



Alaska State Legislature

1976

Source:

SJR 41 am

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 41 am

Requesting amendment of the Organic Act of 1897 to permit management of the national forests in Alaska according to modern silvicultural techniques.

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

WHEREAS the application of the recent decision of the U.S. District Court for the District of Alaska in the case of Zieski v. Butz, et al will require, unless overturned by a higher court, that outmoded and scientifically discredited timber management practices be applied to the national forests in Alaska and the other western states; and

WHEREAS the total application of these practices to the national forests of Alaska will virtually destroy the forest products industry in the state by making it silviculturally, economically and physically impossible to harvest Alaska's timber; and

WHEREAS the forest products industry in Alaska provides direct employment to 3,800 men and women on a permanent and seasonal basis, and indirect employment to thousands of others; and

WHEREAS implementation of the court's decision will create massive unemployment and untold human suffering among this group, whose homes are concentrated in a part of the state already facing economic uncertainty; and

WHEREAS selective cutting of mature or over-mature trees as would be required under the decision will result, in many Alaska forests, in extensive wind damage and "blow down" of the remaining timber, creating fire hazards in the forests of interior Alaska and potential breeding grounds for forest disease and insect pests in coastal Alaska forests; and

WHEREAS the federal law which has now been interpreted to require these outmoded practices was written more than three-quarters of a century ago, at a time when modern silvicultural science did not exist;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature respectfully requests that urgent and immediate consideration be given to amendment of the Organic Act of 1897, 16 U.S.C. secs. 473-482, in order that the U.S. Forest Service will be able to manage the national forests in Alaska according to modern silvicultural techniques, including allowance of the practice of clearcutting when it does not endanger other resources; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Governor is respectfully requested to work with Alaska's delegation in Congress for the purpose of effecting appropriate amendments to the Organic Act of 1897.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Gerald R. Ford, President of the United States; the Honorable Earl Butz, Secretary, Department of Agriculture; the Honorable Herman E. Talmadge, Chairman, Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee; the Honorable Thomas Foley, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Mike Gravel, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.