# ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES, 1989-1990 8672
# 6206 HOUSE TRANSPORTATION

610

# SJR 55

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(5)
Date Referred: February 2, 1990 FURTHER REFERRALS:

RESOURCES

Date of Committee Action: 2/13/90

The TPANSPORTATION Committee considered: SJR 55

SENATE JOINT RES. NO. 55 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN ALASKA

Relating to the proposed restructuring of the National Weather Service in Alaska.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
[ ] be replaced with _____ [ ] the same title
[ ] a new title
[✓] have attached amendment(s)
[✓] do pass
[ ] do not pass
[ ] no recommendation
[ ] individual recommendations
[ ] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept)
[ ] fiscal impact_____
[ ] zero fiscal note_____
[ ] zero with analysis_____

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)
[ ] fiscal note(s) _____
[✓] zero fiscal note(s) Senate Transp
[ ] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

Jim Duncan
Bill Hudson
Drew D. Leman
Eugene O. Kubina
Richard K. Foster

SIGNING: (Check approp. column)

| | Do Not Pass | No Rec | Amer |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
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Richard K. Foster
Chairman's Signature

# HOUSE TRANSPORTATION STAFF OVERVIEW
# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 55

## CONCERNS

1. FAA modernization plan would eliminate 14 service stations in Alaska.

2. National weather stations in Alaska are currently located in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Barrow, Kotzebue, Nome Unalakleet, McGrath, Bethel, King Salmon, St, Paul, Cold Bay, Kodiak, Homer, Valdez, Yakutat and Annette Island.

3. Under the modernization plan, many of the stations will be automated. Personnel may remain at other stations. However, they will only send data to the forecast stations in Anchorage, and Juneau. They will not provide local weather information or briefings to area residents.

4. Under the plan, three forecast stations will remain in Alaska: Anchorage, Juneau and Fairbanks.
(See attached map)

This week, State Department of Transportation officials are in Washington D.C. to meet with Mr. Busey and F.A.A. officials. Senator Stevens and Murkowski will be in attendance at this meeting. State officials will report the outcome of these meetings upon their return however, all areas from weather reporting concerns to security requirements will be discussed.

# ALASKA AREA FORECAST (FA) SECTORS

NOTE: FA AREAS EXTEND TO 100 MILES OFFSHORE

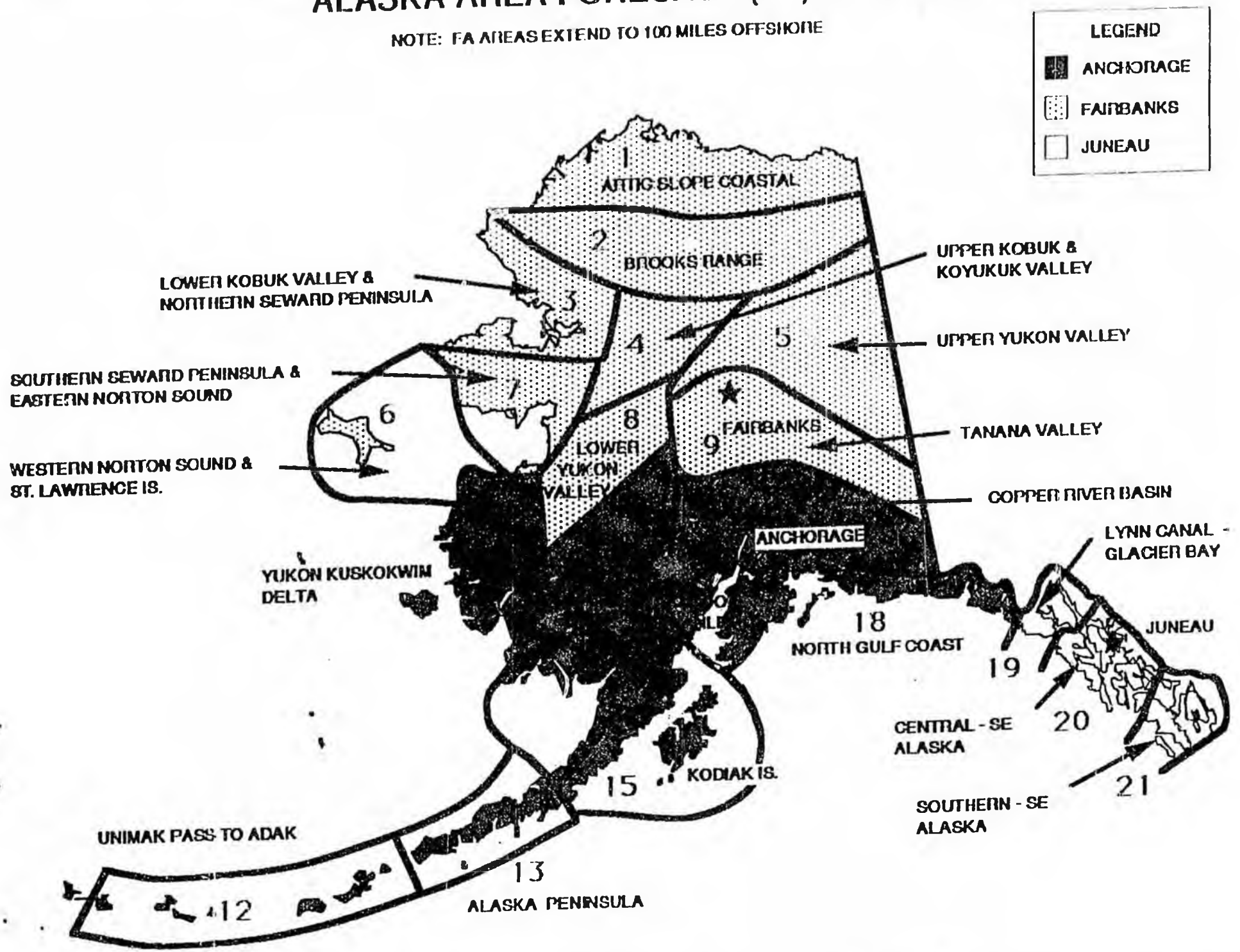


FIGURE 2

STATE OF ALASKA
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION : SJR 55
PUBLISH DATE : 2/13/90

# FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: _____
Title : Relating to proposed restructuring of national weather service in Alaska
Sponsor : Senator Zharoff
Requestor : House Transportation Committee

Agency Affected : —
BRU : —
Components : —

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

| OPERATING | FY 90 | FY 91 | FY 92 | FY 93 | FY 94 | FY 95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERSONAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| TRAVEL | | | | | | |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIES | | | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | | | |
| LAND & STRUCTURES | | | | | | |
| GRANTS, CLAIMS | | | | | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
| CAPITAL | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |
| REVENUE | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GENERAL FUND | | | | | | |
| FEDERAL FUNDS | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- | -0- |

POSITIONS:

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

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Prepared by : House Transportation Committee/Richard Robey
Phone : 465-4858
Division : _____
Date : 2/13/90

Approved by Commissioner : _____
Date : _____
Agency : House Transportation Committee

Distribution (by preparer ) :
Legislative Finance
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# Ted Stevens

## United States Senator For Alaska

Contact: Press Office
(202) 224-3200

October 26, 1989

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STEVENS OPPOSES NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PLAN FOR ALASKA

A plan to modernize the National Weather Service nationwide would reduce rather than improve the forecasting information available to Alaskans, Senator Ted Stevens said today.

During a Senate Commerce Committee hearing on a major restructuring of the National Weather Service, Stevens noted that the plan would eliminate local forecasting services at 17 service stations in Alaska. The staff at those stations currently collect meteorological data for forecast stations in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau and provide local weather information for fishermen, pilots and other members of their communities.

National Weather Service officials today informed Stevens that the three forecast stations in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau would remain open and provide information to the communities that would no longer receive information from a service station.

Stevens questioned the ability of a forecaster in Anchorage to be able to match a local weather service staff person's ability to tell pilots about weather conditions.

"Now we're going to have the fellow who tells us it's all right to land ...is two mountain ranges and 1500 miles away. That's the distance from St. Louis to San Francisco. [Is a weather forecaster in St. Louis] going to tell the people in San Francisco you're clear to land?" Stevens asked.

Using a map showing Alaska superimposed over the lower 48, Stevens pointed out that the nation's largest state will not have an equitable share of National Weather Service offices under the modernization plan. While Alaska will be left with only three forecast stations, the second-largest state of Texas will have ten. A total of 112 forecast stations will be located in the lower 48 states, Stevens was told.

-more-

Stevens noted that the National Weather Service is required to certify that the proposed modernization will not cause a degradation of service. He suggested that certification will not be able to be made in Alaska, where residents rely on accurate forecasts for air and water transportation.

"If there's any place that's sensitive to your business, it's my state...," Stevens said. "Could you certify that this plan ...would not reduce the services to my people who rely on weather data?" Stevens asked Dr. Joe Friday, Assistant Administrator for Weather Services.

Friday said that based on Stevens' information, he would take a second look at the plan for Alaska.

Stevens also questioned the effectiveness of new radar that will be installed in Alaska under the modernization plan. The doppler NEXRAD radar cannot "see" over mountain ranges and therefore would offer only limited coverage in Alaska, Stevens said.

During today's hearing, Stevens read letters from Alaskans who oppose the National Weather Service modernization.

Kodiak mayor Bob Brodie wrote, "As the country's largest fishing port...it is vital that our fishing fleet and our many small plane pilots have the most complete weather information possible."

Local governments in Kodiak, Valdez and Gambell have passed resolutions in opposition to the modernization, Stevens said.

National Weather Service service stations are currently located in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Barrow, Kotzebue, Nome, Unalakleet, McGrath, Bethel, King Salmon, St. Paul, Cold Bay, Kodiak, Homer, Valdez, Yakutat and Annette Island.

Under the modernization plan, many of the stations will be automated. Personnel may remain at other stations. However, they will only send data to the forecast stations in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau. They will not provide local weather information or briefings to area residents.

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FRANK H. MURKOWSKI
ALASKA

COMMITTEES:
VETERANS' AFFAIRS (RANKING MEMBER)
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FOREIGN RELATIONS
INDIAN AFFAIRS
INTELLIGENCE

# United States Senate

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December 18, 1989

good letter

Send out if the admin can't work with us when visits Alaska

The Honorable Richard Foster
Alaska State Legislature
P.O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Richard:

Thank you for contacting me to voice your concern over Federal Aviation Administration enforcement practices. I have heard from many other Alaskans who feel that the FAA has become overzealous and unprofessional over the course of the past year.

In response to these concerns, I recently met with the FAA's Associate Administrator for Aviation standards, Mr. Anthony Broderick. In this meeting I made it clear to Mr. Broderick that the Alaskan aviation community was rapidly losing confidence in the FAA. Mr. Broderick understood this reaction, and described several actions that the FAA is taking to remedy the situation.

Mr. Broderick recognizes that no amount of violations could justify the discourteous behavior reported of FAA personnel by subjects of several investigations. This is a well-documented problem, and was highlighted in a recently completed report by the blue ribbon panel sent to Alaska to study FAA relations with the Alaska aviation community.

The panel's study calls for several programs to improve the FAA's attitudes and quality of service. Some of these have already been implemented. It will be some time before the new programs have a significant effect, but in the end I hope they will help end the adversarial relationship between the FAA and the industry which it regulates.

Mr. Broderick also informed me that the position of Director of Aviation Standards in Alaska has been upgraded to the Senior Executive Schedule. This move will raise the Alaska position to the level of other regional Directors, and should attract candidates with outstanding expertise and leadership abilities. The elevation of this position is decidedly overdue, but demonstrates a commitment by the FAA to solve its problems in Alaska.

I realize, however, that the FAA may not fully address these problems based on internal review. For this reason I have joined Sen. Stevens in calling for investigative hearings before the Senate Commerce Committee. Such hearings would provide an excellent forum for the airing of differences between the FAA and the aviation community, and would allow Members of Congress to determine whether legislative or regulatory action is required.

The Administrator of the FAA soon will be visiting Alaska to get a first hand look at the task which the FAA faces. I intend to follow through on this visit, and work with the Administrator, Mr. Broderick, and the rest of the FAA to ensure that the FAA lives up to proper professional standards. The FAA needs to put more emphasis on helping operators meet flight standards, rather than acting only as the body which enforces the "death penalty" for violators.

Thank you again for sharing your concern. I value your opinion, and hope you will feel free to contact me with any further comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Frank H. Murkowski

Frank H. Murkowski
United States Senator

CITY OF KODIAK
ALASKA

May 15, 1989

Honorable Fred F. Zharoff
Alaska State Senate
P.O. Box 405
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Dear Senator Zharoff:

At the May 11, 1989, regular meeting, the City Council unanimously passed Resolution Number 11-89, requesting Congress reject the plan presented by the National Weather Service. The strategic plan as presented March 13, 1989, provides for modernization and associated restructuring of the Weather Service. There is no question this plan is beneficial to the contiguous states. but it would be disastrous in Alaska.

Alaska's weather is likely to shift quickly and impracticably at any season. Alaska's economy is based on outdoor industries, of which fishing is the largest. Because of the vast distances Alaska has more private pilots than any other state. Many communities depend on small planes which provide the only transportation available. Kodiak is the fifth largest city in Alaska located on the north east end of Kodiak Island. There are six villages, up to 95 air miles from the city accessible only by air and water.

Alaska has only three manned full-service weather stations. The National Weather Service plan proposes to eliminate Kodiak as one of those substituting a much reduced service facility. Under the plan, Anchorage would be the closest manned station and it is 250 miles away across open water. As the country's largest fishing port, we find this unacceptable. It is vital that our fishing fleet and our many small plane pilots have the most complete weather information possible. It is also a vital necessity to have a meteorologist available to talk to fishermen and pilots as trips are planned.

I urge you to carefully review the National Weather Service plan taking into consideration the special needs of the State of Alaska. Remember, if Alaska was superimposed over the contiguous states, it would cover an area from Florida to California and from the Canadian border to the Texas panhandle. That is a lot of land mass generating an incredible variety of weather.

POST OFFICE BOX 1397, KODIAK, ALASKA 99615 PHONE (907) 486-3224

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the National Weather Service performance to date during the oil spill crisis. The information required of them has been delivered in a professional and competent manner and has been a great help in our contingency planning. Kodiak appreciates the job they have done for us under the direction of Kodiak's Official-in-Charge, Bob Bonner.

Sincerely,

CITY OF KODIAK

Robert B. Brodie

ROBERT B. BRODIE
Mayor

RBB/mhd

CITY OF KODIAK
RESOLUTION NUMBER 11-89

A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KODIAK, ALASKA, REQUESTING CONGRESS REJECT THE PLAN PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

WHEREAS, on March 13, 1989, it was announced the National Weather Service strategic plan for the modernization and associated restructuring of the National Weather Service was presented to Congress; and

WHEREAS, this plan would eliminate Kodiak as a full service manned weather station and substitute automatic sensors in 1993 - 1994; and

WHEREAS, Kodiak is the number one fishing port in the nation and weather is a vital link to our fisheries and tourist industry; and

WHEREAS, the recent catastrophic oil spill by the Exxon Valdez and subsequent environmental damage emphasizes the need for on-site local weather knowledge; and

WHEREAS, with a winter just past that featured very cold temperatures, winds to to near 100 miles per hour and the worst oil spill in United States history, the need for weather service in Alaska was never more clear,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Kodiak, Alaska, respectfully requests our Congressional Delegation reject the plan presented by National Weather Service headquarters and to develop a plan that will continue vital weather services at existing levels.

PASSED AND APPROVED this 11TH day of MAY, 1989.

CITY OF KODIAK

Robert B. Brodie
MAYOR

ATTEST:

Marcella Dalton
CITY CLERK

# STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE

# MODERNIZATION AND ASSOCIATED RESTRUCTURING

# OF THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

Department of Commerce

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

March 1989

# Table of Contents

# INTRODUCTION

Weather pervades and affects the daily life of each American. Since the beginning of the Republic, a strong scientific tradition of meteorological research and service has existed in the United States. At a national, regional, and local scale, weather affects the Nation's agriculture, water resources, transportation, general economy, and public safety. Accurate information about future atmospheric events is key to mitigating any adverse effects of the weather. Federal agencies have long joined in cooperative efforts to collect, share and effectively use weather data and information for the public good. Applied research conducted over the last ten years in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Environmental Research Laboratories in New Jersey, Colorado and Oklahoma, and other Federal laboratories such as the National Center for Atmospheric Research has demonstrated that state-of-the-art laboratory techniques for analyzing and predicting severe weather and flood phenomena can be practicably applied to Weather Service operations. Because the scientific understanding of the atmosphere and the ability to forecast large and small-scale weather phenomena has increased dramatically over the last two decades, the Department of Commerce has set an ambitious goal for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's agency, the National Weather Service (NWS):

**To modernize the NWS through the deployment of proven observational, information processing and communications technologies, and to establish an associated cost effective operational structure. The modernization and associated restructuring of NWS shall assure that the major advances which have been made in our ability to observe and understand the atmosphere are applied to the practical problems of providing weather and hydrologic services to the Nation.**

Implementation and practice of the new science will achieve more uniform weather services across the Nation, improve forecasts, provide more reliable detection and prediction of severe weather and flooding, permit a more cost effective NWS, and achieve higher productivity for NWS employees. The effort to improve weather warnings and forecasts will be guided by the principle of providing high quality weather services to users while concurrently lowering NWS operating costs. The development of new technologies will be guided by the principle of balancing technical and service improvements with overall costs. All changes proposed by the NWS will allow productivity and efficiency for any entity dependent on weather information. This includes local, state, and Federal government agencies, private sector meteorologists, private industry, and resource management organizations.

In 1988, Public Law 100-685 was signed by the President which, in part, specifies conditions on the planning, reporting and accomplishment of the modernization and associated restructuring of the NWS. This Strategic Plan is the first response to the Congress required by Public Law 100-685. The Federal law requires an identification of the basic service improvement objectives of the modernization, the pivotal new technological components, and the associated operational changes required to fulfill the objectives of weather and flood warning improvements. Plans, resources, schedules, etc. will be contained in the second, and subsequently annual report required by the Congress -- the National Implementation Plan.

## PRINCIPLES FOR THE MODERNIZATION AND ASSOCIATED RESTRUCTURING

The Modernization and Associated Restructuring goal will require significant changes in the current weather service infrastructure and operations. Accordingly, the following principles will guide the planning and implementation.

Throughout the process of change, the NWS is committed to its Mission which is *to provide weather and flood warnings, public forecasts and advisories for all of the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, primarily for the protection of life and property. NWS data and products are provided to private meteorologists for the provision of all specialized services.* The following principles are essential to meet the operational mission and will be continued during the modernization and associated restructuring transition period.

The principle that the modernization and associated restructuring process will not result in the degradation of services to the general public. Also, service and structural changes and improvements will be implemented only when certified in accordance with Public Law 100-685 to be beneficial to users.

The principle that NWS employees will be involved because their participation is crucial to a successful transition and improved operations. Significant levels of training and education will be provided so that employees will gain the necessary expertise to utilize the new technologies, understand the new sciences underpinning the modernization and associated restructuring and provide the improved services to the Nation. The changes will provide exciting opportunities for professional growth.

The principle that United States international meteorological and hydrologic obligations will be met during and after the modernization and associated restructuring. The exchange of global atmospheric data is essential to the successful interpretation and forecast of weather phenomena in the United States. The NWS is a partner supporting national security interests on a global basis.

The principle that NWS employees will continue to provide the quality weather services required by the country in the most economical manner.

## THE NEED TO IMPLEMENT NEW SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

A weather service organization, whether private or public, fulfills fundamental public safety and economic needs. The information provided supports life-saving and economic productivity decisions. For example, hurricane evacuation recommendations and airline routing decisions are heavily dependent on weather forecasts. As a Nation, the United States experiences more severe local storms and flooding than any other in the world. Eighty-five percent of all presidentially declared disasters result from severe weather events. In a typical year, the United States can expect a staggering assault by the elements: some 10,000 violent thunderstorms, 5,000 floods, 1,000 tornados, and several hurricanes. Along with periods of severe drought, hard winters, and heat waves, these events translate into considerable loss of life and annual property damages estimated in billions of dollars.

The most deadly of our Nation's weather events -- tornados, severe thunderstorms, and flash floods -- are also the most difficult to detect and forecast. They form and exist at the small atmospheric scale (mesoscale) and are measured in minutes and tens of miles. Most mesoscale phenomena are well below the operational resolution of routine observations and analysis today. However, prototype observing technologies and information processing systems, when made available to research meteorologists have provided the first observations of, and insights into the formative indicators of dynamic mesoscale processes of the atmosphere. When implemented operationally, these systems and associated science will improve all weather forecasts provided by national meteorological centers and weather forecast offices. These new systems will enable earlier detection and permit the short range prediction of destructive, violent, local storms and floods, thereby mitigating a glaring shortfall in current warning services. The new observational technologies planned for the next decade will provide unprecedented amounts of complex information and data, requiring significantly higher levels of analytical and interpretive skills by the operational forecasters.

To realize the gains from this research and technology, the Nation needs to put the new meteorological science into practice. This will require training personnel and the deployment of proven, new observational, information processing, and communications technologies.

At present, the vintage technologies that compose part of today's weather service infrastructure need to be replaced. As the equipment has aged, it has become costly to maintain. By replacing the equipment with more reliable technologies that support the new scientific capabilities, the Nation can move into the twenty-first century with strengthened confidence in its atmospheric prediction capabilities.

# THE TECHNOLOGICAL OPPORTUNITY

## MAJOR TECHNOLOGIES FOR MODERNIZATION

New technological systems are essential in providing the opportunity to improve warning and forecast services and for replacing obsolete and increasingly unreliable existing systems. Each of the new technologies plays a unique, but complementary role in the modernization process. The information provided by the new observational technologies will yield high resolution, time variant, three-dimensional representations of details on the state of the atmosphere. At Weather Forecast Offices, intended to perform warning and forecast services, advanced weather data processing systems will aid the forecaster in the assimilation of changing data and numerical weather prediction products. The meteorologist and hydrologist will be able to rapidly manipulate, display and analyze information, thus enabling them to combine scientific principles and operational experience to produce more accurate and timely warning and forecast services for the Nation. The new high resolution data sets and derived information are an important input to business and economic decision making outside the NWS.

Numerous Federal agencies have long shared in the observation and exchange of hydrometeorological data. The existing national observing networks are sparse and limited in their coverage of the Nation's atmosphere. The NWS is joined in its acquisition of much of the major new technologies by the Department of Transportation's Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense, which results in economies of scale and a reduction in purchase costs. The geographical placement of the new radars and automated surface observing systems is coordinated by the three agencies thereby providing more uniform national coverage by these land-based systems. The new geostationary meteorological satellites being procured by NOAA complement the new radars and automated surface observing systems with blanket coverage of the conterminous states. Data from these new observing systems will be shared by each participating agency and will be available in summary form throughout the Nation.

### Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS)

Automating surface observations will relieve staff from the manual collection of surface observations. Over 1000 ASOS systems across the Nation will be providing data on pressure, temperature, wind direction and speed, runway visibility, cloud ceiling heights, and type and intensity of precipitation on a nearly continuous basis. The 1000 ASOS sites include approximately 750 airport installations under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration and approximately 250 NWS sites. The Department of Defense is also considering the acquisition of additional units. The observational data provided by the ASOS system supports aviation operations and provides meteorological data needed by severe weather, flash flood, and river flood forecasting programs. The national capability to observe and transmit critical changing weather conditions almost as they occur represents an important enhancement for improving warning and forecast services.

### Next Generation Weather Radars (NEXRAD)

Utilizing Doppler radar technology, the NEXRAD system will observe the presence and calculate the speed and direction of motion of severe weather elements such as tornados and violent thunderstorms. NEXRAD will also provide quantitative area precipitation measurements so important in hydrologic forecasting of potential flooding. The severe weather and motion detection capabilities offered by NEXRAD will contribute toward an increase in the accuracy and timeliness of NWS warning services. At present, for example, due to the limitation in the current radar detection systems, tornado warnings are usually issued only when visual sightings have been reported. The advent of NEXRAD will not only allow for an earlier detection of the precursors to tornadic activity, but will also provide data on the direction and speed of tornado cells once they form. The national network of 160 NEXRAD systems provides a significant improvement in uniform coverage over the present day radar network. The NWS plans to operate 121 NEXRAD systems; the remainder of the NEXRAD systems will be located at Federal Aviation Administration and Department of Defense locations.

### Satellite Upgrades

For severe weather and flood warnings and short range forecasts, cloud imagery and atmospheric sounding data from the geostationary meteorological satellites will continue to be a major data source. The new Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) I-M system will have separate instrumentation that allows simultaneous image and sounding data to be observed and transmitted to ground stations. The GOES I-M system will also provide visible and infrared imagery data updates as frequently as every six minutes during severe weather warning situations over selected areas of the United States.

For longer-range forecasting, soundings from the polar orbiting satellites are a primary data input into the National Meteorological Center numerical forecast models. The Advanced Microwave Sounding Unit, to be flown on the NOAA K-M satellite series, will provide global soundings in cloudy regions at nearly the same level of accuracy as those presently produced in cloud free areas.

### National Center Advanced Computer Systems

Warnings and forecasts prepared by NWS offices in the next decade will rely heavily on the basic analyses and guidance products provided by the National Meteorological Center, especially for periods of 36 hours and beyond. These analyses and guidance products result from numerical models of the atmosphere run on high-speed computers. The future requirement for guidance products for mesoscale warnings and forecasts is greatly increased over the present. Fundamental model improvements are necessary to satisfy these requirements and provide guidance products of sufficient quality and frequency to support the warning and forecast operation at each office. Present day Class VI computers do not possess sufficient capacity to support the improvements needed at the National Centers. These increased demands require the acquisition of dedicated next generation Class VII computer capabilities with a processing capability an order of magnitude greater than the present Class VI computer.

### Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System (AWIPS)

The revised AWIPS system will be the nerve center of the operations. AWIPS will be the data integrator receiving the high-resolution data from the observation systems, the centrally collected data and the centrally prepared analysis and guidance products from the National Meteorological Center. The integration of all of this data from multiple sources represents the information base from which all warning and forecast products will be prepared. The AWIPS system will provide fast-response interactive analysis and display of the data to help support the meteorologist make rapid decisions, prepare warnings and forecasts, and disseminate products to users.

AWIPS includes the communications network that inter-connects each Weather Forecast Office for exchange of locally generated data. NOAAPORT will provide communications support for the operational distribution of the centrally collected data and centrally produced analysis and guidance products, as well as the satellite imagery and sounding data processed by the National Environmental Satellite, Data and Information Service. In addition to supporting the requirement for AWIPS point to multi-point communications, NOAAPORT will also deliver a wide range of NOAA products, such as oceanographic and environmental data to external users including other government agencies, universities, private research organizations, and business interests.

## THE NEED TO RESTRUCTURE

The planned restructuring involves changing the number and location of field offices in a manner responsive to certification conditions imposed by Public Law 100-685, a gradual transformation of the workforce to one more professional in its makeup, and a reallocation of operational responsibilities between field offices and the National Centers.

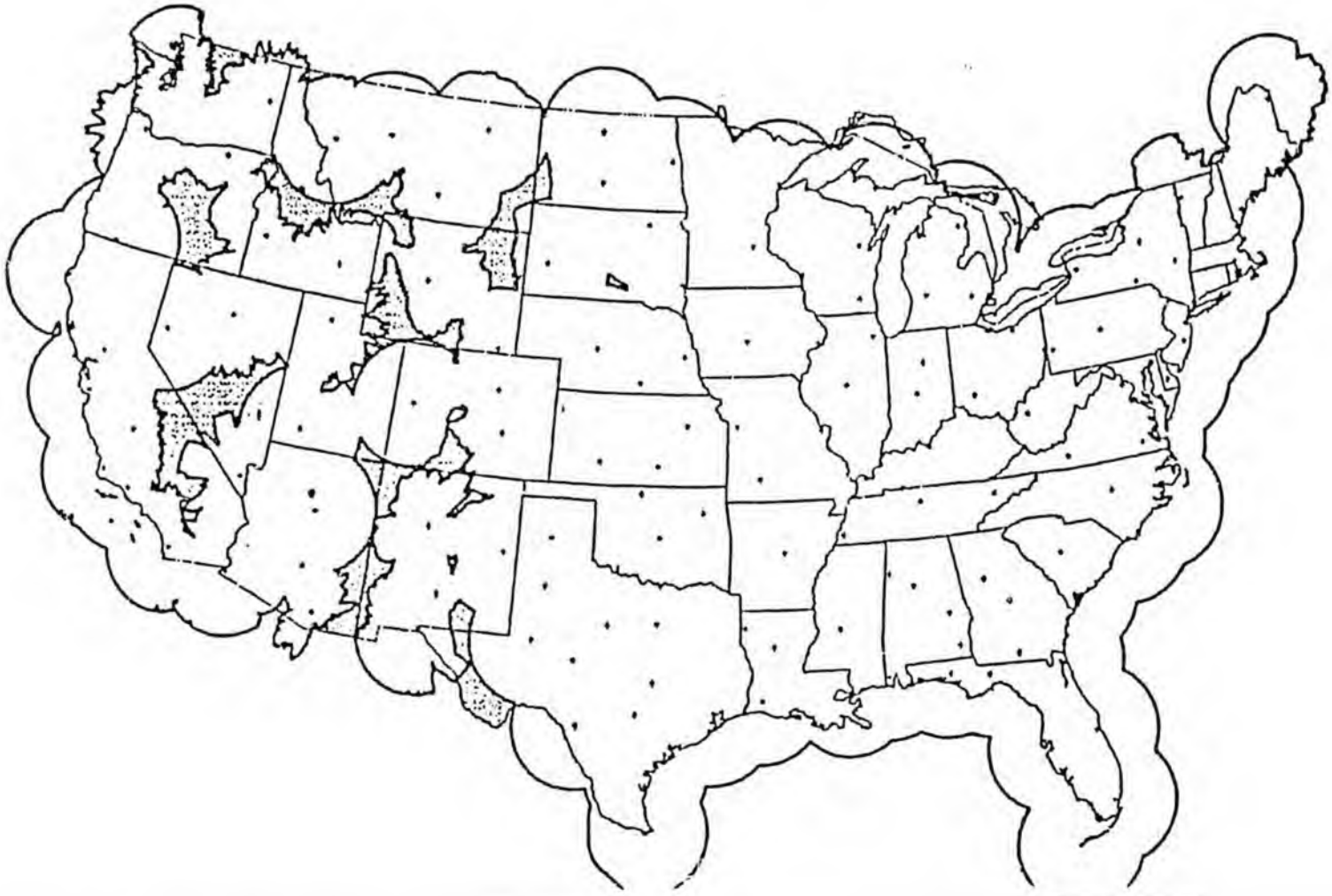
The effective use of the advanced technologies planned for the NWS is closely linked to the scientific abilities of NWS personnel and the national field office structure. The current field office structure has evolved intermittently throughout the agency's history. Today, the structure supports a labor intensive observation and dissemination network. If the new technological network were constrained by the current field office structure, required staffing levels and overall costs would increase unnecessarily.

The need to restructure is twofold: first, the combination of new operational concepts, new data sets, and an evolving scientific understanding of the dynamic processes associated with the most dangerous weather phenomena requires an increase in the number of meteorologists. During periods of impending severe weather and flooding, operational personnel are under extreme pressure to make timely and accurate decisions. The percentage increase of meteorologists in the NWS workforce will improve warnings and forecasts by taking advantage of the capabilities of the new technologies. Second, productivity and efficiency gains will occur as a result of increased integration of the new technological observation, information processing and communication systems with the staff. An increased effective range of the radar systems and the ability to assemble all data at a reduced number of offices increases productivity and efficiency. The reduced number of offices places a special emphasis on the effective delivery of weather services to communities.

Key tradeoffs in the restructuring process exist between human capabilities, costs, and programmatic, scientific, and technological opportunities. Factors considered in determining restructuring and ultimately the quality of warning and forecast services include the ability to establish a more uniform observational network across the country, the automation of observational duties, orographic (effects of mountains) characteristics, the ability of the NWS workforce to employ and understand new technologies and science, and so on.

DEPICTION OF THE TOTAL COVERAGE (AT 10,000 FT ELEVATION) PROVIDED BY THE COMPLETED NATIONAL NEXRAD NETWORK.

DARKENED AREAS OVER THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS ARE GAPS IN COVERAGE AT THE 10,000 FT LEVEL. NEXRAD COVERAGE WILL ALSO BE PROVIDED IN ALASKA.



# THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN THE 1990s

## THE WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE (WFO) AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

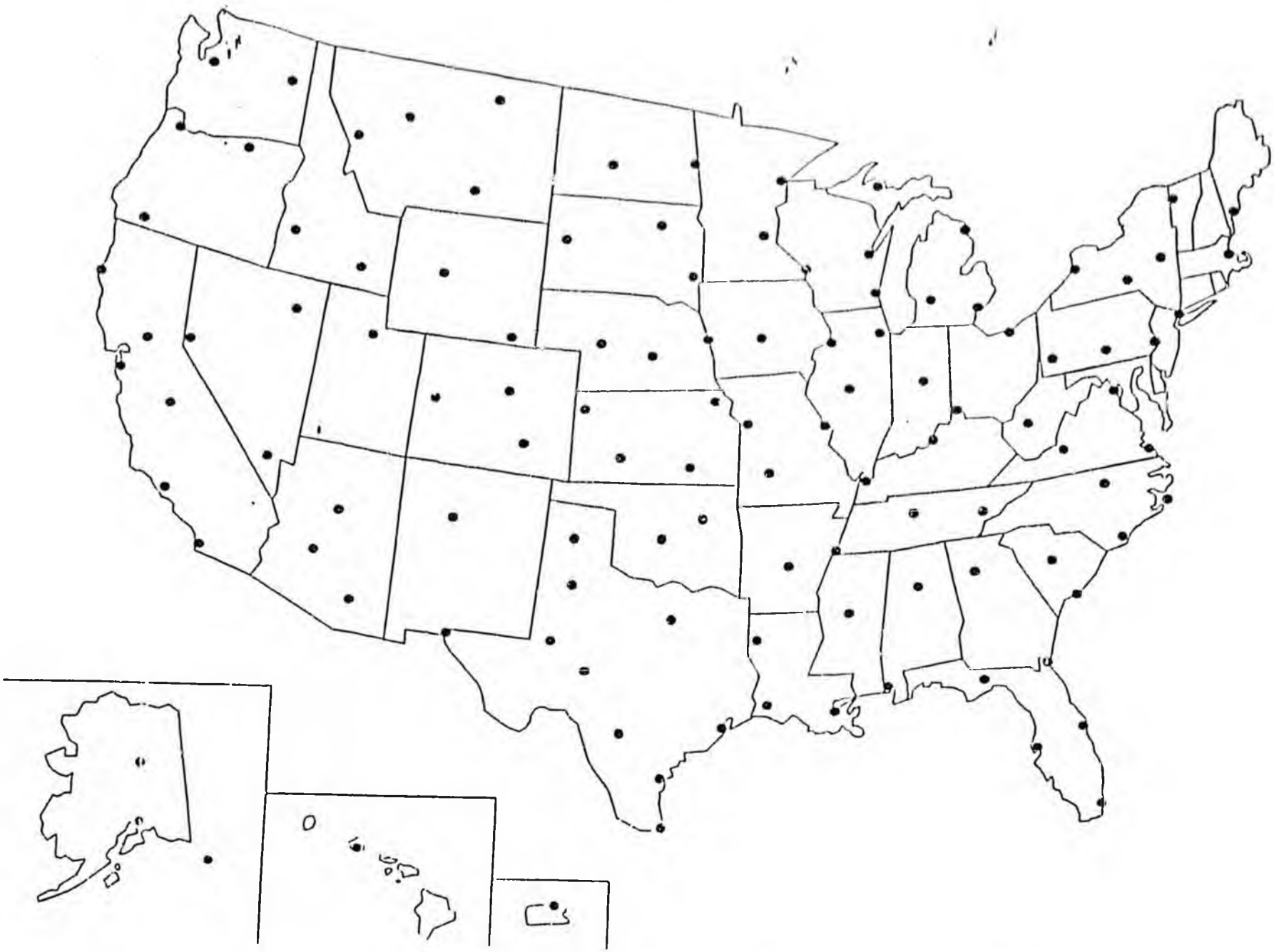
A conceptual analogy of the area of responsibility of a WFO can be portrayed as follows: on the surface of a map of the United States consider a uniform arrangement of 115 conterminous cylinders, each with a radius of approximately 125 miles, extending from the earth's surface up through the atmosphere. The volume of space contained within each cylinder represents the "area" of operational responsibility associated with the WFO. A WFO is located in the center of the base of the cylinder. Each section of the country and the coastal ocean is contained in one of these cylinders and the whole of the country is theoretically uniformly covered.

The GOES Satellite positioned over the United States is providing uniform coverage with visible and infrared imagery and remote soundings penetrating each cylinder from above. Associated with each WFO is one or more NEXRAD radars which scan the atmosphere from near the earth's surface to a height sufficient to detect the majority of meteorological events. Across the surface of the country are the approximately 1000 ASOS units each measuring surface weather parameters as fast as every minute. All of these data within the cylinder are sent directly to the AWIPS system in each WFO. The AWIPS is also receiving the centrally produced guidance products from the National Centers generated from globally exchanged data. Subsets of these data sets are available to all other WFOs through the AWIPS communication network.

## INTEGRATED OPERATIONS WITHIN THE WFO

The future operations will allow forecasters to comprehensively address the air-sea environment in their assigned area. The observation and analysis of current and expected weather conditions can be quickly and reliably completed, critical decisions made, and translated into immediate warnings and forecasts. This is contrasted to current operations where a number of meteorologists and technicians are required to individually evaluate a limited data base and separately derive the required variety of warnings and forecasts.

# LOCATIONS OF THE WEATHER FORECAST OFFICES



The concept of the local data base is central to future operations. The high volume of data from the local NEXRAD and geostationary meteorological satellites combined with the high frequency observations from ASOS will flow directly to the Weather Forecast Office. The most complete data sets will only be available to the local WFO. However, summarized data from all NEXRADs and ASOSs in the Nation will be made available to all field offices.

The new observing systems are designed to provide data sets which can be immediately integrated into three dimensional depictions of the rapidly changing state of the environment. Each system will contribute a critical part, combining with and complementing data from all other systems to form a complete set of information about the space from the earth's surface to the upper atmosphere over the WFO's area of responsibility. AWIPS work stations will allow the forecaster to quickly update, quality control, and analyze current processes and events detailed within the area of concern. New dedicated supercomputer capabilities and high resolution models running at the National Centers will provide a stream of detailed, frequently updated guidance to forecasters, assisting in the prediction of future conditions. This represents a new, highly integrated mode of operation which greatly increases the productivity of personnel, and also holds the promise of increased accuracy and greater timeliness of forecast services for the Nation.

## THE NEW STRUCTURE

The WFO will be the future weather office that will provide all warning and forecast services for its assigned area of responsibility. The forecast and warnings operations at the WFO are supported by guidance products issued from the National Centers and RFCs.

### Weather Forecast Offices (WFOs)

A total of 115 WFOs will exist in the future that will provide weather and hydrologic services in four major areas:

- Watches and warnings for the general public for severe local storms, floods, flash floods and winter storms. Local and zone public forecasts, and fire weather forecasts;

- Local aviation watches and warnings, terminal forecasts, and domestic aviation enroute forecasts;

- Marine warnings and forecasts for coastal areas of the Nation and the Great Lakes; and

» Hydrologic services which identify flash flood-prone areas and the development of community supported surveillance systems.

The foundation for the more accurate and timely warnings and forecasts will be the guidance products from the National Centers and RFCs and the data from the new observing systems: ASOS, NEXRAD, and geostationary meteorological satellites. They will provide the unique local data base which depicts the environment in the WFO's area of responsibility.

The basic tool for more accurate and timely warnings and forecasts from the WFO is AWIPS. It will assemble, process and display the observational data and guidance from National Centers. AWIPS will help meteorologists with the warning and forecast decision process through an interactive work station. It will preformat warning and forecast products and disseminate these products to the users in a timely manner.

**River Forecast Centers (RFCs)**

RFCs provide hydrologic forecasts and guidance information in three major categories:

» Mainstem river and flood forecasts for conditions at approximately 3000 locations with lead times ranging from six hours to several days;

» Flash flood and headwater guidance to WFOs for warning services involving small drainage basins with response times under six hours; and

» Long-term, seasonal forecasts providing estimates of snowmelt and water supply outlooks (from excess to drought) at approximately 1000 locations for periods up to several months in advance.

In the 1990s, the operations of RFCs are expected to change in a number of important ways. Each of the 13 RFCs will be colocated with a WFO. This will result in a more effective utilization of hydrological and meteorological information facilitated by a Hydrologic Analysis and Support Group in each colocated facility. It will also result in cost savings through shared facilities and through on-site exchange of data and information. Flash flood procedures will be more sophisticated resulting in more frequent updates of guidance and information for use by WFOs.

The basic river and flood forecasts produced by the RFC for specific locations along mainstem rivers are sent to WFOs as a basis for flood warnings to the public. Historically, RFCs have operated on one forecast cycle per day, based upon manual observations taken early each morning. To keep pace with changing weather and soil moisture conditions, assimilated data from automated data collection networks and NEXRAD, and to provide quality control, RFCs will operate an average of 16 hours-per-day. RFC operations will expand to 24 hours during periods of flood threat and with seasonal

peak work loads. RFCs will produce hydrologic forecasts as frequently as every six hours, based upon additional data and improved forecast procedures. AWIPS will assist hydrologists in the RFCs through data collection and processing, hydrological model execution, product formatting, and product dissemination.

### National Meteorological Center

The National Meteorological Center has the responsibility for national and international data collection. This data base is first employed for global atmospheric and oceanic analysis. The resultant analysis products are distributed to international and domestic users which include the NWS, other government agencies, and private sector meteorologists. The data base is then used as initial input to global atmospheric numerical models. These models produce international aviation forecast products, high seas forecast products, long range national forecast, and forecast guidance for local WFOs and RFCs. New dedicated Class VII computer capabilities will enable increases in the resolution of the models resulting in improved forecast products and guidance. Traditionally the long range national forecasts have begun at 3-4 days and beyond. The new computers will reduce this threshold to beyond 36 hours. This will allow local forecasters to devote their attention to short-term weather events that are not amenable to centralized model solutions.

### Climate Analysis Center

The Climate Analysis Center is a specialized center established in support of the National Climate Program Act. The Climate Analysis Center is part of the National Meteorological Center and is colocated with it to take advantage of the data, computers, and scientific expertise available there. The Climate Analysis Center's responsibilities are national and international in scope, related to overall goals of the United States Climate Program and are not directly affected by the NWS field reorganization. The Climate Analysis Center collects, organizes and disseminates climate information for diagnosis of short-term climate change; conducts and supports research on the physical cause of short-term (monthly, seasonal and interannual) climate change; and issues forecasts of weekly, monthly, and seasonal departures of average weather conditions from climatological means.

### National Hurricane Center

The National Hurricane Center will continue to be responsible for the analysis, prediction, and tracking of tropical weather systems, their development into tropical storms and hurricanes, and larger scale disaster preparedness and coordination. Geostationary meteorological satellites will track and monitor tropical storms 24 hours-per-day throughout their entire life cycle. Coastal NEXRAD's will provide the opportunity to examine tropical storms and hurricanes as they approach land, to an extent never

before possible. New dedicated Class VII computer capabilities located at the National Meteorological Center will run new hurricane models which will provide improved hurricane forecast guidance to highly specialized tropical and hurricane forecasters located at the National Hurricane Center. AWIPS at the National Hurricane Center will integrate data, improve storm identification and tracking, improve dissemination of vital information to the NWS and external users, and allow more efficient use of personnel.

### National Severe Storms Forecast Center

In the 1990's, National Severe Storms Forecast Center will provide national severe weather guidance to WFOs and RFCs. It will issue more timely and specific mesoscale guidance necessary to support the severe weather and flood warning activities of the WFOs. It will develop new guidance products based upon National Meteorological Center mesoscale model output and new mesoscale data. It will continue to produce special hazardous weather forecasts and forecast guidance for domestic aviation users under interagency agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration. All of these activities depend on the new observing systems (NEXRAD, ASOS and geostationary meteorological satellites), on AWIPS, and on the improved guidance from the National Meteorological Center Class VII computer capabilities.

### National Data Buoy Center

The National Data Buoy Center will continue the operation of deep sea, coastal buoys, and headland systems. Data from these buoys and these coastal systems are essential to marine warnings and forecasts, and numerical weather predictions.

## STAFFING

The new observing and data processing and display systems will provide forecasters the opportunity to sample, observe, and analyze the environment to an extent never before possible. The related expansion of the sciences of meteorology and hydrology will directly translate into improved service capability while simultaneously allowing greater efficiencies. Future field offices will have a core staff of professional scientists at each WFO and RFC to take advantage of these new capabilities. These individuals will be charged to provide all warning and forecast services across their area of responsibility. They will meet these tasks with the ability to evaluate vast amounts of integrated data, analyze the processes and events which will affect their area, and apply their scientific and technical expertise in a broad spectrum of immediate decisions. These will translate into a flow of service products, warnings, forecasts and advisories, that will be based on, and contain increased detail for all parts of the area.

Meteorological technicians will require different skills to support the new technologies, and more demanding, and increasingly sophisticated operations. System maintenance requirements will also place increased demands on electronic technicians who will require advanced training to support and maintain a variety of complex equipment.

A Meteorologist-in-Charge will have responsibility for each WFO. WFOs will operate 24 hours-per-day. The staffing level will be determined by peak service demands and maximum weather activity, with reduced staff requirements at selected offices during hours of lower threat and service demands. The support staff in each WFO will include positions providing critical program and maintenance support to ensure efficient operations and for the practice of advanced applied science. The public hydrologic warning, forecast and information programs of each WFO will be managed and supported by Service Hydrologists strategically located at selected WFOs throughout the Nation. At each of the 13 colocated WFO/RFC facilities, a Hydrologist-in-Charge will have responsibility for the RFC, including the Hydrometeorological Analysis and Support Group. Hydrologists and hydrometeorologists will maintain non-real-time operational support functions, as well as provide hydrometeorological support to the multiple WFOs within the RFC's area of responsibility. Staffing levels at the RFCs will be sufficient to maintain forecast services, nominally 16 hours-per-day, with variations attuned to each RFC's hydro-climatology and seasonal distribution of flood threats.

# IMPLEMENTATION

The NWS has never undertaken a systematic modernization and associated restructuring effort of the magnitude presented in this Strategic Plan. Accomplishing the transition from today's operation to the modernized and restructured NWS of the 1990s, without disrupting ongoing services, will be a complicated process. Application of the new science, enhancement of the workforce, deployment of the new technology, and restructuring of field offices will mean that virtually every NWS activity will change in some way during the next eight years.

Management of this transition will be a complex effort, involving every level of the NWS. Accordingly, the NWS has established a Transition Program Office to provide an organizational focus for the entire transition process. The Transition Program Office will draw upon the technical staff resources of the NWS Headquarters, regional offices and field stations to prepare the plans necessary for the NWS modernization and associated restructuring. Once these plans are prepared, the Transition Program Office will manage the implementation.

## TRANSITION PLANNING

Transition plans will be placed in a tiered structure, with the Strategic Plan as the top level plan. The second tier, the National Implementation Plan, will be a broad guidance document supported by more detailed transition planning and implementation activities carried on throughout the entire agency. The National Implementation Plan will provide a planning framework and general strategies for accomplishing the transition, and establish basic transition management principles that will be used throughout the entire transition period in fulfilling the fundamental goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan. The National Implementation Plan will be updated annually and used to provide the Executive Branch, Congress, cooperating agencies, users, and the public with an overview of what modernization and associated restructuring is, how and when NWS will accomplish the transition, and progress reports on implementation.

The third planning tier, the Regional Transition Plans, will provide management flexibility and recognize both the decentralized nature of the agency's and the NWS Regions' responsibility to maintain ongoing operations throughout the transition period. These plans, intended for internal use, will set a course that will ultimately

achieve the modernization and associated restructuring goals and objectives within each Region, while taking into account unique conditions at each site, such as weather variations and user needs. Each Regional office will have the lead responsibility for preparation of their Regional Transition Plan, consistent with national policy.

The final planning tier, Site Implementation Plans, will contain specific, detailed actions and schedules for accomplishment. A separate Site Implementation Plan will be prepared for each WFO or WFO/RFC, and will address transition of all sites in its area of responsibility. Each Regional office will be responsible for the development and integration of Site Implementation Plans, with the support of the area managers.

The changes in operations and services related to modernization and associated restructuring will ultimately guide the transition. Future operations and services define the system outputs, the staffing type and mix of an office, and the field structure needed to efficiently provide these services. These, in turn, set requirements for training and education, facility preparation, and guide a number of other dimensions of the modernization and associated restructuring. A realistic view of technological capabilities, resource availability and schedules, and the NWS environment will help shape the scope and pace of service changes.

The breadth of future operations and services is bounded by the agency mission and scientific and technological capability. Transition planning will recognize and incorporate these factors, and retain sufficient flexibility to respond to these dynamics. The NWS will plan and maintain a steady and predictable pace for implementation to allow sufficient time for orderly change and adjustment, both internally and externally, and to accommodate and capitalize upon the new knowledge and understanding acquired throughout the transition period.

## DEMONSTRATION AND CERTIFICATION

The modernization and associated restructuring of NWS features improved services through the effective and efficient use of the new technology. Aspects of this objective imply significant change both internally and externally. Active participation by NWS employees and external users is imperative for a successful transition. Support must be sought by informing them in advance of what changes are planned and why these changes are needed. Clear demonstrations of the service improvements that will result from these changes are a critical element in obtaining NWS employee and external user acceptance.

Demonstrations of new capabilities and services will take place through a wide range of activities. The Modernization and Associated Restructuring Demonstration (MARD) will be the centerpiece for demonstrating the fully modernized and restructured NWS of the 1990s. As currently planned, MARD will take place in a multi-state area in the central United States which is extremely prone to severe weather. Once the

proper number and mix of staff is in place along with the new technology, and training has been completed, a number of WFOs supported by RFCs and National Centers will operate in the modernized and restructured mode as the first step towards national conversion to the new structure.

The primary objectives of MARD are to demonstrate more accurate and timely warning and forecast services and to provide an opportunity to evaluate service performance and responses of users within the context of the most cost-effective organizational structure. MARD will help refine new operational procedures and resolve implementation issues that can best be addressed through actual field experience. MARD will also provide an opportunity to examine additional organizational efficiencies that may be gained from application of the new science and operation of the new technology, such as a 2-tier field office structure with reduced staffing at some offices.

Based upon the MARD experience, full implementation of modernized and restructured operations will proceed on a national basis in compliance with the provisions of Public Law 100-685. During national conversion to the new structure, existing weather service offices would be closed, consolidated, automated or relocated only when such action can be certified to result in no degradation of services to the affected area.

## IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Programs to acquire the new technology have been approved, and acquisition is underway. Developmental efforts to simulate the Weather Forecast Office of the 1990s have been undertaken since the late 1970s at NOAA's Environmental Research Laboratories as part of the Program for Regional Observing and Forecasting Services. Planning for application of the new science, transformation of the workforce, and the deployment of the new technology has been started. In a broad outline, the implementation schedule for modernization and associated restructuring of the NWS will consist of activities bracketed in time between now and MARD that must be accomplished in preparation for the demonstration, the Modernization and Associated Restructuring Demonstration itself, and implementation of full modernized and restructured operations after MARD. Field preparatory and risk reduction activities requiring long lead times to complete have already begun, and are scheduled to ensure their timely completion.

## EXPERIMENTAL SYSTEMS

Additional work is underway on other technologies, though technically not now a part of the modernization program. As the research community continues development of experimental systems to improve observational techniques or improve operating efficiencies, demonstration networks may be deployed at specialized operational sites to establish and validate the utility of the new data or improved system. These centers of excellence provide unique opportunities for the research and operational communities to jointly assess and improve the operational utility of the new scientific innovations.

A demonstration project is underway that will deploy a new ground-based atmospheric sounding system, the wind profiler. This system will provide data on atmospheric winds with time and height resolutions not economically available with alternative techniques. Research is also continuing on thermo-dynamic profilers that may ultimately make important improvements in the acquisition of moisture and temperature information and lower the operating costs of today's upper air program.

# PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY ADVANTAGES

In designing the modernized and restructured NWS as a complete system, as opposed to the current system, which has evolved sporadically throughout the agency's history, improvements in services can be combined with productivity and efficiency gains by deliberate design of the new NWS.

Productivity and service improvements will be achieved by automating observation and communication duties, freeing trained professionals to concentrate on the highest operational priority -- analyzing and forecasting local atmospheric events. Because the data available from the precisely organized satellite, surface observing systems, and Doppler radar networks can be processed and manipulated by tomorrow's meteorologists, more accurate and timely warnings and forecasts can be provided by fewer field offices. Using more data with fewer offices and a core of professional personnel translates into higher productivity.

The productivity gains acquired with the professional workforce, new science, and advanced technologies, in turn, mean operational efficiency gains. That is, lower costs associated with delivering more accurate and timely warning and forecast services are accomplished while concurrently increasing the benefits from more timely, pertinent information. The efficiency gains, once achieved, are a direct product of the entire operational design of the modernized structure.

# MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF THE 1990s

Understanding and predicting weather, climate and the state of the Nation's rivers has never been more important to the people of the United States and the world. Major advances in technologies, scientific understanding of the atmosphere, and in the prediction of the localized, most severe storms are within reach. While the resources to achieve the goals set forth in this Strategic Plan are significant, they pale compared to the savings of lives and property attainable through the modernization and associated restructuring of the National Weather Service. The challenge of the modernization and associated restructuring is to configure the NWS field offices, implement the new systems and networks, and professionalize the NWS workforce, without diminishing ongoing operations.

This document summarizes the opportunities and challenges that the Nation faces in modernizing and restructuring its capability to detect, understand, and predict our atmosphere. The discussion focused on the new scientific concepts that foretell significant advances in meteorology and hydrology. It considered the technology available to effect these advances and scientific concepts -- automated surface observations, Doppler radars, satellites, supercomputers, and advanced information processing technology.

The people, the new technology, and the new ideas at hand combine to offer unprecedented advances in hydrometeorological prediction and in understanding climate change.

# SCR

# 14

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(5)
Date Referred: March 29, 1989 FURTHER REFERRALS: RESOURCES
FINANCE

Date of Committee Action: 4/18

The TRANSPORTATION Committee considered: SCR 14

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 14
[ALASKA RAILROAD SUNTRANA BRIDGE]
Relating to the Alaska Railroad Suntrana Branch Bridge.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
[ ] be replaced with _____ [ ] the same title
[ ] a new title
[ ] have attached amendment(s)
[✓] do pass
[ ] do not pass
[ ] no recommendation
[ ] individual recommendations
[ ] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept)
[ ] fiscal impact _____
[ ] zero fiscal note _____
[ ] zero with analysis _____

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)
[✓] fiscal note(s) SED 2/2/89
[ ] zero fiscal note(s) _____
[ ] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

Ben [illegible]
Bill Hudson
Bette Cato
Drew A. Kenan

SIGNING: (Check approp. column)

| | Do Not Pass | No Rec | Amend |
|---|---|---|---|
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Bette Cato
Chairman's Signature

**STATE OF ALASKA**
**1989 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

BILL VERSION: SCR 14
PUBLISH DATE: 2/23/89

# FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date:
Title: ARRC Suntrana Bridge

Agency Affected: Alaska Railroad Corp.
BRU:

Sponsor: Senator Coghill
Requester: Senate Transportation

Components:

**EXPENDITURES / REVENUES :** (Thousands of Dollars)

| OPERATING | FY 89 | FY 90 | FY 91 | FY 92 | FY 93 | FY 94 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERSONAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| TRAVEL | | | | | | |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIES | | | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | | | |
| LAND & STRUCTURES | | | | | | |
| GRANTS, CLAIMS | | | | | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CAPITAL | 130.0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| REVENUE | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**FUNDING:** (Thousands of dollars)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GENERAL FUND | | | | | | |
| FEDERAL FUNDS | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

**POSITIONS:**

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

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

This fiscal note is for informational purposes only. As the Alaska Railroad Corporation is not subject to the Executive Budget Act, legislative appropriation is not required. However, passage of SCR 14 would have fiscal impact on the Railroad. (Analysis continued on page 2.)

Prepared by: Jim Blasingame
Division: Alaska Railroad Corporation
Phone: 265-2688
Date: February 22, 1989

Approved by Commissioner: Larry Merculieff
Agency: Department of Commerce & Economic Development
Phone:
Date: 2/27/89

Distribution (by preparer):
Legislative Finance
Legislative Sponsor
Requestor
Office of Management and Budget
Impacted Agency(ies)



3391D-1/0223C9b

Analysis:

Reallocation of these funds to the Suntrana Branch Bridge improvements would prevent the ARRC from making additional necessary mainline upgrades. The annual return on investment of mainline improvements outweighs the bridge upgrade by reducing labor costs and train delays. Additional improvements to the Fairbanks yard operations to enhance customer service and reduce safety hazards would also be delayed. These cost savings are anticipated to amount to $10.0-15.0 annually for a period of ten years.

# Alaska State Legislature

## SENATE

APR 0 3 1989

Official Business

P.O. Box V
State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99811

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Representative Cato
House Transportation Committee

From: Senator Coghill

Re: SCR 14

Date: April 4, 1989

I would like to request the House Transportation Committee to hold a hearing on SCR 14, "Relating to the Alaska Railroad Suntrana Branch Bridge."

The Alaska Railroad is considering the closure of the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge over the Nenana River due to deterioration of support piers. I believe the bridge provides a vital transportation link to areas on the east side of the Nenana River and that the Alaska Railroad Corporation should make the necessary repairs to keep the bridge open.

Attached are copies of letters I have received relating to the bridge closure, along with a petition. If you have any questions regarding SCR 14, please feel free to contact me.

william i. waugaman

Box 80589, College, Alaska 99708

(907) 479-2812

March 18, 1989

Senator Jack Coghill
Senate Office Building
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Jack:

As you are aware, I was General Manager of Usibelli Coal for over twenty-five years and during that time I became quite familiar with the Healy area since that is where the mine was located.

Your resolution regarding the Railroad bridge at Healy is a hundred percent correct; however, you failed to mention that there are 1) several million tons of coal remaining in the Healy Valley that will be mined sometime and 2) there are two very rich seams of high grade pottery clay in the Healy Valley that have been prospected and tested but not yet marketed.

The Alaska Railroad's thinking on expenditures on repairing this bridge is beyond comprehension.

Sincerely,

William I. Waugaman

# Reliable Coal

*Coal and Automatic Coal Furnaces*

3.6 Mile Usibelli Spur Road
P.O. Box 53
Healy, Alaska 99743

Wm. D. Nordmark
Owner
Ph. (907) 683-2411

September 15, 1988

Attention: Frank Turpin, General Manager
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 10-7500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

Dear Mr. Turpin,

During a meeting with Fairbanks terminal superintendent K. A. Smith on Monday, September 12, 1988, I was informed that the Alaska Railroad has proposed to close the railroad bridge over the Nenana River on the Suntrana branch. I must protest, as my business depends upon this bridge for its existence.

I set up my business adjacent to the Suntrana branch on the east side of the Nenana River in 1983 because of the availability of rail service at that location. Thus, I entered into a 20-year crossing permit with the Alaska Railroad and a 5-year land lease (which has recently been renewed for another 5 years) with William I. Waugaman, and proceeded to set up coal processing equipment, scale, bunkers, and shop. I would have to forfeit a considerable investment in improvements on the site, which is leased, if the railroad bridge were to be closed.

Usibelli Coal Mine hauls the coal from the mine to the Reliable Coal yard in 90-ton capacity dumptrucks which are not legal on Alaska State highways due to their weight and 18 foot width. Thus, moving the business across the Nenana River would not only cause financial loss to myself, but would pose problems obtaining a coal supply.

During the period from September, 1987 through August, 1988, Reliable Coal shipped 54 hopper cars of coal to the Alaska Railroad power plant in Fairbanks, and 46 hoppers to the Coal Bunkers in Fairbanks, as well as 2 side-dump cars to individuals. I would like to be able to assure my customers that I can continue to supply coal to them via the Alaska Railroad. My customers have no other source from which to obtain processed (screened and graded) coal in the State of Alaska.

Please reconsider the decision to close the bridge on the Suntrana branch.

Your truly,

William D. Nordmark

William D. Nordmark
Owner, Reliable Coal

cc: see attached list

cc: George Sullivan, Chairman, Board of Directors
Alaska Railroad Corporation

K.A. Smith, Fairbanks Superintendent
Alaska Railroad Corporation

William I. Waugaman
P.O. Box 2491
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Joe Usibelli, Jr., President
Usibelli Coal Mine
Box 1000
Healy, Alaska 99743

Attention: Walt Schlotfeldt
The Coal Bunkers
Box 72869
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Senator Jack Coghill
Box 55028
North Pole, Alaska 99705

# Reliable Coal

*Coal and Automatic Coal Furnaces*

3.6 Mile Usibelli Spur Road
P.O. Box 53
Healy, Alaska 99743

Wm. D. Nordmark
Owner

Ph. (907) 683-2411




November 2, 1988

Mr. Michael P. Kelly, General Manager
Golden Valley Electric Association
Box 1249
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1249

Dear Mr. Kelly,

Bill Waugaman sent us a copy of a letter from you to Frank Turpin on October 3, 1988 concerning the closing of the Alaska Railroad bridge on the Suntrana branch. Thank you for writing that letter. We value your support in opposing the closure, as our business depends on the existence of the bridge.

Enclosed, for your information, are copies of all the correspondence that I have on the subject to date. I spoke to Jack Coghill last night. He informed me that he has discussed the matter in person with Frank Turpin, and urged the ARR to repair the bridge rather than abandon it.

We are concerned, not only for our own sake, but also for the people who buy coal for household use from the Bunkers in Fairbanks. As Bill Waugaman points out, it is the low income people who burn coal to heat their homes, and they would be in a bad situation if they could not get coal, or if there were a steep price increase as Mr. Turpin advocates in his letter to us.

Thank you for taking an active role in opposing the bridge closing. Please advise us of information you receive on the subject. The ARR doesn't tell us much.

Sincerely,

Patricia Nordmark

Patricia Nordmark
Reliable Coal

BJ
Fyi, PJS

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

P.O. Box 107500 • Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

November 7, 1988

ARR

Mr. William D. Nordmark
Owner
Reliable Coal
P. O. Box 53
Healy, AK 99743

Dear Mr. Nordmark:

In my September 28 letter to you concerning the Alaska Railroad's plans to remove the railroad bridge on the Suntrana Branch from service, I stated that I would have the Operating Division review this issue more extensively and that you would be apprised of their evaluation. This review has been now completed, and the estimated expenditure of approximately $130,000 to repair the bridge is a valid estimate.

I was informed that you accompanied Mr. Roy Stavenjord, ARRC General Bridge and Building Supervisor, on an inspection and now have a better understanding of the bridge's condition.

Letters have also been received from Usibelli Coal Mine and Golden Valley Electric Association expressing concern over this closure. In reviewing their shipping patterns, Usibelli has utilized this spur only during an emergency situation that could have been handled instead by trucking the coal across the river. Golden Valley Electric has not utilized their spur in over four years; the switch to their facility has been removed, and they have recently requested that the remaining trackage into their plant be removed.

It appears that your business is the only one using the Suntrana Branch, and the lack of future prospective users does not warrant an expenditure of funds by the Railroad at this time. In fact, moving your loading point to Healy will also reduce your switching and handling cost and may more than offset the cost of trucking the coal across the river. A second option would be to move your crushing, screening, and loading facility to the other side of the river and have Usibelli trucks haul the coal to the new operating site. Although the trucks would be limited to 70-ton loads by the highway bridge, I would not expect this to present any problem.

In an effort to allow you sufficient time to address your business operational changes, I requested our Engineering Department to reinspect the bridge and estimate the longest time the bridge can safely remain in service without undue risk. They have estimated that, with frequent inspection, the bridge should be safe for operation until September 1, 1989. Therefore we will plan to close the bridge at that time.

Hopefully this longer time period will allow you to plan effective operational changes that will benefit your business.

Sincerely,

F. G. Turpin
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc:
G. Sullivan, Chairman, ARRC Board of Directors
K. A. Smith, Fairbanks Terminal Supt., ARRC
W. I. Waugaman, Fairbanks
J. Usibelli Jr., Usibelli Coal Mine
W. Schlotfeldt, The Coal Bunkers
Senator Jack Coghill, North Pole

Senator John B. (Jack) Coghill
Alaska State Legislature

Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811
(907) 465-4921

Box 55028
North Pole, Alaska 99705
(907) 488-0862

September 27, 1988

Mr. Frank Turpin
President & CEO
Alaska Railroad Corp.
P.O. Box 107500
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Frank:

It has come to my attention that the Alaska Railroad Corporation (ARRC) has proposed to close the railroad bridge that crosses the Nenana River on the Suntrana branch.

If ARRC is contemplating the closure of this bridge, I would like to go on record as strongly opposing the closure and request ARRC to reconsider their decision. There are users across the bridge that depend on the availability of rail service for their businesses existence. It would not be fair to the users if ARRC arbitrarily discontinued the present service.

I would appreciate a written explanation clarifying ARRC's position on the above mentioned bridge. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Senator Jack Coghill

ASCC

ALASKA STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
310 Second Street
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 586-2323

February 14, 1989

Frank Turpin, President
Alaska Railroad Corp.
P.O. Box 10-7000
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Frank:

As you can see from the enclosed letter, Mr. William D. Nordmark has asked for the State Chamber's assistance in resolving the Suntrana bridge repair problem.

I understand the railroad is now considering the necessary repairs and would encourage your decision to do so.

In today's Alaska economy, I believe we must do all possible to assure that our businesses, large and small have the opportunity to remain in business. We at the State Chamber are particularly interested in assisting small businesses in making a go of it. It certainly seems as if Mr. Nordmark is doing all he can.

Also Frank, I think the Alaska Railroad as a public entity has, perhaps, a responsibility beyond the "bottom line" to see that the public is best served even when such service may adversely affect that line. Certainly, your estimate of $125-130,000 in relation to your overall m & o cannot be such a prohibitive item when weighted against the railroads responsibility to the public and business community.

I would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

Cordially,

George Krusz, President

cc: William D. Nordmark
Senator Jack Coghill

GK:ly/turpin

...ALLEY ELECTRIC ...ASSOCIATION, INC. Box 1249, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1249, Phone 907-452-1151

December 30, 1988

The Honorable Jack Coghill
Alaska State Senate
P.O. Box V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

RE: Mr. Turpin's Proposal to Eliminate the Healy Railroad Bridge

Dear Senator Coghill,

Enclosed is all the correspondence we have concerning the subject. We are adamantly against closure of the bridge, but are in no position to assume the cost and liability associated with leasing or owning it.

Please keep us informed.

Best regards,

Michael P. Kelly
General Manager

cc: Frank Turpin
Bill Nordmark
Joe Usibelli
Jerry Colrud

Suntrana Bridge Supporters
Box 53
Healy 99743

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Joe Taylor<br>Joe Taylor | 270 ILL. ST<br>FBKS AK<br>99701 | People burn coal to try + save money, Closing bridge would raise the cost + hurt the people that need help the most. | 3-14-89 |
| Charlene Krause<br>Charlene Krause | 451 Cindy Dr.<br>FBKS AK 99712 | I'm in favor of keeping it running. Please fix it. | 3-14-89 |
| Lawrence Finstad | 664 Lancaster<br>FBKS AK 99708 | Keep running | 3-14-89 |
| Arthur R. Thordess<br>Arthur R. Thordess | 1667 Hammock Ave<br>North Pole, AK 99705 | It's a crime the way ARR runs on the cheap. Have a State Railroad to be proud of. Repair the bridge | 3-14-89 |
| Douglas J. DeRoatt<br>Douglas J. DeRoatt | 211 Hawk road.<br>Fbks. AK 99712 | The railroad should fix the bridge, afterall its their bridge. Keep it open fix the bridge ARR | 3-14-89 |
| Darrell Bourne<br>Darrell Bourne | P.O Box 56764<br>North Pole Ak. | Alaska Railroad should fix their own bridge | 3/14/89 |
| Alan R. Sutter | P.O. Box 16195<br>Two Rivers. Ak 99716 | Jack - We must keep this bridge open for the small guy in your district | 3-14-89 |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Filbert H Burnham ~~221 Craig St. FBKS~~ | 221 Craig St. Fairbanks, Alaska 99701 | We need Coal & I for Coal Distribution will be Shut down | 3/16/89 |
| Wayne Olsen Wayne Olsen | 137 1st Ave FBKS AK 99701 BESCO | Coal Business keeps Our Business going | 3/17/89 |
| Mike Hawks Mike Hawks | 414 Carlton Fbks, AK 99701 Besco | The Coal Bunker is a good Buyer of ours | 3/19/89 |
| David Underhill David Underhill | 1010 8th Ave Fbks. Besco. | At Coal Bunkers is a good Customer of ours | 3-17-89 |
| Shirley Keller Shirley Keller | 731 Florence North Pole AK | We need the Coal Business | 3/17/89 |
| ~~Carl Ledbetter~~ CARL Ledbetter | 460 3RD + Kellam Box 2035 | We need the coal business | 3/17/89 |
| Keith Hoffman Keith Hoffman | 709 Ill. St FBKS | Coal Customer We need coal price down. | 3-17-89 |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| [illegible] Burton<br>Katherine M Burton | [illegible] Box [illegible]<br>Fbks AK [illegible] | | 3-17-89 |
| Eddie Tavar<br>Eddie Tavar | [illegible]<br>FAIRBANKS<br>AK 99711 | need coal | 3-17-89 |
| John A Bankston<br>John A Bankston | P.O. Box 10947<br>Fairbanks AK. 99710 | Cheap coal | 3-17-89 |
| Mark A Caster<br>Mark Caster | 600 Driveway st.<br>Fairbanks Ak. 99701 | The Railroad Should Repair Their own Bridge | 3-17-89 |
| Richard Gregory<br>Richard Gregory | 3080 - Ridgeview Dr.<br>FBKS. AK 99709 | Affect the price of coal | 3-17-89 |
| DAVID A BROWNE<br>[illegible] | P.O. BOX 81669<br>FAIRBANKS, ALASKA<br>99708 | | 17 MAR 89 |
| | | | |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Don S. Halvarson<br>Don S. Halvarson | P.O. Box 2602<br>Fbk., Ak. | Maybe the Milbelt Energy fund money could be used to offset this cost. | March 12 1989 |
| Rodney Shilling<br>Rodney D. Shilling | POBox 814424<br>College AK<br>99708 | Fbks needs Coal | 3-13-89 |
| Richard Cotang | PO BOX 101555<br>Fbks 99710 | Fbks needs coal! | 3/13/89 |
| [illegible] Taylor<br>[illegible] Taylor | PO BOX 72001<br>FBKS AK<br>99707 | | [illegible] |
| [illegible] Greenwalt<br>[illegible] Greenwalt | 110 CHANDLER ST<br>FBK AK 99701 | | 3/14/89 |
| KENNETH KRAUSE<br>Kenneth Krause | [illegible] DR<br>FBKS AK<br>99712 | HEAT MY COAL | 3-18-89 |
| JOE TRAMANELLO<br>Joe Tramanello | BX 80514<br>College 99708 | | 3-14-89 |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| MARSHA WOODS | 5150 FOUTS | Marsha A. Woods | 3/15/89 |
| Laura Johnson Laura Johnson | 5150 Fouts | | 3/15/89 |
| Cyrus Fouts Cyrus R. Fouts | 5110 Fouts Ave. Fairbanks | ~~Cyrus R. Fouts~~ I feel important that we keep all small businesses in operation especially in FBKS. By not fixing the existing bridge most likely our coal businesses in town will be forced to close, and I feel that you need to have that fact. | 3/15/89 |
| Nini Fouts Nini Fouts | 5110 - Fouts Ave Fairbanks, AK 99709 | I concur with the above comments | 3/15/89 |
| Jerald L. Smith JERALD L. SMITH | P.O. Box 75384 FAIRBANKS, AK 99707 | OBVIOUSLY AN ISOLATIONIST TACTIC BY THOSE NARROW-MINDED "CITY-ITES" LIVING IN "LOS ANCHORAGE" - | 3/16/89 |
| JAYNE W. WALKER Jayne W. Walker | 550 Birch Hill Rd FAIRBANKS, AK | We RELY ON COAL AS OUR MAIN SOURCE FOR HEATING AT A+W WHOLESALE. INCREASED COSTS FOR COAL OR ALTERNATE HEAT SOURCE WILL HURT US SEVERELY | 3/16/89 |
| HARRY C. OLSON Harry C Olson | 664 Cranberry Ridge Dr Fairbanks AK 99712 | | 3/16/89 |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| DON L. BENT<br>Don L. Bent | 2002 Souther<br>Fairbanks<br>Ak. 99709 | | 3/16/89 |
| Kerry Gronewold<br>Kerry Gronewold | Box 144<br>~~Levelock~~<br>Fairbanks, Ak 99707 | | 3/16/89 |
| John Rocco Janiro<br>John Rocco Janiro | 1711 Coyote trail<br>Fairbanks ak 99709 | | 3/17/89 |
| Roberta Janiro<br>Roberta Janiro | 1711 Coyote Trail<br>Fairbanks, Ak<br>99709 | - | 3/17/89 |
| DALE BOURNE<br>Dale Bourne | PO BOX 60152<br>FBKS, AK 99706 | | 3/17/89 |
| Peggy Pollen<br>Peggy Pollen | 1606 Heather Dr<br>Fbks., Ak 99709 | | 3/17/89 |
| [illegible] | 5550 Old Steese Hwy | IF THE Bridge IT IS ESSENTIAL TO THE ECONOMIC[H] | 3/17/89 |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Todd Burlew<br>~~Edwin Peck~~ | P.O. Box 81175 | | 3/15/89 |
| Edwin Peck<br>EDWIN PECK | 1052 Nordale Rd N. Pole 99705 | | 3-15-89 |
| Joseph Dangelo<br>JOSEPH DANGELO | 2620 KALISPEL Loop<br>NORTH POLE AK. 99705 | | 3-15-89 |
| Joseph Carlson<br>Joseph L Carlson | PO Box 1185<br>Fairbanks AK 99707 | | 3-15-89 |
| Allan W. Coty<br>Allan W. Coty | P.O. Box 10203<br>FLKS., AK. 99710 | | 3-15-89 |
| Raymond Gabriel<br>Raymond Gabriel | 1756 Airey Rd:<br>FLKS AK. 99709 | | 3-16-89 |
| Keith MEAD<br>Keith Mead | P.O. Box 80118<br>FBKS, AK, 99708 | | 3/16/89 |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| DOUGLAS RICHMOND Douglas J. Richmond | 840 4th AVENUE FBKS. AK 99701 | | 3/17/89 |
| Robert F Meath Robert F. Meath | PO Box 764 Fairbanks, AK 99707 | Need bridge open to receive Equal in Fairbanks at a reasonable price | 3/17/89 |
| Steve Sather Steve Sather | 1212 29th Apt #4 Fbks., AK. 99701 | | 3/17/89 |
| | | | |
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PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME<br>printed<br>signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mike Kelly<br>Mike Kelly | Box 1249<br>Fbks. AK | Bridge will play an even larger roll when new Power plant built east of river. | 3/15/79 |
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PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Michael R. Jacobs<br>Michael R. Jacobs | S.R. 1 Mile 260<br>Healy AK 99743 | | 3-11-8 |
| ONALD MELLECKER<br>onald Mellecker | Box 159<br>Denali AK. 99755 | | 3-11-8 |
| U.B. Willems<br>U B WILLEMS | Box 55<br>McKinley, AK 99755 | | 3-11-8 |
| Y. Patrick Gerrard | P.O. 48<br>Denali Park AK 99755 | | 3-11-8 |
| INDELL SPEER<br>Mindell Speer | BOX 50 HEALY 99743 | | 3-11-8 |
| Timothy KELAHAN<br>Timothy Kelahan | P.O. Box 417<br>HEALY AK 99743 | | 3-11-8 |
| LAVERNE. ISAACSON.<br>La Verne Isaacson | Box 105.<br>HEALY-AK 99743. | | 3-12-89 |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gerald K Hamel<br>Gerald K Hamel | Box 105 Healy AK | | 3/11-89 |
| Kevin Hamel<br>Kevin Hamel | Box 82 Healy, AK | | 3/11/89 |
| JEAN LAPIERRE<br>Jean Lapierre | Box 105 Healy | | 3/11/8 |
| Bill Wolfe<br>Bill Wolfe | 1644 KIVALINA ST<br>FAIRBANKS AK | | 3/11/89 |
| Richard Anderson<br>Richard J Anderson | P.O. Box 74896<br>Fairbanks AK | | 3/11/89 |
| DAN SCHWIETERT<br>Dan Schwietert | P.O. BOX 10361<br>FAIRBANKS AK<br>99710 | | 3/11/89 |
| DAN Snodgress<br>Dan Snodgress | 1245 Lance Cove<br>FBKS, AK 99712 | | PL MAR 89 |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ANDREW R. SAMMS<br>Andrew R. Samms | Box 1866<br>Fairbanks AK | | MAR 11, 198 |
| JOHN P. STINE<br>John P. Stine | 400 CRAIG<br>FRKS. AK. | | MAR 11, 198 |
| JAMES M. O'NEILL<br>James M. O'Neill | 231 CRAIG AVE.<br>FBKS, AK 99701 | | MARCH 11, 1989 |
| Stacey O. Skrivanek<br>Stacey Owen Skrivanek | P.O. Box 17<br>Healy, Alaska<br>99743 | | March 11 1989 |
| Michael S. Gregus<br>Michael S. Gregus | P.O. BOX 105<br>Healy, AK<br>99743 | | 3/11/89 |
| JAMES DREW<br>James Drew | BOX 111533 SE.<br>ANCHORAGE AK 99511 | | |
| SHIRLEY HAMEL<br>Shirley Q. Hamel | BOX 105<br>Healy, AK 99743 | | 3/11/89 |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Patricia Nordmark<br>Patricia Nordmark | Box 53<br>Healy, AK. 99743 | The area accessed by this bridge has a lot of industrial potential --ie. coal, power plant expansion, etc. | 3/13/89 |
| William I. Bailey<br>William I. Bailey | P.O. Box 353<br>Healy, Alaska<br>99743 | | 3/13/89 |
| John C. Grys<br>Louise F. GRYS | P.O. Box 21<br>Healy Alaska<br>99743 | | 3/14/89 |
| Anthony Mueller<br>Anthony Mueller | P.O. Box 152<br>Healy, Ak.<br>99743 | | 3/13/89 |
| [illegible] | Box 134<br>[illegible] | | [illegible] |
| John I. Truett<br>John I. Truett | Box 132<br>Healy, AK 99743 | | 3-13-89 |
| | | | |

PETITION

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| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| RJ Blakeway | Strt. 1 mi 261 PKS Hwy Healy AK 99743 | | 3-11-89 |
| Norm Kloster | Box 168 Healy AK 99743 | | 3-11-89 |
| Randy Brumbaugh | Box 333 Healy Alaska 99743 | | 3/11/89 |
| Linda Brumbaugh | Box 333 Healy Alaska 99743 | | 3/11/89 |
| Terry C. Maclachlan | Mi 261 Parks Hwy Healy AK 99743 | | 3/11/89 |
| Sherry M. Maclachlan | Mi 261 Parks Hwy Healy AK 99743 | | 3/11/89 |
| James N. Brannon JR | Box 39 Suntrana, AK, 99743 | Good For the Economy of Healy. Helps keep the Price | 3/11/89 |
| | Part of Healy, | | |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| LaVerne F Talerico | P.O. Box 361 Healy, AK 99743 | Historical site | 3-12-89 |
| Richard G. Martin Jr | Box 141 Healy, AK. 99743 | Historical site | 3/12/89 |
| James S. Graham | Box 305 Healy AK. 99743 | The Bridge is needed for Commercial use | 3/12/8 |
| Larry P. Jackson | Box 331 Healy, AK 99743 | | 3-12-8 |
| Bruce R. Hamm | Box 192 Healy, AK 99743 | it is used by Business Across the river. | 3-13-8 |
| [illegible] | [illegible] Healy, Ak 99743 | | 3/15/8 |
| | | | |

PETITION

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| NAME<br>printed<br>signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nancy J. Blakeway<br>Nancy J. Blakeway | St. Rt 1<br>Mile 361 Parks Hwy<br>Healy, AK 99743 | | 3-11-5 |
| | | | |
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PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME<br>printed<br>signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| William D. Nordmark<br>William D. Nordmark | Box 53<br>Healy Alaska<br>99743 | If this bridge is closed, any future developement across the river that uses rail service will be unlikely | 3/11/85 |
| John Ellis | RT 1-2-5 [illegible] | | |
| Michael Fillingim<br>Michael Fillingim | Box 24<br>Healy Alaska<br>[illegible] | " " | 3/11/85 |
| Sue J. Keller<br>Sue J. Keller | Box 113<br>Healy<br>Alaska 99743 | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

# PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT [illegible]LUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Co[illegible]ration to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | [illegible]MENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| FRANK TALERICO | [illegible] | | [illegible] |
| [illegible] | [illegible] | [illegible] | |
| Sara Y. Lohrentz | [illegible] | | 3/12/[illegible] |
| CLAUDE LACHAPELLE | P.O. Box 112 [illegible] | | [illegible] |
| [illegible] | [illegible] | [illegible] | [illegible] |
| CINDY MARTIN | Box 114 Healy Alaska 1743 | | 3/12/[illegible] |
| [illegible] Hager | [illegible] | | 3/[illegible]/89 |

# PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Orville Milkins<br>Orville Milkins | P.O Box 123<br>Healy AK<br>99743 | | 3-12-85 |
| Jack Chapman | P.O.B. 121<br>Healy, AK<br>99743 | | 3/14/85 |
| | | | 3/14/ |
| | | | 3/14/85 |
| LAWRENCE P. MARTIN<br>Lawrence P. Martin | P.O. Box 14 | | 3/15/85 |
| | | | 3/ |
| Rob Crowley<br>Robin M. Crowley | P.O. Box 77<br>Healy AK<br>99743 | | 3/17/85 |

# PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT [illegible]ION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad C[illegible]ion to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| [illegible] | [illegible] | | 3/31/84 |
| RICHARD E. UNDRUH [illegible] | [illegible] | | 3/13/84 |
| Jannett Stone Jannett Stone | Box [illegible] [illegible] AK 99745 | | 3/13/84 |
| TIMOTHY J. VENECHUK Timothy J. Venechuk | Box 238 HEALY, AK. | | 3/13/84 |
| [illegible] | [illegible] | | [illegible] |
| JAMES R. HITT James R Hitt | P.O. Box 17 HEALY, AK 99743 | | 3/14/84 |
| DANIEL C. GRAHAM D C C L | PO Box 215 HEALY, AK 99743 | | 3/15/84 |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrena Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| INGGARE. Clausen<br>Ingga E. Clausen | Box 186<br>Esther, Ak<br>99725 | | 3-21-89 |
| Edward O. Smith<br>Edward O Smith | 3339 Baker Rd<br>N.P. AK 99705 | | 3/22/89 |
| Mike Butler<br>MIKE BUTLER | 2026 KENDALL AVE NORTH, NOLE, AK 99705 | WE NEED TO KEEP THE PRICE OF COAL DOWN; AND TRUCKING IT IS NOT THE SOLUTION. | 3-22-89 |
| Richard Baerick<br>Richard Baerick | 3414 Rosie Creek Rd<br>Fairbanks, AK, | | 3/23/89 |
| LARRY D. Hutto<br>Larry D Hutto | Box 466<br>Delta Jct, Ak. | | 3-22-89 |
| HET VAUGHAN<br>Het Vaughan | 3545 CHETANA<br>FAIRBANKS, ALASKA | | 3/24/89 |
| | | | |

PETITION

We the undersigned support SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 14, which requests the Governor to direct the Alaska Railroad Corporation to keep the Suntrana Branch railroad bridge open.

| NAME printed signature | ADDRESS | COMMENTS | DATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| [illegible] McKee | 347 Hillside Dr. | | |
| Charles L. Miles | 598 ETON 99709 | | |
| Mark Swift | Box 82460 FBKS 99708 | | |
| Joan McCumby | 3350 THOMAS | | |
| Debra Clymer | 1318 Windfall Way Fair. AK. 99707 | we use coal Always | |
| Steve Clymer | | | |
| Jodean Ebbert | 7670 Old Steese Hwy Fairbanks 99712 | | |
| | | | |

AR 12.

ALASKA
CONSTRUCTION & MINING
EQUIPMENT, Inc.
DBA THE COAL BUNKERS

PHONE: (907) 456-5005 or 452-2722
P.O. BOX 72869 • 270 ILLINOIS ST
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99707

October 31, 1988

Mr. Frank Turpin
President
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 10-7500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

RE: Removal of Suntrana Branch from Service

Dear Mr. Turpin:

We have a great deal of difficulty accepting your decision to close the Suntrana Branch and force Reliable Coal to truck their product to rail access. To suggest that Reliable's customers would understand an increase in cost due to their additional costs is not accurate. We may understand Reliable's need to raise their price as a result of inaccessibility to the tracks, but we could not accept such an increased cost.

The Fairbanks consumer's cost of coal today is minimally cheaper than oil. To raise the price would diminish the demand for coal to a point where we would be out of business. Over the past several years the coal market in Fairbanks has continued to shrink, even as modern technology and automatic feed coal boilers have been introduced to the consumer. We have responded to this shrinking demand for coal by marketing other products, such as Senco fasteners and other construction-related products. We have also scaled back our operation and reduced overhead to a very low level. Even these actions have not been enough in these economic times to keep us from suffering a loss in 1988. We are struggling to survive the current recession, in the hopes that construction related sales will increase and bring us back to profitability. What lies in the future for the residential and commercial coal business in Fairbanks? We predict a continual decrease in demand over time at the <u>current</u> prices.

With the increased costs which would occur if Reliable had to truck to the railroad, the demand for coal would almost immediately stop. Homeowners and businesses would face the immediate need to convert their heating systems, causing them undue hardship in these already tough economic times. We

would go out of business. The Alaska Railroad would lose a good leaseholder and would lose the transportation revenue from our coal demand. I believe that all of these things add up to more than your cost of repairing the bridge on the Suntrana Branch.

I request that you re-think your decision in this matter, and choose instead a course of action which ensures the continuation of the service you provide to Reliable Coal.

Sincerely,

Walt Schlotfeldt

cc: William D. Nordmark
Owner, Reliable Coal
P.O. Box 53
Healy, Alaska 99743

George Sullivan, Chairman
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 10-7500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

K.A. Smith, Fairbanks Superintendent
Alaska Railroad Corporation
280 N. Cushman
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

William I. Waugaman
P.O. Box 2491
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707

Joe Usibelli, Jr., President
Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc.
Box 1000
Healy, Alaska 99743

Senator Jack Coghill
P.O. Box 55028
North Pole, AK 99705-5028

ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

P.O. Box 107500 • Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

October 4, 1988

The Honorable John B. (Jack) Coghill
Senator
P. O. Box 55028
North Pole, Alaska 99705

Dear Jack,

This is in answer to your request for clarification on our position on closing the Suntrana Branch bridge.

I think you are aware of our problem with the bridge; it has simply been in service too long without reworking the support piers. Repairs needed to provide a sound structure are estimated by our Engineering Department to cost at least $125,000. When we encounter an expenditure of that magnitude, we look carefully at the cost/benefit ratio and also at alternates if the work is not performed.

The major user of this bridge is Reliable Coal, a company that crushes and screens coal for customers requiring a uniform size fuel not available at the Usibelli mine. The majority of crushed coal shipped by Reliable Coal is purchased by the Alaska Railroad for use in our Fairbanks power station. In 1989, our new shop heating system will be installed and we will completely shut down our coal-burning facility. This will leave fewer than 50 cars per year of crushed coal that would use the Suntrana Branch bridge. With such a small volume of material to handle, the coal could easily be trucked to a site across the river and there loaded into rail cars. We have offered to provide such a site for Mr. Nordmark in our Healy terminal.

We recognize that the additional trucking step will slightly increase the operating cost for Reliable Coal, but this will have a small impact on the business compared to losing the railroad volume. We will be happy to discuss a downward adjustment in the freight rate with Mr. Nordmark that will reflect the lower cost of not switching to the Suntrana Branch. The offset could well balance the increased cost of handling the coal.

The other potential user for the Suntrana bridge could be Usibelli Coal Mine in an emergency if their tippie belt fails. The one time this has happened, coal was trucked to the Reliable Coal loading site and loaded into rail cars using a front-end loader. The coal could just as easily be trucked across the highway bridge to a temporary loading site on the other side of the river. Permission would have to be obtained from DOT&PF to temporarily use the large Usibelli trucks on the highway during the emergency, but that should be no problem.

Therefore, Jack, we do not believe use of the bridge justifies the large expenditure to keep it in service. We recognize that changes such as this cause concern, but it is for exactly this reason that we announce these moves early enough to get input from the people affected by them.

Sincerely,

F. G. Turpin
President & CEO

# ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

P.O. Box 107500 • Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7500

September 28, 1988

Mr. William D. Nordmark
Owner
Reliable Coal
P. O. Box 53
Healy, AK 99743

Dear Mr. Nordmark:

I have received your letter of September 15 concerning the Railroad's plans to remove the railroad bridge over the Nenana River on the Suntrana Branch from service.

This action is predicated upon the deterioration of the support piers of the bridge. The concrete has deteriorated to such an extent that our Engineering Department has advised that the bridge either must be removed from service or the concrete structure rehabilitated. It does not appear that an expenditure estimated at approximately $125-130,000 for repairs is justified based on the amount of business carried over the bridge.

Although I realize your business is adjacent to the Suntrana Branch, I have been advised that closing the bridge would not preclude you from continuing your operations. Operational changes would have to be made since you would be unable to load directly into railroad cars at your present site; however, an alternate site in the Healy terminal could be made available for you to load rail cars.

You could continue to crush coal at your current site and then truck it to the rail. Although this would be an added expense to your current operations, your customers should understand your increased costs and expect to pay a higher price for your product.

The land lease and crossing permits that you currently have with the Railroad would be continued, and other property for a loading site across the river could be made available. Closing the bridge should not cause you to forfeit your investment nor prevent you from continuing to do business.

I have asked the Operating Division to review this issue further and will apprise you of their evaluation.

Sincerely,

F. G. Turpin
President and Chief Executive Officer

cc:
G. Sullivan, Chairman, ARRC Board of Directors
K. A. Smith, Fairbanks Terminal Supt., ARRC
W. I. Waugaman, Fairbanks
J. Usibelli Jr., Usibelli Coal Mine
W. Schlotfeldt, The Coal Bunkers
Senator Jack Coghill, North Pole

# ALASKA RAILROAD CORPORATION

P.O. Box 7-2111 • Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7069

October 11, 1988

RECEIV

OCT 13 1988

GVEA - Administrati

Mr. Michael P. Kelly
General Manager
Golden Valley Electric Association, Inc.
P. O. Box 1249
Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1249

Dear Mr. Kelly:

This is in reply to your letter of October 3, 1988, commenting on our plan to abandon the railroad bridge across the Nenana River at Healy.

Since your Healy plant may have future use for rail service across the Nenana River, and you feel the spur will again become an important lifeline to areas on the east side of the river, one option that would provide you with access whenever you find it advantageous would be for us to lease you the spur. If you owned the track, any use by the Alaska Railroad or any other user would be subject to payment that would contribute to the cost of maintaining the bridge and track. The track and bridge would have to be maintained up to Federal Railroad Administration requirements, of course, before we could use it for Alaska Railroad equipment.

If you have any interest in the ownership option, please contact me and we will begin developing a proposal to effect the lease. We do not plan any public hearings on this matter.

Sincerely,

F. G. Turpin
President and Chief Executive Officer

① Bd. –
② Joe Usibelli
③ Woody

Joe Usibelli
Are you taking any action regarding a spur? We are bridge & inclined to cover it.
Mike Kelly

GOLDEN VALLEY ELECTRIC ASSOCIATION INC. Box 1249, Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1249, Phone 907-452-11

October 3, 1988

Mr. Frank Turpin, General Manager
Alaska Railroad Corporation
P.O. Box 10-7500
Anchorage, Alaska 99510

Subject: Railroad Spur at Healy

Dear Mr. Turpin:

It has come to our attention that the Alaska Railroad is considering the abandonment of the railroad bridge across the Nenana River at Healy. Golden Valley is not presently using it's rail spur into the Healy plant. We are bringing fuel oil in by truck. However, the rail line has always been considered an alternate means of liquid fuel supply and an important transportation link into the plant for major component delivery, etc.

In future years, when the Healy plant is enlarged, the rail spur will be needed to supply plant components and construction equipment. Without the bridge and spur, such freight movements would be more difficult and expensive.

We strongly urge you not to remove the railroad bridge. Although little used now, it will again become an important lifeline to areas on the east side of the Nenana River. Please advise us of any hearings to be held on this matter.

Best regards,

Michael P. Kelly
General Manager

cc: W. Waugaman

Bill,

Thanks for alerting us to this matter.

MK

# SCR

# 25

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

(5)
Date Referred: February 14, 1990 FURTHER REFERRALS:
FINANCE

Date of Committee Action: 4/10/90

The TRANSPORTATION Committee considered: CSSCR 25(FINANCE)

CS SCR. NO. 25 (Fin) TRANSPORTATION EXPANSION STRATEGY

Relating to a plan for expansion of the Alaska transportation system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
[ ] be replaced with CS SCR 25 (Transp) [ ] the same title [ ] a new title
[ ] have attached amendment(s)
[ ] do pass
[ ] do not pass
[ ] no recommendation
[ ] individual recommendations
[ ] additional referral to the _____ Committee

ADOPTS: _____ letter of intent

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(s): (Dept)
[ ] fiscal impact _____
[ ] zero fiscal note _____
[ ] zero with analysis _____

APPROVES PREVIOUS: (Date/Dept)
[ ] fiscal note(s) _____
[ ] zero fiscal note(s) _____
[ ] zero fn/analysis _____

SIGNING DO PASS:

Eugene A. Kubina

SIGNING: (Check approp. column)

| | Do Not Pass | No Rec | Amend |
|---|---|---|---|
| Drew M. Scheer | | ✓ | |
| Bill Hudson | | ✓ | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Eugene A. Kubina
Chairman's Signature

6-0967Ha
Utermohle

A M E N D M E N T

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE

TO: CSSCR 25 (Finance)

Page 2, following line 8:

Insert a new paragraph to read:

"(1) undertake expansion of the Alaska transportation system by ~~assuming responsibility for maintenance of~~ identifying those municipal, village, or other local roads that are not maintained year round so that these roads would be open to public use year round;"

Renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

# Alaska State Legislature

SENATOR JIM DUNCAN

P. O. BOX V JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811-3100

(907) 465-4766

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE
VICE CHAIR – HEALTH EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES
BUDGET & AUDIT
BANKING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## *MEMORANDUM*

MAR
MAR
R
Wendy

**DATE:** March 14, 1990

**TO:** Representative Richard Foster, Chair
House Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Senator Jim Duncan

**RE:** CS SCR 25 (Fin) - Relating to a plan for expansion of the Alaska transportation system.

I request that you schedule SCR 25 for a hearing in the House Transportation Committee as soon as possible. SCR 25 directs the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to establish a process to prioritize and fund major projects. Currently the Department does not plan for major transportation system expansion and consequently such projects are not included in the Department's 6 year plan. Major projects are generally extremely expensive and are well beyond the State of Alaska's ability to accomplish with General Funds. If such projects are not included in the 6 year plan, they are not eligible for Federal Highway Administration participation in the cost.

SCR 25 will remedy the situation by requiring the DOT/PF to formulate a plan for expansion of the Alaska transportation system and provide the legislature with that plan. It will also require the DOT/PF to provide the legislature with a prioritized list of the projects identified and how they are proposed to be funded.

My involvement in this issue is prompted by the desire to improve access to Juneau but SCR 25 is generic. It does not direct the Department to formulate a plan only for Southeast Region, but instead all regions of the State. I feel it will focus the DOT/PF's efforts more towards expansion of our transportation system, instead of strictly on maintaining the existing system.

I urge you to schedule SCR 25 for a hearing as soon as possible.

Attachments

STATE OF ALASKA
1990 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL VERSION: CSSCR 25 (Finance)
PUBLISH DATE: 1/22/90

# FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: _____
Title: Expansion of Transportation System
Sponsor: Duncan
Requestor: _____

Agency Affected: Transportation and Public Facilities
BRU: _____
Components: _____

**EXPENDITURES/REVENUES:** (Thousands of Dollars)

| OPERATING | FY 91 | FY 92 | FY 93 | FY 94 | FY 95 | FY 96 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PERSONAL SERVICES | | | | | | |
| TRAVEL | | | | | | |
| CONTRACTUAL | | | | | | |
| SUPPLIES | | | | | | |
| EQUIPMENT | | | | | | |
| LAND & STRUCTURES | | | | | | |
| GRANTS, CLAIMS | | | | | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS | | | | | | |
| TOTAL OPERATING | | | | | | |
| CAPITAL | 75.0 | | | | | |
| REVENUE | | | | | | |

**FUNDING:** (Thousands of Dollars)

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GENERAL FUND | 75.0 | | | | | |
| FEDERAL FUNDS | | | | | | |
| OTHER | | | | | | |
| TOTAL | | | | | | |

**POSITIONS:**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FULL-TIME | | | | | | |
| PART-TIME | | | | | | |
| TEMPORARY | | | | | | |

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

Prepared by: Senator Rick Uehling, Co-chairman
Division: Senate Finance Committee
Phone: 465-4821
Date: 1/22/90

Approved by Commissioner: _____ Date: _____
Agency: _____

Distribution (by preparer):
Legislative Finance
Legislative Sponsor
Requestor
Office of Management and Budget
Impacted Agency(ies)

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS - JUNEAU ROAD ACCESS

Provided by Senator Jim Duncan, March 1990

| | |
|---|---|
| 1921 | Taku Valley Recon. Report prepared for the Alaska Road Commission - Tidewater to the Canadian border. |
| 1951-52 | Reconnaissance Report on proposed Taku River Route and Photo Recon. Report for the Federal Bureau of Public Roads. |
| 1954 | December - Reconnaissance survey of the Taku route for the Alaska Road Commission. |
| 1963 | Taku Glacier Evaluation Study by Maynard Miller for the Alaska Dept. of Highways and Federal Bureau of Public Roads - indicated unstable situation. |
| 1964 | November - Reconnaissance Report for proposed Forest Highway done for the U.S. Forest Service. Access to timber and the Glacier Bay National Monument the goal. |
| 1967 | April - Reconnaissance Report on the Chilkat River Crossing by DOT/PF - to pick crossing location. Assumes a west side route. |
| 1970 | State Dept of. Highways develops plans for Chilkat River Crossing but finds Right of Way problems with Indian Reservation, also environmental issues arise. |
| 1974 | September - Lynn Canal Environmental Assessment for the Alaska Department of Highway. |
| 1974 | October - Alaska Department of Highways prepares a cost estimate on the Juneau to Skagway route. |
| 1975 | Lynn Canal Transportation Corridor Public Hearing Brochure prepared by the Dept. of Highways. Concentrated primarily on surface transportation, transportation costs and environmental issues. |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1979 | Southeast Transportation Plan by Wilbur Smith & Assoc. Examines Taku route and routes to Haines and Skagway. |
| 1980 | Cost estimates prepared on Juneau to Haines route by DOT/PF. |
| 1981 | January - Juneau to Haines location investigation done by R & M Engineering for the Senate Transportation Committee. |
| 1986 | Evaluation of Corridor Alternatives by Acres International for DOT/PF identifies most attractive options as 1) high-speed shuttle ferry between Echo Cove, Haines and Skagway, and 2) a road up the east side of Lynn Canal to Skagway with a shuttle ferry to Haines. Report also identifies status quo as the least costly option. |
| 1987 | March - Greater Juneau Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Committee prepares an Evaluation and Recommendations stating the Acres report did not include important economic factors. |
| 1987 | May - Senator Duncan appropriates $100,000 in federal funds to determine the economic feasibility of road access to Juneau. |
| 1988 | March - the Federal Highway Administration indicates the next step in the process should be an Environmental Impact Statement for a highway connection between Juneau, Haines and Skagway. The FHWA would require a commitment on the part of the Department to build in order to proceed. |
| 1988 | August - Maynard Miller releases information stating the TAKU Glacier was advancing at an accelerating rate and could dam the Taku River in six to 10 years. |
| 1988 | September 15 - Maynard Miller retracts his previous statement saying an assistant had confused feet with meters. |
| 1988 | September - Senator Duncan asks DNR, Fish and Game and the U.S. Geological Survey to determine whether or not the information on the glacial problems on the Taku route was correct. |

1988 September - Senator Duncan asks the Juneau Economic Development Council to take the lead in pulling together a community consensus on a road option, by providing objective information on all possible options. The JEDC agrees to take on the project even though no funding is available.

1988 November - Senator Coghill asks for and receives a $6,000 grant from the Senate Leadership funds for Red Swanson.

1989 January 18 - Senator Coghill introduces SB 124 and SB 125 which would authorize DOT/PF to construct the Lynn Canal Highway Project and appropriate $102.0 million in federal and state funds.

1989 January 24 - the Juneau City and Borough Assembly endorses the Juneau Economic Development Council approach to improved access to Juneau in support of a rational process that will make obtaining funding a more realistic goal. The Assembly expressed concerns with SB 125, Senator Coghill's Lynn Canal appropriation, as being premature.

1989 January 27 - the Juneau Branch, Alaska Miners Association issued the following statement:

"While the Juneau Branch of the Alaska Miners Association favors the concept of enhanced access to the State Capitol, it chooses at this time not to endorse any particular plan as the Branch feels the issue merits further study."

1989 March 3 - Senator Duncan formally asks Bob Ruby of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) exactly what the state should do to show a commitment to build a specific road project.

1989 March 6 - Bob Ruby, FHWA responds; "It is the FHWA policy that Federal-aid highway funds for preliminary engineering work, such as environment, location or design studies, should not be authorized without a reasonable assurance that construction will proceed within five years following the initial authorization...The normal procedures for this funding commitment would be inclusion of a significant construction project in the Alaska DOT&PF's Six-Year Plan." Mr. Ruby went on to say that "legislation to appropriate funds