to condemn or buy these lands or trade for lands in other areas. Roughly 40,000 acres of land are at issue, however, the Power Authority estimates as little as 16,000 acres will actually have to be acquired. Final decisions related to land acquisition will be made in light of the plan's designations on land adjacent to the project and on possible trading stock lands.

c. Settlement Associated with the Dam Project

If the project is constructed this would increase development pressures on the portions of the planning area that are already settled and also, due to construction of new access, open new areas to settlement pressures. On the first of these two issues, sufficient private land presently exists to accommodate the predicted level of population growth associated with the project. Regarding possible new settlement areas, no plans can be made until a final decision is made on the location and mode of new access into the area. However, whatever route is ultimately chosen, DNR will follow a settlement policy of "commensurate impact". This means that in locations where the Power Authority is making a special effort (e.g., through road design and siting) to protect some aspect of environmental quality, DNR will not negate this effort through selling land in the particularly sensitive area. On the other hand, portions of the area opened as a result of the project likely will be able to support some land sales (or cabin construction under the remote cabin program) with an acceptable level of environmental impact. Overall, DNR does not intend to sell much land in this area, since it has limited physical capability to support settlement and is generally sensitive to development.

d. Recreation Associated with Dam Project

The area surrounding the project has good potential for various types of new, developed recreation activities. As part of the FERC application the Power Authority and the State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation are working together to finalize a plan identifying areas for trails, camping, dis-

9. Modifications to Boundary of the Talkeetna Mountains Special Use District

This subregion roughly corresponds to the boundaries of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough's Talkeetna Mountains Special Use District. Under the terms of this ordinance, land within the district can be used for recreation, protection and use of fish and wildlife, mining and grazing. Settlement required to support resource development is permitted but other types of year-round settlement are not allowed. Recreational/seasonal settlement is allowed on a case-by-case basis and usually is restricted to small "wilderness" cabins (<500 sq. feet, no running water, etc.)

The plan generally supports these land use designations and restrictions on settlement. It is recommended, however, that the boundaries of the special use district be modified to better follow the boundaries of the Talkeetna Mountains (see map of this subregion for details). At present the special use district includes several areas that are appropriate for land sales due to road or rail access (e.g., Lake Louise), adequate physical capability for settlement and very high amenities. This proposed change to the special use district boundaries will be brought before the borough assembly as one part of the land management proposals contained in the plan.

Box 1866
Seward, AK 99664
March 4, 1985

Greetings:

I am writing in regards to SB 35 & HB 98 offering support of both. I support the designation of the Nelchina public use area, and would like all 2.3 million acres protected in order to take in necessary caribou winter range as well as the many other fish & wildlife & recreational values of the area. I support the protection of fish & wildlife habitat & populations, & public uses of those resources, as the primary purposes of the designation, with the Dept. of Fish & Game as the lead management agency. Mining should be carefully regulated so as to minimize adverse impacts on the area's primary values.

To provide necessary access to those who cannot afford to fly in, the boundaries should be brought down to approximately the Glenn Hwy., as they were for the Katanaska Valley Moose Range. This adds very little acreage, while it improves access tremendously, & it will have virtually no effect on private lands, since they are not included in the area.

I support HB 93 establishing a state recreational rivers system. The upper Little Susitna River, where most whitewater boating use is concentrated, & which is important for the maintenance of water quality, should be included in the system. The 5 rivers recommended by the Susitna Area plan should be designated. Additional rivers that might have other important values besides their fisheries, and that might be more accessible by road, should be included.

The mining exclusion is essential--witness the mud in Birch Creek and the substantial scenic degradation along the Resurrection pass and Crescent Creek trails. Gravel extraction & logging should also be prohibited within these narrow corridors to protect hiking, hunting, & other uses that people will want to enjoy in conjunction with fishing or floating. I support the protection of both natural values & primitive uses in the corridors, as well as more intensive recreational activities.

Sincerely,

Judith Gravec
Judith Gravec
Box 1866
Seward, AK 99664