

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

1995

Legislative
Resolve No.

18

Source

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Relating to the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; relating to the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, strategic plan known as "Reinvention of the Forest Service"; and advocating that implementation of the plan be suspended pending Congressional review and consultation with local governments.

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

WHEREAS the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, has issued a new strategic plan known as "Reinvention of the Forest Service"; and

WHEREAS this plan has far-reaching implications and was developed without consultation with key elected leaders, including state governors, members of the United States Congress, or community, tribal government, and the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) corporate leaders in contradiction of President Clinton's Executive Order No. 12875 "Enhancing Intergovernmental Partnerships"; and

WHEREAS Vice-President Gore's "Report on Reinventing Government" was developed with the promised intent of empowering local governments and decentralizing decision-making power; and

WHEREAS the "Reinvention of the Forest Service" strategic plan approved by Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, just before his resignation, eliminates the very foundation of locally based authority that had the responsibility of working with states, local communities, tribal

governments, and ANCSA corporations and masks and diffuses decision-making authority and withdraws it to Washington, D.C., making the Forest Service less responsive to local concerns; and

WHEREAS moving the Alaska Region Forest Service office to Portland, Oregon, is an example of the flawed science being used to define ecosystems and ecological boundaries; and

WHEREAS the newly defined purpose of the Forest Service to promote the sustainability of ecosystems without specifically retaining the traditional Forest Service objective of promoting community stability has already created problems and crises for hundreds of communities dependent upon the national forests and state and private forest ecosystems; and

WHEREAS the new strategic plan has seemingly turned away from commitment towards providing a continuous flow of renewable resources to meet the public need, as directed in the Organic Act, Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, the National Forest Management Act, and other Acts of the Congress; and

WHEREAS, under the new strategic plan, the Forest Service is more inclined to present a nebulous plan for ecosystem management where resource yields are simply the by-products of management, with no predictable flows or commitments to supply levels to sustain human life;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alaska State Legislature calls upon the newly designated Secretary of Agriculture to suspend implementation of the reinvention project's strategic plan approved by Secretary Espy to allow for Congressional review and for consultation with local governments; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, conduct true partnership meetings with states, communities, tribal governments, and ANCSA corporations to develop a new strategic plan; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Forest Service acknowledge the United States Department of Agriculture's legal obligations to rebuild, restore, and promote the economic stability of forest dependent communities; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that, in keeping with federal law, timber commodities are a primary not a residual value of forest management; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED that the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, through a true partnership with local communities, identify and implement strategies for decentralizing decision making and empowering state and local governments to more effectively

manage forest ecosystems to assure community stability, improve service to the public, and reduce government cost.

COPIES of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Bill Clinton, President of the United States; the Honorable Al Gore, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable Dan Glickman, Secretary of Agriculture; the Honorable Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of the Interior; Jack Ward Thomas, Chief of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; and to the Honorable Ted Stevens and the Honorable Frank Murkowski, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S. Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress.