

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1994

Source
SCR 13

Legislative
Resolve No.
37



Relating to the Gold Rush Centennial Decade.

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

WHEREAS the discoveries of gold in Alaska and the Yukon in the late 1890s set off the last great American gold rush, luring thousands of men and women north, some to escape economic depression, others to seek adventure; and

WHEREAS prospectors searched throughout Alaska, including the Southeast panhandle, the Kenai Peninsula, the Seward Peninsula, and the vast Interior, discovering gold and other precious metals and establishing new towns such as Circle, Nome, Juneau, Skagway, Fairbanks, Hope, Iditarod, and Valdez; and

WHEREAS along with the prospectors came people, both honest and crooked, to provide services to the miners and, in the process, to stimulate the development of communications, local governments, and establishment of transportation routes like the Chilkoot, Iditarod, Valdez, Kantishna, Bonfield, Dalton, and Circle City trails; and

WHEREAS, while the participants were predominantly white males, there were also women, Asians, and African-Americans who were part of the Gold Rush story; and

WHEREAS Alaska Natives participated in the Gold Rush and the changes the Gold

Rush brought to the territory dramatically changed their way of life, impacting land rights, hunting grounds, and trade and travel routes; and

WHEREAS the gold mining industry has become an integral part of Alaska's economy, with over 200 producing gold mines, employing hundreds of persons, and producing over 260,000 ounces of gold in 1992 worth more than \$88,000,000; and

WHEREAS the Governor and Lieutenant Governor formed the Alaska Gold Rush Centennial Task Force in 1993, consisting of 124 members from 25 Alaska communities, Washington, and the Yukon Territory, representing federal, state, and municipal governments, tourism organizations, historical groups, museums, libraries, the news media, private businesses, educational institutions, and Native organizations; and

WHEREAS the mission of the task force is to coordinate statewide celebration of the 100th anniversary in order to promote the understanding of the importance of the Gold Rush Era in Alaska's history and to enhance tourism opportunities; and

WHEREAS the task force supports education, research, documentation, and preservation of historical resources from the Gold Rush Era;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature designates the years 1994 through 2004 as the Gold Rush Centennial Decade; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature recognizes the Alaska Gold Rush Centennial Task Force as coordinator and promoter of statewide centennial activities; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature urges schools, public and private organizations, and the people of the state to coordinate statewide celebrations of the 100th anniversary in order to promote an understanding of the importance of the Gold Rush Era in Alaska's history and to enhance tourism opportunities.