

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES, 1989-1990 8672  
6527 SENATE RESOURCES

731

④ recreational industry

JAN 31 1990

Jan 27, 1990

Honorable Betty Farhenkamp  
Senate Resource Committee Chairman  
Senate P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Ak 99811

Dear Ms Farhenkamp,

As a 41 year resident of Skwentna I am very concerned about the effort to cram the Susitna Timber Sale down the throats of people who have already demonstrated that they don't want it.

After attending a Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 1990 meeting at the Skwentna School in which it was unanimous in the support of SVA's Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area Bill I strongly urge you to support and co-sponsor it. Our meeting was hampered by 38° below zero temperatures and fog in Anch. that prevented many property owners from attending but phone conversations with them showed their support for the SVA bill.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Joseph F. Delia

Joseph F. Delia  
Box 41  
Shwentner, Ark  
99667



Honorable Betty Farhenkamp  
Senate Resource Committee Chairman  
Senate P. O. Box V  
Guneau, Ark.  
99811

JAN 31 1990

Hon. Betty Farhenkamp  
Chm. Senate Resources Comm.  
Senate P. O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Mrs. Farhenkamp:

The Susitna Timber Sales has been the topic of conversation in our area for a long time. The impact it would have on our lives is not taken lightly. People relaxed when Gov. Cowper said it wouldn't be forced on an area who are so opposed to it. Now, here we go again.

I absolutely support SVA'S Susitna Valley Remote Recreational Area Bill. It would be my hope our representatives would support the lifestyles of those the timber sale would most affect, rather than a few in urban areas. You, as a co-sponsor, would send a vital message to others to respect the will of the people.

Sincerely,

Norma Helia  
Skwentna, Alaska 99667.

## SUMMARY OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA PROPOSAL

**PURPOSES** - The purposes of the SVRRA is to perpetuate and enhance the present character and existing uses of a portion of the Susitna Valley. Specifically, the SVRRA has six main purposes:

1. Protection and maintenance of fish and wildlife populations and habitat;
2. Continued public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
3. Continued remote recreation while protecting natural integrity and scenic values;
4. Continued remote commercial recreation in a quality environment;
5. To perpetuate and enhance the remote character upon which the recreational uses and community lifestyles depend; and
6. To allow additional public uses in a manner compatible with the above purposes.

**ALLOWED ACTIVITIES** - Addresses only activities on state lands. Except as noted in the next section, all existing uses would be allowed, including:

1. Personal-use timber sales for individuals and commercial facilities.
2. Adequate and feasible access to private land, existing mining claims, borough land, and other valid occupancies.
3. Local roads not connected with the existing interstate highway system.
4. Trails.
5. Construction of commercial recreation and tourism facilities.
6. Land disposals.
7. Mineral leasing.

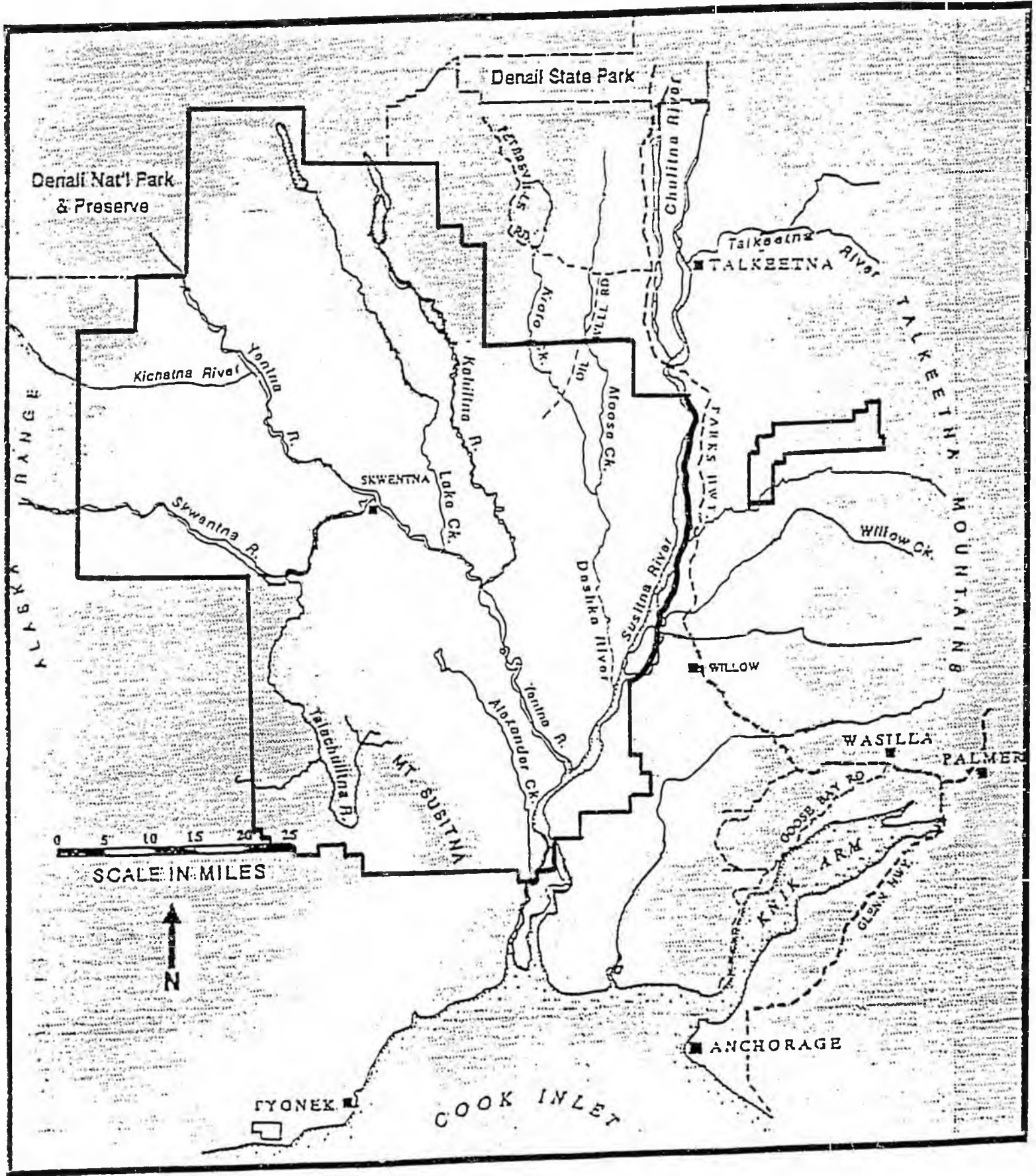
The legislation assures that traditional access, both motorized and nonmotorized, such as by boat, plane, ATV, snowmachine, dogsled, snowshoes, skis, etc., will continue.

**INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES** - the following activities would not be allowed:

1. Commercial logging on state land. (Existing commercial firewood sale areas are all outside the SVRRA boundaries and would not be impacted.)
2. Publicly financed or maintained roads connected to the highway system.
3. Mining claims. (Valid existing rights would continue.)

**MANAGEMENT** - The SVRRA will be managed by DNR, through a management plan, requiring public review and comment. ADF&G has management responsibilities for fish and wildlife resources. The commissioner of DNR may determine that a use is incompatible or needs to be modified, but only after public review and comment.

# SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA



## SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

### ECONOMIC SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES

Which will be Impacted by Susitna Valley Logging

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> which service the Valley	
Combined gross income for 1987 (10 of 38)	\$4,000,000
Combined value of businesses (10 of 38)	\$11,400,000
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> in the Valley	
Combined gross income in 1987 (23 of 52)	\$3,340,000
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b>	
Combined value of businesses (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)	\$1,500,000
<b>COMMERCIAL FISHERIES</b> (from Susitna Drainage harvest)	
Estimated ex-vessel value in '86: \$10,664,716	
Total sales generated in Alaska due to this harvest	\$17,703,428
(Does not include value of processing of fish.)	
<b>SPORTFISHERIES</b>	
Value to Southcentral Alaska of sportfishing on Susitna Valley streams in 1986	\$10,420,000
<b>ANCHORAGE HOTEL/MOTEL ROOMS</b>	
Value of Susitna related hunting and fishing to the Anchorage Hotel/Motel business	\$5,104,080
Value to Anchorage of impacted Hotel/Motel wages	\$1,660,500

### EMPLOYMENT SUMMARY OF EXISTING BUSINESSES

<b>AIR CHARTER SERVICES</b> (10 of 38)		
39 Full time + 106 Part time =145 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	75
<b>REMOTE LODGES</b> (23 of 52)		
Total employees: 125		
Estimated 46 Full time and 79 Part time		
	Full time equivalent	73
<b>AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SHOPS</b> (2 of 15 at Lake Hood)		
18 Full time + 8 part time = 26 total employees		
	Full time equivalent	21
<b>HOTEL/MOTELS</b>		
Number of employees to service related rooms		
	Full time positions	90
	Total employees:	386
	Total full-time equivalent employees:	259

### PRIVATE PROPERTIES

Number of privately owned parcels within the area being considered for timber harvesting	13,685
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# Valley economy stands at fork in road

Anchorage Daily News Sunday, January 28, 1990

By CHARLES WOHLFORTH  
Daily News reporter

**P**ALMER — On the lonely Palmer Hay flats, where frigid wind from the Knik Glacier builds dunes of snow, a line of cars two hours long passes in the dark every morning and every night like an endless desert caravan.

But instead of bearing Persian rugs or Oriental spices, this caravan brings a far more valuable commodity to the Matanuska Valley: people who make money in Anchorage and spend it here.

Commuters provide half the wealth keeping the stagnant Matanuska-Susitna Borough economy alive, and it appears likely that most of the Valley's growth will come from commuter paychecks, too. They contribute more than 10 times the money produced by agriculture, mining, logging, tourism and all other Valley basic industries combined.

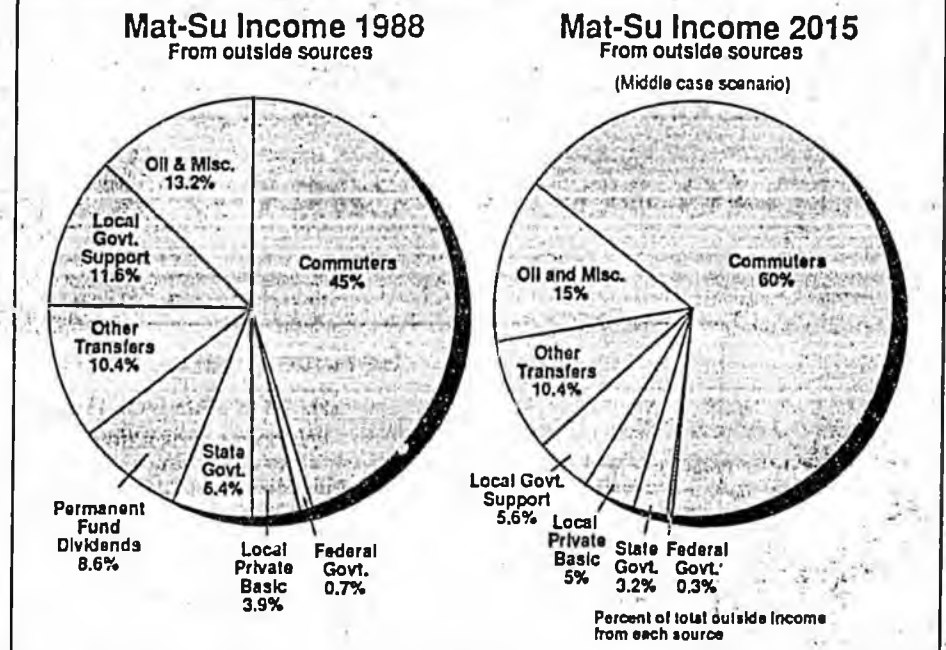
That analysis came last year from Scott Goldsmith and Eric Larson of the University of Alaska Institute of Social and Economic Research. Even the state's permanent fund dividend program brings in twice the wealth of the Valley's basic industries, and so do government social service programs, according to their report for the state Department of Transportation.

The Valley's main function is to provide bedrooms. According to a recent survey, people who work elsewhere want their bedrooms in the Valley because of the isolated, rural lifestyle.

But despite evidence that keeping those bedrooms full of commuters will determine the area's future economic health, a cadre of borough leaders would rather the people who sleep in them didn't commute. They want a return to the frontier Valley and its economy of rough-handed work like logging, mining and farming, its fast growth, and its wide-open development.

They don't think that approach puts the current commuter economy at risk.

## What Will Power the Mat-Su Economy



Sources: I.S.E.R., Alaska Dept. of Transportation, Mat-Su Borough

Anchorage Daily News/Don Tulcus

If they are wrong, the stakes of the gamble are high. Paychecks of Anchorage and the North Slope commuters produce 45 percent of the Valley's income. The local industries produce less than 4 percent of its income.

Goldsmith and Larson predicted that commuters will become even more important if the Valley is to grow. Even though they assumed a huge ski resort at Hatcher Pass and a coal mine at Sutton both will be built soon, by the year 2015 they expect commuters to bring in 60 percent of the income, compared to 5 percent for basic industry.

But the economists said commuter income is not a sure thing. It depends on commuters wanting to live in the Valley. And a growing number of residents say the way for the Valley economy to succeed is to plan its future so the quality of living there that attracts commuters is protected.

For instance, when debate turned to a major timber operation in the Valley, the borough commissioned a public opinion survey to find out how residents feel about

logging. The survey showed that 79 percent want logging to stay small, as it is now. Six percent supported the borough's goal of attracting large, outside timber developers.

Despite that kind of public sentiment, the borough government's economic program is devoted entirely to increasing resource and industrial development. The borough wants to rid itself of dependence on commuters and has pushed hard for large-scale timber development. Borough assembly members say they want commuters to stop commuting and work in the Valley in a self-sufficient economy.

Politicians say commuters import political apathy, lack community spirit, and spend too little time with their families. Their children need expensive schooling, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it because they are in Anchorage.

Still, commuters are a dominant economic force, and there is mounting evidence that most don't support wide open, frontier-style development.

putting a port there to export timber and other resources. It formed a port commission and asked voters to approve \$25 million in bonds to build the port.

Voters narrowly turned down the measure, and a study later showed the port would be speculative and unlikely to break even. But the borough is still pushing it.

In 1987, the state proposed a massive timber sale in the Susitna Valley. Borough officials have supported large-scale logging on borough land.

But an alliance of cabin owners, guides and rural residents rose up and blocked the state's timber. Studies by the state and borough since then have shown that a large-scale timber industry in the Valley probably isn't possible because the land available doesn't produce enough wood.

Trees in the Valley take 50 to 100 years to grow large enough to cut. Some potential timber has been reserved for wilderness or is in private hands, and much of what is left is swamp.

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is in shambles. Only two dairy farmers are still in business except on the state-subsidized Point MacKenzie Project. Almost all the farms on the project have collapsed or are being run by the state.

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The federally mandated plan was written by the borough staff. It represents the views of the assembly, which passed it with words of praise, rather than the broad-based citizen's committee that had been required by the federal government. Although the plan identifies the committee members as co-authors, one member said he had never seen it and another is listed only by her last name.

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Most of the assembly was elected after the economy went bad, and economic development was the constant theme of election campaigns. Although most Valley residents have not lived here long enough to remember a time when the area had its own self-sustaining economy, those who voted installed a pro-development assembly that wants the local jobs of the past to come back.

"This is the first time anyone in our family has had to leave the state to make a living," Assemblywoman Eleanor Malapanes said. "And that's in generations."

Borough Mayor Dorothy Jones said resource development will help commuters, too, by providing jobs in the Valley so they don't have to commute. She and assembly members say development doesn't have to conflict with the rural pleasures of living in the Valley.

But groups like the new Center for the Environment and Susitna Valley Association don't agree.

"There is a growing number of conservationists in the Valley," said Mike Bronson, a commuter and one of the new center's board members. "It's the amenities that attract people to the Valley — besides the cheap housing — like the natural surroundings."

The people running the borough don't agree, he said, because they belong to a small group that stands to profit from resource development.

"I think that is a very important element of our local politics," Bronson said, "that the people who are the most likely to derive direct

## WHAT IS THE SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION?

The Susitna Valley Association formed in January 1988, in opposition to large state timber sales that were being proposed in the core of the Susitna Valley. The association formed primarily for three purposes:

- first, to serve as a contact for the state and Mat-Su Borough on timber harvesting plans for the Susitna Valley,
- second, to serve as spokesperson on this issue when necessary and appropriate, and
- third, to serve as a clearinghouse for dispersal of timber-related information to interested individuals and groups.

The association has grown into a coalition of over 4300 individuals, numerous businesses, and 69 organizations. Some of those organizations are, in turn, coalitions. There are active chapters in Wasilla, Talkeetna, and Anchorage. Over 700 SVA people are valley residents, and 27 percent of the coalition organizations are Mat-Su groups.

The association is broad-based, representing a wide diversity of interests. In addition to people who own property in the Susitna Valley, there are people with business interests such as commercial fishermen, guides and outfitters, river charter services, lodge owners, air taxi operators, people in the tourism industry, and business people who support those businesses. There are people with recreation interests such as pilots, boaters, hunters, fishermen, skiers, sightseers, bikers, mushers, snowmachiners, and photographers. There are environmentalists and conservationists; people with health interests, and public land policy interests. And simply people who think large-scale logging in proximity to Southcentral Alaska's largest population centers will create unacceptable negative impacts. The interests and concerns are as varied as the individuals involved. Clearly, opposition to proposed timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley is a far-reaching issue of deep public concern that involves the entire community.

Dated: January 1990

Susitna Valley Association  
9000 Sialom Drive  
Anchorage, Alaska 99516  
346-1943

## SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION, TOURISM AND FISHERY VALUES

### Brief Background Information

The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), met with disastrous results in an attempt to hold a large-scale timber sale in the Susitna Valley two years ago. As a result, DNR went into a planning mode, and is currently in the process of writing a "forest management plan" for the area. The plan is called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP).

All lands in the valley below 1000' in altitude, a total of over 2 million acres, are being analyzed for commercial timber harvesting potential. The goals of the SRFP are to identify the location and volume of the commercial timber, determine how to access it, and establish guidelines for harvesting it. It is not a park plan; it is a forestry plan. The plan is required to take into consideration other forest values as they relate to forestry, but the focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

The public will not be offered a range of land management options for the valley because other options, or alternatives to logging, have not been considered and analyzed. People will not even have the option to approve or disapprove of the plan to log the Valley, but will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed guidelines for doing it.

### Economic Values of Remote Recreation, Tourism, and Commercial Fisheries in the Susitna Valley

The Susitna Valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area which also supports a valuable commercial fishery. A highly complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities has evolved which is supported by thousands of people and which channels millions of dollars into the local economies. Following is a synopsis of various valley activities and resource uses which the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) has compiled:

# **CORRECTION**

**THIS DOCUMENT  
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED  
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

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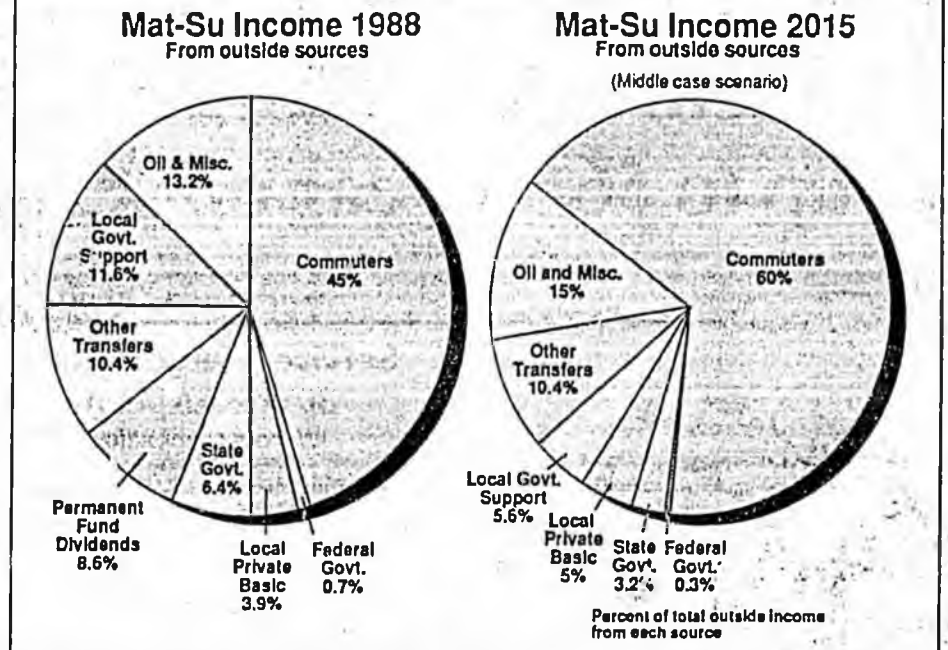
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Politicians say commuters import political apathy, lack community spirit, and spend too little time with their families. Their children need expensive schooling, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it because they are in Anchorage.

Still, commuters are a dominant economic force, and there is mounting evidence that most don't support wide open, frontier-style development.

Talkeetna, Chase, Chickaloon and the central core have begun efforts to manage their own development, saying the best way to boost the borough economy is to keep the Valley a pleasant place to live. They criticize the borough's attempts to launch big development projects at the expense of stable, basic government.

Environmentalists have organized and gained clout. One group plans to fill an empty Wasilla storefront with an office of the Alaska Center for the Environment, "in the belly of the beast," as one of them joked.

The group claims to represent a silent majority.

Some day a million people will live in the heart of the borough, between Palmer and Wasilla, if the future unfolds the way Bob Vroman predicts. When that happens, today's strip development along the highways won't bother anyone, he said, because similar development will fill in the areas between.

Vroman was a development activist in the old days of borough politics, when bad roads prevented commuting. Today he is part of a group working to plan the future of the core area.

He remembers formation of the borough in 1964. The economic problems have not changed. The Sutton coal mine had closed. The Matanuska Maid creamery had moved to Anchorage. Lower shipping costs from Outside were making Valley agriculture less competitive. The area seemed to be losing its economic reason to exist.

Vroman was borough chairman. He set to work drafting a comprehensive plan to attract industry to the Valley. It took years to write and was finally published in 1970.

The borough sent copies of the plan all over the country, and received inquiries about timber and industrial development, Vroman said. A dairy project on Point MacKenzie was proposed and a Texas millionaire leased borough land to build an enclosed, futuristic city on the point.

But at the same time Vroman was working on another project that ultimately changed the Valley far more. He was a construction engineer, and he helped lay the deep gravel foundations of the highway across the swampy flats, which makes Anchorage less than an hour's drive from Palmer and Wasilla.

Oil was discovered at Prudhoe Bay, and as the state's population grew, commuting workers from Anchorage and the North Slope helped super-heat the Valley's economy. The population of the borough increased from 7,400 in 1970 to 44,230 in 1987.

Most of the new residents were commuters and people working for businesses that survived on commuter dollars.

In their study, Goldsmith and Larson asked why people with jobs in Anchorage were willing to drive 40 miles each way to work. The survey found the main attractions were low housing costs, large lots and clean air.

Anchorage and Mat-Su residents were asked how much cheaper a house has to be in the Valley to make the commute worthwhile. Answers settled around 40 percent — a comparable house would have to cost 40 percent less in the Valley for most people to choose to commute. The study said Valley housing is now about 50 percent cheaper.

But the government has to provide good roads and protect the lifestyle that attracts commuters if it wants to keep them, the economists said.

"I've talked to a bunch of people, and they all want that — they want to protect their lifestyle," said Bob Gilfilian, who owns an engineering firm and serves with Vroman on the Core Area Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. "Most of the people here want their rural-urban thing. They're on their one acre, but they don't want their neighbor to put in a cow barn."

Gilfilian said the borough could help the economy by

aiding residents who, like him, want planning to protect their piece of suburbia.

"People like myself — entrepreneurs — are looking at what can be done with what we've got here," Gilfilian said. "I don't see any help coming from the local government or the state. They're not creating work out there."

"I think the borough government has its place to make sure the community will be stable. I'm not talking about creating jobs, but just making it possible for business to exist."

Instead, he and others said, the borough pursues big development projects, which might be good, but leave the basic business of government undone. Even Vroman, who is as pro-development as they come, criticizes the borough assembly for chasing rainbows.

"Over the last 10 years, the borough has shotgunned everything," Vroman said. "They've tried to be all things to everybody. Everyone who comes in, they get on with them, and then someone else comes in, and bang, they're off with them. They go from one thing to the other, and leave all these things lying here like unpopcorn. And it's left everyone in the community divided."

Vroman himself was part of the borough's biggest 180-degree shift. In 1984, the borough drafted a comprehensive plan that residents interpreted as a move to begin zoning. Vroman helped lead a successful fight against the idea. Zoning opponents voted in a pro-development assembly and threw Borough Manager Gary Thurlow out of office. The planning department became the development services department, then changed back to planning in 1988.

But the borough's new emphasis on industrial and resource development hasn't led to much actual development.

The assembly built a road — at a cost of nearly \$1 million — to the water at Point MacKenzie in hopes of

putting a port there to export timber and other resources. It formed a port commission and asked voters to approve \$25 million in bonds to build the port.

Voters narrowly turned down the measure, and a study later showed the port would be speculative and unlikely to break even. But the borough is still pushing it.

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"I think that is a very important element of our local politics," Bronson said, "that the people who are the most likely to derive direct

benefit from real estate speculation are also the most likely to sit on the boards and commissions that will make decisions on that."

Three of the seven members of the borough assembly hold real estate licenses, and a fourth has large land holdings.

Malapanes owns Double Eagle Real Estate Investments. She said real estate dealers bring important skills to the assembly, planning commission and platting board. But she agreed that their interests differ from Bronson's.

"It really scares me to have this be a bedroom community," Malapanes said. "That was a reason why I ran for the assembly, because I was hearing people saying all we have to be is a bedroom community for Anchorage."

Commuters have children who need to be educated, but their places of work can't be taxed to pay for it, she said.

"It means that the local taxpayer — the property owner — is going to have to pick up more and more of the burden of educating children."

□  
But what do the people of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough really want?

In the last election, which included the hot port issue, only 29 percent of registered voters voted. That amounted to 5,443 ballots, or one for every nine residents.

Community leaders on every side of the issues say it is difficult to get anyone involved. Neighborhoods are diffuse and populated by commuters too tired to go to meetings after coming home from Anchorage.

"You can almost isolate yourself here," said Richard DeBusman, a high school teacher and one of the organizers of the new Center for the Environment office. "There's not a lot of cohesiveness in the community. There is the old guard who sticks together, but the rest of the newcomers are not cohesive. It's a real problem,

because a small group of people can get a lot of power easily."

He and other environmentalists say the apathy has hurt them rather than their foes. They say those who stand to make money from development have taken roles in the government, while those who want planning and protection of their lifestyle say nothing until they are directly threatened.

The state's timber sale proposal gave birth to the anti-logging Susitna Valley Association, which DeBusman said still has 600 members in the Valley.

"People come out and buy a house and find out it's next to a gravel pit, and then they cry out for planning," Smith said. "And when you get enough people who do that, you get planning. I think we're getting to that point."

Wasilla Mayor John Stein said Wasilla doesn't want smokestack industry and prefers tourism to logging. But the city council recently voted to offer tax incentives to new industries that come to town.

Stein, Vroman, Gilfilian and others said developers need planning, too, because they now are afraid to act for fear of unpredictable reactions from their potential neighbors.

"As it is now, development is afraid to come in because they don't know what the rules are," Stein said.

Even the borough's pro-development economic plan points to the need for a more cohesive community. One of its goals is to, "Encourage the formation of a Borough identity through clarification of community values, prioritize community development goals, and creation of a community image integrated with a Borough identity."

Slaby translated. "Everyone's kind of lived their own life and had the leeway to hold their own views without having to worry about the affect on anyone else," he said. "We need to pull the community together."

## WHAT IS THE SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION?

The Susitna Valley Association formed in January 1988, in opposition to large state timber sales that were being proposed in the core of the Susitna Valley. The association formed primarily for three purposes:

- first, to serve as a contact for the state and Mat-Su Borough on timber harvesting plans for the Susitna Valley,
- second, to serve as spokesperson on this issue when necessary and appropriate, and
- third, to serve as a clearinghouse for dispersal of timber-related information to interested individuals and groups.

The association has grown into a coalition of over 4300 individuals, numerous businesses, and 69 organizations. Some of those organizations are, in turn, coalitions. There are active chapters in Wasilla, Talkeetna, and Anchorage. Over 700 SVA people are valley residents, and 27 percent of the coalition organizations are Mat-Su groups.

The association is broad-based, representing a wide diversity of interests. In addition to people who own property in the Susitna Valley, there are people with business interests such as commercial fishermen, guides and outfitters, river charter services, lodge owners, air taxi operators, people in the tourism industry, and business people who support those businesses. There are people with recreation interests such as pilots, boaters, hunters, fishermen, skiers, sightseers, bikers, mushers, snowmachiners, and photographers. There are environmentalists and conservationists; people with health interests, and public land policy interests. And simply people who think large-scale logging in proximity to Southcentral Alaska's largest population centers will create unacceptable negative impacts. The interests and concerns are as varied as the individuals involved. Clearly, opposition to proposed timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley is a far-reaching issue of deep public concern that involves the entire community.

Dated: January 1990

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## SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION, TOURISM AND FISHERY VALUES

### Brief Background Information

The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), met with disastrous results in an attempt to hold a large-scale timber sale in the Susitna Valley two years ago. As a result, DNR went into a planning mode, and is currently in the process of writing a "forest management plan" for the area. The plan is called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP).

All lands in the valley below 1000' in altitude, a total of over 2 million acres, are being analyzed for commercial timber harvesting potential. The goals of the SRFP are to identify the location and volume of the commercial timber, determine how to access it, and establish guidelines for harvesting it. It is not a park plan; it is a forestry plan. The plan is required to take into consideration other forest values as they relate to forestry, but the focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

The public will not be offered a range of land management options for the valley because other options, or alternatives to logging, have not been considered and analyzed. People will not even have the option to approve or disapprove of the plan to log the Valley, but will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed guidelines for doing it.

### Economic Values of Remote Recreation, Tourism, and Commercial Fisheries in the Susitna Valley

The Susitna Valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area which also supports a valuable commercial fishery. A highly complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities has evolved which is supported by thousands of people and which channels millions of dollars into the local economies. Following is a synopsis of various valley activities and resource uses which the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) has compiled:

Real estate. Over the past twenty years the state has encouraged recreational use of the Susitna Valley by selling thousands of properties in state land disposals in the area, mostly for recreational purposes. Just within the SRFP planning area, there are 17,609 private properties, and many more still for sale. (Borough Tax Assessment Office, 12-19-89) These are widely scattered throughout the valley. Land sales were a high priority of the state and borough during the '70s in the form of various land disposal programs, and even earlier with the Open-to-Entry program, homesteading and remote parcel distributions. As one would expect, this resulted in the formation of a potent constituency for protecting those values that attracted people to the area. The property owners have a vested interest in their lands and cannot be expected to remain silent on what happens in the valley. The assessed value of the private property is \$14.8-million.

Lodges. According to the Department of Fish and Game, there are 52 lodges which operate in the Susitna Valley, most of them remote. SVA has surveyed 23 of the lodges. Based on that survey, the total gross income for the 52 lodges was estimated at \$7.5-million, with a total employment of approximately 283 people. All but two of the lodges surveyed were owned and operated by Alaskans. 93% of their clients were from out-of-state, bringing new dollars into the Alaskan economy.

Air taxi services. 38 air taxi charter services presently fly clients into the valley for recreational activities and flightseeing. They service lodges, year-around residents, recreational cabin owners, and their own remote camps. 24 of those companies are based in Anchorage, and 14 in the Borough. Based on an SVA survey of ten of the companies, a total combined gross income derived from servicing the Susitna Valley in 1987, for only those 10 companies, was \$4-million, with employment of 145 people. The companies estimated 74.5% of their clients were non-residents. (Note that 28 of the companies are not included in the above figures.)

Commercial fishery. The entire Susitna drainage serves as a vast spawning and fish rearing habitat for a highly productive commercial fishing industry. According to the ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, the direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish reared in this drainage is between \$8-million and \$11-million per year. In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska attributed to this harvest, excluding processing, was just under \$18-million.

Sportfishing. The ADF&G Division of Sport Fisheries established that 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10.4-million. 84 percent of those days was spent at streams with no road access. The lack of roads, rather than being a barrier, was very likely

what attracted people to the area. It also indicates the complex economic network which exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. According to Fish and Game, salmon stocks in the Susitna Basin are already fully allocated.

**Moose and bear hunting.** The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated by ADF&G at up to \$18.9-million dollars. This includes activities of game guides and outfitters, as well as the independent hunters.

**Recreational pilots.** There are over 5000 registered pilots in the Anchorage area and 800 in the Mat-Su Borough. The Anchorage pilots own a total of over 2000 airplanes. SVA surveyed 208 of the pilots and found that the Susitna Valley was their destination 81 percent of the time. Based on data from our survey, the total value of the airplanes based just in Anchorage can be estimated at \$90-million. Total plane related expenditures for 1987 was estimated at \$7.4-million.

**Hotel expenditures.** According to a study by the Alaska Hotel/Motel Owners Association, approximately 3 percent of the occupied rooms in Anchorage are related to clients traveling to or from hunting and fishing destinations in the Susitna Valley. The economic value of these rooms is \$6.8-million.

**Tour companies.** Tour operators sell the Susitna Valley as an accessible "Alaska wilderness experience". The valley is marketed for independent and adventure tours such as flightseeing trips, riverboat fishing and camping, sportfishing and hunting, remote lodge vacations, and rafting trips.

The valley is also an important component of the large package tours. According to information SVA received in 1988, Westours and Princess Tours had purchased and were renovating 14 railroad dome cars at an investment of \$8-million. These dome cars travel through the east side of the Susitna Valley. The tour companies are anticipating related gross revenues during 1990 of over \$100-million dollars.

**Other users.** The Alaska Boaters Association estimates there are approximately 20,000 boats in the Anchorage area, a high percentage owned to access the Susitna Valley streams. There are 20 to 30 riverboat charter services doing business on the streams of the valley. Many activities such as river freight services, mushing, skiing, trapping, and snowmachining remain to be quantified.

**Related services.** Also to be taken into consideration are the local businesses in adjacent communities that are economically supported by these activities and industries; the multiplier factor. These factors would take into account such items as the purchase of construction materials; maintenance costs of buildings and equipment; advertising; insurance; purchase and maintenance of airplanes,

boats, motors, and snowmachines. It would include employee expenses; gas, oil, and propane; generators; radio equipment; food and supplies; purchase of camping equipment, guns, fishing gear, and clothing; fish and game packing and processing; taxidermy services; and money spent at eating and drinking establishments when going to and from the valley.

### The Potential for the Remote Recreation and Tourism Industries in the Susitna Valley

The number of tourists coming to Alaska is expected to increase by 10 percent a year; to Denali by up to 18 percent. The Alaska Railroad has been growing almost 10 percent a year in passengers and has added six new cars. Both the large tour companies and the railroad are marketing new tour packages for flightseeing, boating, and fishing out of Talkeetna, which is expected to be a growth area.

Princess Tours is designing new land tours to extend the company's cruises. The state is planning to construct a new lodge in Denali State Park. Lodges, air taxi services, and river charter businesses say their businesses have grown by at least 200 percent during the past 2-3 years. One company which primarily markets in Europe, brought 450 to 500 Europeans over this past summer to stay at their lodge and to float Alexander Creek. These people also rented RVs and did independent touring. A tour company which caters to Japanese clients is looking for a small lodge in a "primitive" area to accommodate eight clients per week for next summer. An Australian tour agent stated that his company had sold \$1.6-million dollars of Alaska adventure tours.

According to Westours, Alaska is increasingly becoming the traveler's destination of choice, and the emphasis is shifting from Southeastern to the Interior. Much of this change is in response to the companies marketing strategies to encourage repeat visitors. One lodge owner reported 67 percent of his business at Lake Creek during the summer of '89 was repeat business, clients who have stayed at the lodge before. They like what they've found and will pay to come back.

Economists have stated that Alaska needs to discover what it has that is unique . . . and market it. What Alaska does have in abundance, and what people come to Alaska to experience, and will pay to come back for, is quality "wilderness". Very few other places have it, and it's becoming scarcer all the time. Scanning through Alaskan magazines and travel brochures, it becomes apparent that advertisers consider "wilderness" to be a highly marketable commodity. There is economic value in it, especially coupled with the growing interest in outdoor adventure and nature tours, as well as the renewed interest in the environment.

For the industries in the Susitna Valley previously discussed, the perception of wilderness or remoteness is a critical factor in the marketing of the valley activities. As world populations continue to increase, that commodity will become more and more valuable. However, wilderness as a marketable commodity quickly loses its value once roads go in and clearcutting takes place. It will not be possible to go backward and regain it once it is gone. Large scale commercial logging is not compatible with remote recreation and tourism. And, the incompatibility becomes even more pronounced in an area such as the Susitna Valley where the primary orientation is from the air.

The borough and state are at a crossroads in deciding the most appropriate use of the Susitna Valley lands. The type of tourism discussed focuses on a low volume/high dollar approach. It focuses on a "working" wilderness, not a "hands-off" wilderness. But, the success and continuation of the existing businesses is dependent on not crossing the threshold into high volume/low dollar. The latter may be appropriate along well-traveled roadways, but there are other areas where it is more economically astute to go the other direction, thereby providing the full recreational spectrum.

#### Limitations of DNR's Current SRFP Planning Process as it Relates to Remote Recreation and Tourism.

A basic flaw of the SRFP planning process is that it does not recognize or evaluate the economics of the existing remote recreation and tourism industries, or their potential. It does not evaluate whether or not these industries are compatible with large scale commercial logging and related roading such as being proposed. Nor does it evaluate whether the development potential of the remote industries could ever be realized if the proposed logging and roading activity goes forward. Finally, it does not balance any of these competing values against the expected return from logging, which itself has never been determined in this process.

The SRFP advances a management plan for only "forestry", independent of management plans for the other designated land uses, even though the necessity for concurrent planning for all uses was stressed in the Susitna Area Plan.

The Department of Commerce and Economic Development was asked to do an economic feasibility study of the wood products industry in the valley, and was to address the other resource values in the process. This was not done. Instead, the department conceded that the data necessary to address the economics of the other uses was incomplete, and there was not time, personnel, or money available to acquire the data.

In the spring of '88, the legislature passed a \$30,000 budget increment with the following stipulation, "It is the intent of the legislature that the Department work with all interested parties to conduct an economic and environmental analysis of the Mat-Su Timber sale which includes but is not limited to the economic effects on the guiding industry, commercial and sport fisheries, lodges, tourism and recreational uses." This was not done.

The SRFP, if adopted, will provide a blueprint for logging and roading the valley, complete with an annual allowable cut determination. By so doing, and by not identifying and analyzing other competing and conflicting values, the plan will predispose the valley to logging. Since a "forestry plan" will be the only management plan the state has developed, it will obviously be the plan that will be advanced.

Without the pertinent information regarding other values, SVA contends it will not be possible for the state to make an informed comparison to determine the highest and best use of the public resources in the Susitna Valley. With hundreds of jobs and millions of dollars in existing investments and income at stake, and with no research into the potential of those existing investments, this does not seem like a responsible approach to land use management. Rather than introducing a new and conflicting industry, perhaps the state would be wiser to promote, protect, and enhance industries that are already in place, successful, and growing.

(DATED: December 30, 1989)

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### Is the Necessary Volume Available for a Wood Products Industry in the Valley?

Timber industry representatives, as well as DCED, have stated that a minimum of 50-million board feet a year would be needed for a successful wood products industry in the Susitna Valley.

According to the Division of Forestry, in the Susitna Valley it takes an average of 367 acres to produce 1-million board feet of timber. This calculation is based on an average volume of 940 cubic feet of wood per acre, and a conversion factor of 2.9 board feet per cubic foot. The volume is not comparable to Southeast timber.

In the Susitna Valley, 18,350 acres would have to be harvested per year to produce 50-million board feet. That's equal to 1 1/2 Point McKenzies being cut and accessed every year. Over an 80-year rotation, almost 1.5-million acres of commercial timber would be needed from the valley to meet this demand.

The Susitna Valley simply does not have that volume of timber. There's not even a third that volume; and what is there is spread out over a 2-million acre area. The SRFP has identified 450,000 acres with commercial potential that is in a land-use designation that would allow forestry as one of the uses. But not all that acreage is available for forestry. Much of it is in areas where "forestry" is only a secondary use, and must not conflict with the primary uses. In some cases "forestry" is allowed, but only for local personal use. Buffers for wetlands must be discounted from the timber base. Mitigation measures to minimize conflict with other values will further reduce the base. The final volume will be substantially less than the 450,000 acres being analyzed. The forest lands will not be contiguous and much of it will not be economically accessible.

In short, the Susitna Valley Association believes that, while existing small-scale timber harvest can and should continue in certain areas to accommodate commercial firewood sales and personal use wood lots, large-scale commercial harvesting is out of the question. The resource simply isn't there.

# SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

## FACT SHEET

**Introduction:** A number of proposals have surfaced recently which would involve large scale commercial timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently in the process of formulating a "forest management plan" which would serve as a blueprint for logging and roading activities in the valley. DNR's plan is called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan.

A "forest management plan" is not a plan for managing all uses of the forest. It is a plan which focuses upon logging the forest, and regrowing it to be logged again. The focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

**What is the Susitna Valley:** The valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area that also supports a large and successful commercial fishery. It is located just a short distance across Cook Inlet from Anchorage, and has developed a very complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities.

All areas of the valley below 1000' in altitude, over 2,000,000 acres, are being analyzed by DNR for commercial logging. In this area, there are 52 remote lodges, 38 air taxi businesses, 20 to 30 riverboat charter services, and 13,685 private properties.

**Fundamental issue:** Incompatibility of large scale commercial timber harvesting and related roading with existing land uses and resources in the valley.

Remote recreation and tourism values are economically and culturally important to Alaskans. Roading and logging are incompatible with the continuation of these wilderness-based values.

What degree of the economically successful existing uses would have to be sacrificed to develop a timber industry? Some of the state's own studies have determined that certain other industries would likely be displaced. Would we be trading existing jobs for speculative forestry jobs?

**Crucial questions not being addressed:** The public has not yet had the opportunity to address the crucial question of whether or not it approves of large-scale commercial logging as the highest and best use of the forest resources in the Susitna Valley. Or whether or not the scale of logging, or the type of timber management being proposed, is compatible with the other forest uses in the area. Rather than being asked if they approve of having the area logged, people will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed method for doing it.

What DNR sees as the state's mandate for logging is not what the public perceived when the Susitna Area Plan was prepared, nor is it a mandate that the public wants now. Alaskans feel the scale of proposals being advanced by the state and borough, for both logging and roading, threaten the long established and successful land use patterns in the valley. They believe the trade-off that would be required is not justified either economically or socially.

## ADDITIONAL ISSUES

### Existing economic values which must be considered.

- 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10,420,000. Eighty-four percent of those days was at streams with no road access indicating a complex economic network exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. (ADF&G)
- The direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish spawned and reared in the Susitna Valley is \$8-11,000,000 per year. (ADF&G) In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska due to this harvest, excluding processing, was more than \$17,700,000.

- The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated at up to \$18,900,000. (ADF&G)
- The Susitna Valley is the destination of choice by 81 percent of the recreational pilots flying float planes. (Susitna Valley Association survey)
- 13,685 private properties are located within the area being analyzed for timber harvests. (Mat-Su Borough tax records)
- Additionally, the basin is heavily used for hunting, trapping, boating, camping, rafting, cross-country skiing, snowmachining, and dog-mushing.

### **Costs.**

- Massive state subsidies would be necessary to provide access for the timber industry. . .and further, to maintain that access.
- Studies are establishing that stumpage value of available timber is not high enough to cover associated costs of timber harvesting, processing, shipping, reforestation, and roading. Should the state heavily subsidize the creation of jobs for a wood products industry if the creation of those jobs would likely displace even more jobs in other industries?
- The state has acknowledged it has no standards for winter access in the Susitna Valley with its unique climatic conditions which often result in thawing conditions and extensive overflow problems. Yet DOF has stated much of the logging would be done in the winter under these conditions. Funding for research would be imperative to develop the standards necessary to protect the extensive valley wetlands?
- What level of timber harvesting, and related wood products industry, would be commercially viable? Is there really a sufficient timber base that would be accessible and available?

### **Small-scale logging.**

- Even with the existing small-scale timber harvesting that is going on now, as it expands into the valley, will the state and Mat-Su borough develop and enforce meaningful controls that will allow it to remain compatible?
- At what point does small scale become large scale?
- Once a mill is built, would the industry continue to expand because we are locked into feeding the mill to the detriment of other pre-existing industries. (See separate paper on Suggested Alternatives.)

### **Planning process.**

- The DNR planning process advances a management plan for only "forestry", independent of management plans for the other designated uses, resulting in a lop-sided planning process.
- The state has acknowledged a major lack of information regarding the value of remote recreation and tourism in the Susitna Valley, and that they do not have the time, personnel or money to acquire the data. New data is being acquired, however, on the wood products industry. As a result, the SRFP process is proceeding without adequate and balanced data.
- In order to do a responsible economic feasibility study of the logging industry, it is critical that DNR also address the negative impacts to the other uses, meaning they must be identified and evaluated.

### **In conclusion:**

SVA believes the state and municipalities should concentrate on further promotion of the Susitna Valley as a prime forest-dependent, wilderness-based tourist and recreation area with a growing and healthy commercial and sportfishing industry.

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## **LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS**

The Susitna Valley Association communicates with its approximately 4300 individual members through a newsletter mailout and through periodic Updates to 68 organizations. These organizations have all expressed a desire to have information concerning the status of the Department of Natural Resources' Susitna Regional Forest Plan planning process. Many of these organizations, in turn, incorporate information from the SVA Updates into their respective newsletters. Following is a list of the current member organizations:

**AKPIRG**  
Alaska Air Carriers Association  
Alaska Airmens Association  
Alaska Boating Association  
Alaska Center for the Environment  
Alaska Environmental Lobby  
Alaska Flyfishers Association  
Alaska Hotel and Motel Association  
Alaska Outdoor Council  
Alaska Professional Sportsmens Association  
Alaska Professional Hunters Association  
Alaska Professional Sport Fishing Association  
Alaska Sportfishing Association  
Alaska Survival  
Alaska Visitors Association  
Alaska Wildlife Alliance  
Alexander Property Owners  
American Lung Association  
Anchorage Audubon  
Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Anchorage Recycling Center  
Anchorage Waterways Council  
Arctic Bicycle Club - Mountain Bikers  
Chase Community Council, #1  
Chase Community Council, #2  
Clean Air Coalition  
Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association  
Cook Inlet Fisheries Coalition  
Cook Inlet Professional Sport Fishing Association  
Denali Citizens Council  
Flathorn Property Owners Association  
Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, Alaska Chapter

Susitna Valley Association Organizations  
Page 2

Friends of the Earth  
Goodpaster River Property Holders Assn.  
Iditabike Organizing Committee  
Iditarod National Historic Trail Advisory Council  
Iditarod Trail Blazers, Knik Chapter  
Kachemak Bay Citizens Coalition  
Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association  
Kenai River Sportfishing Association  
Knik Kanoers & Kayakers, Inc.  
Mat-Su 99's  
Mat Valley Sportsmen's Assn.  
National Audubon Society  
National Wildlife Federation  
National Wildlife Refuge Ass'n.  
North Pacific Fisheries Association  
Northern Alaska Environmental Center  
Northern District Setnetters of Cook Inlet  
Nunam Kitlutsisti  
Prince William Sound Conservation Alliance  
Rolejo Lake Association  
Salcha River Property Owners Association  
SE Alaska Conservation Council  
SE Alaska Seiners Association  
Shirley Lake Homeowners Association  
Sierra Club, Alaska Chapter  
Skwentna Community Council  
Skyensu Property Owners Association  
Susitna Basin Charter Operators Association  
Susitna Valley Lodge Association  
Talkeetna Chapter, Susitna Valley Association  
Tokosha Citizen's Council  
United Cook Inlet Drift Association  
United Fishermen of Alaska  
Upper Cook Inlet Drift Assn.  
Wasilla Chapter, Susitna Valley Association  
Wildlife Federation of Alaska

(Dated: January 1, 1990)

**SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION**  
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**Suggested Alternatives to a Large-Scale Commercial  
Timber Industry for the Susitna Valley**

SVA proposes that the state and municipalities encourage and support the continuation and further promotion of the Susitna Valley as a prime forest-dependent, wilderness-based tourist and recreation area with a growing and healthy commercial and sportfishing industry. Furthermore, this type of development is compatible with the residential communities and the thousands of privately owned properties which already exist in the affected area.

SVA proposes that, in those areas where commercial timber harvesting is determined to be appropriate, the state limit support to the development of a small local timber industry. SVA is not opposed to this type of industry, provided that:

- timber sales are planned on a site specific basis, so that impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, private property, and other competing resource uses are fairly and adequately considered,
- good forest management, including reforestation, is practiced,
- environmental controls are enforced,
- access for timber extraction must take into consideration that existing uses have developed around, and are dependent upon, nonroad-oriented recreation,
- where temporary roads are used, the roads will be constructed according to standards developed specific for climatic conditions in the Susitna Valley,
- the sales are not escalated in number to equal the size of large proposals, and
- that money is appropriated up-front to cover the costs of responsible sale preparation, field monitoring, enforcement, reforestation, and putting roads to bed when indicated.

Logging could be moderately expanded, with appropriate forest management practices, while remaining compatible with, and complementing, existing uses of the Susitna Valley. The annual allowable cut would need to be determined based on not less than an 80-year rotation basis, until such time that it is proven that the rotation time in the Valley is shorter. . . not can be shorter, but is shorter. The public must be involved in determining what access will be allowed.

SVA does not believe Forest Management Agreements are appropriate for use in the Susitna Valley. The current use patterns of this area, plus the multiple-use implications, are far too complex to be turned over to a private resource development corporation for long-term management.

Based on the above criteria, SVA is willing to work with the agencies to attempt to find a designated timber base for an appropriate sized local timber industry. We fully understand the need for that industry to have some degree of certainty that they will have trees to harvest in the future, and how much. By the same token, many SVA members who are employed in the wilderness-dependent recreation industries need to know where the loggers won't be harvesting. They too, need some degree of certainty for their future.

Dated: September 1989

# SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

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# Straight talk on evolving forest management plans

1-27-90

By BECKY LONG

Let us have some straight talk on the two current evolving forest management plans that will affect Susitna Valley residents and users.

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There is a multi-million dollar industry in the Susitna Valley now. People are not going to sit back and allow the tourism, recreation, hunting and fishing economy, that they have invested in and built their homes and communities around, to be threatened for the sake of a few logging jobs subsidized



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Specifically, a 1990 public revision of SAP is needed for the following reasons:

- Since SAP was signed in 1985, land-use patterns have evolved into social and economic conditions with different demands on public lands than envisioned in SAP. Data, which has been gathered by the Habitat Division and the Susitna Valley Association, shows this. State and borough agencies continue to ignore this data in their professional planning. Thus, the public is proposing a special legislative designation, the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, in order to recognize and protect these outstanding public values that support Valley economies, and have been ignored by the agencies.

- To the detriment of all land uses, the 1985 SAP mandates have not been followed. It was mandated in SAP that "Each land management division within ADNR and ADF&G will need to prepare detailed regional implementation programs built around the land-use designations and guidelines specified in this plan." So far, ADNR has only gone ahead with planning for annual timber sales, access improvements and timber marketing. We have no program for wildlife habitat, public recreation, or water quality. This is a bias favoring a special use.

- The current forest management process is flawed, leading to an unrealistic planning agenda.

For instance, the draft report "Economic Impact Potential for Forest Products in the Mat-Su Borough," prepared for DNR, is not adequate to responsibly plan a wood-products industry in the Valley. The report's timber harvest data base is incomplete, the forest acreage is incorrectly overestimated and the annual allowable harvest is miscalculated. Thus, all sorts of unrealistic and misleading assumptions could be made to advocate a large-scale intensive timber harvest program. And, of course, the existence of the current economic uses of the Valley is not addressed adequately. This certainly makes for a litigious situation.

All of this points to the need for a revision of our guiding plan.

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July 7, 1989 letter to the editor that "approximately 19 million board feet of timber are to be offered for sale in November 1989. This compares with 4.5 mbf in 1988 and 5-7 mbf in 1987. Moreover, there are currently 11 mbf of timber in the Mat-Su which have been contracted out for sale but have not been cut."

Whatever the statistical reality is, translate this into everyday language: logging is occurring now on public lands. The public is clearly saying through community council, comprehensive plan, and environmental group meetings that we do not need massive clearcut harvests and roads that favor corporations exporting our forests for chips. They are not saying "no" to logging, for there is a need for firewood, house logs and roughcut lumber in our communities.

Let us continue the present cutting agenda with better management and environmental improvements. Let us favor small independent loggers in the Valley and personal use for firewood and building materials. This benefits our communities, the Susitna Valley, and the Anchorage Bowl for many years to come.

The state constitution states that "Fish, forests, wildlife, grasslands, and all other replenishable resources" must "be utilized, developed, and maintained on the sustained yield principle." With responsible use and recognizing the limits of the land, the Susitna Valley has this now. Why won't the state and borough recognize this?

*Becky Long is a Upper Susitna Valley resident active in land-use issues.*

# **CORRECTION**

**THIS DOCUMENT  
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED  
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

# SUSITNA VALLEY ASSOCIATION

## FACT SHEET

**Introduction:** A number of proposals have surfaced recently which would involve large scale commercial timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently in the process of formulating a "forest management plan" which would serve as a blueprint for logging and roading activities in the valley. DNR's plan is called the Susitna Regional Forest Plan.

A "forest management plan" is not a plan for managing all uses of the forest. It is a plan which focuses upon logging the forest, and regrowing it to be logged again. The focus is on the best economic return for the wood products industry, not for tourism, recreation, or fish and wildlife habitat.

**What is the Susitna Valley:** The valley is an intensively used remote recreation and tourism area that also supports a large and successful commercial fishery. It is located just a short distance across Cook Inlet from Anchorage, and has developed a very complex pattern of both developed and undeveloped recreation opportunities.

All areas of the valley below 1000' in altitude, over 2,000,000 acres, are being analyzed by DNR for commercial logging. In this area, there are 52 remote lodges, 38 air taxi businesses, 20 to 30 riverboat charter services, and 13,685 private properties.

**Fundamental Issue:** Incompatibility of large scale commercial timber harvesting and related roading with existing land uses and resources in the valley.

Remote recreation and tourism values are economically and culturally important to Alaskans. Roading and logging are incompatible with the continuation of these wilderness-based values.

What degree of the economically successful existing uses would have to be sacrificed to develop a timber industry? Some of the state's own studies have determined that certain other industries would likely be displaced. Would we be trading existing jobs for speculative forestry jobs?

**Crucial questions not being addressed:** The public has not yet had the opportunity to address the crucial question of whether or not it approves of large-scale commercial logging as the highest and best use of the forest resources in the Susitna Valley. Or whether or not the scale of logging, or the type of timber management being proposed, is compatible with the other forest uses in the area. Rather than being asked if they approve of having the area logged, people will merely be asked to comment on the state's proposed method for doing it.

What DNR sees as the state's mandate for logging is not what the public perceived when the Susitna Area Plan was prepared, nor is it a mandate that the public wants now. Alaskans feel the scale of proposals being advanced by the state and borough, for both logging and roading, threaten the long established and successful land use patterns in the valley. They believe the trade-off that would be required is not justified either economically or socially.

## ADDITIONAL ISSUES

### Existing economic values which must be considered.

- 242,850 days were spent sportfishing in the Susitna Valley in 1986, with associated expenditures of \$10,420,000. Eighty-four percent of those days was at streams with no road access indicating a complex economic network exists just to get people to and from their fishing sites. (ADF&G)
- The direct income to commercial fishermen dependent upon fish spawned and reared in the Susitna Valley is \$8-11,000,000 per year. (ADF&G) In 1986, the total economic activity generated in Southcentral Alaska due to this harvest, excluding processing, was more than \$17,700,000.

- The annual expenditures for moose and bear hunting in the Susitna Valley is estimated at up to \$18,900,000. (ADF&G)
- The Susitna Valley is the destination of choice by 81 percent of the recreational pilots flying float planes. (Susitna Valley Association survey)
- 13,685 private properties are located within the area being analyzed for timber harvests. (Mat-Su Borough tax records)
- Additionally, the basin is heavily used for hunting, trapping, boating, camping, rafting, cross-country skiing, snowmachining, and dog-mushing.

### **Costs.**

- Massive state subsidies would be necessary to provide access for the timber industry. . .and further, to maintain that access.
- Studies are establishing that stumpage value of available timber is not high enough to cover associated costs of timber harvesting, processing, shipping, reforestation, and roading. Should the state heavily subsidize the creation of jobs for a wood products industry if the creation of those jobs would likely displace even more jobs in other industries?
- The state has acknowledged it has no standards for winter access in the Susitna Valley with its unique climatic conditions which often result in thawing conditions and extensive overflow problems. Yet DOF has stated much of the logging would be done in the winter under these conditions. Funding for research would be imperative to develop the standards necessary to protect the extensive valley wetlands?
- What level of timber harvesting, and related wood products industry, would be commercially viable? Is there really a sufficient timber base that would be accessible and available?

### **Small-scale logging.**

- Even with the existing small-scale timber harvesting that is going on now, as it expands into the valley, will the state and Mat-Su borough develop and enforce meaningful controls that will allow it to remain compatible?
- At what point does small scale become large scale?
- Once a mill is built, would the industry continue to expand because we are locked into feeding the mill to the detriment of other pre-existing industries. (See separate paper on Suggested Alternatives.)

### **Planning process.**

- The DNR planning process advances a management plan for only "forestry", independent of management plans for the other designated uses, resulting in a lop-sided planning process.
- The state has acknowledged a major lack of information regarding the value of remote recreation and tourism in the Susitna Valley, and that they do not have the time, personnel or money to acquire the data. New data is being acquired, however, on the wood products industry. As a result, the SRFP process is proceeding without adequate and balanced data.
- In order to do a responsible economic feasibility study of the logging industry, it is critical that DNR also address the negative impacts to the other uses, meaning they must be identified and evaluated.

### **In conclusion:**

SVA believes the state and municipalities should concentrate on further promotion of the Susitna Valley as a prime forest-dependent, wilderness-based tourist and recreation area with a growing and healthy commercial and sportfishing industry.

# Straight talk on evolving forest management plans

1-27-90  
By BECKY LONG

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*Becky Long is a Upper Susitna Valley resident active in land-use issues.*

## FORUM

## Wilderness means jobs, lifestyle in Talkeetna

By PAUL BRATTON

**T**ALKEETNA — "Make jobs, not more wilderness."

I first saw this bumper sticker plastered on a fancy Cadillac parked in Wasilla. Redcorp and other timber industry promoters are distributing this to promote their philosophy.

In Talkeetna we don't have many Cadillacs or any Redcorp bumper stickers, but if we did plaster a slogan on our Super Cubs, fishing boats, pickups, or dog sleds, it would read "Wilderness produces our jobs."

Commercial fishing and processing employs more people in Alaska than any other private industry. I make my living gillnetting salmon and herring. There's no place on this Earth that has been able to maintain a healthy salmon fishery once the wilderness is gone. There's no reason to believe Alaska would be an exception.

But you don't have to look out to the coast to see the jobs that the Susitna basin wilderness produces. I've been around Talkeetna for 17 years and have seen a few changes, but the major one is the development and growth of a wilderness-based recreation economy. In the early '70s, Ray Genet guiding climbers and a couple air taxis flying them was about it.

Now I couldn't begin to list all the air taxis, riverboat charter services, guides, outfitters, tour operators, and other businesses that depend upon the tourism and outdoor recreation economy.



People in Talkeetna didn't just sit around waiting for the state or borough to develop a ski area or park hotel or timber industry to hand them a subsidized income. Instead they built an economy using renewable natural resources but not destroying those resources.

Local initiative found the niches where an individual, family, or small business could survive and make a profit.

Today this economy is threatened with ruin by the state and borough's reckless attempts to create timber industry jobs at any cost.

In coming weeks the Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission will hold public hearings on a plan to encircle Talkeetna with blocks of land dedicated to commercial timber harvest. That means road construction and clear-cutting on some of the most valuable wildlife habitat and remote recreation areas in our community.

There is no surer or quicker way to destroy the community character and wild country that makes Talkeetna an economically viable community.

This isn't just one man's opinion. At a half-dozen community meetings over the past three months I have yet to hear a single resident support the borough's timber plan. In 17 years I've never seen this kind of unanimity before.

Unfortunately, this community consensus hasn't deterred the borough's single-minded drive to implement widespread clear-cutting in the Upper Susitna Valley. This is especially distressing as more than 150 area residents are now participating in the Talkeetna and Chase Comprehensive Planning processes to determine appropriate land uses and development directions for our community. Many who have dedicated their energies to this planning effort view the unseemly rush to impose clear-cutting units here as a slap in the face to community self-determination.

In this age of perestroika, when people all over the Earth are insisting on their right to determine their own destinies, the borough appears to be telling Talkeetna that we have little choice but to accept the dictates of a handful of special-interest promoters and logging bureaucrats.

I know the timber industry consultants, pressure groups, and promoters along with their friends in government will not believe it but they occupy exactly the same position that the Communist Party had in Eastern Europe until recent weeks.

When I made this analogy at a planning

commission meeting, some found it objectionable. But I contend the comparison is valid. I am not ascribing evil motives merely pointing out that this group occupies the position of a party elite certain they know better than those of us who, from and on the lands, they intend "develop."

In contrast, the community comprehensive planning process is a fine example of decentralized Jeffersonian democracy. It may be slower and seem awkward, but in the long run it is the only way excellent decisions can be made about the proper use of public lands. I encourage borough residents to attend hearings and contact planning commission members to stop the clear-cutting juggernaut which threatens to raze down our forests.

I hear that Palmer, Wasilla and Houma are talking about pulling out of the borough. In Talkeetna people are beginning to talk about incorporation if the borough attempts to impose their timber-cut plans on our community.

Unless the borough learns to listen to its citizens, rather than just a handful of special-interest promoters, borough officials may one day find themselves administering a borough only the size of Rhode Island.

Paul Bratton is a Talkeetna resident.

Susitna Valley  
assn



**ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, INC.**

300 W. CHINIKS ST. JUNEAU, AK 99801  
(907) 786-1140

P.O. Box 34097  
Juneau, Ak. 99803  
(907) 463-3830

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: All Legislators

FROM: Ed Grasser, Director  
Legislative Affairs

RE: Susitna Valley Association's proposed legislation

DATE: February 5, 1990

Recently you received a packet of information from the Susitna Valley Association supporting legislation for a remote recreational parcel in the Susitna River Drainage. Within the packet were listed several organizations which purportedly participated in the drafting of this proposal. The Alaska Outdoor Council, along with several member affiliates were so listed.

In order to clarify any misconceptions which may or may not have been inferred by the presence of our organization on SVA's list, we would like to inform you that we currently are not in support of their proposal, nor did we participate in any of their discussions leading to this proposal. Also, several of our member affiliates have indicated they are currently opposed to SVA's proposed legislation.

We regret any inconvenience or misconception SVA's inclusion of our name on this proposal may have caused. We appreciate your consideration of our concerns on this matter and look forward to a more constructive level of participation on this legislation after our members have had time to relate their concerns and comments to us.

cc: Member Clubs

## MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION SERIAL NUMBER 90- 014

"A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY RECOMMENDING THAT THE ALASKA LEGISLATURE OPPOSE THE CREATION OF THE PROPOSED SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA."

WHEREAS, legislation has been proposed to create a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the State and Borough through a open public planning process adopted the Susitna Area Plan as management guidelines for public lands within the Susitna Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan does not recommend the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, approximately fifty-five percent of all State lands within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are already classified a Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat lands; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will severely retard the State's and Borough's efforts to diversify their economies by halting all forms of development including tourism; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will subvert the rationale for past decisions for selecting lands under the Municipal Lands Entitlement program by rendering the lands selected under this program useless for the uses they were selected for; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will provide an economic windfall to existing property (lodge) owners by restricting competition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough strongly opposes the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area and respectfully recommends that the Alaska State Legislature oppose this legislation.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Assembly of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough this 6 day of February, 1990.

Dorothy A. Jones  
Dorothy A. Jones  
Mayor  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

ATTEST:

Linda Dahl  
Linda Dahl  
Borough Clerk

(SEAL)

SUBJECT: Proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area Legislation

For Agenda of: 02/06/90

No. AM90-034

ATTACHMENTS: Proposed Legislation Resolution 90-014

Route to:	Dept/Committee/Individual	Initials	Remarks
	(Please review & return to originator)		
1	Planning Director	JD	Originator
	Borough Assessor		
	Public Works Director		
2	Finance Director	RS	
3	Borough Attorney	IM	
4	Borough Manager		
	Mayor		

STATEMENT The Susitna Valley Association (SVA) and several environmental organizations, e.g., Sierra Club, have proposed legislation that would establish a remote recreation unit within the Susitna Basin. It is expected that Senator Rodey will introduce the legislation during the last week of January, 1990; a House sponsor was not identified at the time this memorandum was written.

The proposed legislation, if adopted, would not allow commercial timber harvesting, land disposals, mining nor the construction of publicly financed roads within the Susitna Valley. The restrictions, especially the restrictions on road construction, will severely restrict the

FISCAL ACTION (TO BE COMPLETED BY FINANCE) FISCAL IMPACT? YES/NO  
 AMOUNT REQUESTED \$ 0 at this time FUNDING SOURCE \_\_\_\_\_  
 FROM ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_ PROJECT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 TO ACCOUNT # \_\_\_\_\_ PROJECT # \_\_\_\_\_  
 VERIFIED BY: Donald Moore CERTIFIED BY: Donald Moore  
 DATE: 1-29-90 DATE: 1-24-90

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The Borough Administration respectfully recommends that the Borough Assembly strongly oppose the proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area legislation.

APPROVED BY: Donald E. Moore  
Donald E. Moore  
Borough Manager

economic development of the Borough in all phases of the economy including tourism and recreation. The proposed legislation violates and subverts the public land use classification process undertaken by the State and Borough through the Susitna Area Plan. Moreover the proposed legislation will convey an economic windfall on existing property (lodge) owners since entry by new lodge owners via existing and future land disposals will not be allowed. The proposed legislation, if adopted, would also subvert the land selection decisions made by the Borough since the Borough would not be allowed to use the lands for the reasons it selected them. Finally, a cursory analysis of present land use classifications (see Table 1) within the Borough indicates that approximately 55% of State lands within the Borough are already classified as either Public Recreation (20%) or Wildlife Habitat (35%) and very little as Forest Management (6%) and Agriculture (1%); therefore, it does not appear that additional remote recreation lands are needed.

**RECOMMENDATION** The Borough Administration respectfully recommends that the Borough Assembly strongly oppose the proposed Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area legislation.

TABLE I  
STATE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS  
IN MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

(ACRES X 1000)

	PUBLIC RECREATION	WILDLIFE HABITAT	FOREST MANAGEMENT	SETTLEMENT	AGRICULTURE	TOTAL
WILLOW SUB-BASIN PLAN	16.6	371.0	66.5	5.5	44.5	504.1
SUSITNA AREA PLAN (1)	1,555.1	3,126.6	521.5	4,391.2	26.1	9,620.5
LEGISLATIVELY DESIGNATED:						
GOOSE BAY STATE GAME REFUGE		10.9				10.9
PALMER HAY FLATS		26.0				26.0
SUSITNA FLATS		300.8				300.8
MATANUSKA VALLEY MOOSE RANGE	16.6	101.7	85.1			203.4
WILLOW MOUNTAIN CRITICAL HABITAT		23.0				23.0
DENALI STATE PARK	421.1					421.1
NANCY LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA	22.7					22.7
WILLOW CREEK STATE RECREATION AREA	3.6					3.6
HATCHER PASS PUBLIC USE AREA	5.1					5.1
SIX RECREATION RIVERS	240.9					240.9
TOTAL	2,281.7	3,960.0	673.1	4,396.7	70.6	11,382.1
PERCENT	20.0%	34.8%	5.9%	38.6%	0.6%	100.0%

Note: (1) Includes 4,391,244 unverified acres in Settlement - this is based on conversation with DNR personnel regarding survivor classifications.  
Includes 19,897 unverified acres in Agriculture - total Agriculture figure is based on narrative in plan.

Willow Sub-Basin Plan, Susitna Area Plan and Matanuska Valley Moose Range figures include many areas with more than one primary designation.

All figures for Willow Sub-Basin Plan taken from narrative of plan except Public Recreation. Public Recreation taken from information supplied by DNR personnel.

SUMMARY OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA PROPOSAL  
11-2-89

1. PURPOSE - the purpose of the SVRRA is to perpetuate and enhance the present character and existing uses of a portion of the Susitna Valley. Specifically, the SVRRA has five main purposes:

- a. Protect and maintain fish and wildlife populations and habitat;
- b. Perpetuate and enhance public enjoyment of fish and wildlife;
- c. Perpetuate and enhance remote recreation while ensuring the scenic and natural integrity of the area;
- d. Perpetuate and enhance continued remote commercial recreation in a quality environment;
- e. Protect and perpetuate the remote character upon which present and future recreational use and community lifestyles depend.

2. ALLOWABLE ACTIVITIES - except as noted in (3) below, all existing uses would be allowed, including:

- a. Personal use logging, including house logs and firewood for private or commercial facilities;
- b. Local roads not connected to the existing road system;
- c. Adequate and feasible access to private lands, existing mining claims, or other valid occupancies;
- d. Traditional means of access.

3. INCOMPATIBLE ACTIVITIES - the following would not be allowed:

- a. Commercial logging;
- b. Future land disposals by the state;
- c. Publicly financed and/or maintained roads connected to the highway system and intended for use by highway vehicles.
- d. Exploration, development, and the extraction of minerals (except for valid existing rights).

4. MANAGEMENT - The following management considerations apply:

- a. Management of the area will be by DNR, with ADF&G being responsible for management of fish and wildlife resources;
- b. A Management Plan is required to be prepared by DNR with the consultation of ADF&G, and with public review and comment;
- c. The commissioner of DNR may prohibit or restrict incompatible uses, after public review and comment.

DISCUSSION DRAFT

11-2-89

For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area."

SECTION 1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this act is to establish the area described in this act as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. The Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area is established to

(1) manage, protect, and maintain fish and wildlife habitat so that traditional public uses of fish and wildlife populations may continue on a sustained yield basis;

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

(3) perpetuate and enhance remote recreation including camping, boating, cross-country skiing, dogsledding, hiking, flightseeing, snowmobiling, and all-terrain vehicle use, while ensuring the scenic and natural integrity of the area;

(4) perpetuate and enhance continued remote commercial recreation, including air taxi and flightseeing services, lodges, guided hunting and fishing, adventure tours, riverboat charter services, and commercial operations supporting these industries, in a quality environment;

(5) Protect and perpetuate the remote character which has historically attracted people to the area, and upon which present and future recreational uses and community lifestyles depend;

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

SECTION 2. MANAGEMENT. (a) Management of the surface and subsurface estate within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area is the responsibility of the commissioner. The commissioner shall adopt and may revise a management plan for the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area after public hearings. With regard to the management of land within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area described in this act, the commissioner shall consult with the Department of Fish and Game in the adoption and revision of the management plan.

(b) The Department of Fish and Game is responsible for the management of fish and wildlife resources and public use of fish and wildlife in the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area consistent with the purposes of this act. Nothing in this act

shall be construed to prohibit the Department of Fish and Game from engaging in protection and maintenance of the fish and wildlife habitat within an area described in this act. The Department of Public Safety and the Department of Fish and Game shall have necessary access for fish and wildlife management, research, and enforcement purposes.

(c) Subject to valid existing rights, the commissioner shall not dispose of the surface estate in state land within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(d) Consistent with the purposes of this act and the management plan adopted under this act, the commissioner may allow the construction and operation of commercial recreation and tourism facilities, by

(1) leasing land under AS 38.05.070; or

(2) contracting for the construction and operation of a facility under AS 36.30 so long as the facility is not in competition with a private facility or enterprise.

(e) Publicly financed and/or maintained roads connected to the public highway system and intended for use by vehicles designed and licensed for highway travel shall not be constructed within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(f) The commissioner shall not dispose of timber under AS 38.05.110 - 38.05.120, AS 41.15, or AS 41.17 within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. The commissioner may permit the harvesting of timber for personal use, including house logs and fuelwood for private or commercial facilities.

(g) Subject to valid existing rights, the commissioner shall not allow for exploration, development, and the extraction of minerals under AS 38.05.135 -- 38.05.275

(h) The commissioner shall give such rights as may be necessary to ensure adequate and feasible access to private lands, existing mining claims, or other valid occupancies within or effectively surrounded by the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. Such access rights shall be subject to regulations to protect the natural and other values of the land and water within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, and does not necessarily mean access by road. The construction of roads to provide access shall not be allowed unless the commissioner determines other modes of access are not adequate or feasible.

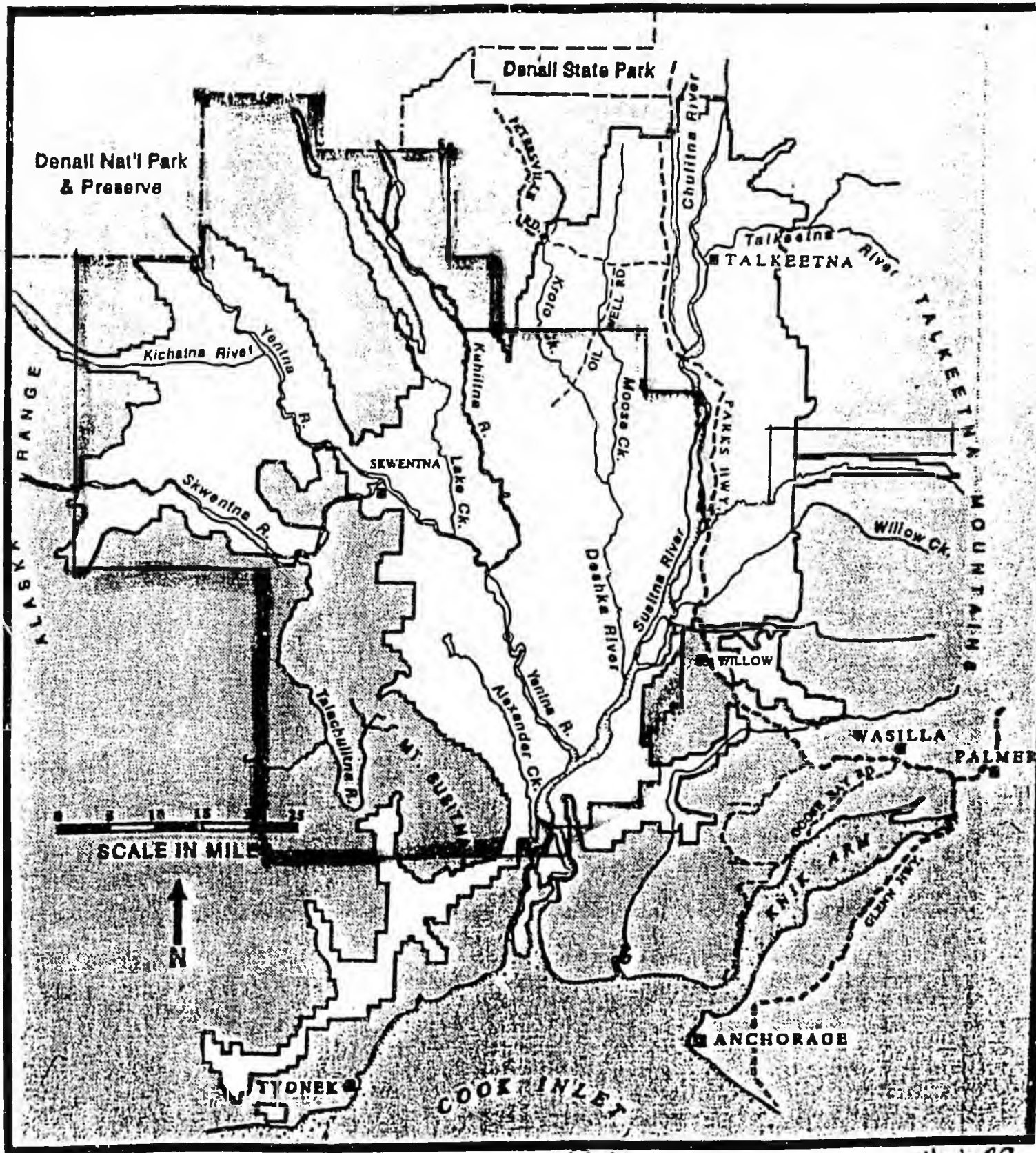
(i) The commissioner shall allow traditional access to the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area by motorized or nonmotorized means of transportation to private land, and interests in private land, and for lawful sport and subsistence hunting, fishing, trapping, and recreational purposes in a manner that is compatible with the purposes specified in this act. The commissioner and the commissioner of fish and game may jointly develop guidelines for traditional access.

(j) Except as provided in this section, the commissioner may not restrict lawful sport and subsistence fishing, hunting, or trapping rights allowed under a regulation of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game within the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

(k) The commissioner may determine a use is incompatible with the purposes of this act only after public hearings. If the commissioner determines that a use is incompatible, the commissioner shall state,

- (1) each determination of incompatibility;
- (2) the specific area where the incompatibility is determined to exist;
- (3) the time within which the incompatibility is determined to exist; and
- (4) the reasons for each determination of incompatibility.

SECTION 3. SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA. The vacant and unappropriated state-owned land and water and the state land and water acquired in the future, excluding the Recreation Rivers and Recreation River Corridors described under AS 41.23.500, that lie within the boundaries described in this section are designated as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area, are reserved for all uses compatible with their primary function as public remote recreation land, and are assigned to the commissioner for control and management:



11-1-89

# Legislative Designation Needed To Protect Susitna Valley

Stretching from Cook Inlet on the south to Mt. McKinley on the north, and from the Talkeetna Mountains on the east to the Alaska Range on the west, the Susitna Valley is a vast expanse of lakes, rivers, wetlands, muskeg, meadows and forests rich with wildlife and fish. The area has long been popular for hunting, fishing, boating, skiing, flightseeing, wildlife viewing, and a myriad of other outdoor recreation pursuits. Due to its proximity to the population centers of Southcentral Alaska, the Susitna Valley is used extensively by residents and visitors alike who are seeking, at relatively little expense, the wilderness experience for which Alaska is internationally known.

A significant segment of the economy of Southcentral Alaska relies on these remote recreational and tourism activities in the Susitna Valley. Daily, large numbers of planes leave Lake Hood in Anchorage to ferry recreationists, private property owners, and supplies to wilderness lodges, remote cabins, or favorite fishing holes. Tourists leave their hotels for a day of flightseeing. Boaters put in at Susitna Landing or at the boat ramp in Anch-

orage to access the Big Susitna, Little Susitna, Deshka, Yentna, Skwentna, and Kahiltna Rivers, as well as Alexander and Lake Creeks.

This substantial and growing remote recreation industry pumps tens of millions of dollars into the Alaska economy every year. The 52 wilderness lodges alone contributed approximately \$10 million to the economy in 1987; about 93% of these dollars were brought to the economy in 1987; about 93% of these dollars were brought in from outside of Alaska. Approximately 38 air taxi and flightseeing businesses service the Susitna Valley, with an economic impact estimated at \$13 million annually. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Susitna Valley anglers contributed over \$10.4 million to the Alaskan economy in 1986; in 1987 the area supported a total of 242,850 angler days, with 83.6% of those days spent at lakes and streams with no road access. In 1989, bear and moose hunting could result in as much as \$18.9 million worth of activity according to ADF&G. The value of hotel and motel rooms in

Anchorage occupied in relation to hunting and fishing in the Susitna Valley was \$6,764,580 in 1987. Tour operators also contribute substantially to the economy.

In spite of the economic and cultural importance of the Susitna Valley as a world renowned remote recreation area, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is continuing its pursuit of logging and road-building through the preparation of the Susitna Regional Forest Plan (SRFP). Although initiated in response to the overwhelming public opposition to a large timber sale proposal two years ago, the SRFP will provide a blueprint for logging and will sidestep the question of whether logging major portions of the Susitna Valley is consistent with the public interest.

Therefore, the Sierra Club Alaska Chapter has joined with other organizations and individuals of the Susitna Valley Association (SVA) in calling for the legislative designation of a portion of the Valley as the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area. As envisioned by the SVA, the Remote Recreation Area would provide protection for the Valley's established remote recreation, tourism and subsistence uses by placing certain restrictions on future land disposals by the state, commercial logging, future mining claims, and publicly financed roads connected to the existing highway system within the designated area. Although the exact wording of the bill is still being hammered out, the intent of the proposed legislation is to perpetuate the existing economic base and current use patterns of the Susitna Valley. Legislative designation is the only way in which long term protection of the spectacular remote recreation values of the Susitna Valley can be achieved.

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH

PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION SERIAL NUMBER 90-09

"A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE BOROUGH ASSEMBLY OPPOSE SENATE BILL 430 WHICH AUTHORIZES THE CREATION OF THE SUSITNA VALLEY REMOTE RECREATION AREA."

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WHEREAS, legislation has been proposed to create a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, the State and Borough through an open public planning process adopted the Susitna Area Plan as management guidelines for public lands within the Susitna Valley; and

WHEREAS, the Susitna Area Plan does not recommend the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 430 subverts the Susitna Area Plan planning process; and

WHEREAS, approximately fifty-five percent of all State lands within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough are already classified as Public Recreation and Wildlife Habitat lands; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will severely retard the State's and Borough's efforts to diversify their economies by halting all forms of development including tourism; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will subvert the rationale for past decisions for selecting lands under the Municipal Lands Entitlement program by rendering the lands selected under this program useless for the uses they were selected for; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area will provide an economic windfall to existing property (lodge) owners by restricting competition.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough strongly urges the Borough Assembly to oppose the creation of the Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Planning Commission of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough this 5th day of February, 1990.

ATTEST:

Twila Carney  
Twila Carney  
Planning Clerk

John Duffy  
John Duffy  
Planning Director  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough

(SEAL)

SB430



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# GABBERT'S CAMP

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February 15, 1990

FEB 26 1990

Senator Fahrenkamp  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau AK 99881

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp,

I spoke to your aide, Nancy, on the telephone on January 29 of this year, to voice my support to SB 430, and to support the current proposals to amend and approve the Forest Practices Act as they are written. I am worried that the proposals will be changed to delete the mandatory buffers on streams. The buffers, 100 feet on all stream, 200 feet on Salmon streams are absolutely essential to the maintainance of the flora and fauna not only where cutting would occur, but downstream of any cutting also.

I have been a resident of Alexander Creek for 8 years, my husband and myself own and operate a sport fishing and hunting lodge that has been in business for 20 years. My lifestyle and my livelihood depend upon the preservation of this area. Clear cutting would be detrimental to the economy of this area, as well as the wildlife habitat.

Please vote YES on SB 430. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy Gabbert". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Cathy Gabbert

Paul & Cathy Gabbert & Family  
2nd West Bend  
Alexander Creek, Alaska 99695  
(907) 733-2371

## Briefings

### SUSITNA PLANNING PROJECTS

- DNR Area plans
- Briefing: Susitna and Willow Area Plans
- Briefing: SB 430 (Susitna Valley Remote Recreation Area)
- Briefing: Susitna Regional Forest Plan
- Citizens' Advisory Committee for forest plan
- Briefing: Susitna State Recreation Rivers Management Plan
- Susitna Recreation Rivers Plan brochure
- Briefing: Kashwitna Management Plan

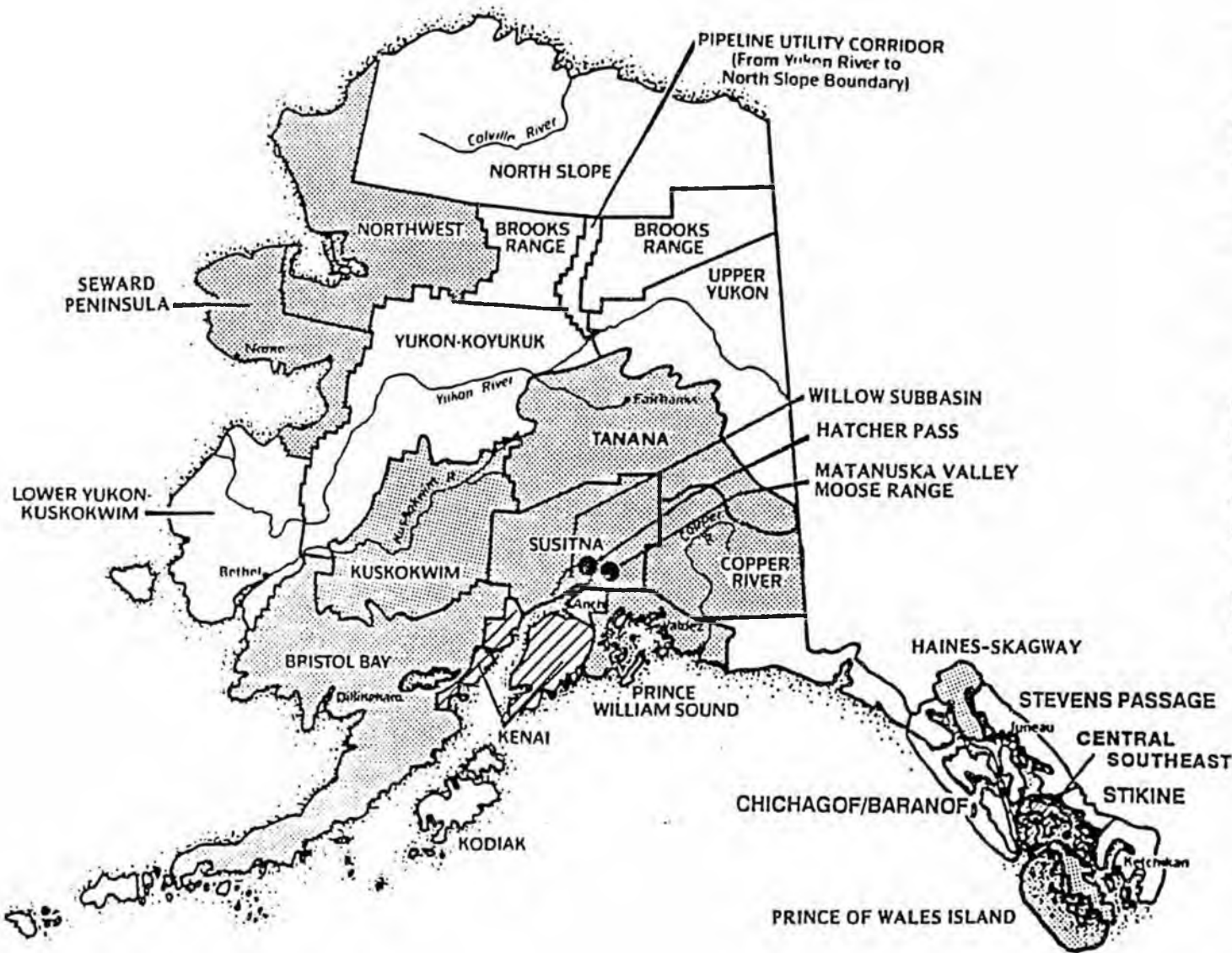
February 15, 1990



ALASKA Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

Figure 3.

# Alaska Department of Natural Resources AREA PLANS



### AREA PLANNING STATUS

- Completed area plans
- Area plans in progress
- Not scheduled for area plans at this time

December, 1989



Alaska Department of  
**NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

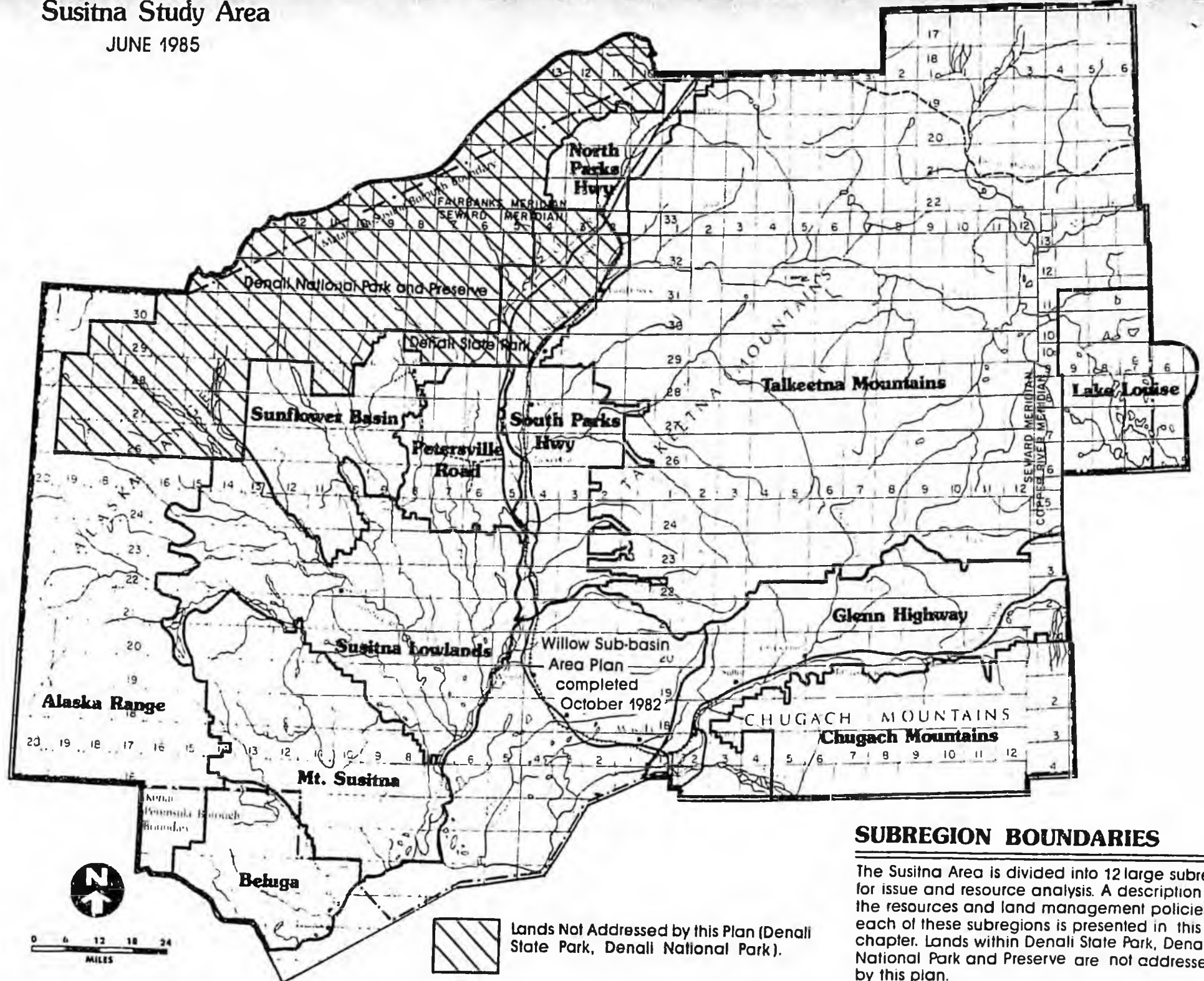
February 12, 1990

## SUSITNA AND WILLOW AREA PLANS

<b>Purposes</b>	Designate main uses of state and borough lands Establish guidelines to ensure that multiple uses occur compatibly Coordinate use of state and borough lands
<b>Area</b>	15.8 million acres of land in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and Tyonek areas including: -- 9.5 million acres of state land -- 600 thousand acres of borough land
<b>Process</b>	Issues identified by public and agencies Information gathered by state, borough, and federal agencies Alternatives reviewed by public Draft plan reviewed by agencies Draft plan reviewed by public Final plan adopted by DNR, DFG, and Mat-Su Borough in 1985
<b>Participants</b>	Planning team: DNR, DFG, DOT&PF, Mat-Su Borough Cooperating agencies: USDA Soil Conservation Service, BLM, Kenai Borough Public: 40 public meetings, written + oral comments, meetings with groups
<b>Major Decisions</b>	Designated primary and secondary land uses Established land use guidelines to keep multiple uses compatible Identified 105,000 acres for future disposals Identified 50,000 acres for agriculture, including agric. homesteads Established stream, lake, trail, and wetland buffers in land disposal areas Identified areas open to new mineral entry and leasehold location; closes lands along some streams and sensitive habitats to mineral entry Recommended State Recreation Rivers (adopted), Nelchina Public Use Area (adopted), Susitna State Forest (HB 356 in committee), and legislative designation of trumpeter swan nesting areas, Susitna-Yentna Public Use Area, addition to Susitna Game Flats, and recreation sites. Recommended transportation corridors to support land use designations Classified land as required by AS 38.04.065 Established process for modifying the plan
<b>Update Process</b>	Plans are updated about every five years. The first update for the Susitna Area Plan is scheduled to begin in 1990. The Susitna and Willow plans will be combined during the update. The update process will be done with the interagency planning team and public review.  The process will review guidelines, land use designations, legislative recommendations, and proposed settlement and agriculture areas to determine where changes are needed. It will also update land status and develop guidelines for commercial leasing.

# Susitna Study Area

JUNE 1985



## SUBREGION BOUNDARIES

The Susitna Area is divided into 12 large subregions for issue and resource analysis. A description of the resources and land management policies for each of these subregions is presented in this chapter. Lands within Denali State Park, Denali National Park and Preserve are not addressed by this plan.

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT HAS  
NOT BEEN FILMED BUT IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE ORIGINAL  
FILE

# Susitna Area Plan




## PRIMARY SURFACE LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

This map shows generalized land use designations. Only the primary surface designations are shown. The primary uses are not the only uses that will be permitted; the large majority of publicly retained lands are multiple use areas where a variety of other uses, including mining, are allowed. Information on the management of subsurface resources including boundaries of areas open and closed to mining are shown on the Subsurface Designation Map. See also Chapter 2 for land management guidelines that apply to the whole planning area and Chapter 3 for a complete statement of management intent for each location.



### LEGEND

#### LAND SALE AREAS






##### SETTLEMENT

-  Past State Subdivision Sales and Remote Parcel Offerings  
In these areas most land suitable for development has already been sold.
-  Other Past State Remote Parcel Offerings  
In these areas a large portion of the developable land is available for additional settlement
-  Future State and Borough Land Disposals

##### AGRICULTURE



-  Past State and Borough Agricultural Sales
-  Future State and Borough Agricultural Sales

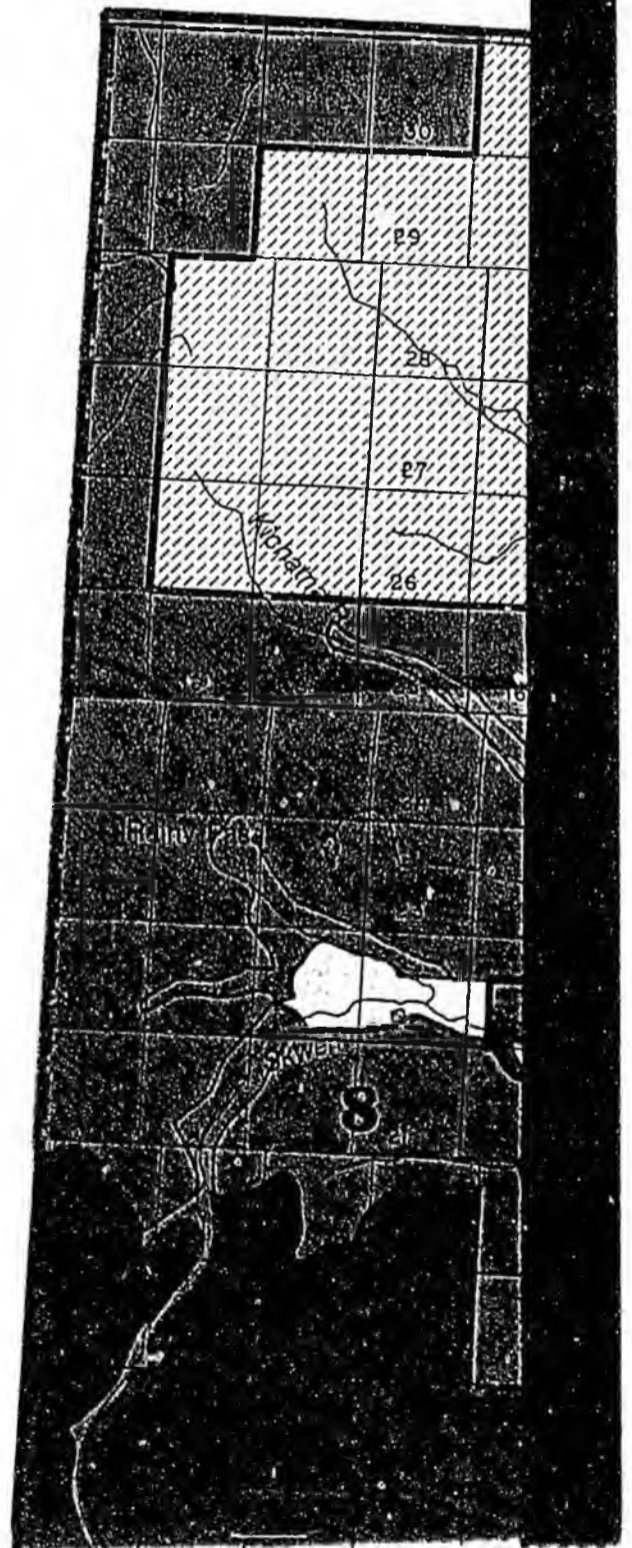
#### PUBLIC LANDS

-  Forestry/Public Recreation/Water Resources/Wildlife Habitat
-  Public Recreation/Water Resources/Wildlife Habitat
-  Areas With a Surface Land Use Designation of Minerals, Oil and Gas or Coal.  
These types of designations can be applied either as the only designation in an area or in addition to any other surface designations
-  Areas Designated by the Legislative for Special Uses
-  Areas Proposed by this Plan for Legislative or Administrative Designation for Special Uses (e.g., state forests, recreation rivers, wildlife refuges)  
Only the top priority areas are shown on this map. See Chapter 4 for a full list of all such areas.

#### RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND LAND BANK AREAS

Resource management (high value) and borough land bank lands are, respectively, state and borough lands with multiple values including agriculture, settlement, forestry, fish and wildlife and recreation. In the near term these areas will be retained in public ownership and managed for multiple use including forestry, wildlife habitat, recreation and mining. In the future they will be evaluated to determine their best long term use. Resource management (low value) lands are areas with no identified high value resources.

-  Resource Management (High Value)
-  Resource Management (Low Value)



# **CORRECTION**

**THIS DOCUMENT  
HAS BEEN REPHOTOGRAPHED  
TO ASSURE LEGIBILITY**

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT HAS  
NOT BEEN FILMED BUT IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE ORIGINAL  
FILE

# Susitna Area Plan




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##### AGRICULTURE



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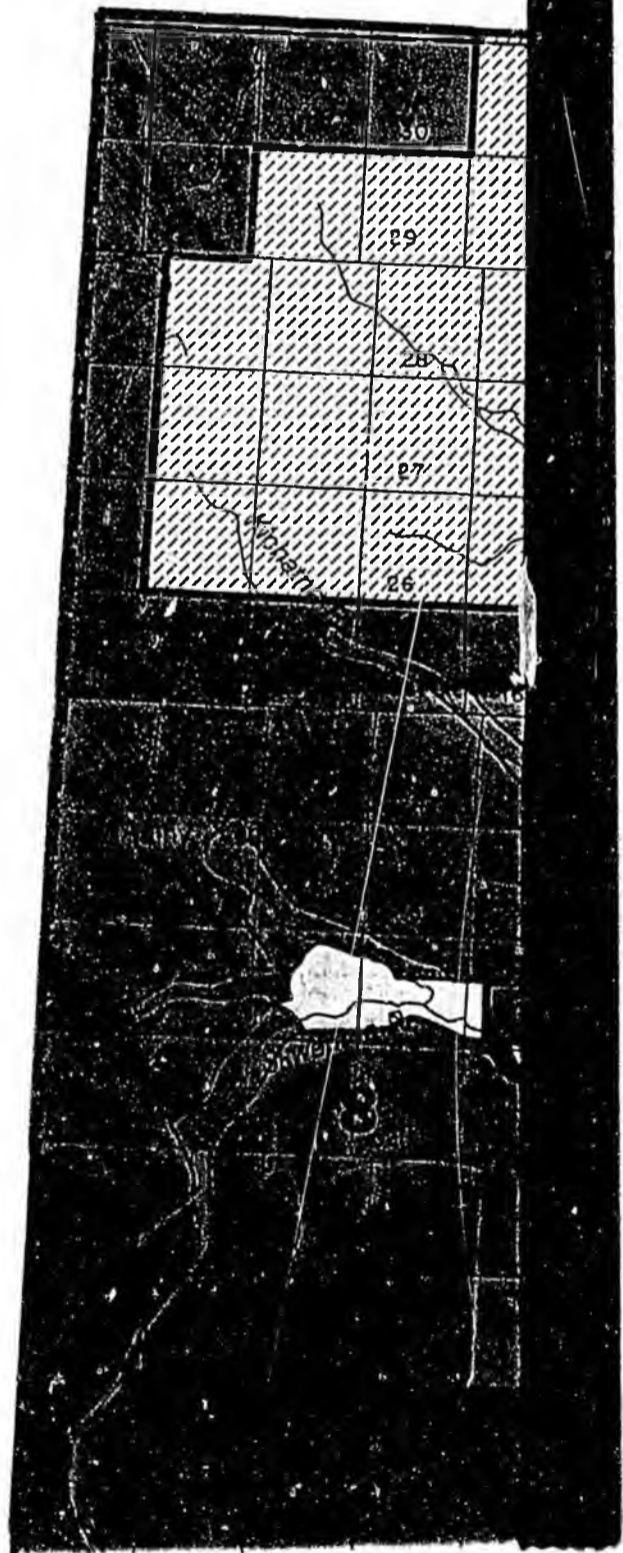
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-  Resource Management (High Value)
-  Resource Management (Low Value)



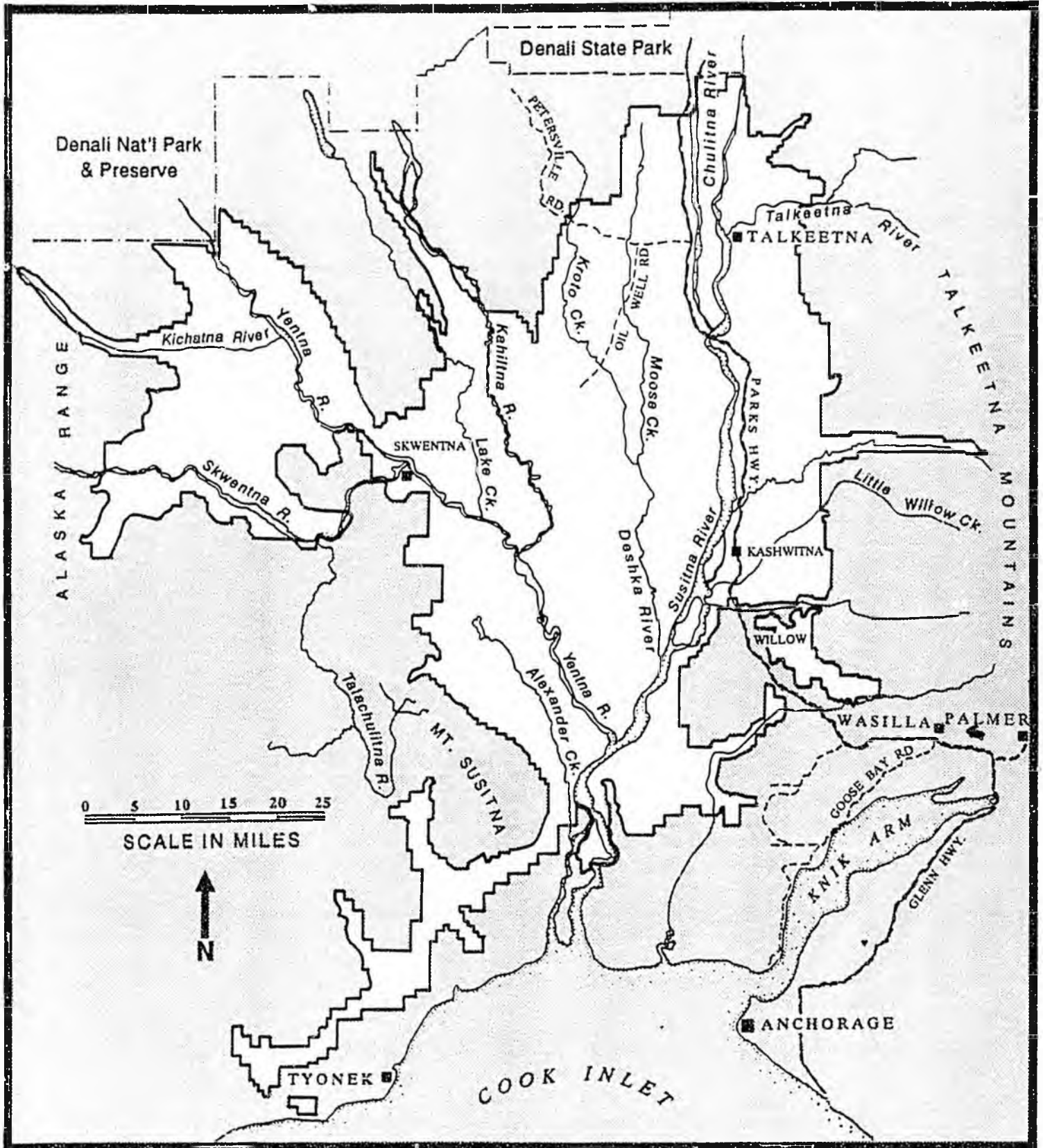


Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Land and Water Mgmt.  
Land and Resources Section  
Box 107005, Anchorage, Alaska 99510 • 907-762-2660

February 12, 1990

- Purposes** Determine the areas available for timber harvesting  
Set the rules for timber harvesting in the Susitna Valley  
Determine the volume of timber available for harvest
- Area** 2 million acres total area in the lowlands of the Susitna basin and Tyonek area  
1 million acres of state land with designations allowing timber harvest  
400,000 acres of designated state forest land with mixed forests, cottonwood, or closed white spruce forest
- Process** Issues identified winter 1988  
Planning begun spring 1988  
Data collection summer, fall, winter 1988  
Develop regional guidelines 1989  
Develop site-specific guidelines winter 1990 - **CURRENT STEP**  
Public review of draft proposal spring 1990  
Final plan summer 1990
- Participants** Planning team  
DNR Forestry, Land & Water, Parks, Agriculture  
Dept. of Fish and Game  
Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities  
Dept. of Environmental Conservation  
Matanuska-Susitna Borough  
Kenai Peninsula Borough
- Technical advisors -- US Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Citizens' Advisory Committee -- representatives of 80 interest groups, local governments, corporations, and legislative offices
- General public -- meetings on issues and draft proposals, newsletters, briefings to interest groups, phone calls and letters
- Major Issues** Rules for timber harvesting  
Fish and wildlife habitat and water quality  
Recreation, tourism, and scenery  
Access development  
Coordination with adjacent landowners  
Public involvement
- Current Step** Regional guidelines on habitat, recreation, cultural resources, access, and landowner issues are drafted. Planning team is developing guidelines for site-specific issues. Draft plan will be presented to the public in spring 1990.

# SUSITNA REGIONAL FOREST PLAN BOUNDARY



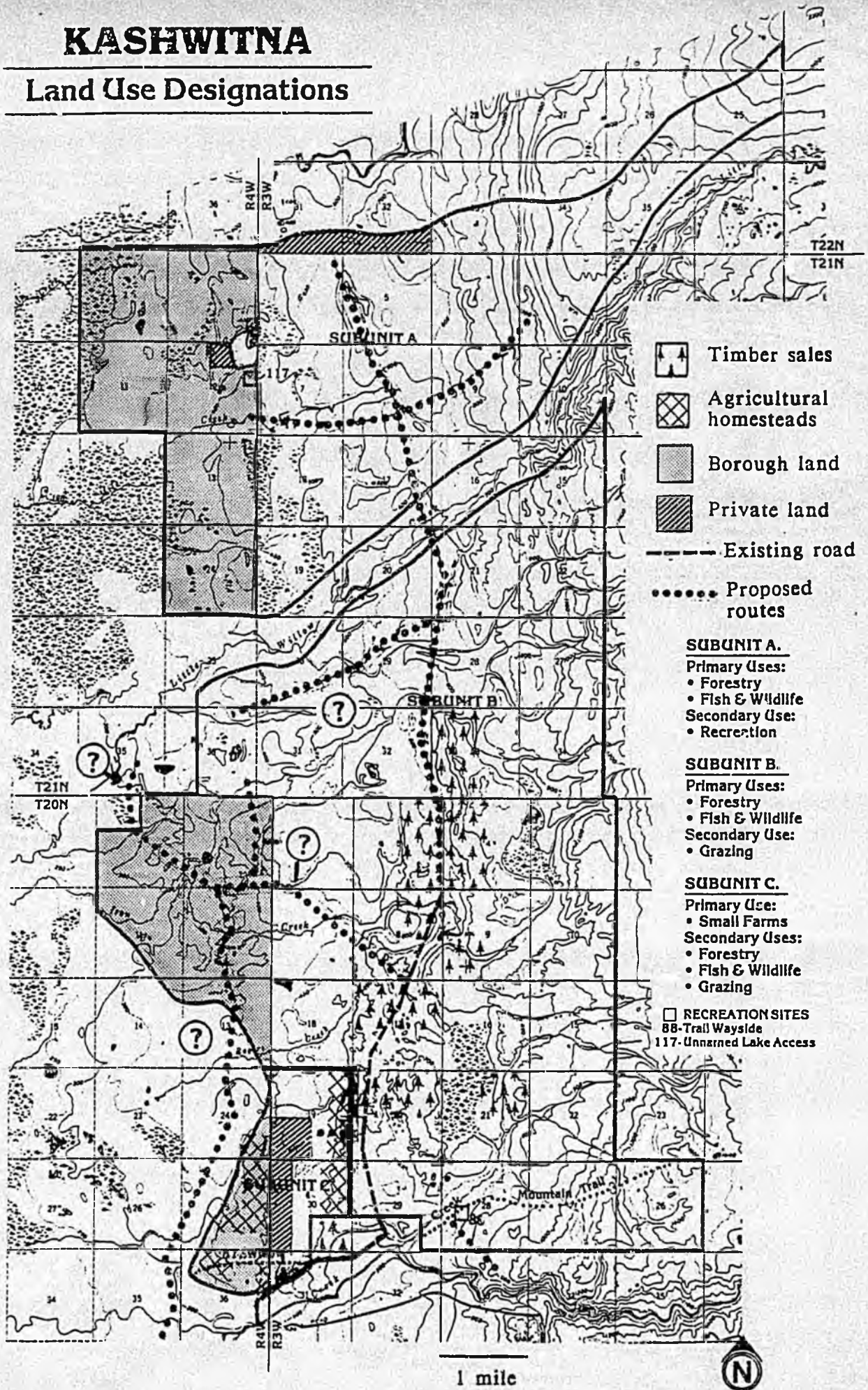
February 12, 1990

## KASHWITNA MANAGEMENT PLAN

<b>Purposes</b>	Required by Willow Subbasin Area Plan to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Schedule timber and farm sales</li><li>2. Design roads</li><li>3. Minimize conflicts between land uses.</li></ol>
<b>Area</b>	Lowlands between Willow Creek (Hatcher Pass road) and Kashwitna River Approximately 21,000 acres of state land, 6,500 acres of borough land, and 700 acres of private land.
<b>Process</b>	Issues identified by Willow Subbasin plan Information gathered through Susitna Regional Forest Plan Resolution of issues begun October 1989 Agency review draft - <b>CURRENT STEP</b> Public review of draft plan spring 1990 Final plan June 1990
<b>Partici- pants</b>	Same groups as for Susitna Regional Forest Plan Planning team: DNR, DFG, DOT, DEC, Mat-Su Borough Citizens' Advisory Committee with representatives of 80 interest groups General public will review plan at public meetings in spring 1990
<b>Major Proposals</b>	<u>Access</u> Routes for main N-S road and year-round road access to borough lands and agricultural homestead areas Routes for temporary access to timber harvest areas Routes for ATV access to Willow Mt. Critical Habitat Area Summer ATV use on designated trails only  <u>Agriculture and timber sales</u> Eight agricultural homesteads proposed for sale in 1991 Existing timber sales will continue; additional sales will be scheduled through the DNR 5-year timber sale schedule No timber harvest within 500' of main road; selective cutting only within 1/4-mile of main road Susitna Regional Forest Plan guidelines will apply  <u>Recreation</u> Recreation study of boating and fishing prior to bridging Little Willow Creek Recreation sites on northern lake and southern ATV trailhead  <u>Grazing</u> Guidelines to keep grazing compatible with wildlife habitat and forestry
<b>Next Step</b>	Summarize agency and advisory committee comments and hold public meetings

# KASHWITNA

## Land Use Designations

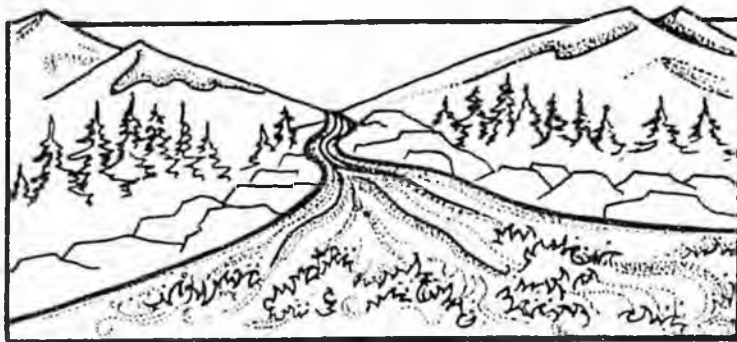


# Susitna Regional Forest Plan - Citizens' Advisory Committee

Record#	FIRST	LASTNAME	ORGANIZATION REPRESENTED	ADDRESS	CITY	STATE ZIP
	CHARLIE	AKERS	FISH & GAME ADV COUN	PO BOX 1	PALMER	AK 99645
	JUDITH	ANDREGG	SUSITNA VALLEY ST PARK	CITIZEN'S ADV BOARD	BOX 1472	PALMER AK 99645
	WALT	BEGALKA	ALASKA LOGGERS ASSOC	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BUX 6600	KETCHIKAN AK 99901
	GREG	BELL	AK LOGGERS ASSOC	VALLEY SAWMILL	6231 OLD SEWARD HWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	DUKE	BERTKE	SUSITNA VALLEY LODGE	OPERATOR'S ASSN	4801 AIRCRAFT DR	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	TROY	BLAYLOCK	YEN-SU PROP OWNERS		5208 COPE ST	ANCHORAGE AK 99518
	G G "JERRY"	BOOTH	BOARD OF FORESTRY		139 E 51ST AVE	ANCHORAGE AK 99505
	TERRY	BRADY	ALASKA HUSKY WOOD		2900 BONIFACE #672	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	WALTER	BRIGGS	COOK INLET REG	PLANNING TEAM	8820 BANJO CIRCLE	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	DANA	BROCKWAY EXEC DIR	AK VISITORS ASSN		PO BOX 102220	ANCHORAGE AK 99510
	MIKE	BRONSON	WASILLA CHAPTER	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN.	PO BOX 2176	PALMER AK 99645
	WAYNE	BURKHART PRES	MAT-SU CONV & VIS BUREAU		191 EAST SWANSON	WASILLA AK 99687
	GEORGE	CARTE'	MAYOR CITY OF PALMER		231 W EVERGREEN	PALMER AK 99645
	JIM	CARTER	WASILLA CHAM OF COMMERCE		PO BOX 286	WILLOW AK 99688
	DAVE	CLINE VICE-PRES	NATL AUDCBON SOC	AK REG OFFICE	308 G ST SUITE 219	ANCHORAGE AK 99501
	JOE AND NORMA	DELIA	SKWENTNA COMM ASSOC		SKWENTNA	AK 99667
	DENNIS	DEVORE	CHASE AREA REP		PO BOX 362	TALKEETNA AK 99767
	GENE	DICKASON	ROLEJO LAKE ASSOC		3130 LOCHWOOD CIR	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	JACK	DICKERSON	MAT VALLEY SPORTSMEN		PO BOX 712	PALMER AK 99654
	CARL	DIXON	RIVERSONG LODGE		SKWENTNA	AK 99667
	DAN	DORRAN	REDCOR	C/O ALAGCO	SRB 7814	PALMER AK 99645
	BILL	DUGDALE PRES	AK HOTEL AND MOTEL ASSC		PO BOX 104900	ANCHORAGE AK 99510
	PAULA	EASLEY	DEPT OF DEV & PLANNING	MUNI OF ANCHORAGE	PO BOX 196650	ANCHORAGE AK 99519
	BILL	EASTHAM	MAT-SU MOTOR MUSHERS		HCO-3 BOX 8286	PALMER AK 99645
	RUTH	EDMONDSON EXE DIR	COALITION FOR BOREAL	FOREST DEV	6821 SHERWOOD AVENUE	ANCHORAGE AK 99504
	JOHN	EVANS	TYONEK NATIVE CORP		4433 LAKE OTIS PKWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99507
	JOE	EVANS	BOARD OF FORESTRY		4741 SO PARK BLUFF DR	ANCHORAGE AK 99516
	LOREN	FLAGG	KENAI PENIN FISHER ASSN		BOX 546	SOLDOTNA AK 99669
	DIANE	FRANK	TOKOSHA CITIZEN'S COUN		2224 TURNAGAIN PKWY	ANCHORAGE AK 99517
	CHRIS	GOLL	AK PROF SPORTFISHING ASSN		4127 RASBERRY ROAD	ANCHORAGE AK 99502
	REP MARY	GRISCO	SIERRA CLUB AK CHAPTER		PO BOX 202045	ANCHORAGE AK 99520
	ROBERT E	HARRIS	DEPT ADMINISTRATOR	CITY OF WASILLA	290 E HERNING AVE	WASILLA AK 99687
	GENE	JENNE	TALKEETNA CHAMBER OF COM		TALKEETNA	AK 99676

DOROTHY	JONES MAYOR	MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH		PO BOX B	PALMER	AK	99645
SUSIE	KAISER	COOK INLET COALITION		PO BOX 110381	ANCHORAGE	AK	99511
STEVE	KALLICK ASSOC DIR	SE AK CONSER COUNCIL	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BOX 021692	JUNEAU	AK	99802
CAL	KERR	KERR AND ASSOCIATES		PO BOX 111293	ANCHORAGE	AK	99511
DR DAVID	LAW	ALASKA FLYFISHERS		300 E FIREWEED	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
GARY	LEE	BOARD OF FORESTRY		C/O DOYON 201 1ST AVE	FAIRBANKS	AK	99701
DEAN	LITTLEPAGE	IDITAROD NATL HIST TRAIL	ADV COMMITTEE	PO BOX 230983	ANCHORAGE	AK	99523
BOB	LOESCHER CEO	SEALASKA CORP	BOARD OF FORESTRY	1 SEALASKA PLAZA STE 200	JUNEAU	AK	99801
ROBERT	LOISELLE PRES	KLUKWAN FOR PROD INC	BOARD OF FORESTRY	BOX 2077	JUNEAU	AK	99803
BECKY	LONG	AK SURVIVAL		BOX 344	TALKEETHA	AK	99686
RON	MCNEESE	MAT-SU PROP OWNERS ASSOC		PO BOX 128	PALMER	AK	99645
PEPPER	MERCURIO	UPPER COOK INLET DRIFT	ASSOC	HC 2 BOX 550	KASILOF	AK	99610
JAMES	HINTON	FLAT HORN LAKE ASSN		PO BOX 190121	ANCHORAGE	AK	99519
MARCELLA P	PADIE	MAYOR CITY OF HOUSTON		PO BOX 940027	HOUSTON	AK	99694
ROSE	PALMQUIST	MAT-SU BOROUGH ASSEMBLY	MAT-SU BOROUGH	PO BOX 1608	PALMER	AK	99645
JEFF	PARKER PRES	WILDLIFE FEDERATION OF AK		3111 C STREET	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
JOHN	PECKHAM	BOARD OF FORESTRY		BOX 9579	KETCHIKAN	AK	99901
LARRY	PEET	BIG LAKE CHAMBER OF COMM		PO BOX 520067	BIG LAKE	AK	99652
ANDY	PENYAK	AK BOATING ASSOC		9608 DINAAKA DRIVE	EAGLE RIVER	AK	99577
MIKE	PERYAM	AK FRONTIER TRAPPERS ASSN		#C 32 BOX 6637 B	WASILLA	AK	99687
DREW	PESNELL	KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		PO BOX 240225	ANCHORAGE	AK	99524
ART	PETERSEN	UPPER SUSITNA SOIL &	WATER CONSERVATION DIST	HC BOX 562	WILLOW	AK	99688
ALAN	PHIPPS STATE LNDS DIR	AK CENTER FOR THE ENV		700 H STREET SUITE 4	ANCHORAGE	AK	99501
JOHN W	PICKERING	KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		PO BOX 240225	ANCHORAGE	AK	99524
TAMMY	PITTS	BIG LAKE CHAMBER OF COMM		PO BOX 520067	BIG LAKE	AK	99652
RUSS	REDICK	AK SPORTFISHING ASSN		3605 ARCTIC BLVD #800	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
LOISANN	REEDER PRES	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN		9600 SLALOM DR	ANCHORAGE	AK	99516
JIM	RICHARDSON	COOK INLET CHAPTER	AK SOC OF AM FORESTERS	3339 WENTWORTH	ANCHORAGE	AK	99508
CINDY	ROBERTS EXEC OFF	WORLD TRADE CENTER ANCH		2001 CHURCHILL DRIVE	ANCHORAGE	AK	99517
ANN	ROTHE	NATL WILDLIFE FEDERATION	AK REG OFFICE	19049 WHIRLWAY ROAD	EAGLE RIVER	AK	99577
SUSAN	RUDDY	NATURE CONSERVANCY THE	AK FIELD OFFICE	601 W 5TH STE 550	ANCHORAGE	AK	99501
HENRY	RUST	AK AIR CARRIERS ASSN	C/O RUST'S FLYING SER	PO BOX 190325	ANCHORAGE	AK	99519
GEORGE	SAMPSON	BOARD OF FORESTRY		119 GRUENING WAY	FAIRBANKS	AK	99712
JIM	SEELY	ROLEJO L ASSN		4340 SEELEY CT	ANCHORAGE	AK	99502
ROBERTA	SHELDON	TALKEETHA CHAPTER	SUSITNA VALLEY ASSN	PO BOX 292	TALKEETHA	AK	99676
TED	SMITH	MAT-SU ASSEMBLY	BOARD OF FORESTRY	PO BOX 1026	WILLOW	AK	99688
LARRY	SMITH	SC REG COUN OF FISH &	GAME ADV COMM		FRITZ CREEK	AK	99603
RON	SOMERVILLE	AK OUTDOOR COUNCIL		3780 MCGINNIS DR	JUNEAU	AK	99801
JOHN	SPALDING	AK AIRMAN'S ASSN		6445 IMLACH WAY	ANCHORAGE	AK	99502

DONALD JOEL	STANDIFER STEFANSKI	TYONEK NATIVE CORP MAT-SU LOGGERS ASSN		4433 LAKE OTIS PKWY HC01 BOX 6031A	ANCHORAGE PALMER	AK AK	99807 99645
JOHN	STURGEON	KONCOR	BOARD OF FORESTRY	3501 DENALI STE 202	ANCHORAGE	AK	99503
JIM	SYKES	CHASE COMMUNITY COUNCIL		309 GAYLENE CIR	ANCHORAGE	AK	99504
JOHN DICK	THOMAS TINDALL	BOARD OF FORESTRY RESOURCE DEVELOP COUNCIL		BOX 8282 PO BOX 100516	KETCHIKAN ANCHORAGE	AK AK	99901 99510
BILL CYNTHIA JACK RON	TULL WATSON PRES WILLIS WOLFE	PALMER CHAMBER OF COM GREATER WASILLA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SUSITNA BASIN CHARTER APT C/O AK REC SER KLUKWAN FOREST PROD INC		634 S BAILY STE 201 PO BOX 871826 HC 32 BOX 6525-75 PO BOX 34659	PALMER WASILLA WASILLA JUNEAU	AK AK AK AK	99645 99687 99687 99803
DICK	ZOBEL CHAIRMAN	WASILLA SOIL & WATER	CONSERV DIST	2640 WASILLA-FISHOOK RD	WASILLA	AK	99687



## Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

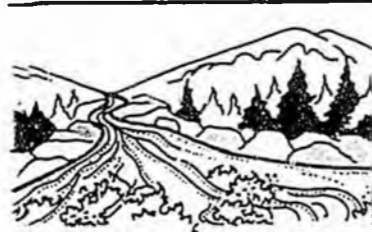
Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Land and Resource Section

### Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

- Purpose** To decide how to manage state land and water in corridors along six recreation rivers: Little Susitna River, Deshka River (including Moose and Kroto creeks), Talkeetna River, Lake Creek, Talachulitna River, and Alexander Creek.
- Area** 260,000 acres and 460 river miles along six river systems  
238,000 acres of state-owned land and water  
15,000 acres of borough-owned land  
2,700 acres private land
- Schedule** Issues identified winter (1988-1989)  
Data collection and draft resource assessment written (summer 1989)  
Public reviews alternatives (winter 1989)  
Agencies review draft plan (summer 1990)  
Public reviews draft plan (fall 1990)  
Final plan (winter 1990)  
Legislature reviews plan (winter, spring 1991)
- Participation** Planning team: representatives from Dept. of Natural Resources divisions of Land & Water, Parks, Forestry, Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Geological & Geophysical Surveys, and Mining; Dept. of Fish and Game; Dept. of Transportation & Public Facilities; Dept. of Environmental Conservation; Matanuska-Susitna Borough; and City of Houston
- Technical advisors: National Park Service
- Citizens' advisory board: 11 members appointed by the governor's office representing user groups; 2 members appointed by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough
- General public: 3 rounds of public meetings, meetings with interest groups, letters and phone calls
- Major Issues** Levels of allowable development, including lodges, airstrips, and seasonal tentcamps  
Access, including boating, roads, and off-road vehicles  
Public facilities, including campgrounds and day use areas  
Implementation, including user fees, project priorities, field staff, enforcement, and additional regulations
- Current Step** Public reviews alternatives in series of eight public meetings. Comments will assist planning team and advisory board in developing an agency review draft plan by May, 1990

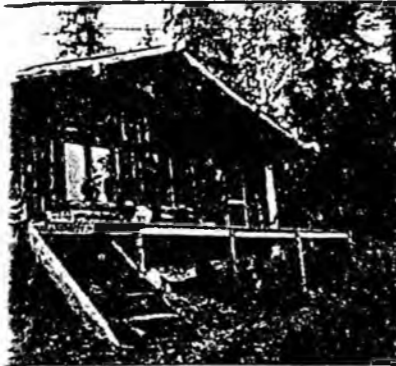
THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT HAS  
NOT BEEN FILMED BUT IS  
AVAILABLE IN THE ORIGINAL  
FILE

# Susitna Basin



## Recreation Rivers Management Plan

Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Resource Allocation Section  
3601 C Street  
Pouch 10-7005  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510-7005



### Introduction

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources is preparing a Recreation Rivers Management Plan for the Susitna Basin. The purpose of the plan is to manage state land and water located in corridors along six recreation rivers: Little Susitna River (including Moose and Kroto creeks), Lake Creek, Talachulitna River, and Lake Creek. Anyone interested in these areas is encouraged to participate in the planning process.

The waters in the recreation rivers corridors are entirely state owned. Most of the land is state or borough owned. However, there are scattered private parcels of land that date back to the state open-to-entry and Bureau of Land Management homesteading programs. Large-scale state and borough land sale areas are not included in the river corridors.

Management Area.....	266,470 acres
State owned.....	240,910 acres
Borough owned.....	21,260 acres
Private.....	4,300 acres



### Why do we need a plan?

In 1983, the Alaska legislature passed the Recreation Rivers Act. This act established six "recreation rivers" and placed them in public ownership in perpetuity, with a general management intent. The purposes of the act are maintenance and enhancement of recreation in the corridors for recreation; management and maintenance of fish and wildlife resources on a sustained yield basis; con-

### How will the plan be done?

The Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan will take about two and one-half years to prepare. It will be developed by a planning team and an advisory board.

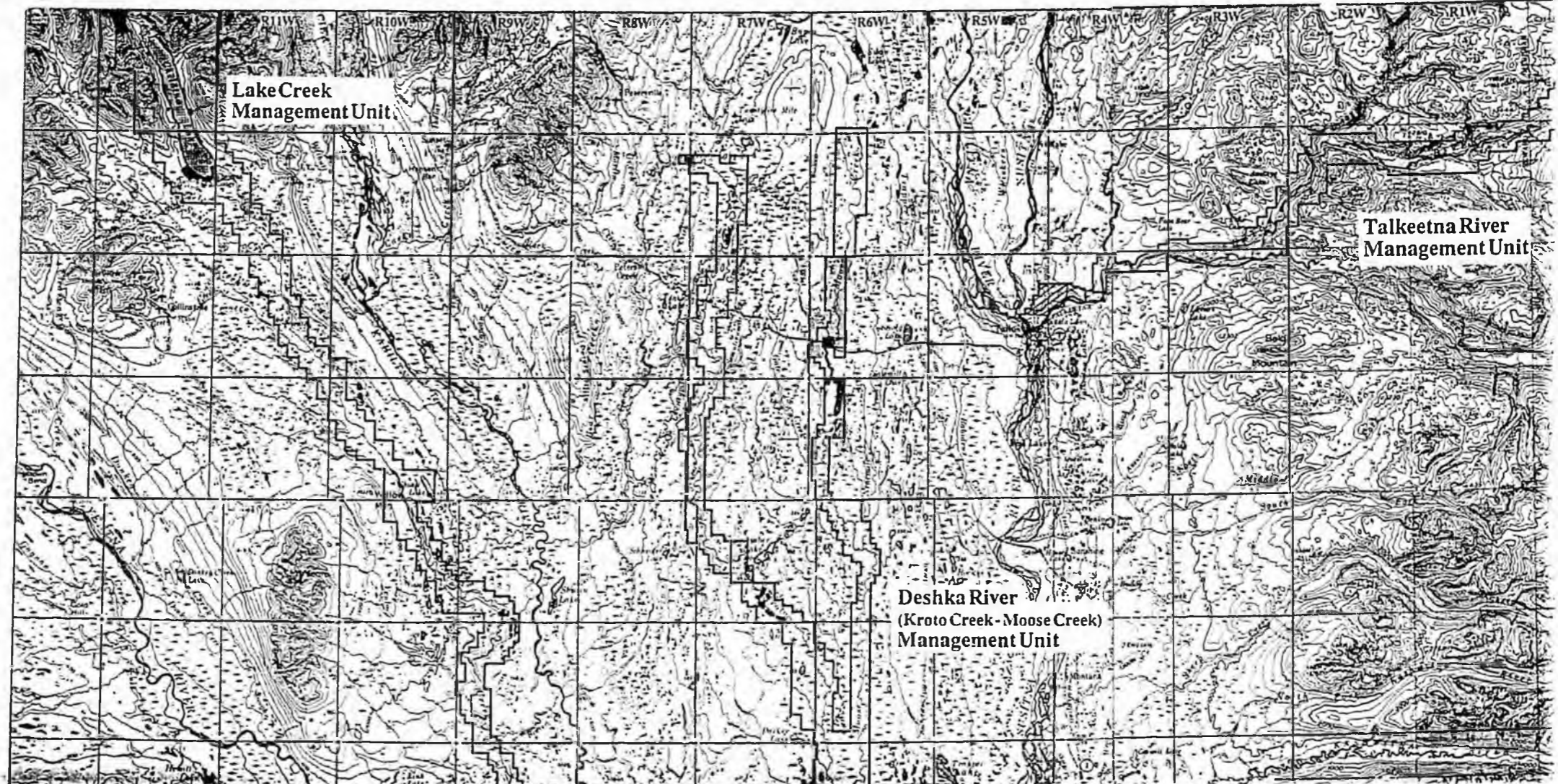
The planning team includes representatives from state agencies that manage state resources, including the departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Game, Environmental Conservation, and Transportation and Public

### Steps in the process

1. Identify Issues  
Hold public meetings to identify issues and concerns in the river corridors. (December 1988)
2. Gather Information  
Collect information about natural resources, present and past land use, land ownership, and the local economy. (Occurs throughout planning process)
3. Prepare Draft Plan  
Review agency and public comments and revise the plan. The plan is prepared for publication. (Fall 1990)
4. Public Reviews Draft Plan  
Hold public meetings to provide the public the opportunity to comment on the draft plan and identify parts that need to be changed. (Summer 1990)
5. Prepare Final Plan  
Review agency and public comments and revise the plan. The plan is prepared for publication. (Fall 1990)

# Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan

The Susitna Basin Recreation Rivers Management Plan includes corridors approximately one-mile wide along six rivers. The corridors include scattered parcels resulting from past state and federal dispersed land sale programs. The corridors exclude large blocks of private land resulting from concentrated state and borough land sales.



**S B**

**434**

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT  
FIRST COMMITTEE OF REFERRAL

DATE: 2/5/90

FURTHER:

Date of 5-Day Notice: 2-8-90  
(in accordance with Uniform Rule 23)

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE: 2-14-90

Resources Committee considered SB 434

Act establishing a task force to continue state initiatives for the development of a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline; efd.

and recommended:

replace with \_\_\_\_\_ CS SB 434 (Resources)  same title  
 attached amendment(s)  new title

\_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent adopted

do pass

do not pass

no recommendation

individual recommendations

further referral to Finance

ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):

Department(s)/Date:

Department(s)/Date:

fiscal note(s) Office of the Governor

zero fiscal note(s) DNR

appropriation-no fiscal note

Governor's bill w/fiscal note

SIGNING DO PASS:

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

[Signature]  
[Signature]  
[Signature]  
[Signature]  
[Signature]

Do pass  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

[Signature]  
Chair: Signature and Recommendation

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

400 WILLOUGHBY AVE.  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1796  
PHONE: (907) 465-2400

February 9, 1990

The Honorable Bettye Fahrenkamp  
Chair, Senate Resources Committee  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

Subject: Senate Bill 434, which establishes a task force to continue state initiatives for the development of a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline.

Position: The Department of Natural Resources supports this bill. A task force on the construction of a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline would focus positive attention on the proposed project and could help determine whether state initiatives for pipeline promotion, development or construction are necessary.

Background: The Department of Natural Resources has established a state pipeline coordination office to coordinate state activities relating to all common carrier pipelines with other state and federal agencies. Coordination of gas pipeline activities is included in the responsibilities of this office. The task force would provide additional opportunities for gas pipeline related coordination.

Please let me or Jerry Brossia, State Pipeline Coordinator, know if you would like additional information about the department's pipeline responsibilities.

Sincerely,

  
Lennie Gorsuch  
Commissioner

cc: Bill Sponsors  
Committee Members  
Bob Evans, Legislative Liaison  
Office of the Governor  
Denby Lloyd, Special Staff Assistant  
to the Governor  
Jerry Brossia, State Pipeline Coordinator  
Department of Natural Resources

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 2/9/90  
Title: Gas Pipeline Task Force

Agency Affected: Natural Resources  
BRU: Management and Administration

Sponsor: Senator Kelly  
Requestor: Senate Resources Committee

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	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

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

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Several trips a year to task force meetings could be accommodated by the current travel budget. The department could not provide staff support or extensive travel funds for task force work without additional funding.

Prepared by: Carol Wilson Phone: 465-2400  
Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 2/9/90

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency: Department of Natural Resources

Distribution (by preparer):

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

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 2/9/90  
Title: Gas Pipeline Task Force  
Sponsor: Senator Kelly  
Requestor: Senate resources Committee

Agency Affected: Natural Resources  
BRU: Management and Administration  
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	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

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

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Several trips a year to task force meetings could be accommodated by the current travel budget. The department could not provide staff support or extensive travel funds for task force work without additional funding.

Prepared by: Carol Wilson Phone: 465-2400  
Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 2/9/90  
Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency: Department of Natural Resources

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

Changes in CS SB 434 (Res) have no fiscal impact. This fiscal note is appropriate. Projections of no fiscal impact would continue through 1996.

## FISCAL NOTE

**REQUEST:**

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Affected: Office of the Governor  
 Title: "An Act establishing a task force  
... natural gas pipeline:..." BRU: Executive Operations  
 Sponsor: Sen. Kelly, Sturgulewski, et al Components: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Requestor: Sen. Fahrenkamp

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

OPERATING	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL	.4	.4				
CONTRACTUAL	1.8	3.8				
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>				
<b>CAPITAL</b>						
<b>REVENUE</b>						

**FUNDING:** (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND	2.2	4.2				
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>				

**POSITIONS:**

FULL-TIME	-	-				
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

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

See attached analysis

Prepared by: Michael A. Nizich, Director Phone: 465-3616  
 Division: Division of Administrative Services Date: 2/13/90  
 Approved by Commissioner: Garrey Peska, Chief of Staff Date: 2/13/90  
 Agency: Office of the Governor

**Distribution (by preparer):**

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

SB 434 Analysis

Analysis assumes travel and per diem costs for executive branch members will be absorbed within each agency's operating budget. Fiscal note provides for meeting expenses for one public member only.

TRAVEL .4

Assumes 10 meetings to be held in Anchorage.  
5 meetings in FY 91, 5 meetings in FY 92.

per diem @ 80/day x 1 day x 1 person x 5 meetings = 400

CONTRACTUAL 1.8

Advertising, Printing & Binding:

Advertising -- 5 meetings x 350	1,750
Printing -- Final report (FY 92)	2,000

Absent legislative appropriation for related task force expenses, fiscal note assumes support needs will be provided by participating agencies.

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 2/9/90  
Title: Gas Pipeline Task Force  
Sponsor: Senator Kelly  
Requestor: Senate Resources Committee

Agency Affected: Natural Resources  
BRU: Management and Administration  
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	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

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

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Several trips a year to task force meetings could be accommodated by the current travel budget. The department could not provide staff support or extensive travel funds for task force work without additional funding.

Prepared by: Carol Wilson Phone: 465-2400  
Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 2/9/90  
Approved by Commissioner: [Signature] Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Agency: Department of Natural Resources

Distribution (by preparer):

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



STATE OF ALASKA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
BILL ANALYSIS

DEPARTMENT Fish and Game	DIVISION Habitat	BILL NUMBER SB434	SPONSOR Kelly, et al.
SHORT TITLE OF BILL An act establishing a Trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline task force.			
DEPARTMENT POSITION Neutral with amendment			
PREPARED BY Frank Rue, Director	DATE 2-14-90	COMMISSIONER'S SIGNATURE <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE 2/14/90

SUMMARY

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED BY BILL Dept. of Revenue, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Dept. of Natural Resources, Alaska Public Utilities Commission, Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., Industrial Development and Export Authority, Office of International Trade	CONSTITUENT GROUPS AFFECTED BY BILL All users of state land
ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT FOR BILL Unknown	ORGANIZATIONAL OPPOSITION TO BILL Unknown

FISCAL IMPACT:  NONE  FISCAL NOTE ATTACHED

BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE INTENT

This measure establishes within the Office of the Governor a Task Force on Construction of a Trans-Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline. The task force's primary purpose is to evaluate and report on state initiatives for development and construction of a Trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline in an environmentally safe and economically feasible manner.

ANALYSIS OF BILL/PROGRAM EFFECTS

This measure establishes a task force comprised of seven members, including the Commissioners of Revenue, Natural Resources, Environmental Conservation, a representative from the Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority, director of the Office of International Trade, chair of the Alaska Public Utilities Commission, and a representative of the Alyeska Pipeline Services Company appointed by the governor. The task force is charged with evaluating and reporting to the governor and the legislature by January 1992 on state initiatives for development of a Trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline. Specific emphasis is to be placed on (1) state options for promoting development and construction of a gas pipeline and (2) tax, regulatory, and permitting constraints to development of a pipeline that the state may address.

AMENDMENTS PROPOSED

This measure should be amended to include the Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) as a member of the task force. Direct involvement of ADF&G is critical to the success of the task force. By law and administrative procedures, the design and construction of a Trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline project will require extensive agency and industry consultation with ADF&G and in numerous instances Title 16 approvals.

PLEASE ATTACH A SEPARATE SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR ANALYSIS.

STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY

FEB 12 1990

POUCH Y - STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
907 465 3800

MEMORANDUM

February 10, 1990

SUBJECT: Senate Bill 434, establishing a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline task force -- sectional analysis

TO: Senator Tim Kelly,  
Senate President  
ATTN: Eldon Mulder

FROM: Jack Chenoweth  
Legislative Counsel

In this legislation, three cabinet members, three other state officials, and one person drawn from a private company with significant relevant experience are constituted a Task Force on Construction of the Trans-Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline. The task force would be charged with providing guidance to the legislature and the administration "on state initiatives for development of a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline in a manner that is environmentally safe and economically feasible."

Bill section 1 establishes the seven-member task force, specifies the task force's membership; authorizes the governor to appoint a chair and vice-chair for the task force; sets out a manner of calling task force meetings; authorizes alternates to serve for task force members who cannot attend meetings; specifies that task force members are entitled to travel compensation and per diem as otherwise authorized for state boards and commissions; and, subject to legislative appropriation for the purpose, permits the task force to expend money to perform its duties.

Those duties are set out in (g) of bill section 1. As noted earlier, they include a review and evaluation of state initiatives for development of a pipeline and its construction. The task force is to give special emphasis to the options available to the state to promote completion of the pipeline, and the identification of constraints to its development that the state may address.

Senator Tim Kelly  
Page 2  
February 10, 1990

Bill sections 2 and 3 together indicate that the task force is to operate between December 15, 1990 and February 1, 1992. The task force's report is to be delivered to the governor and legislature by late-January, 1992.

JBC:lmb  
L9/114

Original sponsor(s): SEN. KELLY, Sturgulewski, Pearce, Jones, Faiks,  
Adams, Duncan, Pourchot, Rodey, Szymanski, Eliason, Kerttula, Zharoff,  
Fahrenkamp

1 IN THE SENATE

BY THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

2 CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 434 (Resources)

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5 A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act establishing a task force to continue state  
7 initiatives for the development of a trans-Alaska  
8 natural gas pipeline; and providing for an effective  
9 date."

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

11 \* Section 1. TASK FORCE ON CONSTRUCTION OF TRANS-ALASKA NATURAL GAS  
12 PIPELINE. (a) There is established in the Office of the Governor a Task  
13 Force on Construction of a Trans-Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline. The task  
14 force is composed of seven members, including

15 (1) the commissioner of revenue;

16 (2) the commissioner of natural resources;

17 (3) the commissioner of environmental conservation;

18 (4) one of the members of the Alaska Industrial Development and  
19 Export Authority or the executive director of that authority, as determined  
20 by the members of the authority;

21 (5) the director of the Office of International Trade in the  
22 Office of the Governor;

23 (6) the chair of the Alaska Public Utilities Commission; and

24 (7) an officer, member of the board of directors, or employee of  
25 Alyeska Pipeline Services Company, appointed by the governor.

26 (b) The governor shall name a chair and vice-chair of the task force  
27 from among the members of the task force.

28 (c) The task force shall meet regularly at the call of the chair of  
29 the task force or at the request of a majority of the members of the task

*New  
Lange  
Resources  
CS*

1 force.

2 (d) If a member described in (a) of this section is unable to attend  
3 a meeting of the task force, the member may, by an instrument in writing  
4 filed with the Office of the Governor, designate an alternate to act in the  
5 member's place as a member of the task force for the meeting. For all  
6 purposes of this Act, the person designated in the instrument is a member  
7 of the task force at the meeting.

8 (e) The members of the task force serve without compensation, but are  
9 entitled to receive per diem and travel expenses authorized for boards and  
10 commissions under AS 39.20.180. The members appointed under (a)(1) - (6)  
11 of this section may receive per diem and travel expenses only from the  
12 annual appropriations made to the agency by which the member is employed.

13 (f) The provisions of AS 39.50 apply to members of the Task Force on  
14 Construction of a Trans-Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline.

15 (g) Subject to legislative appropriation for the purpose, the task  
16 force may expend money it considers necessary to perform its duties.

17 (h) The task force shall evaluate and report to the governor and  
18 legislature, not later than the 10th day of the Second Session of the  
19 Seventeenth Alaska State Legislature, on state initiatives for development  
20 of a trans-Alaska natural gas pipeline and its construction in a manner  
21 that is environmentally safe and economically feasible. The task force  
22 shall give special emphasis to

23 (1) options for state initiatives in the promotion, development,  
24 and construction of a natural gas pipeline; and

25 (2) tax, regulatory, and permitting constraints to development  
26 of a pipeline that the state may address.

27 \* Sec. 2. This Act is repealed February 1, 1992.

28 \* Sec. 3. This Act takes effect December 15, 1990.

29

SB 430



MAR 26 1990

**Koncor Forest Products Company**

3501 Denali, Suite 202  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
(907) 562-3335 FAX (907) 562-0599

March 20, 1990

The Honorable Senator Bettye M. Fahrenkamp  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau AK 99811

RE: SB 430

Dear Senator Fahrenkamp:

I am writing regarding SB 430 introduced by Senator Rodey on February 2. The bill is an attempt to lock up a vast area of public lands in the Susitna Valley for the benefit of a few elite lodge owners, air taxi operators and remote parcel owners. The bill circumvents the time and significant expenditure of public funds used to develop the Susitna Area Plan. The bill eliminates opportunities to disperse congested recreation activity away from the few existing roads in the area. It closes the door on the area's potential to provide economic diversification in Alaska's oil dependant economy, and virtually eliminates the role the private and public sector can play in improving moose habitat through timber harvest.

Alaska has an abundance of recreation lands of a remote character. The identification and selection of State lands was intended to provide for community and resource development. Current recreational opportunities are severely over crowded as can be evidenced on a summer day along the Alexander, Deshka, and Susitna rivers. Last summer I ran my boat up Lake Creek and was amazed by the crowds, with the congestion being similar to that on the Russian River. This all speaks poorly for the condition of accessible recreational opportunities in this largest state in the union. The irony of this legislation is the premise that it is pro recreation. What these over congested areas need is more roads to disperse the crowds, not a locked up wilderness.

For all practical purposes the bill would eliminate mining, timber harvest and future land disposals, with a few exceptions for those who already have a piece of the pie. This "I've got mine" approach to public land management is a disservice to the public and the resource agencies involved with the planning process.

The restrictions in this bill would make practical solutions to the moose management problems in the Susitna Valley extremely limited. Any habitat manipulation for the benefit of moose would have to be accomplished with legislative appropriations. On the contrary, the Susitna Area Plan is flexible enough to allow for habitat improvement through sales of timber. This saves the State money, improves economic conditions in the valley and improves moose habitat. This

