

STATE OF ALASKA
SENATE

1979

Source

SR 3

Senate
Resolve No.

2



Relating to land allocation in the Tongass National Forest.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

WHEREAS, in May, 1977, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Conservation, Research and Education M. Rupert Cutler announced that the United States Forest Service would make a second review and evaluation of roadless areas in the National Forest System (RARE II), the purpose of which was to allocate roadless areas in the National Forest System to wilderness, further wilderness study, or multiple use; and

WHEREAS, in May, 1977, Secretary Cutler announced that RARE II in the Tongass National Forest would be accomplished through the Tongass Land Management Plan which was then being prepared by the U. S. Forest Service in accordance with the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act; and

WHEREAS the Tongass Land Management Plan is designed to incorporate and coordinate data on all of the forest multiple resource values, citizens' comments, socio-economic data and transportation information; and

WHEREAS, in February, 1978, before the completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan and without the preparation of an environmental impact statement, Secretary Cutler released the so-called "Administration Proposal for the Tongass National Forest" which proposal would have had a significant impact upon the timber, mining, hydroelectric, fishing, and tourism industries, and thereby adversely affect the economy of Southeastern Alaska; and

WHEREAS, in June, 1978, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Tongass Land Management Plan was released, which included a proposal prepared by an interdisciplinary team

which would have had a significantly smaller impact upon the timber, mining, hydroelectric, fishing, and tourism industries than that released by the Carter Administration on February 1, 1978; and

WHEREAS, in a letter dated August 4, 1978, the State of Alaska responded to the Tongass Land Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement in general support of the interdisciplinary team recommendation with the provision of a mechanism to assure adequate timber to the industry should the team's economic assumptions prove to be erroneous, and this proposal would have had a substantially smaller impact upon the timber, mining, hydroelectric, fishing, and tourism industries in Southeastern Alaska than the Carter Administration's February 1, 1978 proposal; and

WHEREAS public input to the Tongass Land Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement from both the public and the municipal governments favored the proposal advanced by the Southeast Chapter of the Citizens for the Management of Alaska Lands which would have protected the existing timber, fishing, and tourism industries and provided continued hydroelectric, fisheries enhancement facility siting and mining opportunities in Southeastern Alaska; and

WHEREAS, in September, 1978, before the completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan and without an environmental impact statement for it, Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland transmitted the Carter Administration proposal for the Tongass National Forest to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which proposal was in all significant respects the same as the Carter Administration's February 1, 1978 proposal; and

WHEREAS, in October, 1978, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources reported out a bill which would have had a significantly smaller impact on the timber, mining, hydroelectric, fishing, and tourism industries than the Administration proposal and which bill, as regards Southeastern Alaska, was in substantial accord with the State of Alaska's August 4, 1978 position and the proposal of the Southeastern Chapter of the Citizens for the Management of Alaska Lands; and

WHEREAS, on October 14, 1978, Congress adjourned without passing any legislation allocating land in the Tongass National Forest; and

WHEREAS, on December 1, 1978, before completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan and without an environmental impact statement for the plan, President Carter designated Admiralty Island and Misty Flord as National Monuments under the purported authority of the Antiquities Act of 1906; and

WHEREAS, at the same time and before completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan and without an environmental impact statement for it, Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus withdrew approximately 7,000,000 acres of the Tongass National Forest from mining under the purported authority of section 204(b)(1) of the Federal Land Management Policy Act; and

WHEREAS, on January 4, 1979, before completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan and without an environmental impact statement for the plan, Secretary of Agriculture Bob

Bergland announced that certain areas of the Tongass National Forest were being recommended to Congress for and would thereafter be treated as wilderness as part of the RARE II process, which inclusion was completely at odds with Secretary Cutler's statement of May 1977 that the Tongass Land Management Plan would be the vehicle for completing the RARE II process in Southeastern Alaska; and

WHEREAS, assuming use of the "A" Base Map shown in the Tongass Land Management Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement and no increase above the present Region 10 timber management budget, the Carter Administration proposal would provide only 302 MMBF of the 520 MMBF needed to maintain the timber industry which threatens to reduce the timber industry jobs to half their present number and would effectively preclude development of the Lake Grace hydroelectric project near Ketchikan, the U. S. Borax Mine near Quartz Hill in Ketchikan, the Noranda Greens Creek Project on Admiralty Island, and the Inspiration Project on Yakobi Island;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska State Senate that the Carter Administration is requested to withdraw its RARE II - (d)(2) recommendations for the Tongass National Forest until completion of the Tongass Land Management Plan; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Senate firmly endorses the earliest possible passage of a RARE II or (d)(2) bill which would include a more balanced approach to resource allocation for the Tongass National Forest and would, among other things,

(1) provide sufficient timber from the Tongass National Forest to maintain at least the current level of employment without job displacement and without reliance on private (Native) timber;

(2) permit known mineral deposits to be developed and exploration continued in areas of high mineral potential;

(3) provide for access across national interest lands and maintain the option for future transportation needs;

(4) permit expedited development of hydroelectric sites and allow for transmission corridors;

(5) provide that fisheries enhancement and rehabilitation, including aquaculture, be permitted on all suitable sites;

(6) provide that traditional and subsistence uses, including commercial fishing, shall be permitted to continue throughout Southeastern Alaska;

(7) provide for state management of fish and game on national interest lands in Southeastern Alaska;

(8) include Congressional recognition that whatever land allocations are made in Southeastern Alaska represent a Congressional attempt to achieve final national interest withdrawals for Southeastern Alaska and that no further wilderness withdrawals are required.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Jimmy Carter, President of the United States; the Honorable Bob Bergland, Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary of the Interior; the Honorable Henry M. Jackson, Chairman, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; the Honorable Herman Talmadge, Chairman, Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry; the Honorable Thomas S. Foley, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee; the Honorable Morris Udall, Chairman, House Interior Subcommittee; 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; and to the legislatures of all states impacted by RARE II and their Congressional delegations.