

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1985-1986 86/2

4232 SRES SB 105 112



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11/24/89
Date

SB

105

Alaska State Legislature

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BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Vice Chairman
JACK COGHILL
DICK ELIASON
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FRED ZHAROFF



POUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA. 99811
(907) 485-4907

Senate Committee on Resources

MEMORANDUM

February 26, 1985

TO: All Members
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: Staff *7*
Senate Resources Committee

RE: SB 105 " . relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
Refuge; an oviding for an effective date."

SB 105 provides for additional land to be added to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established under AS 16.20.032.

The bill does not allow for taking private land by eminent domain but does allow for land exchange or purchase by the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The bill does not restrict the use of private land pending an exchange or purchase.

The specific land which is addressed in this bill includes about 900 acres on either side of the Glenn Highway. Some of the land, approximately 130 acres, is owned by the Matanuska Susitna Borough and they have agreed to discuss an exchange for state land in other areas. The remainder is privately owned and presently has minimal development. The Draft Susitna Area Plan recommends that the land use designations in this area be for wildlife habitat, water resources and public recreation.

The Department of Fish and Game has suggested the bill be amended to include additional lands in the Palmer Hay Flats. The Department of Transportation and Public Facilities may wish to acquire some of this land for highway expansion at some future date. Both departments will present testimony at the hearing.

This bill has a zero fiscal note since it only allows for purchase at some future time. The total cost to the state is unknown at this time because the bill provides for land exchange as well as purchase. The number of acres that might require purchase would be determined by the Department of Natural Resources after discussion with the property owners.

fh:bh

*FISH & GAME will be getting funds from
SALE OF DUCK STAMPS TO PURCHASE WETLANDS.*

Alaska State Legislature

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Vice Chairman
JACK COGHILL
DICK ELIASON
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RICK HALFORD
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POUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA. 99811
(907) 485-4807

Senate Committee on Resources

MEMORANDUM

February 26, 1985

TO: All Members
Senate Resources Committee

FROM: S. [Signature]
Senate Resources Committee

RE: SB 105 "An Act relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

SB 105 provides for additional land to be added to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established under AS 16.20.032.

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fh:bh



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BILL ANALYSIS

DEPARTMENT Fish and Game	DIVISION Habitat	BILL NUMBER SB 105	RESOLUTION None
DEPARTMENT POSITION Support - with amendments.			
PREPARED BY Habitat Div. - Debra Clausen		DATE 2/4/85	COMMISSIONER'S SIGNATURE <i>[Signature]</i>
			DATE 2/13/85

SUMMARY

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED BY BILL DNR Matanuska Susitna Borough	CONSTITUENT GROUP(S) AFFECTED BY BILL
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BILL Matanuska Susitna Borough (see attached resolution 85-12)	ORGANIZATIONAL OPPOSITION TO BILL None known

FISCAL IMPACT: NONE FISCAL NOTE ATTACHED

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE INTENT

The purpose of this bill is to provide protection for highly productive wetlands habitat in the Spring Creek area by adding it to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The wetlands proposed for addition provide important habitat for waterfowl, salmon, and moose populations. Addition of these lands will result in acquisition of key refuge access points.

ANALYSIS OF BILL/PROGRAM EFFECTS

The bill will provide protection to highly productive wetlands habitat by:

1. Expanding the boundary description of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge to include the Spring Creek area.
2. Allowing for the addition of municipal lands within the Spring Creek area to Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.
3. Allowing the Department of Natural Resources to acquire, through purchase or trade, private land determined desirable for inclusion in Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

The bill will enhance public access to the Refuge by directing the acquisition of key access points now in private ownership.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED

Change AS 16.20.032(a)(2) Section 36: All [STATE TIDE AND SUBMERGED LAND]
(see attached continuation sheet)

PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR ANALYSIS.

BILL ANALYSIS
(Supplemental Sheet)
Page 2 of 2

Department
Fish and Game

Sponsor
Kerttuia

Bill Number
SB 105

Amendments continued.

- Add (a)(5) Township 16 North Range 1 East Seward Meridian
Section 2: Portion lying west of the Alaska Railroad
Section 3: Lot 1, excluding portions lying east of the Alaska Railroad centerline,
Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$
Section 10: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and portions lying west of the Alaska Railroad
Section 15: All state lands lying north of the south bank of the Knik River and west
of the Alaska Railroad.
Section 16: All state lands lying north of the south bank of the Knik River.
- Add Sec. 2(b): The State shall attempt to acquire all lands described in (a) of this
section for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.
- Add Sec. 6. The Department of Fish and Game may purchase privately owned lands determined
desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

PALMER HAY PLATS
A PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE GAME REFUGE

BY
MICHAEL BRONSON
FOR
SEN. J. KERTTULA

NOVEMBER 30, 1984

PALMER HAY FLATS

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ABSTRACT

THE LEGISLATURE IS REQUESTED TO EXTEND THE PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE TO TAKE IN 916 ACRES OF WETLANDS ALONG THE GLENN HIGHWAY BY PURCHASE FROM WILLING SELLERS.

PARTS OF THIS OPEN AREA NEAR THE JUNCTION OF THE PARKS AND GLENN HIGHWAY ARE SCHEDULED FOR PRIVATE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT. CURRENTLY, SEVERAL LAND OWNERS ARE CONSIDERING FILLING THE MARSHES FOR A TRUCK CARGO TRANSFER YARD, A RETAIL STORE BUILDING, A GRAVEL AIRSTRIP AND A 30-ACRE CAMPER PARK. SUCH USES, HOWEVER, WOULD REDUCE FISH AND GAME POPULATIONS AND PUBLIC ACCESS IN AS PRODUCTIVE AN AREA AS PARTS OF THE ADJACENT STATE GAME REFUGE.

THE WETLANDS OF THE PROPOSED EXTENSION ARE MOST VALUABLE TO THE PEOPLE OF ANCHORAGE AND THE MAT-SU BOROUGH JUST AS THEY ARE. THE CREEKS THROUGHOUT THE AREA ARE MAJOR FRY REARING GROUNDS FOR SILVER SALMON. RABBIT SLOUGH NEAR WASILLA CREEK GETS UP TO 6,000 FISHERMANS OF USE PER YEAR. HUNTERS GAIN ACCESS TO THE REFUGE ACROSS PRIVATE LAND THERE AT THE RATE OF ABOUT 2,000 USER-DAYS PER YEAR. SMALL GAME IS HARVESTED BY HUNTERS AND TRAPPERS. MOOSE WINTER AND CALVE IN THE AREA, AND LARGE BIRDS OF PREY ARE COMMON YEAR ROUND.

VARIOUS GROUPS HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN KEEPING THE HAY FLATS OPEN FOR ESTABLISHED OUTDOOR USES. AMONG THEM ARE THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE PALMER HAY FLATS, MAT-SU CHAPTER OF DUCKS UNLIMITED, MAT-SU CHAPTER OF ALASKA FUR TRAPPERS ASSOCIATION, ANCHORAGE AUDUBON SOCIETY, AND THE ALASKA CENTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. THE MAT-SU BOROUGH, ALASKA STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME HAVE ALSO SHOWN SUPPORT OF STATE ACQUISITION OF THE AREA FROM WILLING SELLERS.

THE MINIMUM COSTS OF THE EXTENSION WOULD EQUAL \$535,000 (I.E. 1984 ASSESSED VALUATION) PLUS APPRAISAL FEES AND STAFF TIME. PRIVATE OWNERS IN THE AREA HOLD 786 ACRES ASSESSED AT \$470,300. THE MAT-SU BOROUGH OWNS 130 ACRES VALUED AT \$65,000. MANY OF THE 13 PRIVATE OWNERS ARE INTERESTED IN SELLING OR TRADING THEIR LAND. CURRENTLY, NO HOMES OR BUSINESSES EXIST IN THE PROPOSED EXTENSION.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION

THIS LEGISLATION WOULD EXTEND THE PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE ALONG THE GLENN HIGHWAY TO TAKE IN AN ADDITIONAL 916 ACRES OF WETLANDS.

THE LEGISLATION WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE FOLLOWING MEANS:

- DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO OFFER FAIR MARKET VALUE TO WILLING SELLERS AMONG THIRTEEN OWNERS OF 786 ACRES. OFFERS UNACCEPTED TWO YEARS AFTER THEY ARE TENDERED WILL BE WITHDRAWN. (TABLES 1 AND 2)
- DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TO OFFER STATE LAND IN TRADE FOR 130 ACRES OWNED BY THE MAT-SU BOROUGH. TRADES WOULD BE ON A DOLLAR-FOR-DOLLAR BASIS AND INVOLVE STATE LAND WITHIN THE MAT-SU BOROUGH.
- APPROPRIATE AT LEAST \$500,000 TO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR PURCHASES, APPRAISALS, AND SURVEYS. PARCELS SHOWN IN FIG. 1.
- TO PROTECT RESIDENTS ON THE BLUFF OVERLOOKING THE AREA, DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS NORTH OF THE RAILROAD TRACK IN THE PROPOSED EXTENSION WOULD BE DISALLOWED.
- THE ACQUIRED LAND WOULD BE MANAGED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME AS PART OF THE PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE. SEE FIG. 2.

TABLE 1. LAND PARCELS IN PROPOSED GAME REFUGE EXTENSION

<u>R1ET17N</u> <u>PARCEL</u>	<u>OWNER</u>	<u>ACRES</u>		<u>ASSESSED</u>
		<u>ON HAY FLATS</u>	<u>ON BLUFF</u>	
22 A2	Stanley Pleninger	16		\$ 8,100
22 A3	Lucille Martin	20	7	90,000
22 A4	c/o Bonnie McGee	38		19,000
22 B1	Jay Russell	100	8	54,000*
22 C1	Saxon Land Invest.	9		37,000
22 D1	Yvonne Cassity	151		75,500
27 A5	Painter's Local	34		17,000
27 A6	Ray Farrar	33.4		16,700
27 A9	Don Lyon	3		1,400
27 A10	KLH, Inc.	65		33,000
27 A11	Don Benson	86		42,000
27 B1	Glen Cope Estate	160		48,000
27 D2	Georgine Case	17.3		8,600
27 D3		0.3		100
27 D4	Tom Price	2		500
27 D5		51		18,400
	Subtotal	786		\$470,300
22 C2	Mat-Su Borough	82		
		48		
	Subtotal	130		\$65,000
	TOTAL	916 ACRES		\$535,300

* Assessed value is land only; does not include SFD improvements on bluff portion of parcel

TABLE 2. PROPERTY OWNERS IN PROPOSED EXTENSION

<u>NAME AND ADDRESS</u>	<u>NOTES ON PROPERTY</u>
DONALD BENSON PO BOX 1330 PALMER AK 99645	HAS PERMIT FOR AIRSTRIP
GEORGINE CASE 2153 MANTZ STREET ASHLAND KENTUCKY 41101	UNDEVELOPED
YVONNE CASSITY 211 WEST COOK ANCHORAGE AK 99501	WAS INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING LAND TRADE WITH BOROUGH; TALKED TO MSB LAND MANAGER
GLEN COPE ESTATE C/O PO BOX 582 PALMER AK 99645	IN PROBATE; PUBLIC ACCESS FOR 8,000 ANNUAL USER-DAYS; ORAL EXPRESSION OF TRADE INTEREST BY HEIRS
RAY FARRAR 2508 STANLEY DRIVE ANCHORAGE AK 99502	'ILLEGAL FILL FOR DEFUNCT SUBDIVISION
KLH, INC. PO BOX 858 PALMER AK 99645	UNDEVELOPED
DON LYON PO BOX 1525 EAGLE RIVER AK 99577	NEAR HIGHWAY PULL-OUT; ORAL EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN BOROUGH TRADE
LUCILLE MARTIN C/O BONNIE MCGEE 4812 SUNDI DRIVE ANCHORAGE AK 99502	SWAMP AND CREEK AT JUNCT'ON OF PARKS AND GLENN HIGHWAY. PURCHASE WOULD REQUIRE LOT SPLIT
MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH BOX B PALMER AK 99645	UNDEVELOPED; ROAD AND RAILROAD FRONTAGE
PAINTER'S LOCAL 1818 W. NORTHERN LIGHTS ANCHORAGE AK 99503	UNDEVELOPED
STANLEY PLENINGER 4159 HOOD STREET ANCHORAGE AK 99503	POSSIBLE TRUCK YARD ON SPRING CREEK AT HIGHWAY

NAME AND ADDRESSNOTES ON PROPERTY

TOM PRICE
SRA 375-C
ANCHORAGE AK

APPLIED TO ARMY CORPS ENGINEERS
TO FILL FOR 30-ACRE CAMPER
PARK; CONTACTED BOROUGH ABOUT
INTEREST IN LAND TRADE

JAY RUSSELL
BOX 870792
WASILLA AK 99687

NORTHERN CORNER OF PARCEL ON
BLUFF CONTAINS RESIDENCE;
MOST OF PARCEL IS ON SPRING CR.;
PURCHASE WOULD REQUIRE LOT SPLIT

SAXON LAND INVESTMENTS, LTD.
106 SOUTH MENTOR
PASADENA CALIF 91106

PLAN TO FILL SEVERAL "NON-WETLANDS"
ACRES NEAR HIGHWAY FOR RETAIL
BLDGS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HISTORY COLLECTION

- 1967 BOROUGH ZONES MOST OF PALMER HAY FLATS AS "RECREATIONAL."
- 1974 BOROUGH DENIES CHUGACH ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION TRANSMISSION LINE ACROSS FLATS FOLLOWING PUBLIC OBJECTIONS TO LINE.
- 1975 PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE CREATED ON 26 SQUARE MILES OF STATE LAND (FIG. 2)
- 1983 PUBLICITY BEGINS OVER PLANS TO FILL IN PRIVATE WETLANDS.
- 1984
- JANUARY BOROUGH NOMINATES PALMER HAY FLATS AS "AREA MERITING SPECIAL ATTENTION" UNDER NEW COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PLAN.
- MARCH PLANNING COMMISSION REFUSES TO ZONE MORE PRIVATE LAND ON PALMER HAY FLATS TO HALT COMMERCIAL USES.
- APRIL BOROUGH OFFERS TO TRADE FOR LAND ON HAY FLATS. MOST OWNERS EXPRESS INTEREST AT MEETING.
- APRIL TO SEPT. EIGHT OWNERS OF LAND ON HAY FLATS INQUIRE WITH BOROUGH ABOUT TRADES (TABLE 3); NO TRADES COMPLETED.
- JULY REX TURNER WITHDRAWS APPLICATION FOR FLOAT PLANE BASIN ON HAY FLATS IN FACE OF OPPOSITION IN BOROUGH.
- SEPT. 14 SENATOR KERTTULA SUGGESTS STATE ACQUIRE "PRIORITY" WETLANDS FROM WILLING SELLERS DURING MEETING WITH CITIZENS GROUP.
- SEPT. 17 DNR STAFF SUPPORTS PUBLIC ACQUISITION FROM WILLING SELLERS.
- SEPT. 18 BOROUGH ASSEMBLY WITHDRAWS OFFER TO TRADE.

TABLE 3. OWNERS INQUIRING WITH MAT-SU BOROUGH ABOUT
LAND EXCHANGES ON PALMER HAY FLATS

TERRY BEAL FOR F. BEAL

JERRY BROWN

YVONNE CASSITY

DON MCGEE FOR L. MARTIN

TOM PRICE

KAREN ROUSEY

CAROL STRAUN

JANET STOUT

VALUE OF PROPOSED EXTENSION TO PUBLIC

THE PRIVATE WETLANDS NEAR SPRING CREEK AND RABBIT SLOUGH ARE PRODUCTIVE IN FISH AND GAME, AND SUSTAIN HIGH LEVELS OF USES INCOMPATIBLE WITH COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

HUNTING AND FISHING

RABBIT SLOUGH GETS UP TO 6,000 FISHERMAN-DAYS PER YEAR (FIG. 3, TABLE 3). MOST OF THIS USE IS ANGLERS FROM ANCHORAGE AND VALLEY FISHING WITH PERMISSION ON PRIVATE LAND FOR SILVER SALMON AND DOLLY VARDEN TROUT (ADF&G ANNUAL REPORT, 1977-1983). IN ADDITION, RABBIT SLOUGH IS AN ACCESS ROUTE TO THE GAME REFUGE FOR DUCK HUNTERS AT THE RATE OF ABOUT 2,000 USER-DAYS PER YEAR (JACK DIDRICKSON, PALMER AREA GAME BIOLOGIST, ADF&G, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION).

THE PROPOSED EXTENSION AND ADJACENT PRIVATE LANDS ALSO CONTAIN PRODUCTIVE SMALL GAME HABITAT. WHEN SNOWSHOE HARES ARE ABUNDANT, AS IN 1983 AND 1984, THE AREA IS INTENSIVELY HUNTED (PERSONAL OBSERVATION). MOREOVER, SOME 50 PEOPLE TRAP FURBEARERS ON THE PALMER HAY FLATS (JIM RIESE, PRES., MAT-SU CHAPTER, ALASKA FUR TRAPPERS ASSOC.). AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF THESE PERSONS TRAP PARTS OF THE PROPOSED GAME REFUGE EXTENSION. MOST OF THEM ARE TRESPASSING.

SALMON REARING

SPRING CREEK AND RABBIT SLOUGH ARE MAJOR REARING AREAS FOR SILVER SALMON FRY. TRAPPING DATA INDICATE LARGE NUMBERS OF YOUNG SALMON THROUGHOUT THE PROPOSED EXTENSION (TABLE 4 AND UNPUBLISHED DATA ADF&G, PALMER). SOME EGGS ARE SPAWNED THERE, BUT MOST FRY PROBABLY MIGRATE TO THE AREA FROM WASILLA CREEK AND THE MATANUSKA RIVER (LARRY ENGELS, PALMER AREA FISHERIES BIOLOGIST, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION). FRESHWATER SLOUGHS AND MARSHES ARE CRITICAL TO SILVER SALMON POPULATIONS BECAUSE THE FISH SPEND ABOUT HALF THEIR LIVES IN SUCH HABITAT.

AESTHETICS

NON-CONSUMPTIVE PUBLIC USE IS ALSO SIGNIFICANT ON THESE PRIVATE WETLANDS NORTH OF THE REFUGE. SEVERAL DOZEN BIRD WATCHERS FREQUENT THE SPRING CREEK AREA ANNUALLY (THEDE TOBISH, PRES., ANCHORAGE AUDUBON SOCIETY, PERSONAL COMMUNICATION). LARGE HAWKS AND OWLS ARE COMMON THERE YEAR ROUND, AND WATERBIRDS ARE NUMEROUS DURING MIGRATION.

TRAVELERS APPRECIATE THE AREA'S OPEN SPACE AS WELL. ON AN AVERAGE DAY, 10,000 VEHICLES CROSS THE PALMER HAY FLATS ON THE GLENN HIGHWAY. NO HOMES OR BUSINESSES EXIST ON THE PRIVATE LANDS AND THE AREA IS INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE ADJOINING GAME REFUGE. AS TWO MEMBERS OF THE BOROUGH ASSEMBLY NOTED, THE HAY FLATS IS THE "GATEWAY TO THE MATANUSKA VALLEY" AND THE LAST REMAINING BUFFER ZONE BETWEEN THE VALLEY AND ANCHORAGE.

TABLE 4. FISHING ON RABBIT SLOUGH (ADF&G ANNUAL REPORTS)

	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>
FISHING-DAYS	2805	3446	4024	5726	4019	6261	3239
NO. SILVER SALMON	472	2112	1211	3555	814	1624	345
NO. DOLLY VARDEN	328	325	364	189	690	1289	1290

PLANS TO FILL WETLANDS

DURING THE PAST YEAR, FOUR LAND OWNERS EXPRESSED PLANS TO FILL IN AREAS ALONG THE GLENN HIGHWAY ON THE PALMER HAY FLATS. SEE FIG. 4.

THOMAS PRICE OF ANCHORAGE APPLIED TO THE U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO FILL IN 30 ACRES OF WETLANDS ALONG RABBIT SLOUGH FOR A CAMPER PARK.

DONALD BENSON OF PALMER HAS AN ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PERMIT TO CONSTRUCT A HALF-MILE LONG GRAVEL AIRSTRIP EXTENDING WESTWARD FROM THE GLENN HIGHWAY. THE FILL WOULD SUPPORT SHOP BUILDINGS AND A PARKING LOT NEAR THE HIGHWAY.

SAXON LAND INVESTMENTS, LTD., A HOLDING COMPANY ASSOCIATED WITH TURNER CONSTRUCTION CO. OF EAGLE RIVER, HAS PUBLICIZED PLANS TO FILL PARTS OF A NINE-ACRE PARCEL ADJACENT TO THE HIGHWAY FOR RETAIL BUILDING. THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS EARLIER DENIED PERMISSION TO FILL IN THE WETLANDS PORTION OF THIS SITE.

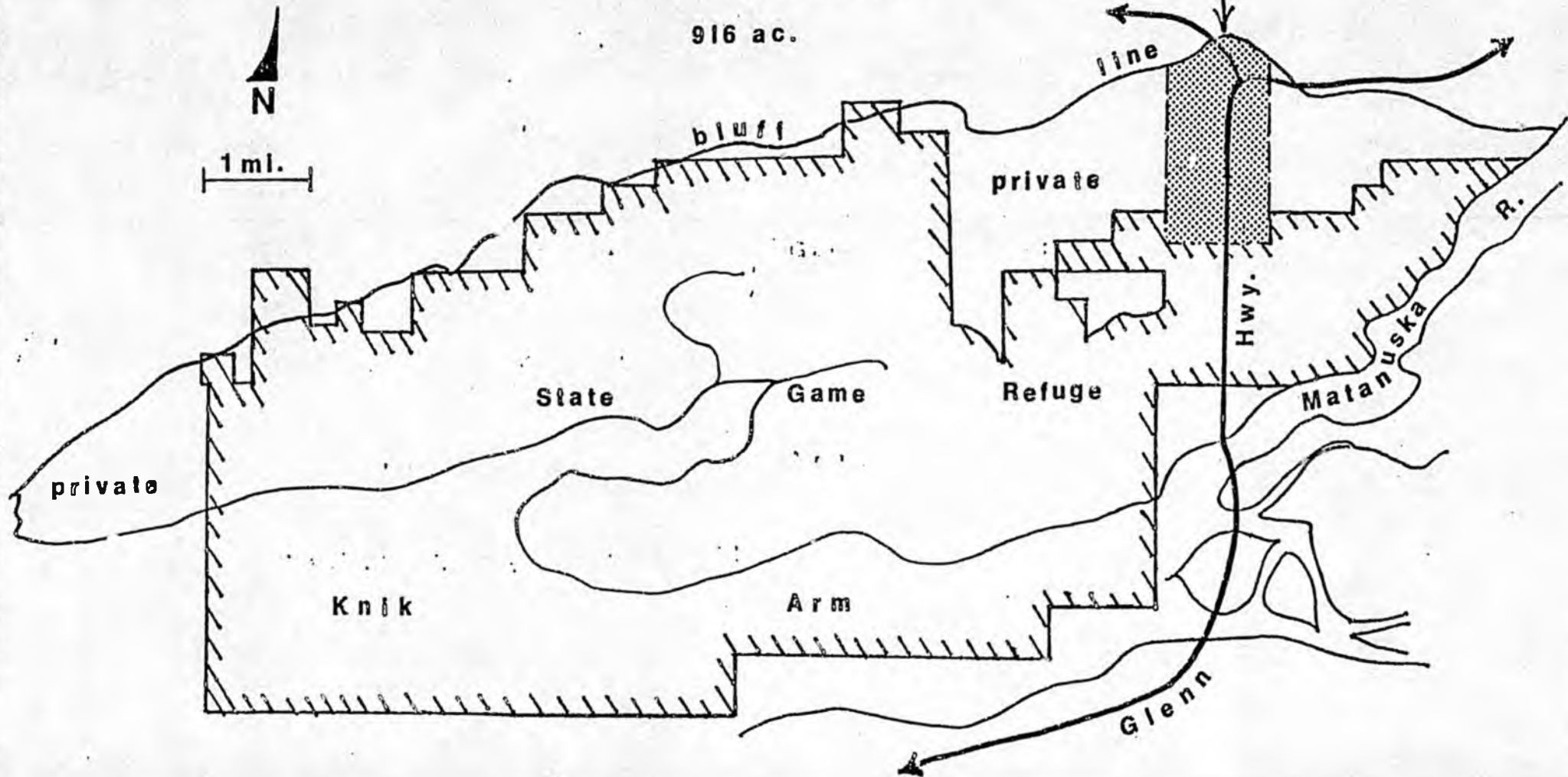
THE MAT-SU BOROUGH PLANNING STAFF SAYS IT WAS APPROACHED REGARDING THE PROPERTY OF STANLEY PLENINGER ON SPRING CREEK. AN AGENT WAS INVESTIGATING THE FEASIBILITY OF A CARGO TRANSFER YARD THERE. NO APPLICATIONS FOR WETLANDS FILL HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED SO FAR, HOWEVER.

Fig. 2 Palmer Hay Flats

*Siskiyou Area Plan
Glenn Highway Section
Map area 2b*

Proposed extension of
State Game Refuge

916 ac.

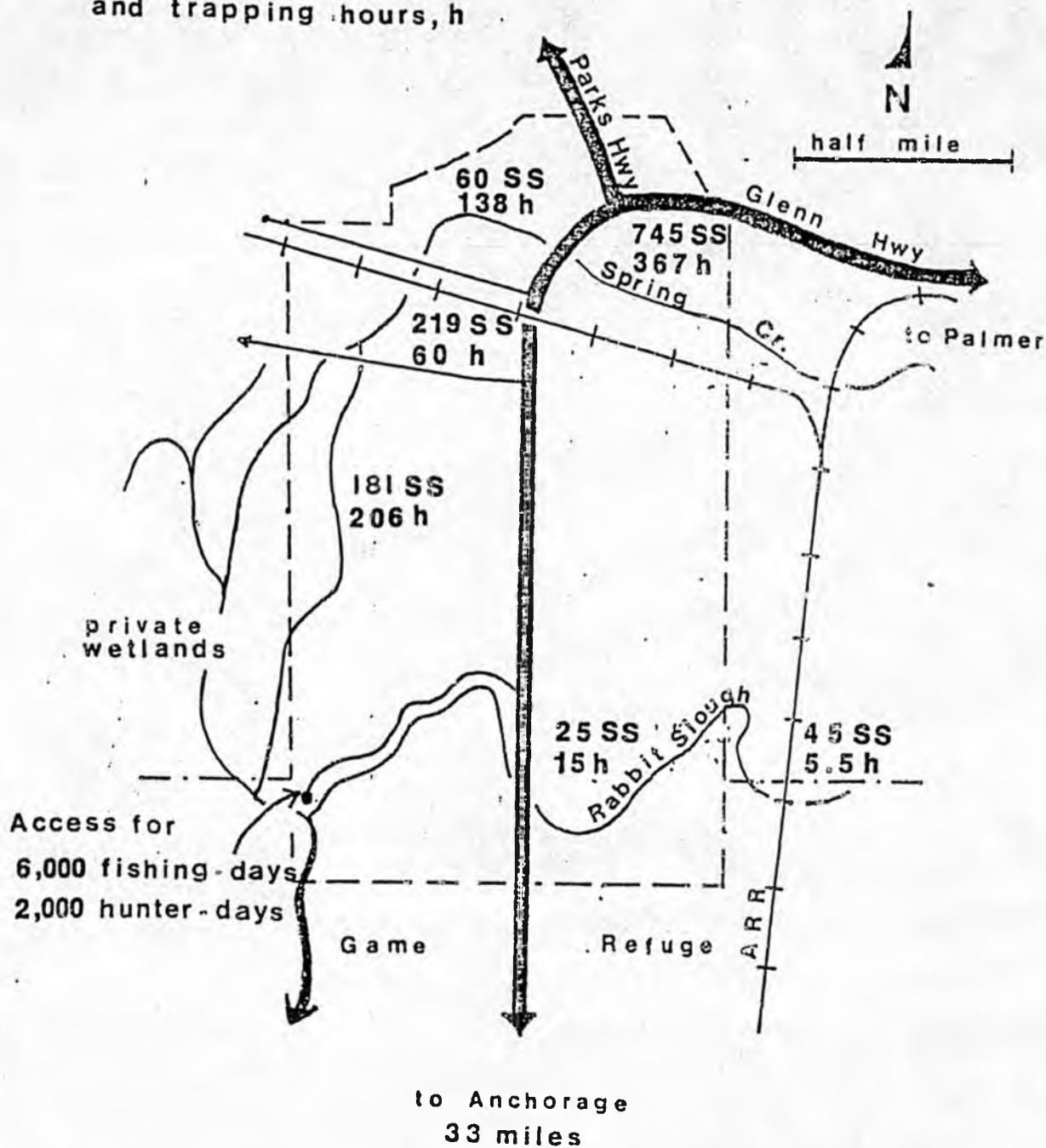


Proposed extension of Palmer

Hay Flats State Game Refuge

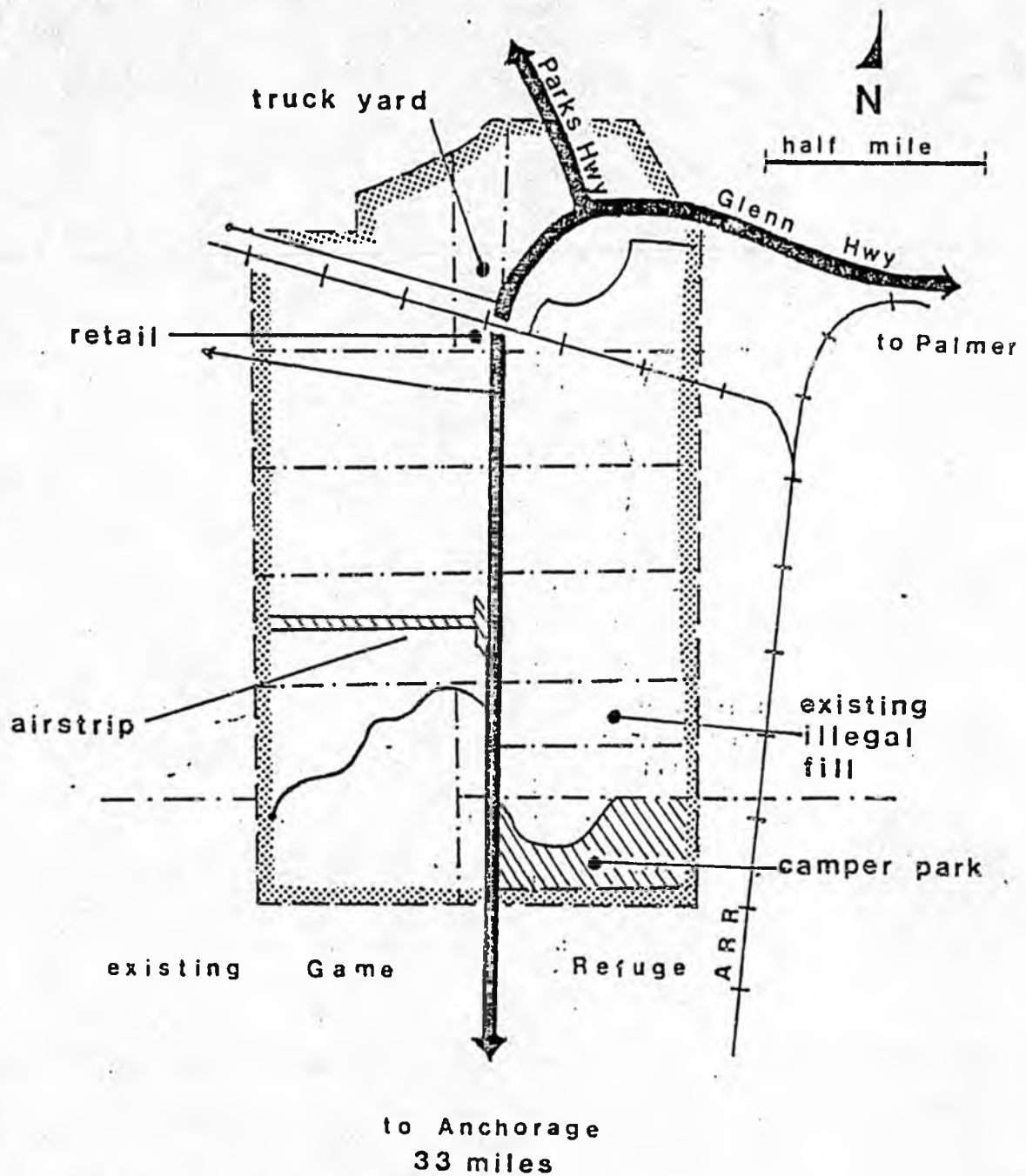
LIVE-TRAPPING DATA FROM STREAMS

FIG. 3 Silver salmon fry, SS,
and trapping hours, h



Proposed extension of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

Fig.4. Fill proposals



February 6, 1985

FEB 12 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman Resources Committee
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

It is with a deep sense of urgency that I request your full support for passage of Senate Bill No. 105, introduced by Senator Keritula.

I have lived in the Matanuska Valley for seven years and have grown to deeply appreciate the many values associated with the Palmer Hay Flats area. As a daily commuter to Anchorage, the "flats" provides an oasis of aesthetic quality in what otherwise has become a 45 mile strip development. Coincidentally, it is the safest part of the trip due to the lack of development. Any development along this single lane stretch of the Glenn Highway would create a horrendous safety hazard.


As a consumptive user of the fish and wildlife resources of this great state, I have become intimately familiar with those resources in the "flats" area. I have also seen the number of other users increase tremendously the past few years. Not only hunters, fishermen and trappers, but general recreationists as well. A great number of these users are Anchorage residents and non-residents. As you are well aware, the degree of access is a key factor to recreational use in any area. The location of the "flats" is ideal for serving well over 50% of the recreational users in the state. I, as well as others, especially enjoy the area as a place to share these experiences with our children without making a major expedition. It is also an ideal educational area and is used as such by local educators. Concurrent, with the rapid development in the valley, I have seen fish and wildlife resource habitats dwindle, thereby enhancing the importance of remaining areas, such as the Palmer Hay Flats.

As a business owner in Palmer, I have enjoyed watching the valley grow and have shared in some of the associated benefits. I have also experienced a growing concern that we are destroying many of the qualities which make the valley so attractive. This is due to a large extent by our failure to recognize these qualities and place them in a proper perspective, equal to strictly economic interests.

In view of declining state revenues, the relatively small cost associated with protecting a natural resource of this importance and magnitude is a bargain that should not be ignored.

Your support for this bill will help assure preservation of this beautiful natural area for the enjoyment of untold numbers of future Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Gary Stackhouse

cc: all Resources Committee members

STATE OF ALASKA THE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY

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JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
907-465-3800

May, 1986

Copies of minutes listed below were originally included in this file. The minutes are available on the STAIRS date base CM 14. In order to save space copies of minutes have not been left in the files.

Jeanie Henry

SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE,

2/27/85, 1:35

" "

3/1/85, 1:40

Alaska State Legislature

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Vice Chairman
JACK COGHILL
DICK ELIASON
VIC FISCHER
RICK HALFORD
FRED ZHAROFF



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

Senate Committee on Resources

June 24, 1985

Esther Wunnicke, Commissioner
Department of Natural Resources
Pouch M, Mail Stop 1000
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Commissioner Wunnicke:

Enclosed is a letter I have received from a Palmer resident regarding the Palmer Hay Flats (SB 105). Could you please provide me with the necessary information to answer his questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Arliss".

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Senate Resources Committee

Inclosure

reid
6-12-85

Senator Arliss Strugulewski
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: SB 105

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

I appreciated your May 28th letter announcing the passage of SB 105, authorizing the Commissioner of DNR, through purchase or land exchange, to expand the Palmer Hayflats State Game Refuge by approximately 2,000 acres.

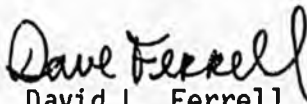
Now that the bill has become law, I am interested in knowing how it will be implemented. Specifically, is DNR actively contacting affected property owners regarding the purchase or exchange of these lands? Has a time-frame been established and potential exchange lands identified? I assume that if a property owner does not wish to participate in the program, then his land would not be incorporated into the State Refuge System.

I am also interested in the "special provisions" written into the law for future highway expansion. For example, would highway right-of-way lands be managed by the refuge as wildlife habitat?

Please provide me with a copy of SB 105 and accompanying maps identifying the affected area.

Again, thank you for your support and responsiveness to the concerned public.

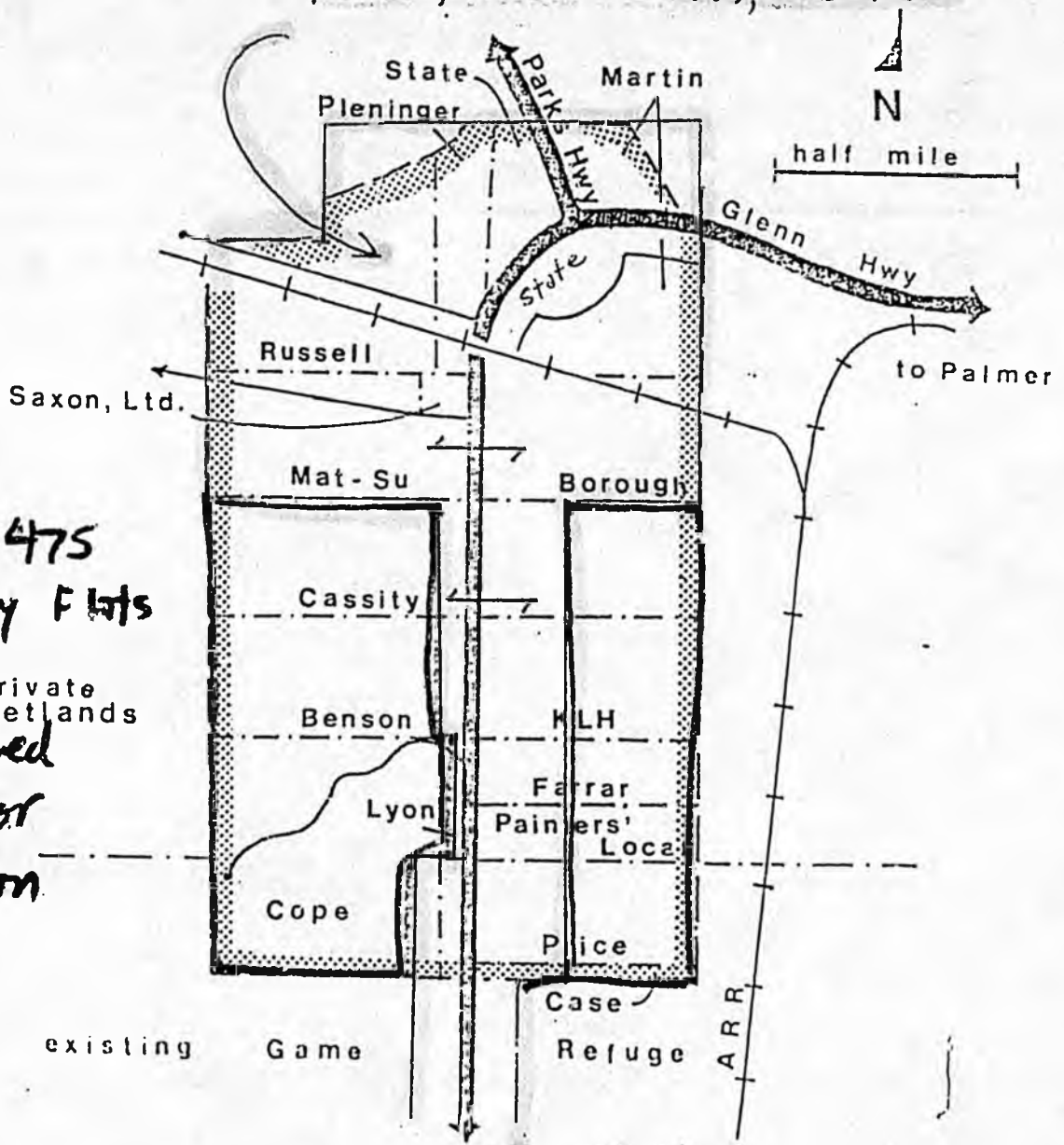
Sincerely,


David L. Ferrell
SRA 6105
Palmer, AK 99645

cc: Commissioner, DNR

Proposed extension of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

Fig. 1 Land owners Transportation corridor requested by DOT, Section 2 (S), in BR 105.



Blue shows 475
acres in Hay Flats
bill after
DOT's proposed
withdrawal for
transportation
corridor.

private
wetlands

existing Game Refuge

TO THE DIRECTOR
OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

*
* DELIVER TO: KARLYN BLACK *
* *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/27/85 TIME: 13:52 *
* FROM: TCMAT *
* SUBJECT: SEN. RESOURCES-SB 11, SB105 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 13:53 *
* *

SB105

MATSU MESSAGE NO. 2

TO TESTIFY ON SB 105
6. TOM SHANKSTER *NP*

TO OBSERVE
3. SUSAN SHANKSTER

*
* DELIVER TO: KARLYN BLACK *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:16 *
* FROM: TCANC *
* SUBJECT: PART LIST (S)RESOURCES *
* PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:19 *
*

ANCH. PARTICIPANT LIST #2
TO TESTIFY:

ANCHORAGE

✓ 1. MICHAEL PERYAM - SB 105 O/K

*
* DELIVER TO: KARLYN BLACK *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT 02/27/85 TIME: 13:36 *
* FROM: TCMAT *
* SUBJECT: SEN. RESOURCES, SB 105 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 13:49 *
* *

MESSAGE NO. 1, MATSU

TO TESTIFY ON SB 105 .

1. JAMES REISS *OK*
2. DAVE CHURCHILL *no*
3. DWIGHT BATT (MUST LEAVE BY 2:00) *OK*
3. WAYNE WOODS *OK*

TO OBSERVE

1. DEBRA REISS
2. LINDA CHURCHILL

*
* DELIVER TO: KARLYN BLACK *
*
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/27/85 TIME: 13:57 *
* FROM: TCMAT *
* SUBJECT: SEN. RESOURCES, SB 11, SB 105 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 13:57 *
*

MATSU MESSAGE NO. 3

TO TESTIFY ON SB 105

- ✓ 6. SARA HORNER *o/c*
- ✓ 7. JOE LAWTON *o/c*
- ✓ 8. TERRY BEAL *o/c*

Alaska State Legislature

SB 105

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Vice Chairman
JACK COGHILL
DICK ELIASON
VIC FISCHER
RICK HALFORD
FRED ZHAROFF



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

Senate Committee on Resources

July 23, 1985

David L. Ferrell
SRA 6105
Palmer, Alaska 99645

Dear Mr. Ferrell:

Enclosed is the information on the Palmer Hay Flats, Senate Bill 105, that you requested. I have also enclosed a letter from Commissioner Wunnicke of the Department of Natural Resources that explains their present position.

I hope the material will prove useful. I want to thank you for your interest in this legislation.

Sincerely yours,

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Senate Resources Committee

Enclosures

fh:cp

Offered: 5/9/85
Referred: Rules

Original sponsor: Kerttula

1 IN THE SENATE BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE-
2 HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 105 (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 relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
7 Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

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

9 * Section 1. The legislature determines that wetlands important to the
10 protection of waterfowl and salmon in the Spring Creek area lie outside of
11 the boundaries of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The Spring Creek
12 area also provides one of the major public access points to the hay flats
13 although the land is privately owned. The legislature therefore determines
14 that it is in the public interest to protect the Spring Creek wetlands
15 through extension of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge under this Act.

16 * Sec. 2. AS 16.20.032(a) is amended to read:

17 (a) The following state-owned land and water is established as
18 the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge:

19 (1) Township 16 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

20 Sections 1 - 12 [INCLUSIVE]

21 Section 13: N1/2

22 Sections 14 - 18 [INCLUSIVE]

23 (2) Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

24 Section 25. [: ALL]

25 *Section 26: S1/2, S1/2N1/2, N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4

26 Section 27: S1/2, SE1/4NE1/4

27 Section 31: Lot 4, SE1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SE1/4NE1/4,

28 S1/2SW1/4NE1/4

29 Section 32: S1/2, S1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NE1/4,

1 SE1/4NW1/4
2 Sections 33 - 36
3 [SECTION 33: ALL
4 SECTION 34: ALL
5 SECTION 35: ALL
6 SECTION 36: ALL]
7 (3) Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian
8 Section 19: Lots 3 and 4, E1/2SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4
9 Section 22:
10 excluding NW1/4NW1/4
11 excluding N1/2NE1/4NW1/4
12 excluding NE1/4NE1/4NE1/4
13 Section 25: Lots 1 - 6, NW1/4, N1/2NE1/4, N1/2-
14 SW1/4, SW1/4SW1/4
15 Section 26: SE1/4NE1/4, S1/2
16 Section 27: Lot 1, N1/2, N1/2S1/2, SE1/4SW1/4,
17 S1/2SE1/4
18 Section 28: Lots 1 - 2, N1/2SE1/4, SW1/4SE1/4,
19 S1/2SW1/4
20 Section 30: Lots 1 - 4, E1/2, E1/2W1/2
21 Section 31: Lots 1 - 10, NE1/4NW1/4, SW1/4NE1/4,
22 N1/2NE1/4 [LOTS 5, 7, 8, 9, 10]
23 Section 32: Lots 3 - 7, NE1/4, SW1/4SW1/4, NE1/4-
24 SE1/4
25 Section 33: Lots 5 - 9, S1/2SE1/4, SW1/4NW1/4,
26 including all state tide and submerged land
27 Section 34: Lots 1 - 3, E1/2NW1/4, SW1/4, E1/2
28 Section 35: Lots 1 - 5, NW1/4, N1/2SW1/4, SW1/4-
29 SW1/4, N1/2NE1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, NW1/4SE1/4

1 Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The commissioner of transporta-
2 tion and public facilities is directed to provide access to the Palmer
3 Hay Flats State Game Refuge during future development of state
4 highways in the area. The land that is excluded from the Palmer Hay
5 Flats State Game Refuge under this subsection is described as

6 Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian

7 Section 22: SE1/4NW1/4, W1/2NE1/4, SE1/4NE1/4, S1/2-
8 NE1/4NE1/4, NW1/4NE1/4NE1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4

9 Sections 27 and 34: a corridor 300 feet on either side
10 of the existing highway centerline

11 * Sec. 4. The commissioner of natural resources shall include land
12 acquired from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the Palmer Hay Flats State
13 Game Refuge established under AS 16.20.032.

14 * Sec. 5. (a) The commissioner of natural resources may exchange
15 state land located within the Matanuska-Susitna borough for privately owned
16 land determined desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
17 Refuge. The commissioner of natural resources may also offer to purchase
18 at fair market value from willing sellers privately owned land determined
19 desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

20 (b) An offer made by the commissioner of natural resources under this
21 section for a purchase or exchange that remains unaccepted for two years
22 after tender is withdrawn.

23 (c) An exchange or purchase authorized under (a) of this section
24 shall be accomplished under AS 38.05 or AS 38.50.

25 (d) The commissioner of natural resources shall include land acquired
26 under this section in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established
27 under AS 16.20.032.

28 * Sec. 6. The addition of land to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
29 Refuge under secs. 2 and 4 - 5 of this Act may not be an occasion for the

1 delay in or prohibition of the expansion or improvement of the Glenn
2 Highway, the Parks Highway, or the Wasilla Bypass, or the construction of
3 the interchange at the Parks and the Glenn Highways, nor may it restrict
4 the present or future use of land retained by an owner of land under sec. 5
5 of this Act.

6 * Sec. 7. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-
7 10.070(c).

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

BILL SHEFFIELD, GOVERNOR

POUCH M
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
PHONE: 907-465-2400

July 17, 1985

The Honorable Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Senate Resources Committee
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator *Arliss Sturgulewski* Sturgulewski:

Thank you for your letter concerning the additions to Palmer Hay Flats, SB 105. Your constituent, Mr. Ferrell, has asked whether this department is actively pursuing acquisition of private lands within the Hay Flats and if so, when such acquisitions would take place.

This year's budget reductions have resulted in very limited funding in our land exchange project, thus requiring careful consideration of priorities. For lands within the refuge, the department is relying upon the Department of Fish and Game to identify those parcels considered to be of highest importance to the refuge. These priorities must then be weighed against all other exchange priorities statewide, to determine a ranking that provides for the greatest public benefit. As a result, this department is not making any attempt to contact the property holders within the refuge, nor have we developed any schedule for such acquisition.

Perhaps the most important parcel to acquire in the refuge is the Williams property, which is now in progress. The Department of Fish and Game recommended that we obtain this site for improved access and it has contributed the funding necessary to process the exchange (e.g. survey and appraisal costs). I expect that each acquisition within the refuge will depend upon that department's support, both from a refuge management standpoint and through funding. Clearly, future exchanges will be dependent upon funds available.

Mr. Ferrell is correct in his assumption that only willing traders will be considered for a land exchange. SB 105 clearly provides that each private landowner be agreeable to an exchange of their property.

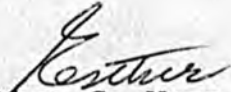
Finally, Mr. Ferrell has asked about the highway right-of-way lands. These lands have been excluded from the refuge for the establishment of a transportation and utility corridor and will continue to be managed as wildlife habitat

July 17, 1985

under terms described in the Susitna Area Plan. Land within this corridor that is found to be unnecessary for transportation purposes by the Commissioner of Transportation and Public Facilities becomes a part of the refuge.

Please let me know if you need further information.

Sincerely,

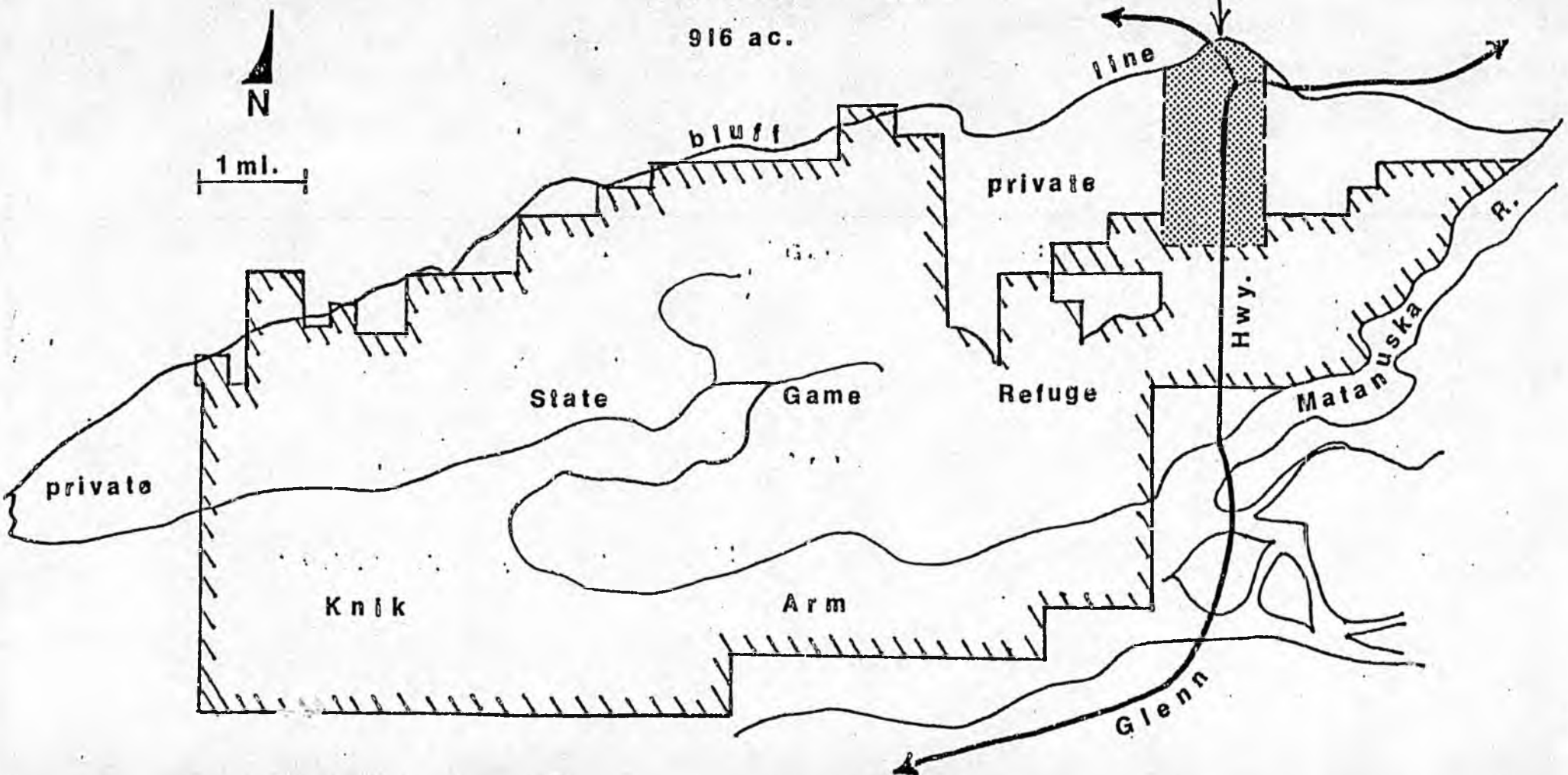

Esther C. Wunnicke
Commissioner

cc: Tom Hawkins, Director, Division of
Land and Water Management
Arlan DeYoung, Southcentral Regional Office

Fig. 2 Palmer Hay Flats

*Seward Area Plan
Glenn Highway Section
Map area 2b*

Proposed extension of
State Game Refuge
916 ac.



Proposed extension of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

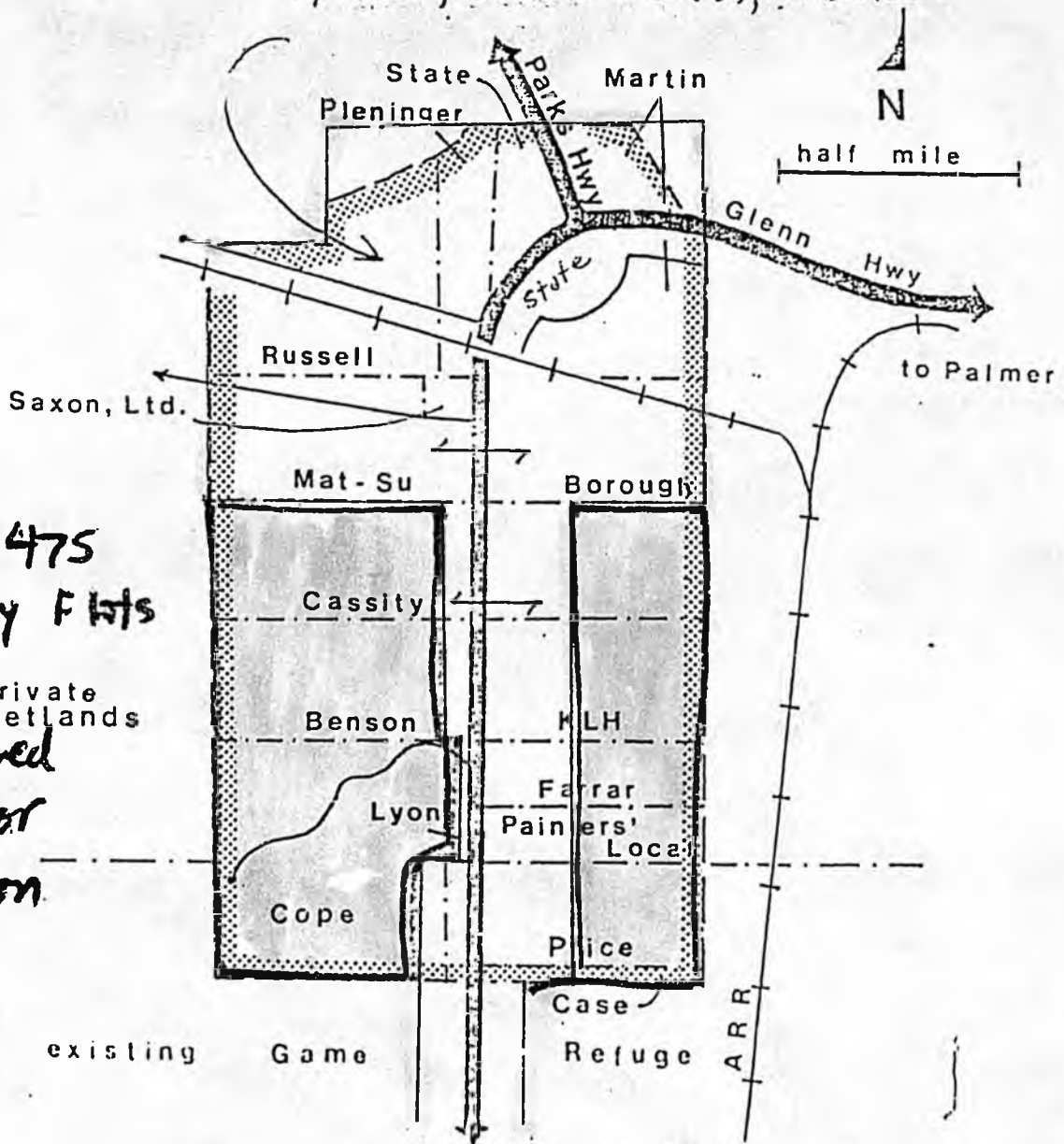
Fig.1 Land owners



Benson to Keitt 1/4

Proposed extension of Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge

Fig. 1 Land owners Transportation corridor requested
by DOT, Section 2 (S), in 3B105.



Blue shows 475
acres in Hay Flats
bill after
DOT's proposed
withdrawal for
transportation
corridor.

private
wetlands

The Palmer Hayflats

State begins developing management plan for vast, waterfowl-rich marshland

By CHRIS GEIGER
Daily News reporter

WASILLA — To the casual driver on the Glenn Highway between Eklutna and Matanuska, Palmer Hayflats State Game Refuge appears true to its name. Vast fields of deep gold, pancake-flat grasslands stretch on either side of the highway, punctuated by river channels and an occasional moose.

To other Alaska residents, Palmer Hayflats is more than a pretty picture. The 45-square-mile refuge provides some of the finest waterfowl hunting in the state, along

with moose hunting, salmon fishing, bird watching and off-road adventuring.

The state Division of Fish and Game is beginning to develop a management plan for the refuge, and has scheduled public hearings next week to gauge residents' concerns.

The issues of providing more public access to Palmer Hayflats — and limiting off-road vehicle use in the area — promise to spur debate at the hearings, officials say.

The Wasilla hearing will take place from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Monday at Cottonwood

Creek Elementary School. The Anchorage hearing is set for 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 3, at Spring Hill Elementary School.

The Palmer Hayflats really were hayflats not so long ago. As farmers settled in the area earlier in the century, cattle grazed the rich grasslands and fences sprang up on the flats.

Much of the area sank during the 1964 earthquake, and tidal flooding turned the flats into salt marshes — an ideal waterfowl habitat. Occasional dilapidated buildings are the only reminders of the flats' former use.

Currently, there are few restrictions on off-road vehicle use, or practically anything else, in Palmer Hayflats. At least one group, the Alaska Waterfowl Association, plans to call for a ban on the vehicles, according to group president John Hendrickson.

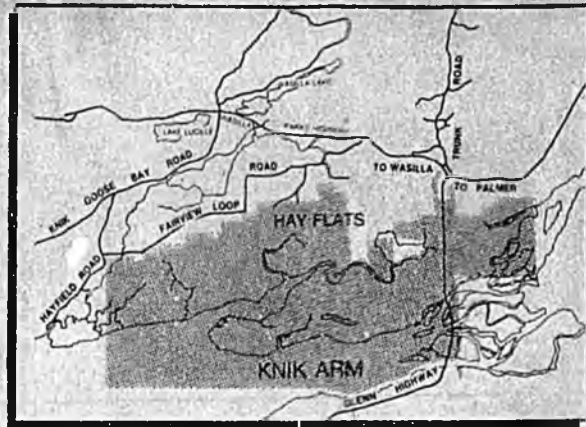
"There are uses compatible with wildlife management," Hendrickson said. "One of them is not three-wheelers and four-wheelers. They tear up the swamp and change drainage patterns."

When the drainage changes, marshy areas and ponds dry

up, destroying waterfowl habitat, Hendrickson said. He'd like to see the vehicles banned from the refuge.

According to Tony Gatts, owner of Honda of Anchorage, all-terrain vehicle tires cause less damage than people walking across the swamp. An ATV's weight is spread over a larger area, he said.

ATVs have been stigmatized by the media, Gatts said. As a result, most people think ATV drivers are a "wanton, vandalous, wild segment of the population,"



Hearings set on plan for management of Palmer Hayflats

Continued from Page B-1

he said.

Palmer resident Craig Puddicombe has hunted in the refuge for 28 years, and has mixed feelings about restricting off-road vehicles without restricting all motorized vehicles. Airplanes can disrupt waterfowl as much as ATVs, he said, and it's unfair that only people who can afford to fly should have access.

Puddicombe and another Palmer resident, Chuck Felzien, sued the state last year over its restriction of airboat use by waterfowl hunters in the hayflats. The Alaska Board of Game changed the regulation to allow duck hunters to use motorized vehicles on major waterways.

"It's tough country to hunt," Puddicombe said. "You've got a 30-foot tide — the second biggest in the world — and you've got a lot of mud to get stuck in. People die all the time out there.

"But I'd like to see it stay just the way it is."

The access problem is aggravated by the lack of public easements into the refuge. All three public accesses run over private land, according to Dan Timm, acting regional supervisor of the state Game Division.

The state is considering another access off Fairview Loop Road, near Reedy Lake, Timm said.

"You can bet that access is going to be one of the big issues," said state game biolo-

gist John Matthews. "You can't carry a shotgun and decoys into most of those areas."

Leonard Haire, owner of Mac's Airboats and Skiffs in Anchorage, said more roads would make the area too accessible.

"It kind of restricts itself because of the way it is," Haire said.

Alaska State Troopers complained of the target shooting that often goes on at the Knik River access point, according to state habitat biologist Debra Clausen. The management plan may also address that issue, she said.

Ducks Unlimited has proposed a project to provide more prime waterfowl habitat in a 100-acre area near the

highway. Backhoes would make shallow excavations in the marsh to create more pond areas, according to state Waterfowl Coordinator Tom Rothe. The mud would then be piled into small islands, to provide more dry nesting sites.

Ducks Unlimited has offered to pay for the project, and the state Department of Fish and Game would monitor its success, Rothe said.

Next week's hearings are the first step in the plan development process. Afterwards, the state will develop a draft plan, put it up for more public review and prepare a final plan.

The whole process should take about a year, Clausen said.

Offered: 4/24/85
Referred: Rules

Original sponsor: Kerttula

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

2

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 105⁸ (Finance)

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

5

A BILL

6

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

7

8

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

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* Section 1. The legislature determines that wetlands important to the
protection of waterfowl and salmon in the Spring Creek area lie outside of
the boundaries of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The Spring Creek
area also provides one of the major public access points to the hay flats
although the land is privately owned. The legislature therefore determines
that it is in the public interest to protect the Spring Creek wetlands
through extension of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge under this Act.

16

* Sec. 2. AS 16.20.032(a) is amended to read:

17

(a) The following state-owned land and water is established as
the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge:

18

19

(1) Township 16 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

20

Sections 1 - 12 inclusive

21

Section 13: N1/2

22

Sections 14 - 18 inclusive

23

(2) Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

24

Section 25: All

25

Section 26: S1/2, S1/2N1/2, N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4

26

Section 27: S1/2, SE1/4NE1/4

27

Section 31: Lot 4, SE1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SE1/4NE1/4,

28

S1/2SW1/4NE1/4

29

Section 32: S1/2, S1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NE1/4,

1 SE1/4NW1/4
2 Section 33: All
3 Section 34: All
4 Section 35: All
5 Section 36: All
6 (3) Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian
7 Section 22:
8 excluding NW1/4NW1/4
9 excluding NE1/4NE1/4NE1/4
10 excluding N1/2NE1/4NW1/4
11 Section 27:
12 excluding S1/2S1/2
13 Section 28: N1/2SE1/4
14 Section 31: Lots 5, 7, 8, 9, 10
15 Section 32: NE1/4
16 Section 33: SW1/4NW1/4, including all state tide
17 and submerged land
18 (4) Township 16 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian
19 Section 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: All
20 Section 17: N1/2
21 Section 18: N1/2
22 All state tide and submerged land
23 (5) Township 16 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian
24 Section 2: Portion lying west of the Alaska
25 Railroad
26 Section 3: Lot 1, excluding portions lying east
27 of the Alaska Railroad centerline, Lots, 2, 3,
28 4, 5, 6, NW1/4, NW1/4, NE1/4
29 Section 10: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and portions

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lying west of the Alaska Railroad

Section 15: All state land lying north of the south bank of the Knik River and west of the Alaska Railroad

Section 16: All state land lying north of the south bank of the Knik River

* Sec. 3. AS 16.20.032 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of (a) of this section, the land described in this subsection is excluded from the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established under (a) of this section for the establishment of a transportation and utility corridor. Land within the transportation and utility corridor that is determined by the commissioner of transportation and public facilities to be unnecessary for future transportation or utility corridors becomes a part of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The commissioner of transportation and public facilities is directed to develop access points to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge at the Knik River Bridge and to Rabbit Slough during future development of state highways in the area.

The land that is excluded from the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge under this subsection is described as

Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian

Section 22: SE1/4NW1/4, NE1/4, NE1/4SW1/4, W1/2SE1/4

Section 27: a corridor 300 feet on either side of the existing highway centerline

* Sec. 4. The commissioner of natural resources shall include land acquired from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established under AS 16.20.032.

* Sec. 5. (a) The commissioner of natural resources may dispose of state land located within the Matanuska-Susitna borough in exchange for

1 privately owned land determined desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay
2 Flats State Game Refuge. The commissioner of natural resources may also
3 offer to purchase at fair market value from willing sellers privately owned
4 land determined desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
5 Refuge.

6 (b) An offer made by the commissioner of natural resources under this
7 section for a purchase or exchange that remains unaccepted for two years
8 after tender is withdrawn.

9 (c) An exchange or purchase authorized under (a) of this section
10 shall be accomplished under AS 38.50.

11 (d) The commissioner of natural resources shall include land acquired
12 under this section in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established
13 under AS 16.20.032.

14 * Sec. 6. The addition of land to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
15 Refuge under secs. 2 and 4 - 5 of this Act may not be an occasion for the
16 delay in or prohibition of the expansion or improvement of the Glenn High-
17 way, the Parks Highway, or the Wasilla Bypass, or the construction of the
18 interchange at the Parks and the Glenn Highways, nor may it restrict the
19 present or future use of land retained by an owner of land under sec. 5 of
20 this Act.

21 * Sec. 7. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-
22 10.070(c).

Offered: 3/4/85
Referred: Finance

Original sponsor: Kerttula

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 105 (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 relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game

7

Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

8

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

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(a) The following state-owned land and water is established as

18

the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge:

19

(1) Township 16 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

20

Sections 1 - 12 inclusive

21

Section 13: N1/2

22

Sections 14 - 18 inclusive

23

(2) Township 17 North, Range 1 West, Seward Meridian

24

Section 25: All

25

Section 26: S1/2, S1/2N1/2, N1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NW1/4

26

Section 27: S1/2, SE1/4NE1/4

27

Section 31: Lot 4, SE1/4, E1/2SW1/4, SE1/4NE1/4,

28

S1/2SW1/4NE1/4

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Section 32: S1/2, S1/2NE1/4, NE1/4NE1/4,

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SE1/4NW1/4

Section 33: All

Section 34: All

Section 35: All

Section 36: All

(3) Township 17 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian

Section 22:

excluding NW1/4NW1/4

excluding NE1/4NE1/4NE1/4

excluding N1/2NE1/4NW1/4

Section 27:

excluding S1/2S1/2

Section 28: N1/2SE1/4

Section 31: Lots 5, 7, 8, 9, 10

Section 32: NE1/4

Section 33: SW1/4NW1/4, including all state tide

and submerged land

(4) Township 16 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian

Section 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: All

Section 17: N1/2

Section 18: N1/2

All state tide and submerged land

(5) Township 16 North, Range 1 East, Seward Meridian

Section 2: Portion lying west of the Alaska

Railroad

Section 3: Lot 1, excluding portions lying east

of the Alaska Railroad centerline, Lots, 2, 3,

4, 5, 6, NW1/4, NW1/4, NE1/4

Section 10: Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and portions

1 lying west of the Alaska Railroad
2 Section 15: All state land lying north of the
3 south bank of the Knik River and west of the
4 Alaska Railroad

5 Section 16: All state land lying north of the
6 south bank of the Knik River

7 * Sec. 3. The commissioner of natural resources shall include land
8 acquired from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the Palmer Hay Flats State
9 Game Refuge established under AS 16.20.032.

10 * Sec. 4. (a) The commissioner of natural resources may dispose of
11 state land located within the Matanuska-Susitna borough in exchange for
12 privately owned land determined desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay
13 Flats State Game Refuge. The commissioner of natural resources may also
14 offer to purchase at fair market value from willing sellers privately owned
15 land determined desirable for inclusion in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game
16 Refuge.

17 (b) An offer made by the commissioner of natural resources under this
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20 (c) An exchange or purchase authorized under (a) of this section
21 shall be accomplished under AS 38.50.

22 (d) The commissioner of natural resources shall include land acquired
23 under this section in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge established
24 under AS 16.20.032.

25 * Sec. 5. This Act does not prohibit expansion or improvement to the
26 Glenn Highway or the Parks Highway, the potential Wasilla Bypass, or the
27 construction of the interchange at the Parks and Glenn Highways.

28 * Sec. 6. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.-
29 10.070(c).

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

FEB 8 1985

BILL ANALYSIS

Bill No. <u>SB 105</u>	Sponsor <u>Kerttula</u>
Borough Position <u>Support</u>	Borough Contact Person <u>Rob Stickles</u>

Similar Bills <u>None</u>	Conflicting Bills <u>None</u>
Organizational Support <u>ADF&G</u> <u>Local Groups</u>	Organizational Opposition <u>Unknown</u>

Fiscal Impact On Borough		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Operating _____	Capital _____		

Proposed Amendments:
NONE

Comments:

The Assembly passed a resolution that will allow for the donation of 135 acres of Borough land to the expanded Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge if this legislation passes. Copy of resolution attached.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 85- 12

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SUPPORTING THE EXTENSION OF THE PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE AND THE INCLUSION WITHIN THE EXTENSION OF APPROXIMATELY 130 ACRES OF BOROUGH LAND

WHEREAS, the Palmer Hay Flats is the gateway to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Hay Flats is currently the home of many species of wildlife and is important to the fishery resources; and

WHEREAS, most of the land proposed for the extension of the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge is wet and unsuitable for development; and

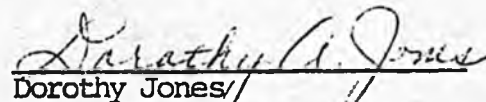
WHEREAS, this area receives intense recreational use throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, the State is in the process of trying to obtain funds to buy private property adjacent to the Flats in order to extend the refuge; and

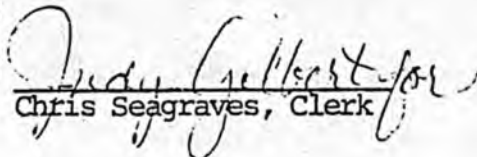
WHEREAS, the Assembly supports the extension of the refuge to ensure the open natural character of the land will remain as the gateway to the Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that if the State can obtain funds to buy private properties to extend the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge, the Borough will include, under State management, the 130 acres that

have been selected and conveyed to the Borough lying adjacent to the
Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge.


Dorothy Jones/
Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:


Chris Seagraves, Clerk

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:


Gary Thurlow, Manager

February 6, 1985

FEB 12 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman Resources Committee
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

It is with a deep sense of urgency that I request your full support for passage of Senate Bill No. 105, introduced by Senator Kerttula.

I have lived in the Matanuska Valley for seven years and have grown to deeply appreciate the many values associated with the Palmer Hay Flats area. As a daily commuter to Anchorage, the "flats" provides an oasis of aesthetic quality in what otherwise has become a 45 mile strip development. Coincidentally, it is the safest part of the trip due to the lack of development. Any development along this single lane stretch of the Glenn Highway would create a horrendous safety hazard.

As a consumptive user of the fish and wildlife resources of this great state, I have become intimately familiar with those resources in the "flats" area. I have also seen the number of other users increase tremendously the past few years. Not only hunters, fishermen and trappers, but general recreationists as well. A great number of these users are Anchorage residents and non-residents. As you are well aware, the degree of access is a key factor to recreational use in any area. The location of the "flats" is ideal for serving well over 50% of the recreational users in the state. I, as well as others, especially enjoy the area as a place to share these experiences with our children without making a major expedition. It is also an ideal educational area and is used as such by local educators. Concurrent, with the rapid development in the valley, I have seen fish and wildlife resource habitats dwindle, thereby enhancing the importance of remaining areas, such as the Palmer Hay Flats.

As a business owner in Palmer, I have enjoyed watching the valley grow and have shared in some of the associated benefits. I have also experienced a growing concern that we are destroying many of the qualities which make the valley so attractive. This is due to a large extent by our failure to recognize these qualities and place them in a proper perspective, equal to strictly economic interests.

in view of declining state revenues, the relatively small cost associated with protecting a natural resource of this importance and magnitude is a bargain that should not be ignored.

Your support for this bill will help assure preservation of this beautiful natural area for the enjoyment of untold numbers of future Alaskans.

Sincerely,



Gary Stackhouse

cc: all Resources Committee members

FEB 14 1985

P.O. Box 873496
Wasilla, AK 99687
Feb. 7, 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
State Capitol
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

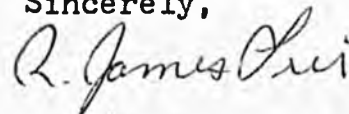
Senate Bill 105, an important first step in allowing for expansion of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, will come before your committee for consideration. I urge you to support this bill.

As you may know, SB 105 would authorize land trades and buyouts of privately held land within a 910-acre strip running south along the Glenn Highway from the Parks Highway intersection. As an amateur ornithologist, I am a frequent visitor to the Hay Flats. It is what we call in the trade a "birding hot spot." Waterfowl and shorebirds by the thousands use this area as both a breeding and feeding grounds.

I feel that commercial development in the area covered by SB 105 would adversely affect the potential recreational birding opportunities both within the 910-acre site and in adjacent land. I, for one, would not look forward to viewing the backs of supermarkets and gas stations during my treks through the wetlands. Likewise, my friends who hunt and fish in this area assure me that shopping mall parking lots are most unproductive.

Considering the number of user days in the refuge last year (2,000 hunting days and 8,000 fishing days according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game) there is demonstrated public interest in expanding the refuge. The Mat-Su Borough Assembly has recognized this and has passed a resolution in support of SB 105. I hope that you also can give it your support.

Sincerely,



R. James Frei

cc. Sen. Fahrenkamp
Sen. Eliason
Sen. Zharoff
Sen. Coghill
Sen. V. Fischer
Sen. DeVries
Rep. Hurley
Rep. Larson

FEB 19 1985

Feb. 13, 1985
PO Box 2176
Palmer, Alaska
99645

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Resources Committee
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator,

I urge your support of SB105, the Palmer Hay Flats bill. This legislation is a fair solution to the problem of commercial development in a regionally popular hunting and fishing area. It would offer land or money to the land owners along part of the Glenn Highway in order to extend the boundary of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. The extension would cover 910 acres of wetlands and salmon streams, if owners were willing to accept state offers at market value.

Parts of the Palmer Hay Flats near the junction of the Parks and Glenn Highway are scheduled for private commercial development and land fill. Currently, several owners are considering a truck cargo yard, a retail building, a gravel airstrip, and a 30-acre trailer park. Such uses, however, would reduce salmon and furbearer populations and public access in "the gateway to the Matanuska Valley."

The wetlands of the proposed game refuge extension are most valuable to the residents of southcentral Alaska just as they are now. The creeks are a major fry rearing area for the silver salmon of Knik Arm, according to data from ADF&G and USFWS. Rabbit Slough gets up to 6,000 fisherman-days of use per year, and yields a harvest of about 1,500 fish annually, mainly silvers and Dolly Varden.. Rabbits and furbearers are numerous and are hunted and trapped to capacity.

About 12,000 people per day drive across these wetlands. Many are commuters homebound from Anchorage, and are happy to encounter real Alaskan wide-open spaces after their long drive. The proposed extension currently holds no homes or businesses. It is indistinguishable from the adjoining 26 square-mile game refuge, and is perhaps the most visible wetland area in the state.

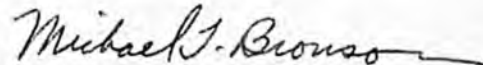
Support for SB105 comes from several sources. Among them is the ad hoc Committee for the Palmer Hay Flats, an informal citizens' group originally concerned with disappearing resources on the Hay Flats. Also in support is the Mat-Su chapter of Ducks Unlimited, a hunting group, the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association, the Northern District Setnetters Association of Upper Cook Inlet, Anchorage Audubon Society, and Alaska Center for the Environment with members in Anchorage and the Mat Valley.

Governmental groups also back the measure. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly resolved on January 22, 1985, to allow the state to manage its 136 acres in the area as part of the game refuge, providing the legislation passes. The Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission has more recently concurred. Commissioner Collingsworth has written a letter of support for ADF&G. Finally, Mr. Jim Barnett of DNR writes that the final Susitna Area Plan will have new language stating that public acquisition of private lands from willing sellers in this part of the Hay Flats is appropriate.

The attitude of the thirteen land owners has been cautious, but encouraging, in my opinion. I have written each of them a letter accompanied by a copy of SB105 to keep them abreast of the situation. Some are anxious to talk to the state about trades or purchases. One or two are suspicious of the move. Most, however, hold a "wait and see" position.

As Alaska's population grows, accessible recreational and scenic areas will become fewer and more valuable. Now is the best time for the state to acknowledge its responsibility to maintain traditional uses of such areas as the Palmer Hay Flats.

Sincerely,



Michael T. Bronson

cc: Senate Resources Committee

FEB 22 1985

February 20, 1985

Re: SB 105, Palmer Hay Flats

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

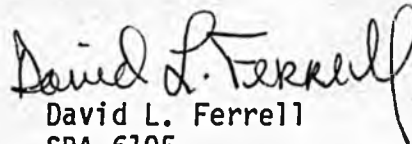
As a resident of the Mat-Su Valley, I would like to express my support for Senate Bill 105 to extend the Palmer Hayflats State Game Refuge. A number of concerned citizens are troubled about a series of proposed developments in the wetlands and salmon streams on the Hayflats along the Glenn Highway. There is a strong sentiment that it is the responsibility of the State of Alaska to protect these resources for all Alaskans. The most permanent form of protection is to place these lands in the public domain. Incorporation of these lands into the Palmer Hayflats Game Refuge is the most expedient and logical manner in which to accomplish this.

Recently the Mat-Su Assembly passed a unanimous Resolution to add 130 acres of Borough land if the State would purchase 786 acres of private land from willing sellers. I have followed events in the Hayflats over the past several years and have come to realize that Local, State and Federal agencies have consistently recommended that development in this area not be permitted. It appears that private property owners would be more than willing to sell their land to the State, as the land is unsuitable to build on and permits are difficult, if not impossible, to obtain.

I would like to inform you that Spring Creek, a salmon stream which flows through these lands, provides some of the best silver salmon habitat in the Valley. The stream provides "nursery grounds" for large numbers of juvenile silver salmon. The dollar value of this stream to sport and commercial fishermen may very likely exceed the dollar cost of purchasing these lands. The Mat-Su Borough is so intent on protecting this area that it has a program to swap uplands for wetlands. All of this leads me to conclude that the public wants this area maintained in its present natural condition. The passage of SB 105 is obviously in the Public Interest.

I would like to be kept advised of the progress of SB 105 and would like to receive copies of the minutes of the discussions that take place when this bill reaches the Resources Committee.

Sincerely



David L. Ferrell
SRA 6105
Palmer, AK 99645
(745-6575)

cc: Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer
Devries
Hurley
Bronson

Alaska State Legislature

ARLISS STURGULEWSKI, Chairman
BETTYE FAHRENKAMP, Vice Chairman
JACK COGHILL
DICK ELIASON
VIC FISCHER
RICK HALFORD
FRED ZHAROFF



POUCH V
JUNEAU, ALASKA. 99811
(907) 485-4907

Senate Committee on Resources

May 28, 1985

Rick Turner
Matanuska Boat Company
P.O. Box 3196
Palmer, AK 99645

Dear Rick:

I am pleased to advise you that SB 105 making additions to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge has passed the legislature.

This bill allows the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to expand the Palmer Hay Flats either through land purchase or land exchange. More than 2,000 acres are authorized to be added by this bill. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough has also agreed to provide about 130 acres to the refuge. The commissioner of DNR may make an offer to purchase private land within the refuge but may not exercise eminent domain.

Special provisions have been included for expansion or improvement to the Glenn Highway, the Parks Highway or the Wasilla bypass or related construction since these existing transportation routes run through parts of the area.

I was pleased to support this bill in the Senate Resources Committee and again on the floor of the Senate. The local effort generated in support of this bill was exceptional and I want to thank all those who worked for its passage. The protection of this valuable wetland area for wildlife habitat and recreation is important now but will be more important in the future as population and development pressures increase.

Please continue to keep me informed on issues of importance to you.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arliss".

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Senate Resources Committee

*
* DELIVER TO: JPOM *
* *
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/04/85 TIME: 09:59 *
* FROM: TERESA SALAZAR *
* SUBJECT: POM MAT-SI *
* PRINT DATE: 02/04/85 TIME: 09:59 *
*

TO: REP. LARSON
REP. HURLEY
SEN. KERTTULA
SEN. DEVRIES
SEN. FAIKS
SEN. SACKETT
SEN. ELIASON
SEN. FISCHER (PAUL)
SEN. HALFORD
SEN. FERGUSON
SEN. STURGULEWSKI
SEN. FAHRENKAMP
SEN. ZHAROFF
SEN. COGHILL
SEN. V. FISHER

FROM: PAT MAURIN
SR BOX 3189
WASILLA 99687

PHONE: 376-5992

RE: SB 105

I SUPPORT SB 105 TO SAVE THE PALMER HAY FLATS FROM
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT. THE PLAN IS FAIR TO THE LANDOWNERS.

4

FEB 8 1985

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*****
*
* DELIVER TO: LTOJ
*
* ORIGINAL
* SENT: 02/07/85 TIME: 17:15
* FROM: VERNITA VESTAL
* SUBJECT: POM
* PRINT DATE: 02/07/85 TIME: 17:15
*
*****

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23

TO: SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE: SEN. FAIKS, SACKETT, KERTTULA, ELIASON, P. FISCHER, HALFORD, FERGUSON

RESOURCES: SEN. STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, ELIASON, ZHAROFF, HALFORD, COGHILL, V. FISCHER

SEN. DEVRIES, V. FISCHER, JOSEPHSON, KERTTULA
REP. CLOCKSIN, MURLEY, LARSON, UEHLING

FROM: MARY CORE
503 W 9TH
ANCHORAGE, AK. 99501 (H) 274-3382 (W) 274-3621

RE: SB 105

ACQUISITION OF PALMER HAY FLATS NOW WILL AVOID WATER POLLUTION
 PROBLEMS PRESENTLY OCCURING IN THE ANCHORAGE BOWL. THE FILTERING
 FUNCTION OF THE WETLANDS, THE ABUNDANT FISH AND WILDLIFE
 POPULATIONS AND THE FINE AESTHETIC VALUES FOR TOURISM JUSTIFY A
 TRADE OUT.

FEB 6 1985

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* DELIVER TO: LIOJ
*
* ORIGINAL
* SENT: 02/05/85 TIME: 17:11
* FROM: VERNITA VESTAL
* SUBJECT: PDM
* PRINT DATE: 02/05/85 TIME: 17:11
*
*****

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TO: SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE: SEN. FAIKS, SACKETT, KERTTULA,
 ELIASON, P. FISCHER, HALFORD, FERGUSON

SENATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE: SEN. STURGOLEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP,
 ELIASON, ZH AROFF, HALFORD, COGHILL, V. FISCHER

SEN. DEVRIES, V. FISCHER, JOSEPHSON

REP. HURLEY, LARSON, MARTIN, AND POURCHOT

FROM: CLIFF EAMES
 3725 MOUNTAIN VIEW DR.
 ANCHORAGE, AK. 99508 (H) 279-3969 (W) 274-3624

RE: SB 105

PLEASE VOTE YES ON SB 105, ADDING VALUABLE WETLANDS TO PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE. PROVIDES FOR VOLUNTARY ONLY EXCHANGE OR SALE OF PRIVATE LANDS OTHERWISE APT TO BE DEVELOPED. PRESERVES NOT ONLY WATERFOWL HABITAT BUT IMPORTANT SCENIC VALUES ALONG GLENN HIGHWAY, AND BENEFITS BOTH NAT-SU AND ANCHORAGE RESIDENTS AND TOURISTS.

*
* DELIVER TO: JPOM *
*
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/04/85 TIME: 13:15 *
* FROM: MICKI HENSON *
* SUBJECT: POM *
* PRINT DATE: 02/04/85 TIME: 13:15 *
*

TO: ALL MEMBERS / SENATE FINANCE
SENATORS FAIKS AND SACKETT (CO-CHAIRS)
SENATOR KERTTULA (VICE-CHAIR)
SENATORS ELIASON, P. FISCHER, HALFORD, FERGUSON

ALL MEMBERS/ SENATE RESOURCES
SENATOR STURGULEWSKI (CHAIR), FAHRENKAMP (VICE-CHAIR)
SENATORS ELIASON, ZHAROFF, HALFORD, COGHILL, V. FISCHER

FROM: CATHY REZABECK
14500 FERNHILL CIRCLE
ANCHORAGE, AK. 99516
PHONE: 345-2363 (HM) 274-8440 (WK)

RE: SB 105

I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE PASSAGE OF SB 105 FOR STATE PURCHASE OF PRIVATE LANDS IN THE POTTER FLATS NEAR THE INTERSECTION OF ROUTES 1 AND 2. THIS LAND MUST NOT EXPERIENCE STRIP DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD NOT ALLOW FOR THE STATE GAME REFUGE ON ADJACENT LANDS TO FURTHER ITS PURPOSE OF GAME PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT.

TO: SENATORS SACKETT, FAIKS, HALFORD, KERTTULA, FERGUSON, P.
FISCHER, ELIASON, STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, ELIASON,
ZHAROFF, HALFORD, COGHILL, V. FISCHER

FR: MIKE BRONSON
P O BOX 2176
PALMER 99645
PHONE: 376-3642

RE: SB 105 - PALMER HAY FLATS LEGISLATION

PLEASE SUPPORT SB 105 SPONSORED BY KERTTULA. THIS IS A
GRASSROOTS EFFORT FOR A FAIR SOLUTION TO THE POTENTIAL PROBLEM OF
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF WETLANDS IMPORTANT TO THE PUBLIC.
PURCHASE OF THE HAY FLATS FROM WILLING SELLERS WILL KEEP THE
GATEWAY TO THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH OPEN FOR FISHERMEN AND
HUNTERS.

*****POMK 104 - 1/31/85

TO: SENATORS SACKETT, FAIKS, HALFORD, KERTTULA, FERGUSON, P.
FISHCER, ELIASON, STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, ELIASON,
ZHAROFF, HALFORD, COGHILL, V. FISCHER

FR: K. ANNELY GERMAINE
SR B 7460
PALMER 99645
PHONE: 745-6511

RE: SB 105 - PALMER HAY FLATS LEGISLATION

PLEASE SUPPORT SB 105 ACTIVELY. MAT-SU IS ALREADY TOO EXPLOITED
AND COMMERCIAL. THE HAY FLATS BILL CAN BE AN IMPORTANT FIRST
STEP IN SAVING THE VALLEY FROM PERMANENT UGLY DAMAGE. AN
INNOVATIVE BILL LIKE THIS DOES MUCH TO SLOW THE PROGRESS OF THE
MARCH TO STRIP DEVELOPMENT.

*****POMK104-1/31/85

FEB 22 1985

549 E. Caribou
Palmer, AK 99645
17 February 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Chairman, Resources Committee
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

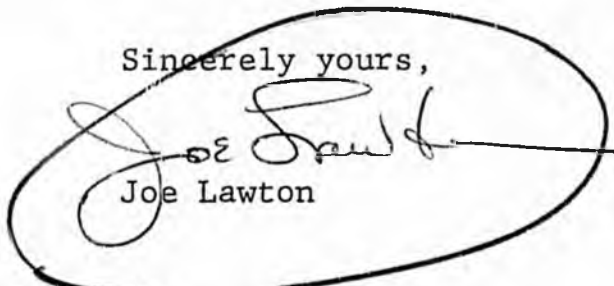
I am writing about SB105 relating to the Palmer Hayflats,
which I understand is in your committee.

Please count me among those who favor that bill.

The Palmer Hayflats is bottomland formed by the great estuary of the Knik and Matanuska rivers flowing into the northern-most point of the Pacific Ocean, in Knik Arm. This area is a favorite local hotspot for rabbit hunting, trapping, birding, salmon fishing, and a host of other recreational and wildlife activities. While it is unfortunate that it was necessary to bisect it when a shortcut was desired to Anchorage twenty years ago, there is no cogent reason to allow development in the area. To forestall this, however, the few landowners on the Flats and their great expectations must be appeased. Quite a bit is being done locally to protect the area, but State help is needed, too.

Your approval of the bill is unquestioningly a move in the direction of maximum public good at a minimum expenditure, which will protect the time-honored rights and harvests of speculators. I beseech you to recommend its passage, and let us locals retain some of our precious little recreational and educational land of value.

Sincerely yours,


Joe Lawton

cc:

Senators:
Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
Fischer

February 18, 1985
SR-A-6145
Palmer, Alaska, 99645

FEB 22 1985

Chairperson Sturgulewski
Resources Committee
Alaska State Senate
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska, 99811

Ms. Sturgulewski,

We are writing this letter in support of Senate Bill 105, proposing procurement of 910 acres to extend the existing Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

The wetlands of the proposed extension are most valuable to the people of Anchorage and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough just as they are. We feel the highest and best use of this wetlands area is as a refuge and reproductive area for silver salmon, moose, and waterfowl. Hunting and fishing for these species is high in season, as is year-round recreation use, since the area is close and readily accessible to the populations of Anchorage and the Matanuska Valley.

These wetlands have high scenic value as well. Travelers along the Glenn Highway appreciate this natural buffer between the two population areas.

We urge you to vote in favor of Senate Bill 105 to help insure these values are preserved.

Sincerely,

Beth Estelle

Bob Estelle

Beth and Bob Estelle

cc: Finance
Sackett
Faiks
Halford
Kerttula
Ferguson
P. Fischer
Eliason

Resources
Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer

DeVries

P.O. Box 1241

Palmer, Alaska

2-10-85

99645
FEB 25 1985

SENATOR Arliss Sturgulewski
STATE Capitol
Pouch V
TERRACE, Ak 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

I URGE YOUR support for SENATE Bill 105. This bill is A VERY important first step in allowing for the EXPANSION of the PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE. I would APPRECIATE ANY help in supporting this Bill.

SB 105 would AUTHORIZE land trades and buyouts of PRIVATE land within a 910 ACRE STRIP running south along the Glenn Highway from the intersection of the Parks Highway. I am a hunter, fisherman and an ornithologist; the PALMER HAY FLATS is a TREMENDOUS bird ROOKERY, with thousands of MIGRANT birds BREEDING there; A RECENT Fish and GAME REPORT has shown that the 910 ACRES under consideration provide vital habitat for SILVER Salmon smolt; The HAY FLATS ARE ALSO a calving ground for MOOSE; Finally, the FLATS ARE a BEAUTIFUL AREA, with the Chugick Mountains CREATING a BREATH taking back drop, I would APPRECIATE NOT ENCUMBERING this BEAUTY with development in this AREA. I FEEL that these RESOURCES should be PROTECTED, and I AM ASKING for your support.

The MATANUSKA Borough Assembly has PASSED a RESOLUTION in support of SB 105. The ALASKA DEPARTMENT of Fish & GAME has shown that OVER 2000 hunting days, and OVER 8,000 fishing days OCCURRED in the PALMER HAY FLATS last year. I FEEL that this bill is in the PUBLICS BEST INTEREST.

Sincerely Yours

Stephen W. Johnson
Stephen W. Johnson

MAR 4 1985

Box 1401
Palmer, Alaska 99645
February 22, 1985

Senator Sturgulewski
P. uch V
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator:

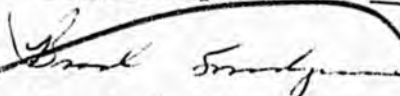
As President for the past five years of the Mat-Su chapter of Ducks Unlimited I have developed a great deal of concern for the status of the Palmer Hay Flats and their uniqueness as a salt-water estuary and a buffer between the urbanized areas of Anchorage and the rapidly growing communities of the Valley. It is my hope that they can remain relatively free of private and commercial development and if they are developed at all, that said development would be directed towards the enhancement of their natural recreational potential and their potential as a producer of wildlife.

As you may know, Ducks Unlimited National in conjunction with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has proposed the enhancement of the area as a waterfowl factory. It is their feeling that some stabilization of the water table along with dredging, diking and the creation of nesting islands will result in a tremendous increase of the productive capacity of the marsh. This type of development will have a concurrent benefit for forms of wildlife that frequent the marsh in addition to waterfowl, such as moose and shorebirds. This will also greatly benefit human user groups, from school children on field trips, to photographers, to hunters. While I cannot speak to the present status of this project, or to the feeling of Ducks Unlimited National with regard to S.B. 105, I can speak as a person intimately acquainted with the area in question and who strongly supports the Hay Flats Bill. I can also state that the vast majority of our local membership, some 300 Valley residents, also strongly support this measure.

Although Ducks Unlimited National understandably goes to great lengths to avoid political controversy as their stated goal is to have 80¢ of every dollar go into habitat enhancement, I am sure that Alaska's Regional Director, Larry Van Ray of Soldotna, would be willing to give you the most current information regarding the status of their proposal for enhancement of the Hay Flats.

Please lend your support to your constituency who stand strongly behind S.B. 105. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Brad Snodgrass
President, Mat-Su Ducks Unlimited

*
* DELIVER TO: JFOM *
*
*
* ORIGINAL *
* SENT: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:27 *
* FROM: MARTIE ROZKYDAL *
* SUBJECT: POM - MATR-0059 *
* PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:27 *
*

TO: SENATORS STURGULEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, COGHILL, ELIASON, V.
FISCHER, HALFORD, ZHAROFF AND KERTTULA
REPRESENTATIVE HURLEY AND LARSON

FROM: TOM SHANKSTER
PO BOX 3225
PALMER 99645
745-5280

RE: SB 105

I AM FOR SB 105 FOR THE MANAGEMENT, USE, AND PROTECTION OF
THE WET LANDS CLOSE TO POPULATED AREAS THAT WE ARE GETTING HERE IN
ALASKA.

 * DELIVER TO: JFOM *
 * * * * *
 * ORIGINAL *
 * SENT: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:25 *
 * FROM: MARTIE ROZKYDAL *
 * SUBJECT: POM - MATR-0058 *
 * PRINT DATE: 02/27/85 TIME: 14:25 *
 * * * * *

TO: SENATORS STURGOLEWSKI, FAHRENKAMP, COGHILL, ELIASON, V. FISCHER, HALFORD, ZHAROFF AND KERTTULA REPRESENTATIVES HURLEY AND LARSON.

FROM: DAVID CHURCHILL
 PO BOX 871646
 WASILLA 99687
 H 376-5758
 W 659- 4442

RE: SB 105

THIS REFUGE IS THE GATEWAY TO THE MAT-SU BOROUGH, AN IMPORTANT BOUNDARY BETWEEN ANCHORAGE, IT IS A CRITICAL WILDLIFE HABITAT AREA, WILDLIFE VIEWING AREA, A MAJOR HUNTING/TRAPPING AREA, WINTER AND SPRING. RABBIT CREEKS ARE IMPORTANT SALMON FRY REARING STREAMS. THE AREA COVERED UNDER THE BILL PRESENTLY UNDEVELOPED, URGE YOU TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION.

FROM: DEWIGHT BATT
 PO BOX 874472
 WASILLA 99687
 H 376-2097
 W-265- 6551

RE: SB 105

I AM SUPPORTING SB 105 FOR THE STATED REASONS IN THE BILL. WE SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PROTECT ALL OUR WETLANDS AND TO ENSURE FUTURE ACCESS FOR PUBLIC USE OF THIS TYPE OF AREA. EVENTUALLY PUBLIC USE AREAS COULD BECOME SURROUNDED BY PRIVATE LAND AND WILL ELIMINATE PUBLIC ACCESS.

Core Business Forms, Inc.

FEB 22 1985

February 20, 1985

Re: SB 105, Palmer Hay Flats

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

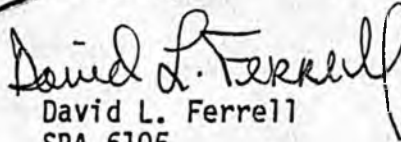
As a resident of the Mat-Su Valley, I would like to express my support for Senate Bill 105 to extend the Palmer Hayflats State Game Refuge. A number of concerned citizens are troubled about a series of proposed developments in the wetlands and salmon streams on the Hayflats along the Glenn Highway. There is a strong sentiment that it is the responsibility of the State of Alaska to protect these resources for all Alaskans. The most permanent form of protection is to place these lands in the public domain. Incorporation of these lands into the Palmer Hayflats Game Refuge is the most expedient and logical manner in which to accomplish this.

Recently the Mat-Su Assembly passed a unanimous Resolution to add 130 acres of Borough land if the State would purchase 786 acres of private land from willing sellers. I have followed events in the Hayflats over the past several years and have come to realize that Local, State and Federal agencies have consistently recommended that development in this area not be permitted. It appears that private property owners would be more than willing to sell their land to the State, as the land is unsuitable to build on and permits are difficult, if not impossible, to obtain.

I would like to inform you that Spring Creek, a salmon stream which flows through these lands, provides some of the best silver salmon habitat in the Valley. The stream provides "nursery grounds" for large numbers of juvenile silver salmon. The dollar value of this stream to sport and commercial fishermen may very likely exceed the dollar cost of purchasing these lands. The Mat-Su Borough is so intent on protecting this area that it has a program to swap uplands for wetlands. All of this leads me to conclude that the public wants this area maintained in its present natural condition. The passage of SB 105 is obviously in the Public Interest.

I would like to be kept advised of the progress of SB 105 and would like to receive copies of the minutes of the discussions that take place when this bill reaches the Resources Committee.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David L. Ferrell", enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

David L. Ferrell
SRA 6105
Palmer, AK 99645
(745-6575)

cc: Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer
Devries
Hurley
Bronson

FEB 14 1985

P.O. Box 873496
Wasilla, AK 99687
Feb. 7, 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
State Capitol
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

Senate Bill 105, an important first step in allowing for expansion of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, will come before your committee for consideration. I urge you to support this bill.

As you may know, SB 105 would authorize land trades and buyouts of privately held land within a 910-acre strip running south along the Glenn Highway from the Parks Highway intersection. As an amateur ornithologist, I am a frequent visitor to the Hay Flats. It is what we call in the trade a "birding hot spot." Waterfowl and shorebirds by the thousands use this area as both a breeding and feeding grounds. I feel that commercial development in the area covered by SB 105 would adversely affect the potential recreational birding opportunities both within the 910-acre site and in adjacent land. I, for one, would not look forward to viewing the backs of supermarkets and gas stations during my treks through the wetlands. Likewise, my friends who hunt and fish in this area assure me that shopping mall parking lots are most unproductive.

Considering the number of user days in the refuge last year (2,000 hunting days and 8,000 fishing days according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game) there is demonstrated public interest in expanding the refuge. The Mat-Su Borough Assembly has recognized this and has passed a resolution in support of SB 105. I hope that you also can give it your support.

Sincerely,
R. James Frei
R. James Frei

- cc. Sen. Fahrenkamp
- Sen. Eliason
- Sen. Zharoff
- Sen. Coghill
- Sen. V. Fischer
- Sen. DeVries
- Rep. Hurley
- Rep. Larson

MAR 7 1985
7136 Terry Place
Anchorage, Alaska 99502
February 26, 1985

Arliss Sturgulewski, Chair
Resources Committee
State Capitol
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Ms. Sturgulewski:

I am writing to urge your support of Senate Bill No. 105 for "an Act relating to the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, and providing for an effective date." The Spring Creek wetlands which are addressed by this bill are an integral component of the Palmer Hay Flats. Because these wetlands are privately owned, there is increasing pressure to develop them. I believe these wetlands are so important that they should be given public protection and included in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

I have hunted and fished, hiked and canoed in the Palmer Hay Flats wetlands at the head of Knik Arm, which are traversed by the Glenn Highway. I'm not aware of fish and wildlife population figures specifically for the Spring Creek area. However, the Hay Flats area receives heavy recreational fishing pressure and the Rabbit Slough-Spring Creek-Wasilla Creek complex are open only to single-hook fishing during a weekend-only season. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, every spring some 100,000 ducks, 50,000 geese and 5,000 swans use the Palmer Hay Flats during migration. The Anchorage Audubon Society estimates that some 10,000 people are drawn to view and photograph this migratory spectacle. The Palmer Hay Flats is the most accessible waterfowl hunting area in the Cook Inlet region, and it annually ranks among the top three areas state-wide in number of hunter-days and duck harvest. In winter the Hay Flats provide important moose winter range.

The Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge is a valuable public asset; especially so because of its proximity to about half of Alaska's population. I hope to see areas such as the Spring Creek wetlands included in the Refuge and given the protection required to protect the public resources and recreational opportunities they provide.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jon R. Nickles

Jon R. Nickles

cc: Resources Committee members

MAR 25 1985

March 15, 1985

Senator Sturgulewski
Resource Committee Chairman
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Re: SB 105

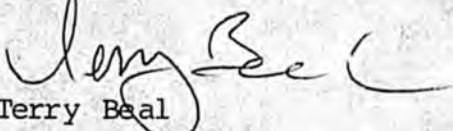
Dear Senator:

Your support of the Palmer Hay Flats Extension is greatly appreciated.

The needs are strong for Southcentral to do this. Without your support, this bill goes nowhere.

Thanks again.

Glad you're in Juneau


Terry Beal

SR 2 Box 249
EAGLE RIVER 99577



COOK INLET
AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 3819
SOLDOTNA, AK 99669-3819
(907) 262-9419

FER 27 1985

February 25, 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator:

The Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association supports SB 105 which allows for the extension of the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. It is clear that the entire area is valuable for recreational fishing and hunting activities. The extension is essential to "legalize" public access to much of the Refuge.

It is probably more important to realize that the sloughs and marshes throughout the area are excellent rearing or "nursery" areas for large numbers of coho salmon fry. Dredging, filling, diking and draining, the very expensive things which can be done to marshlands to make them usable for commercial or residential purposes, all destroy the fitness of the area to harbor and nourish young salmon. We encourage the State to preserve these wetland habitats.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Mears

Thomas E. Mears,
Executive Director

cc: Suzanne Haines
Steve Braund

FEB 27 1985

February 22, 1985

Senator A. Sturgulewski
Senate Resources Committee
Pouch V
Juneau, AK 99811

RE: SB 105

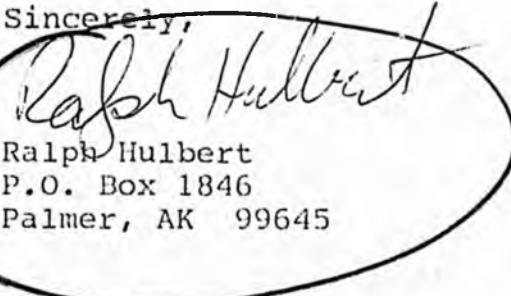
I support this bill. I have used the Spring Creek area and Hay Flats for over thirty years for recreation and hope to continue. Up to this time there has been very little pressure to develop this ground primarily due to the extreme cost of site preparation. With the current boom and subsequent escalation in commercial real estate prices, there is real economic pressure to develop the road frontage.

Currently, zoning/subdivision restrictions such as Army Corps of Engineers, EPA, and Mat-Su borough regulations restrict development. These regulations were implemented under the premise that the long term economic/social interest must be protected, and I feel they are generally well applied. Commercial development in the Spring Creek area would be disruptive not only to the environment of the entire downstream drainage, but would also disrupt the traffic flow. The area is in the flood plain of the Matanuska River. The town of Matanuska (near subject properties) was moved to Palmer because of the extreme cost of fighting high water. Any facilities placed in the area covered by SB 105 are likely to experience this problem, with the burden eventually resting with the State. This irregular flooding also makes it extremely difficult to comply with EPA regulations should any development occur.

Preservation interests must be weighed against vested property interests. Many of the owners have held the property for several years, often predating wetland regulations. Only one owner has a permit to fill in a portion of the wetlands.

Although the proposed enabling legislation has a two year expiration for selling or exchange, hopefully after the offer is specifically tendered, the intent should be perpetual. Perhaps certain provisions could be enacted to allow continuation of the exchange provision beyond this time frame. Finally, all offers to exchange or sell property should be strictly voluntary.

Sincerely,


Ralph Hulbert
P.O. Box 1846
Palmer, AK 99645

cc: Sen. Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer



FEB 27 1985

ALASKA FRONTIER TRAPPERS ASSN.
P.O. BOX 2856
PALMER, ALASKA 99645 ☐ (907)745-4660

February 18, 1985

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski
Resources Chairman
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski:

I am writing in regard to S.B. 105 introduced into the senate by Senator Kerttula. This bill is a very important piece of legislation to our organization and to outdoor-minded people of all pursuits. Senator Kerttula, in introducing this bill, is trying to preserve one of the most highly used and highly valued pieces of wildlife habitat in Alaska. Anyone who has crossed the flats on the Glenn Highway at any time of the year has surely seen the large numbers of ducks, geese, muskrat, beaver and other numerous species that inhabit this area.

The Mat-Su Borough has indicated its desire to see this area preserved by offering to let the Fish and Game Department include its 130 acres in the refuge to be managed as the rest of the area. With the population expanding as rapidly as it is in the Matanuska Valley, it is imperative that we preserve areas for our citizens to use and enjoy.

I would like to thank Senator Kerttula for introducing this legislation, as I believe it shows his desire to protect the outdoor lifestyle of many of his constituents.

Your support of S.B. 105 would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

James Reiss

James Reiss, President
ALASKA FRONTIER TRAPPERS ASSOC.

cc: Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer

FEB 27 1985
P.O. Box 3196
Palmer, Alaska 99645
February 21

Senator Sturgulewski
State Capital
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Senator Sturgulewski,

An issue of interest to me will be coming before the Senate this session. That issue is the Palmer Hay Flats Bill. As you already know, this bill would acquire private land for inclusion into an existing special use area.

I strongly support passage of this bill in this session of the legislature. I believe this action is warranted in view of the long-range state interest to promote economic developments through economic diversification of the private sector. As a local boatbuilder, I feel the area should be protected for wildlife, sport fishing and scenic values. These ends support my personal business interests.

On a larger level, I feel the passage of the Hay Flats Bill will recognize the area as a national and international landmark. The area has already been selected by Ducks Unlimited, an international organization, as a special feeding and breeding ground along the Pacific Flyway for many species of wildfowl. In enacting this bill, the State of Alaska identifies itself among the few forward-looking nations and regions of the world seeking to keep land uses diverse and healthy.

Finally, as an educator, I strongly believe the state must take a leadership role in promoting the continuence of 'as is' landscape for the enjoyment and education of our state's youth. If regional planners are correct, the area surrounding the Hay Flats may soon approach the population density of the Anchorage bowl. By protecting the Hay Flats for young people to hunt, fish and recreate in, we teach good stewardship of Alaska's land resources.

Again, let me strongly state my support of this critical piece of state-wide legislation. It appears we have much more to gain than lose in this proposal.

Sincerely,

Rick Turner
Matanuska Boat Company
Palmer, Alaska

CC:Sens. Fahrenkamp
Eliason
Zharoff
Halford
Coghill
V. Fischer

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

RESOLUTION SERIAL NO. 85- 12

A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH SUPPORTING THE EXTENSION OF THE PALMER HAY FLATS STATE GAME REFUGE AND THE INCLUSION WITHIN THE EXTENSION OF APPROXIMATELY 130 ACRES OF BOROUGH LAND

WHEREAS, the Palmer Hay Flats is the gateway to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Hay Flats is currently the home of many species of wildlife and is important to the fishery resources; and

WHEREAS, most of the land proposed for the extension of the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge is wet and unsuitable for development; and

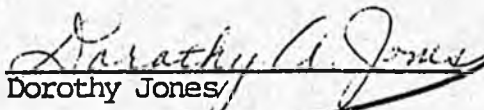
WHEREAS, this area receives intense recreational use throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, the State is in the process of trying to obtain funds to buy private property adjacent to the Flats in order to extend the refuge; and

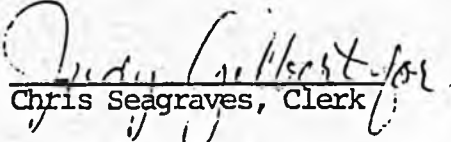
WHEREAS, the Assembly supports the extension of the refuge to ensure the open natural character of the land will remain as the gateway to the Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that if the State can obtain funds to buy private properties to extend the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge, the Borough will include, under State management, the 130 acres that

have been selected and conveyed to the Borough lying adjacent to the Palmer Hay Flats Game Refuge.


Dorothy Jones/
Deputy Mayor

ATTEST:


Chris Seagraves, Clerk

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:


Gary Thurlow, Manager