



Outdoor Alaska



The Official publication of the Alaska Outdoor Council and Alaska Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund.
"Protecting your hunting, fishing, trapping, and outdoor heritage since 1955"

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Summer 2012

Questions of Candidates running for the Alaska Legislature in 2012

By AOC Executive Director Rod Arno

Alaska Outdoor Council staff has personally interviewed and spoken with many of the candidates for the state legislature, but because it would be impossible for us to speak with all 126 primary election candidates for the state house and senate, we have posed key questions to candidates in the form of a written questionnaire. We think it's important for you, our membership, to see what we're asking them on your behalf. Also, should you get the opportunity to speak with any candidates before the general election this November, you may ask their position on these key issues that they will be facing during the upcoming legislative sessions:

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November 3rd, 5:00pm
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November 3rd, 5:00pm
 Fairbanks, Alaska

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Easy to judge Antler size when you call it out into the open

1. In 1998 the Legislature enacted a requirement to register snowmobiles, with the proceeds from registration directed to funding the development and maintenance of snowmobile facilities and trails across Alaska. AOC would like to pursue the same type of system for off-road track and wheeled vehicles. Is this user-pay system something you could support? Are you aware of the Snowtrac program?

2. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, has proposed to establish a state forest in the Susitna Valley. Legislation was introduced during the last legislative session to establish forest boundaries. AOC opposed the bill as written, because the boundaries created several disjointed parcels of

forest land, and because language dealing with public access to the forest was weak. Do you support a state forest in the Susitna Valley? If so, do you believe the public should have the right to motorized access in a Susitna State Forest? In other or all state forests?

3. Several federal agencies are currently conducting federal land management plans in Alaska. These plans ALL propose to restrict the use of federal land to all but local area residents. To date, the state involvement in these planning processes has been limited. Would you support increased funding for the Department of Law and the Department of Natural Resources to

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Presidents Message

By Bill Iverson, AOC President

Donations and volunteers

Anyone who would like to help with any of our banquets or sports shows please contact AOC. We still need donation of items for each of our banquets, so if you have that item sitting around your home, that you could part with, we could repurpose it to a new user and help support AOC.

Again **Interior Airboaters Association** has outdone themselves with another large donation to AOC. Thank you very much.

Bison Permit Raffle Winner

Congratulations to: Denny Hamann of Wasilla
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Special thanks to Snowmads and Slana Alaskans
Unite for purchasing extra tickets to help AFWCF.

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I hope all had a great fishing season and will have even a better hunting season.



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Executive Director Report

By Rod Arno, AOC Executive Director



Roadblocks Ahead for Alaska's Outdoors Folks

If the federal land management agencies have their way the opportunities for new public access to public lands in Alaska will be limited. Scoping meetings on new road construction and a BLM draft Resource Management Plan (RMP) covering lands in interior Alaska from the Bering Sea west to the Canadian

border, **all recommend limiting non-local public use** on any new road construction.

As the State attempts to create new access routes to resource development projects the most contentious issues has been “who” will be allowed to travel these newly constructed roads? The “who” that has drawn the largest objection is outdoors folks.

While roads, airstrips, and boat launches for public use to access public lands and waters has traditionally been made available by resource development companies, that is not the case currently in Alaska. The haul road to Prudhoe Bay goes through millions of acres of public lands but doesn't allow access off the road right-of-way. The Donnelly Creek Mine road and the Red Dog Mine road are closed to the public.

How is it that the practice of allowing the public to access public lands has been derailed in Alaska? The answer to that question is Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) passed by Congress in 1980. Section 810(a) of ANILCA requires that an evaluation of local subsistence uses and needs be completed for any determination of land use. Federal law gives a priority use of public lands to local people on all federal lands in Alaska (over 60% of the State). Thirty years of federal management decisions based on ANILCA makes it clear; no actions that may increase competition for local residents to public resources will be adopted. Local's fear of competition for resources from outsiders cause the feds to adopt restrictions to access for non-local outdoors folks.

Often “safety” is used for the reason to block public travel on resource development roads but the draft Interior Eastern Resource Management Plan RMP/EIS and the public scoping meetings on the roads to the Ambler mining district and the Colville River makes it clear; it's about objecting to non-local travel. Safety concerns of ore truck traffic are manageable.

During Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) permitting of “Roads to Resources”, outdoors folks will have to depend on the Alaska Legislature and the Governor to protect their access to public lands and waters. AOC representatives will be participating in the public process fighting to prevent roadblocks to all Alaskans who wish to utilize roads constructed on public lands.

Who should Alaska make sure gets their fish? No Matter What?

With many salmon runs around Alaska on the decline we hear a lot of talk from the Board of Fisheries (BOF) about conservation. More and more, it appears that's all it is - talk.

This past season the BOF was presented with a number of Emergency Petitions proposing to close or restrict some salmon harvests in Cook Inlet for the purposes of conservation. When it should have been focused on the sustainability of the run, the board spent most of its time talking about who should get what. The board had a robust discussion about what gear type has or hasn't fished but never mentioned allocating to the land and the wildlife that depend on the nutrients from the fish. Most users of renewable fish resources forget this important use of fish as they battle for their share of the take. All agree that escapement for reproduction is of vital importance but after that it's; “what about my share?”

Once salmon get past killer whales, sea lions, and seals into fresh water streams they are taken by bears, both brown and black, and wolves. After they spawn and begin their decay eagles, osprey, ravens, sea gulls, fox, otters, lynx, and others all line up waiting to take their share. Moose, caribou, deer, elk, goats, bison, and sheep are next, waiting every spring for the greens fertilized by decaying salmon carcasses to come up along river banks and on beaches. In short, entire ecosystems depend on salmon for sustenance.

AOC's first purpose, as stated in our bylaws, is “conservation of the resources our members are dependent upon”. Sadly, around the state, and especially in Cook Inlet, we see management of salmon that is not as focused on conservation. When salmon runs deteriorate to the point that river escapements haven't been met for years, it's time for Alaska Board of Fisheries to save Alaska's renewable resources from commercial exploitation.

Unfortunately, it will probably take the Alaska Supreme Court, with a little help from the Alaska legislature, to clarify for the BOF that they must allocate fishery resources to individual Alaskans - all Alaskans - before commercial fisheries. But there is no reason for the BOF not to take immediate action to assure salmon escapement goals are being fully met.

Adequate runs of most targeted species of salmon since statehood have provided acceptable escapements. This has saved the BOF from having to seriously address the “conservation over allocation” to commercial fisheries issue. Today, for whatever reason, this is not the case. A number of salmon runs with a long history of commercial harvest are in shocking decline. King salmon runs are down 50% across the State. Susitna River sockeye salmon were designated a stock of yield concern back in 2008. Salmon runs in the Northern District of Cook Inlet continue to decline at an alarming rate.

Continued on Page 4 - Who Gets Fish

Who Gets Fish: Continued from Page 3

Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) staff from the Division of Commercial Fisheries have written that declines in salmon returns to the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet are “neither unforeseen nor unexpected events” and as such don’t rise to the level necessary to be acted on by the BOF when emergency petitions are submitted to them under 5 AAC 96.625(f). Whether or not ADF&G biologists were able to predict the declines shouldn’t relieve the BOF from their obligation, by law, to manage for sustained yield. It’s not just the sustained yield of one run of salmon in a mixed stock fishery that is threatened by ever smaller salmon escapements, the wellbeing of numerous wildlife species are also at stake.

Fishery biologists, BOF members, local observers and advocates for each user group have been speculating for over a decade as to the cause of the decline of some salmon runs in Cook Inlet, while other runs are at record breaking levels. You’ve probably heard some of the more common excuses listed below:

- An increase in beaver dams preventing salmon returning to spawning grounds.
- Invasive pike eating up juvenile salmon.
- In-river anglers are disturbing too many spawning beds.
- Increases in in-river motorized boat traffic.
- Too much unreported subsistence harvest.
- Actually escapement is fine, it’s just faulty Bendix and Didson counters.
- The counting weirs are in the wrong location to make in-season adjustments to commercial and in-river harvest.
- The set gillnet fleet is intercepting declining salmon runs.
- The drift gillnet fleet is preventing passage of declining runs.
- Ocean Trawlers are taking too many salmon as bycatch.
- Protection of marine mammals has allowed for too many ocean predators of salmon.
- Pirate High Seas drift nets are still overharvesting too many salmon headed to Alaskan rivers.
- Global warming has changed ocean temperatures.
- Increased hatchery salmon have depleted the ocean’s food supply.

To AOC, based on their first purpose of conservation, it doesn’t matter which combinations of factors are causing the decline in some salmon runs, it’s the BOF’s responsibility to manage harvest conservatively. When the BOF allows ADF&G to execute a commercial fishery on runs that are known to be declining for the last decade they are not doing their job. When they tell individual Alaskans, trying to put fish in their freezer, that they can’t fish, but they allow commercial interests to exploit that same fish, and then export it out of state, it goes beyond not doing their job. (Consider for a moment this same treatment of another state resource - oil and gas. If the BOF were in charge natural gas in Cook Inlet wouldn’t go to heat Southcentral homes, nor would the North Pole refinery be allowed to take oil and refine it into fuel for our cars and trucks - it would all be off-limits to Alaskans so it could be sold commercially.)

The Board of Fisheries was created by, and is an extension of, the Alaska Legislature. When the board is not doing the job it was

created to do it’s appropriate for the legislature to step in and fix the problem. It’s time for the public to ask the legislature to do just that. Do Alaska’s current laws governing management and allocation of public resources really allow the commercial industries to harvest a strong stock of Kenai sockeye at the expense of other salmon runs in Cook Inlet? Shouldn’t the Sustained Yield clause (Article VIII, Section 4) of Alaska’s Constitution prevent the demise of other species of salmon that are being intercepted by a commercial fishery targeting one specific run?

Whenever other factors are causing a known decline in various salmon runs that are crucial to the wellbeing of so many other renewable resources dependent on those runs it’s time for conservation concerns to far outweigh consideration of the negative affect to human user groups.

It’s important that legislators, and candidates for the legislature, be made aware of this situation. AOC will be urging legislators to increase the protection of salmon runs that are clearly imperiled at this time. We hope our members do the same.

Candidate questions????: Continued from Page 1

protect the state’s rights, and preserve the general public’s right to use federal public lands?

4. Alaska Statute 16.05.340 establishes the cost of resident hunting and fishing licenses at \$25 and \$24 (\$15 license fee + \$9 hatchery surcharge), respectively. Other high profile hunting and fishing destinations charge residents more, and sometimes considerably more. Non-resident license and tag fees are about right. AOC believes resident license fees are low and are due to be raised. Would you support increasing resident hunting and fishing license fees?

5. The past few state administrations have promoted programs they call “Roads to Resources.” Simply put; new road corridors on state land and some federal land to resource-rich areas. Do you believe the public should be able to use these roads? Can you envision a situation or arrangement where the public should NOT be able to use publically-funded roads, or roads built on public land?

6. Rivers have been travel corridors in both summer and winter since humans first arrived in Alaska. Would you support directing funding to provide safe boat launch facilities on navigable waters?

7. The most popular fishery in the state is the Kenai River Sockeye Salmon Dipnet Fishery. Would you support legislation to give this fishery the highest priority in times of shortage?

8. Over the past several years the Alaska Supreme Court has ruled certain statutory language unconstitutional, yet it is still published in the Alaska Statutes. In McDowell, the court struck down the state’s proposal to grant a preference to fish and game based on “proximity to the domicile.” This language, or phrasing very similar, is used over 10 times in AS 16.05.258. Would you be willing to work with AOC to identify and remove unconstitutional language from state statutes?

9. As King Salmon runs decline across the state and the demand for harvestable game increases, the Boards of Fisheries and Game require a greater amount of scientific data to assure the sustainable harvest of Alaska’s renewable fish and game resources when adopting management regulations. Do you support funding of research data in order to increase the availability of fish and game resources for harvest within the limitations of their habitats?

Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association

By Pamela A. Lewis, Secretary - July 2012

In October 1911 The Fairbanks Daily Times reported that the "first event in the shoot of the newly organized Tanana Rifle Club was held on the range prepared by club members near Birch Hill." Many Alaskans now know that the Tanana Valley Rifle & Pistol Club manages the shooting range operation of the TVSA and holds twice annual popular gun shows for the benefit of the University of Alaska Nanooks Rifle Team.

In addition to shooting, in the early 1900's, the club played an important social role in the Interior, providing an annual "biggest fish" contest; forest fire prevention poster and wildlife conservation essay contests for elementary and high school students; an annual midnight sun shooting match; an annual "Snow-shoe Baseball Game" at Griffith ball park in conjunction with the Fairbanks Winter Carnival; annual game meat barbecues; radio challenges with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Dawson for shooting matches; and on, and on.

Original minutes from April 1936 state: "A meeting was called and held at the Council Chambers for the purpose of organizing a game protective and propagation association...The name 'Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association' was adopted by unanimous voice." Incorporation of the club was completed on April 2, 1937.

The TVSA adopted wildlife conservation as one part of its mission. In 1936 TVSA opposed the sale of wild game meat in restaurants and later the club worked to reintroduce muskox to the Arctic Wildlife Range. By the end of 1937, there were approximately 175 members who paid \$1.00/year in dues. In the 1940's, lists showed 417 male members and 10 "Culinary," or "lady" members.

Over the decades TVSA adopted resolutions that impacted territorial and state policies. The TVSA became a parent organization for many outdoor sportsmen's groups in Alaska and fought "consistently for the intelligent conservation of wildlife."

The US patented 24± acres of land to TVSA by an Act of Congress in the '40's. The land is adjacent to the Chena River "about three miles outside of town" off Airport Road. Members began constructing a clubhouse from donated materials, including old telephone poles. In 1952, The Fairbanks Daily News-Miner reported "Wives and women members contributed tedious labor in brushing out a trail from the airport road. They helped build the large friendly fireplace that dominates one end of the big clubroom in addition to making coffee and snacks for the men workers."

In 1957, TVSA made the first public proposal for establishment of the Arctic Wildlife Range (as compared to a "wilderness area") and several TVSA members gave testimony in U.S. Senate hearings regarding the same. TVSA issued a still relevant study called "Analysis of the Predator Problems in Alaska" that was written in 1959 and discussed primarily wolf predation. TVSA opposed all bounties on "terrestrial predators."

During the 1950's a basement shooting range was constructed by volunteers as interest in TVSA's mission and goals continued to surge. In addition to wildlife conservation, a second major goal of the TVSA became education of Interior Alaska's youth and adults in the safe use of firearms. In the 1960's, a frame addition consisting of a classroom was added to the building, again by volunteers.

By the 1980's and 90's the TVSA shooting range/clubhouse/classroom provided its facility for the largest junior shooting club in the state, as well as four Fairbanks high school rifle teams, two middle school rifle clubs and various adult programs. Several young people who began shooting in TVSA programs went on to earn positions on the National Champion University of Alaska Nanooks Rifle Team, and competed in national, international and Olympic venues. Valuable collegiate scholarships have been awarded to many of Interior Alaskan youth for their shooting skills.

On March 31, 2007 the historic old building was completely destroyed by fire. Firefighters were able to save all of the firearms and the University of Alaska's Rifle Team immediately set to drying and cleaning the guns. The entire community pitched in to help in any way possible to keep the club from disbanding.

TVSA sold most of its property to help finance construction of a new building immediately in front of the original site. In addition, State grants, NRA grants and many private and commercial donations

were made. By Spring 2009 the shell of the new building was completed. Volunteers have been making slow, but steady, construction progress on the new facility. TVSA is aiming to have a state-of-the-art air handling system in one of the two 8-lane shooting bays completed by the start of the 2012-13 school year and the club will be ready to once again offer indoor smallbore shooting. Youth shooters from local schools and TVSA's own Midnight Sun Sharpshooters have been using the facility the past two years for classroom instruction, air gun shooting practice and matches.

TVSA celebrated its 75th anniversary of incorporation on July 14, 2012 by hosting a flotilla down the Chena River to TVSA's property, an all-day picnic, an open house of the new facility and an old-fashioned shooting match between local politicians at high noon. The "world premiere" production of "TVSA History" was shown to appreciative audiences throughout the afternoon. These professionally taped interviews of "old-time" Fairbanksans and TVSA members will find a home in the University Archives. DVD's are also available for purchase from TVSA.

You can contact TVSA by writing to PO Box 70669, Fairbanks, AK 99707. Our website is: www.tvsa.us.



new TVSA Building in Fairbanks



DRAFT Eastern Interior RMP/EIS Public comment period extended

By Rod Arno, AOC Executive Director.

Thanks to CACFA's Executive Director Stan Leaphart's diligent review of the BLM Draft Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Study (RMP/EIS) Alaskans have another chance to comment on which alternative they would like to see the BLM adopt regarding management of BLM lands in much of the Fortymile area of the state. The public comment period is now open.

While BLM lands make up less than ¼ (6.7 million acres) of the planning area their choice of an alternative will have a major impact on how over 30 million acres are used by anyone. The planning area encompasses all lands and waters from the Alaska Highway north to the Yukon River and from the Canadian board west to the Richardson highway. This area is one of the most accessible areas of the State, with over 100 years of recorded use by Alaskan natives, miners, hunters, and outdoors folks. This is the home range of the highly sought after 40mile caribou herd.

Because of BLM management of Wild & Scenic River corridors, the White Mountains National Recreation Area and Steese National Conservation Area, BLM has the authority to restrict the means of access on lands and waters to over 20 million acres of surrounding private and state lands, as well as their own federal lands.

The draft RMP/EIS weighs over **11 pounds** and is over a thousand pages long. Very few people have ever read it. BLM is offering up four Alternative management regimes to pick from:

- Alternative 1 – is the no change alternative. History has soon us that this is not a viable option; every Record of Decision (ROD) for every BLM RMP/EIS conducted in Alaska has adopted a new management plan for BLM lands during the last decade.
- Alternative 2 – is the “lets lock up as much multi-use BLM lands as the feds can possibly get away with” alternative.
- Alternative 3- is BLM's preferred choice; an incremental loss of access and mining opportunity.
- Alternative 4 – is the “pro-development” alternative that still contains locking up some lands to no development and limited access.

AOC will be submitting a pro-multiple use of BLM lands position that supports regulated public access and mining under an amended Alternative 4.

You can view the draft Eastern Interior RMP/EIS on the BLM website <http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en.html> or go to a BLM and ask for the draft plan. If you are one of those Alaskans who utilizes any part of these highly accessible public lands in the White Mountains National Recreation Area, the Steese National Conservation Area, and the Fortymile area you should attend the BLM public meetings in your area.

When BLM schedules the next round of public meetings this fall they will post them on their website and AOC will send out email alerts with the meeting schedules. Without comments from Alaska's public BLM will adopt their preferred option; that you can count on.

CACFA Chairman – Representative Wes Keller

By Rod Arno, AOC Executive Director (on board of CACFA as well)

Alaskan outdoors folks have been well served by the two chairmen of the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA) since its re-established in 2007 by the Alaska State Legislature. Re-establishing the old Commission, chopped by the Knowles' administration back in 1999, was no easy task. It was important to get the Commission started out on the right foot and Rick Schikora (Chairmen from 2007- 2010) did an admiral job accomplishing that goal.

In 2011 Rick passed the torch off to Representative Wes Keller, who has served on CACFA since its re-establishment. The Commission members chose wisely in electing Wes as Chairman. If you're looking for someone to lead the Commission to successfully provide assistance to the citizens of Alaska affected by the management of federal lands within the state its best to have a chairman who is knowledgeable of the vast amount of terrain in Alaska in federal ownership.

It's particularly advantageous to have a chairman who was aware of what was occurring on the ground before 1980 when the federal land managers arrived to manage the newly created Conservation System Units created by the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). Wes was flying C-123J across the State back in the late 1960's for near 20 years. That first hand knowledge serves him well as he listens to Alaskans now being impacted by new restrictions on use as the feds ramp up their regulatory process to comply with current federal laws.

If you're interested in reading what CACFA has done to protect Alaskan's lawful use of federal lands/waters and resources check out their website under the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR): <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa/index.htm> and be sure to thank Wes for his volunteer service for our benefit next time you see him.



Wes Keller & son Matthew

Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA)

By CACFA Chairmen Representative Wes Keller

When the words 'federal government', 'Alaska', and 'outdoors' are included in the same sentence, the first things that probably come to mind are overzealous National Park Service Agents, wilderness land reviews, and hampering Alaskans' constitutional right to freely travel across our navigable waters and lands. Concepts like 'cooperation' and 'prudence' and 'limited powers' probably do not make it onto the list.

2012 marks my second year as chairman of the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA). Established soon after the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), CACFA gave Alaskans a voice when trying to navigate ANILCA's complex land management regulatory framework. Disbanded in 1999, CACFA was brought back to life in 2007 thanks

to former Representative Mike Kelly and has continued its strong work in holding the federal government accountable to the land management principles spelled out in ANILCA, particularly for Alaskans whose livelihood depends on being able to freely travel across federal lands. I strongly believe that without CACFA's constant vigilance and active review of case after case of Federal 'land management creep', Alaskans' access rights would be much more greatly curtailed than they are today.

CACFA has the credibility and the influence it has today thanks to the leadership of its executive director Stanley Leaphart. Stan is a thirty-five year resident of Alaska who was in the thick of the debate during the crafting of ANILCA in the 1980s. Naturally, Stan was chosen to head up CACFA following passage of ANILCA. He took a brief hiatus after Governor Knowles cut funding for CACFA but returned following the Commission's reestablishment.

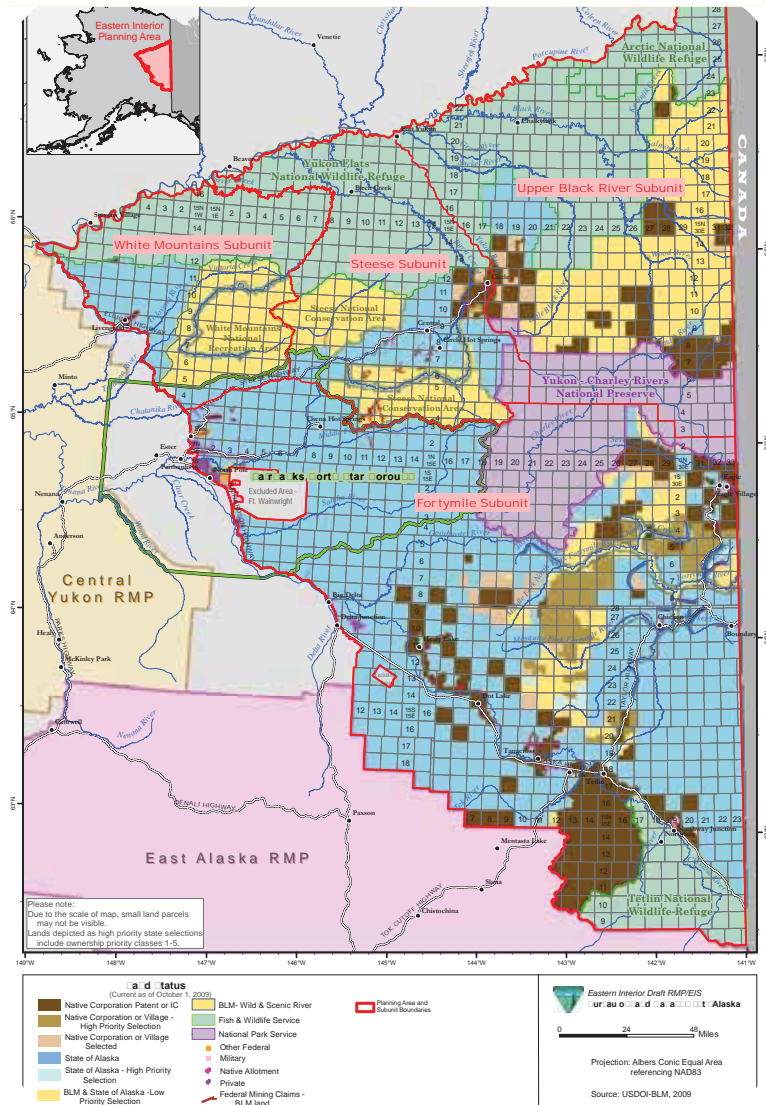
I cannot speak highly enough of Stan's tenure at CACFA. His passion for Alaskans, an almost encyclopedic knowledge of ANILCA and federal land management issues, and attention to detail has made my chairmanship a rewarding experience. He has become a valued personal friend and has the respect and appreciation of the entire Commission. Together with his staff assistant Karrie Improte, Stan has ably guided CACFA in making sure Alaskans' voices are heard in the federal land management process.

Two issues that exemplify Stan's work are CACFA's comments on the Sealaska legislation (S. 730 & H.R. 1408) and the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex (JPARC) review. Sponsored by Senator Murkowski and Congressman Young, S. 730 and H.R. 1408 attempt to award the Sealaska Native Corporation the final lands it is due as part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). CACFA devoted many months of review to this issue and in November 2011, released its formal comments in opposition to S. 730. Though CACFA supports Sealaska being awarded its final lands allotment, the Commission felt the proposed new lands outside the original ANCSA boundaries would further detrimentally impact Southeast Alaska's timber industry and infringe upon Alaskans' access to state lands due to increased litigation by radical anti-Alaska environmental organizations. Early drafts of S. 730 could ultimately expand federal areas managed as wilderness, thereby eliminating some access that is currently there for all Alaskans."

Stan is also closely following the proposed changes to JPARC. The structure of JPARC is extremely important to all Alaskans because it proposes expanding military training into areas already used by many Alaskans for subsistence and sport fishing and hunting purposes. Changes to JPARC enhancements could also significantly impact Alaska's bush pilot community should restricted airspace corridors be lowered to the 500 feet. Stan briefed CACFA at our recent June meeting in Fairbanks and is preparing comments in preparation for the July 9th comment deadline.

I am extremely grateful for Stan's decades of service to Alaska. Not many Alaskans are aware of CACFA and the work it does fighting against the federal government's ever increasing efforts to restrict and deny Alaskans access to state and federal lands. Without an institutional knowledge of ANILCA and a dedication to detail possessed by individuals like Stan Leaphart, Alaska would be in a much weaker position when fighting to uphold its rights against federal agencies and environmental organizations opposed to developing our natural resources for future generations.

Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement area map



(source www.blm.gov)

Joel L. Hard

Deputy Regional Director, National Park Service, Alaska Region, 240 W. 5th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501 - (907)644-3506

During a meeting with the Citizens Advisory Commission of Federal Areas (CACFA) Commissioner Rod Arno asked me to introduce myself to the Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) membership. I've been around for a while, managing and protecting both public resources and safety in Alaska for more than 30 years. I look forward to continuing that work as the new deputy regional director for the Alaska Region of the National Park Service.

I have lived in Alaska since my parents arrived in Juneau not long after statehood; I was raised in a family strongly influenced by nature conservation. Alaska's wild resources lured my folks here after their service in the Navy. I have been the superintendent of Lake Clark National Park and Preserve since 2003, where I have worked with communities to preserve key natural and cultural resources, resolve land ownership and festering access issues, and preserve critical subsistence opportunities.

Prior to working at Lake Clark, I had a long career as an Alaska State Trooper. I was assigned in many regions of the state, rural and urban, in assignments that included criminal investigations, drug enforcement and fish and wildlife protection. I retired as Fish and Wildlife Protection (FWP) Division Director in 2003, in strong disagreement with an administration that demanded the elimination of FWP as a stand-alone Trooper division.

In my new role, I will help Regional Director Sue Masica oversee operations in all national parks and programs in Alaska which together host more than 2.2 million visitors and employ about 1,100 people at the peak of the summer

season.

But let me describe my work philosophy and what you can expect from me. I try always to be fair-minded, though I recognize I can be demanding, particularly with regard to delivering ethical, meaningful and professional service. Those tenets have served me well over the years, and I hope the loyalties they have garnered me will continue to be built upon. I ask those with whom I work to courteously attend to their assigned functions and try always to do their best.

It is important to me that you know me and understand my methods. To that end, I encourage you to voice your concerns on important and complex issues. Please, frankly speak your minds to help me avoid unnecessary problems, mistakes and controversy. We may not always agree, but I hope we can improve shared respect and understanding.

Let me close by recognizing that there has always been some friction in Alaska towards the NPS. After a lifetime here I understand why, but I hope we can spend more time supporting those things we have in common and less time arguing over the differences.

If we are to successfully pass to future generations the caretaking of wild places, we must make sure that everyone's connection to public landscapes and resources is protected. The National Parks and Preserves are critical to this. They were preserved for all people, but perhaps most important, those not yet born – decades, even centuries from now - who might not otherwise ever know lands and resources as we have.



Comments on the passing of Representative Carl Gatto

By AOC Executive Director Rod Arno

Outdoors folks, and all Alaskans, lost a trusted elected official this spring with the death of Carl Gatto. Representative Carl Gatto was truly a “public servant” in every sense of the term, he couldn't give enough. Whether it was a teacher, coach, paramedic/firefighter, School Board member, or State Representative that was needed to serve Alaskans, he was there doing it.

Representative Carl Gatto served on the House Resource Committee (RES) during the highly contentious years (2003 – 2008) of battle over how the State was to manage wildlife populations in Alaska. As Co-Chair of H(RES) in 2007 -2008 Rep. Gatto was on the frontlines during Board of Game confirmation hearings taking testimony from anti-predator/prey management advocates who insisted that a non-hunter/trapper should have a seat on a Board created by the Alaska Legislature to regulate the harvest and allocation of game resources. While he never wavered in his support for hunters and trappers his willingness to question those who opposed wildlife management was a source of irritation to me. I remember suggesting to Rep. Gatto that he not give the “antis”



Carl Gatto

anymore time before the H(RES) Committee by asking them why they opposed having those dependent on harvesting wildlife, a renewable public resource, participate in the adoption of regulations

to do so. I showed him various state statutes and sections of the State Constitution that made it the law for the legislature to provide for the utilization and development of natural resources. I went on to tell him in my opinion no amount of reasoning with these “antis” was going to change their views on predator/prey management. Rep. Gatto, in his always cheerful way, said while he was aware of the laws and that he had always supported hunting/trapping and the state's efforts to manage game for

sustainable harvests that still he wanted to hear from the public how they viewed the issue.

State Representatives who are willing to openly listen to Alaskans regardless of whether they share your position is what it takes to legitimize the whole rulemaking process of government, Carl Gatto was that kind of public servant. AOC will miss his presence in the rulemaking process; outdoors folks could always count on him keeping his word when he cast his vote in support of our issues.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

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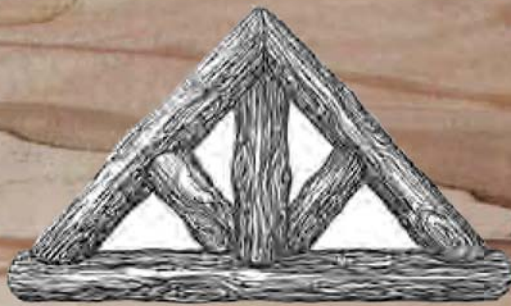
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Alaska Department of Natural Resource (DNR) Current Efforts to Protect Public Access to Public Resources

By DNR Deputy Director Ed Fogels

One of our state government's most important duties is protecting Alaskans' access to public lands and waters for recreation, subsistence and other traditional uses.

The state's founders understood that our rivers are our rural highways and felt strongly enough about protecting public access to waterways for recreation and other uses that they enshrined it in the Alaska Constitution.

In 1980, Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Land Conservation Act (ANILCA), establishing more than 100 million acres of federal land in Alaska as new or expanded conservation system units. Ever since, the state has devoted tremendous resources in an attempt to work with – or when necessary, battle against – federal agencies to ensure that the special provisions of ANILCA that protect Alaskans' customary way of life and access to public lands, waterways and resources are properly implemented.

The Alaska Department of Natural Resources coordinates state input on access issues through the Division of Mining, Land & Water's Public Access Assertion and Defense (PAAD) Unit and the Office of Project Management & Permitting's ANILCA Implementation Program.

ANILCA Work

The ANILCA Implementation Program reviews plans, regulations, and policies that affect federal public lands under ANILCA. Numerous federal actions have been initiated during the Obama administration that run counter to ANILCA and other state interests. For example, the Department of Interior Secretarial Order 3310, directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to designate "Wild Lands" nationwide. The ANILCA Program took a lead role in asserting the State's strong criticism of the policy, which essentially creates de facto wilderness. Governor Parnell's very strong letter to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar complained that the policy usurped Congressional authority and was an end-run around ANILCA. Facing a broad outcry from several states, Salazar revised his direction for implementing the Wild Lands order, but the order itself has not been rescinded.

The state is also appealing BLM's Delta Wild and Scenic River Management Plan because the plan includes numerous access and use restrictions, which are inconsistent with ANILCA. This case is pending before BLM's Interior Board of Land Appeals.

Other federal plans under development include the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan, Gates of the Arctic National Park General Management Plan Amendment, the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan, and the Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan. Most of these plans include wilderness and/or wild and scenic river reviews, which

is in direct violation of ANILCA's "no more" clause. The State continues to voice its strong objection to such blatant disregard for one of ANILCA's key provisions. BLM's Eastern Interior plan is still out for public review and the State is actively reviewing to ensure the public has access to these remote areas and resources, and are not burdened by unnecessary restrictions.

PAAD work

After three years of research and analyses by the DNR's PAAD, Office of History and Archeology and Hydrological Survey groups, on June 1, 2012 the Department of Law filed a Federal Quiet Title Action lawsuit asserting ownership of the bed of the Mosquito Fork of the Fortymile River from its confluence with the Denison Fork up to Wolf Creek at approximate River Mile 87.5.

This dispute between the state and BLM over the ownership of the riverbed is primarily impacting public access and state mining claims. Ultimately, the state's assertion of navigable waters throughout Alaska is important to all user groups, as "clouds" to the state's ownership to the submerged lands and those resources, including oil and gas will be lifted. This litigation is being funded by the Legislature as requested by Governor Parnell. It will be a multi-year process.

The PAAD unit is also supporting the state's renewed efforts to defend the validity and use of RS 2477 rights of way throughout Alaska. These are legal rights of way across land that was previously unappropriated federal land. While RS 2477 authority was repealed in 1976, the federal government did not eliminate the rights of way created prior to the repeal.

However, the Department of Interior's and Forest Service's current policy is that no RS 2477 is considered valid unless adjudicated by a court of competent jurisdiction. This policy is exacerbated by the fact that many rights of way were not identified at statehood or before the repeal of the federal RS 2477 statute. The PAAD Unit continues to seek the public's assistance in identifying and validating these rights of ways by documenting use before 1969. Find out more by visiting: <http://dnr.alaska.gov/mlw/trails/paad/index.cfm>.

In the Fortymile region, the PAAD Unit has also taken the lead in researching, documenting and evaluating RS 2477 rights of way for the last two years. PAAD has documented conditions on the ground, land use conflicts, strength of historical use, public need, public resources and the servient estate's rights, duties and conflicts into an evaluation for action recommendations. The Department of Law has given Notice of Intent to file federal quiet title actions over a dozen area rights of way.

Whether it is a RS 2477 or a navigable water body, it is imperative to create solid case law "cornerstones" that will provide guidance for additional cases. The state is currently defending several cases brought by private parties and is building solid evidence to aggressively assert more cases to defend the state from federal overreach.



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Statewide harvest by commercial fishing industry -

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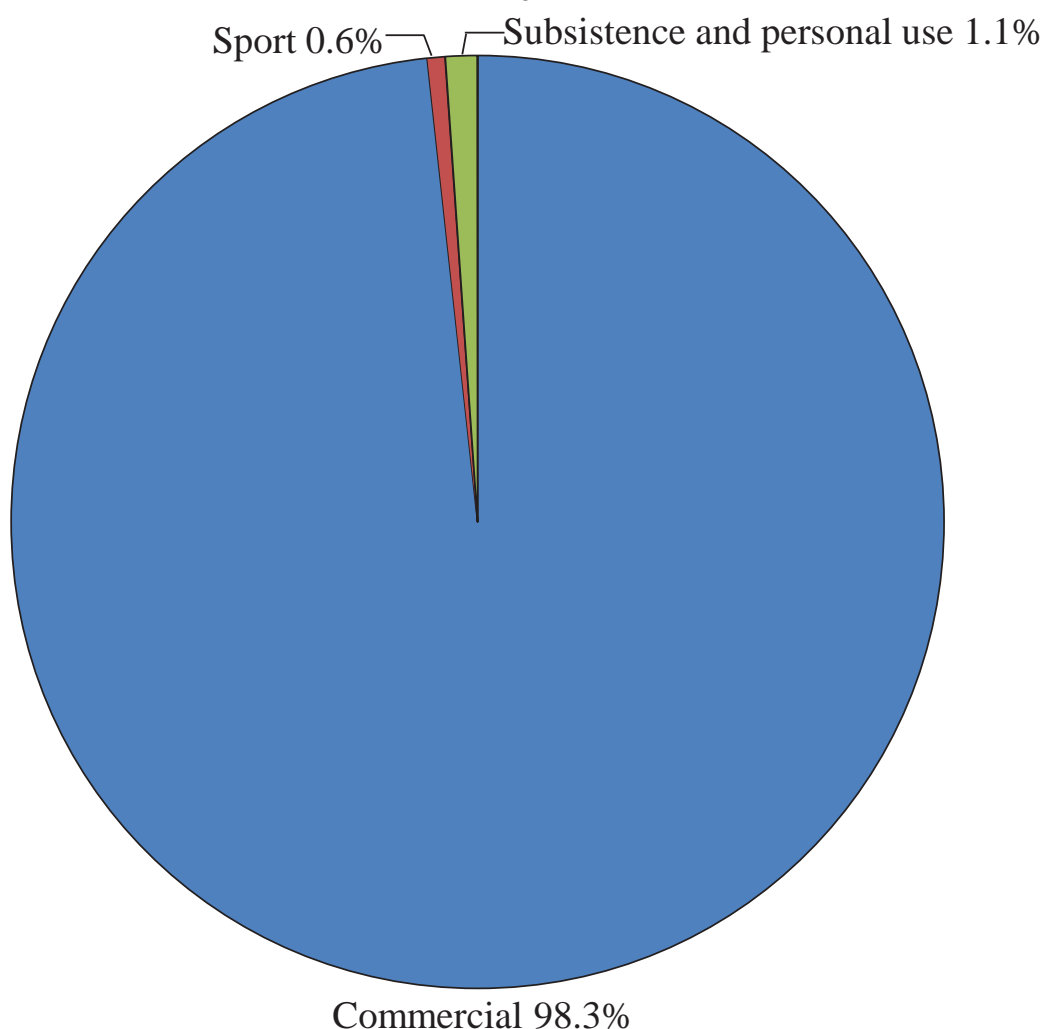
General hunting and sport fishing by Alaskans living in non-subsistence areas and non-residents

21.3 million pounds

Subsistence hunting and fishing (Estimated by ADF&G Subsistence Division)-

52.1 million pounds

Who harvests fish and game? Resource harvests by use in Alaska



Graph Harvest Chart source of Harvest Data

Subsistence in Alaska: A Year 2010 Update

Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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By Mary Bishop, Secretary, Alaska Trust Fund

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Thanks to hunter-artist Sue Arthur of Juneau who has created all 3 of our associate logos – the AOC's goose, the parent Fund's leaping fish and the Alaska Trust Fund's muskox.

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Moose Tips in Gravy

By Pam Iverson, AOC Administrative Director

3 lbs. moose chunks

(This can be bits of stew meat cut from many parts of the moose, usually 1 to 3 inch pieces).

8 cups water in a large crock pot

A couple of cups of flour to dust the tips, in a bag or bowl, salt & pepper to taste

Canola oil in a large frying pan to coat the bottom

3 stalks of celery, chopped

3 carrots, sliced into chunks

1 onion, diced

3 cloves of garlic, diced

2 packages of Southeastern Mills Roast Beef gravy mix (or any gravy of your choosing)

1 or 2, 14 oz. cans of beef broth depending on the thickness of the gravy

Lightly cook the celery, carrots, onion and garlic in the frying pan with Canola oil, put into the crock pot.

Lightly brown the tips after dusting them with flour.

Put them into the crock pot with all the other ingredients, cook for

several hours until the meat is tender.

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I serve this over rice or mashed potatoes. Enjoy.

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John Lang

New AOC/AFWCF Board Member

John is a long time Alaskan and business owner. He is passionate about hunting, fishing and Alaskan extreme adventures. He believes in the balance between preservation, conservation and industry. John is an avid supporter of equal access to and the use of Alaska's resources. John is a long time member of The Alaska Outdoor Council, National Rifle Association, The American Watercraft Association and Vice President of the Personal Watercraft Club of Alaska. He has spent over half of his life in Alaska striving to promote safe and responsible use of Alaska's resources including but not limited to fish, game, wildlife, oil, gas, timber, and minerals. When his business is not promoting Alaska around the world, he can be found exploring the pristine beauty of Alaska's oceans and coastline from his personal watercraft.



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Fortymile Mining Association	Fairbanks	Territorial Sportsmen, Inc.	Juneau
Golden North Archery Assoc.	Fairbanks	Tok Shooters Association	Tok

The Fortymile Caribou Herd: Management Success or Avoidable Failure

By David G. Kelleyhouse, a former Director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation, ADF&G

This is an article I never thought I'd be writing- one encouraging state wildlife managers to stop the growth of the Fortymile Caribou Herd as soon as possible to prove that Alaskans can be trusted to use Intensive Management responsibly. The herd has grown to over 50,000 caribou from a low of less than 9,000 in the late 1970s as a result of wolf control and very low hunting quotas. In my opinion as a former manager of this caribou herd, the herd should be stabilized now to prevent overgrazing of the herd's range and yet another herd crash. Management of the Nelchina Herd is a great example of how the Fortymile Herd should be managed biologically to maximize long-term benefits.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has clear evidence of nutritional stress affecting the Fortymile Herd (-low fall calf weights, lower calving rates for young cows and slowing rates of herd growth) and knows that extensive wildland fires in 2004 and 2005 reduced the availability of highly preferred winter range. Department biologists also know that the Nelchina Herd has competed for remaining winter range in recent years. Yet the current management and harvest plans still call for further herd growth to force the Fortymile Herd onto range not used for nearly 100 years. The hope, and I emphasize hope as in wishful thinking, is that the herd will indeed move and that herd nutrition will improve substantially before the herd crashes. This plan is risky at best and just plain foolhardy at worst. The management of the Fortymile Herd must be based upon scientific observations and practical management actions now; management plans cannot be based on what the herd did nearly 100 years ago and what people hope will happen again in the future.

The Fortymile Herd once numbered several hundred thousand animals and occupied an expansive range from north of Fairbanks eastward deep into the Yukon Territory in the 1920s. The herd crashed to only a few thousand animals in the 1930s most likely due to overgrazing. A

natural caribou herd rebound is a slow process providing adequate time for range recovery. When a herd is encouraged to increase due to intensive management of predators, the rebound is quicker although range recovery may be incomplete. Widespread federal wolf poisoning in the late 1940s and 1950s caused a rapid eruption of moose and caribou numbers, but in the early 1970s the Fortymile Herd crashed again from about 70,000 to fewer than 9,000. I strongly believe that overgrazing played a major role in that crash. Given the boom and bust history of the herd, I feel that another crash due to overgrazing and nutritional stress is more likely than the herd becoming a sustainable mega-herd in the future.

When I wrote the first management plan for the herd 30 years ago, I stated that herd growth should be stopped when the herd numbered 50,000 or if evidence of nutritional stress was observed. It appears that these valid concerns have long since been disregarded in the zeal to continue with herd growth to force what I believe to be an unattainable and unsustainable outcome. I can understand human nature and why hunters in Alaska and the Yukon want a huge, productive herd. What I can't understand is why our state biologists have not actively promoted a more careful and conservative course of action and fully explained the possibility and dire consequences of another herd crash if the current management is blindly continued.

This herd of 50,000 caribou could produce annual harvests of more than 2,500 animals, yet fewer than 1,000 have been taken annually in recent years. If the herd were to be reduced to 40,000 and nutrition improved, with continued Intensive Management, a long-term annual harvest of 3,000 - 4,000 may be realized. In the early 1980s the herd was increasing at nearly

13% per year. My point is that hunters can realize significantly greater benefits from a healthy, well fed, moderate size herd than a large unproductive herd struggling for survival on overgrazed range. History has shown that moose can be managed in this way for extended periods of time, caribou cannot. The near total loss of reasonable annual harvests as a result of a population crash must be avoided at all cost. The choice is ours.



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