



Outdoor Alaska



The Official publication of the Alaska Outdoor Council
"Protecting your hunting, fishing, trapping, and access to public lands since 1955"

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Summer 2017

The March to Regain Alaska State management of Fish and Game

By Rod Arno, Executive Director, Alaska Outdoor Council

What a difference a change of the guard has made in Washington, D.C. Bolstered by the ousting of the former regime, Alaska's congressional delegation is leading the charge to take back authority granted to the State of Alaska at statehood regarding management of public resources on federally owned lands and waters.

Congressmen Don Young wasted no time in introducing HJR69 in February to nullify the U.S. Fish & Wildlife (FWS) seizure of state authority to manage wildlife on 70 million acres of National Wildlife Refuge lands in Alaska only. By April 4th that rulemaking was thrown out by the stroke of a pen when President Donald Trump signed the resolution into law, much to the dismay of the Center for Biological Diversity. The preservationist organization is now busy suing the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) over Congresses use of the Congressional Review Act of 1996 to overturn the FWS rule.

Upcoming Events

Palmer State Fair

August 24th - September 4th

AOC Annual Wasilla Banquet & Fund-raiser

Evangelo's Restaurant
Saturday - October 7, 2017

AOC Annual Fairbanks Banquet & Fundraiser

Westmark Hotel
Saturday - November 4th, 2017

WE NEED DONATIONS.

Please contact:

president@alaskaoutdoorcouncil.com



Rod Arno with Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke

By March HJR44 was rolling through Congress, co-sponsored by Congressmen Don Young, to nullify the BLM's Planning 2.0 rule. This Obama era rule, by the U.S. Department of the Interior, was aimed at rewriting the 1976 Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) to allow BLM to consider "landscape-scale resource issues" beyond the boundaries of BLM lands. That rule has also been nullified and is now being reevaluated.

The new national administration has also selected cabinet members whose actions will benefit the majority

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Presidents' Message

By Bill Iverson, AOC President

As the hunting season approaches, I must comment on our current State Administration. I am extremely disappointed in their conduct and direction, which in my opinion is contrary to the State Constitution.

The Klutina Lake Road and Gulkana River proposed settlement is just one example. (see included article) Another is the appalling management of all the fisheries across the State, giving priority to the commercial industry at the expense of all others, notwithstanding the survival of the fisheries themselves.

In my opinion, we need new leadership in all areas of government in the State. It is time we all turn out at the ballot box and show them we have been paying attention.

Consider volunteering to help whenever you can and you will gain a better understanding of just what AOC board members give of themselves on behalf of the AOC membership and all outdoor folks in Alaska,

Thank you for being AOC members and donors, your financial contributions keep AOC at the table when conservation and allocation of public resources comes up in the regulatory process, year after year.

I would like to stress the importance of supporting the Sustaining Business Members in this newsletter. They put their name and reputation on the line by openly supporting AOC, because they believe in our vision.

My apologies for the lateness of this newsletter. I have personally been dealing with the recent death of my father, so this newsletter is dedicated to him. Philip L. Iverson. He was my mentor and inspiration to become the man I am today.



My dad (Phil) and I. The toughest moose meat ever.



Bill with this last years moose steaks, nice and tender.



My dad, Philip L. Iverson

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Executive Director Report

By Rod Arno, AOC executive Director



2017 AOC Annual Meeting review.

AOC held its 2017 Annual Meeting in South Central last March. Delegates from statewide AOC clubs and individual AOC members heard from state and federal agencies as to what they were doing to protect and enhance opportunities for the public to access public lands and waters in Alaska.

Public access on State waters.

Assistant Attorney General, Jessie Alloway gave a stirring presentation on how the Alaska Department of Law (DOL) was winning on quiet title actions to affirm state ownership of submerged lands beneath navigable waters in Alaska. AOC delegates were particularly pleased to hear that the state had won its case (May 6, 2016) in federal court to receive attorney fees, \$750,000, due to the BLM acting in “bad faith” on the Mosquito Fork of the Fortymile River quiet title action. The final amount awarded by Federal Court Judge Gleason to the state was \$593,001.71.

On June 1, 2017, the 9th Circuit Court agreed to a dismissal of the Federal appeal of the order to pay the State’s attorney fees. The State has not yet received payment from the U.S. Government. AOC is anxious to make sure Governor Walker and the Alaska Legislature places those funds back in the DOL’s budget to take further action on a number of other navigable rivers where the BLM is unwilling to concede state ownership of the river bed.

State Fish & Game funding for public access.

Also of great interest to AOC delegates were presentations by Sportfish Division director Tom Brookover and Paul Cyr, coordinator for the **Statewide Access Program**. This program benefited from an increase in sport fish license fees in 2016 (HB137). A percentage of Sport fish license revenues plus the 3/1 match from Federal excise tax on fishing gear from the Sport Fish Restoration Act provides funding each year to build and maintain boat launch access for sport fishing in Alaska.

ADF&G Assistant Director Tony Kavalock from the Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) informed delegates that they were looking to create a coordinator position similar to what Sportfish Division had for increasing hunter access. No word as of this writing, on how DWC is progressing on that project. AOC will

follow up on that development and report back to delegates at the 2018 Annual meeting.

Federal lands planning.

Andy Mack, Commissioner of Alaska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) re-iterated the message in Governor Walker’s January 5, 2017 *Press Release* regarding the BLM Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan (RMP). The final Record of Decision from BLM creates **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern** (ACECs) restricting mining and access. Commissioner Mack mentioned having the state pursue legal action, but to date nothing has come out of the DOL defending the “No more clauses” in ANILCA sections 101(d), 1326(a) and (b) against these new conservation areas. BLM’s justification to create these new conservation areas, ACECs, is unfounded at best and breaks the balance reached between conservation and development that was a major compromise in ANILCA. Two more draft RMPs for Alaska, the Central Yukon and Bering Sea-Western Interior, also include proposed ACECs. Alaska’s Governor is negligent for not following through to challenge the creation of ACECs in Alaska. AOC has asked Alaska’s congressional delegations to jump in and put a stop to what the state has yet to take action against. (Staff knowledgeable of federal overreach from both Senator Dan Sullivan’s office, Sara Taylor and Congressmen Don Young office’s, Chad Padgett were on hand at AOC’s annual meeting contributing in on the discussions between agencies and AOC club delegates)

Off-highway vehicle access on trails across Alaska.

DNR was well represented by Brent Goodrum, Director of Mining, Land, and Water who made it passionately clear that he took his job seriously with regard to providing “maximum use of the state resources consistent with public interests”. The discussion regarding RS2477s and 17(b) easements between Ted Murphy, BLM, Jim Walker, DNR PAAD Unit, and many

knowledgeable AOC folks in attendance was enlightening to say the least. It’s estimated that there are over 20,000 miles of RS2477s across both public and now private Alaska Native lands. (Many of these routes have been codified by the Alaska Legislature, thanks in a large part to the efforts of long time AOC member Mike Dalton from Fairbanks.) The important distinction that was made clear to AOC delegates between RS2477 rights-of-way (ROW) and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) 17(b) easements is: RS2477 rights-of-way include **all** historical uses and are maintained by the State of Alaska.

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Baja Wilderness - Rod Arno 2017

State law determines the allowable uses on RS2477s, such as; rest stops, parking, sight-seeing, camping, picnicking, and boat launching. While 17(b) easements are managed and maintained by BLM, whether on public or private lands.

Assuring public access across private (ANCSA) lands and on state or federal ROWs to publicly owned lands and waters remains high priority for AOC staff.

Alaska Native land into trust with the Federal Government.

AOC delegates reaffirmed their oppositions to the creation of Indian Country in Alaska during the 2017 AOC Annual Meeting (*AOC Policy 1-97(2)*). The U.S. Congress made it clear with the passage of ANCSA in 1971 that Alaska would try something different than what took place in the Continental United States regarding American Indian reservations. Instead of having Alaska's indigenous people being wards of the state, Congress gave Alaska Natives fee simple ownership of lands and money to invest. The Walker/Mallott administration set the state on a dangerous course by dropping federal litigation that could have reversed the 2014 rulemaking by the DOI that now allows Alaska Native Corporations and villages to ask the federal government to hold their lands in trust for them. There are many negative ramifications for Alaska when the federal government has authority over the state on private lands. State management and allocation of public resources that migrate (examples caribou and salmon) across public lands is a primary purpose of the Alaska Outdoor Council. Indian Country would threaten continued state management of fish and game on Alaska Native lands.

Updates on current Litigation

The Sturgeon lawsuit.

Even though the US Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of John Sturgeon's lawsuit against the National Park Service they remanded several issues back to the 9th Circuit to answer. The US Supreme Court provided the 9th Circuit guidance on how they should rule on those remaining issues. In oral argument, the judges commented that the 9th didn't do their job because they didn't answer all the questions. The Supreme Court reminded the 9th Circuit that they are the court of last review not the court of first

review.

The hearing before the 9th Circuit 3 judge panel was in October. A ruling was expected in May or June, but that didn't happen. Sturgeon's attorneys and the State of Alaska did an incredible job before the 3-judge panel. They answered all the judges' questions and didn't concede anything. However, the 3 judges that heard the case have records of being very liberal, so a win from them is going to be difficult regardless of the merits of the case or the unanimous guidance provided by the US Supreme Court. Sturgeon expects to be back in front on the highest court to once again plead his case. The cost for Sturgeon's case is close to \$750,000. A high price tag for justice but like they say, "freedom is not free". We all are not really free if the Federal Government doesn't follow the laws passed by our representatives in Congress.



AOC intervention in the Center for Biological Diversity v. Ryan Zinke, U. S. Secretary of the Interior case.

The Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF), a donor-supported, non-profit with a mission to protect individual liberty and promote limited government, has graciously agreed to represent AOC as a Defendant-Intervenor in the lawsuit filed by the preservationist NGO the Center for Biological Diversity to reinstate the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services rule to takeover state management of game on 70 million acres of prime wildlife habitat in Alaska. PLF has asked that the federal court dismiss the case. After all the Center for Biological Diversity is "barking up the wrong tree". It was the U.S. Congress that voted to use the Congressional Review Act of 1996 to throw out the illegal takeover of game management on U.S. Wildlife Refuges in Alaska, not the Secretary of the Interior. If the Center for Biological Diversity has a problem with that they should take it up with Congress. AOC is waiting to hear a word on the motion to dismiss.

AOC Annual meetings are an opportunity for their AOC member clubs and all individual members to influence AOC efforts in both the state and federal regulatory process. The 2018 AOC meeting will be held in Juneau next spring. An agenda, meeting location and specific dates will be available on AOC's website this fall. AOC benefits from the strength of its membership, if the continued opportunity for you and your family to participate in outdoor activities in Alaska is something you cherish, join up and help out.

Regain Management - Continued from Page 1

of Alaskans who support state management of public resources. While not overturning federal rules that were contrary to the Alaska Statehood Act and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) these actions do affect current litigation in federal court or open up previous rulemakings for public review:

On June 1st, the U.S. Department of Justice, under the new administration, threw in the towel on two high profile navigability cases - the Mosquito Fork of the Forty Mile River and the Stikine River. Both rivers have a long history of navigational use, yet for years BLM has refused to grant the state a quiet title of state ownership of the submerged lands. The voluntary dismissal of appeal could save the state a fortune in legal expenses plus signal an opportunity for Alaska to pursue state ownership of hundreds of miles of additional waterways.

On June 27th, the Obama administration's Waters of the United States (WOTUS) ruling was repealed by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt. This rule, as part of the Clean Water Act, would have given the federal agencies authority over much of Alaska, from moving water, to lakes, to wet lands, to frozen tundra, and possibly glaciers and snowfields - any area where water was present. The repeal will reinstate the regulations adopted under the 1986 Clean Water Act.

On July 14th, the Trump administration directed the National Park Service (NPS) in Alaska and the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge to reconsider bans on certain state-allowed game harvest techniques. Virginia Johnson, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks within the DOI, sent a memo to both directors telling them to initiate a new rule making process, in light of effects on sport and commercial hunting and trapping. The NPS rule, adopted October 23, 2015, and the FWS rule, adopted May 5, 2016, were both outside the timeframe available for Congress to use the Congressional Review Act to nullify Interior's action to revoke state authority, granted by ANILCA, to manage the harvest of game on national preserve lands.

All these positive actions to regain state management of public resources in Alaska have happened in the first 200 days of the new administration. Alaska's congressional delegation, the State of Alaska, and Alaskans and NGO's supportive of the state's authority to manage natural resources as granted by the Alaska Statehood Act and the ANILCA have years of hard work left to return state management to what was promised.

With your financial support Alaska Outdoor Council staff and its board of directors will continue advocating in the federal regulatory process to assure your opportunity to hunt, fish, trap, and recreate on public lands is not infringed upon by unnecessary restrictions. Unfortunately, many of the federal rules adopted during the term of former president Barack Obama were just that - unnecessary restrictions not necessarily benefiting conservation.

Lost Outdoor Opportunities along the Klutina Lake Road and Gulkana River

Proposed by the Walker/Mallott administration

Ahtna Inc. calls - Public access within the RS2477 right-of-way to the Klutina River and Lake **"State of Alaska overreach"**.
http://www.nativefederation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Summary-paper_Klutina-2.pdf

The Alaska Outdoor Council calls - Historical use within RS2477 right-of-ways the **law**.

It's an old law from 1866 that predates the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) by over 100 years. The Copper River Native Association was well aware of the fact that there was a RS2477 right-of-way from the Richardson highway running along the Klutina River to the outlet of Klutina Lake when they chose lands in the area. Now Ahtna Inc. has gone to state Superior Court asking for restrictions along the road to public use. The Walker/Mallott administration have abandon their fiduciary duties to manage public resources to benefit all Alaskans and are supporting Ahtna Inc. interests over that of the public.

You have until August 31st to let the Alaska Department of Law know that you oppose any settlement agreement with any private land owners, Ahtna Inc. in this case, that would the least bit infringe on your legal rights within RS2477 right-of-ways that are proven by historical use. Your right to rest, stop, sight-see, camp, picnic, or launch a boat into the Klutina River within the RS2477 are protected, don't let Governor Walker take those rights away from you and your family.

The same settlement agreement will restrict your ability to launch or haul out of the only piece of State owned land on the Gulkana River. There is no reason for the State of Alaska to diminish your opportunity to access public waters in the Nelchina basin.

Let the Alaska Department of Law know you oppose the current Settlement agreement with Ahtna Inc. regarding the Klutina Lake Road and the Gulkana River land exchange with the Gulkana Village Council. (Details of the Settlement are still not all available to the public but some information is available on the governor's website under July press releases.)

E-Mail to - klutina.settlement@alaska.gov or
 Mail to - Alaska Department of Law
 Klutina/Gulkana Comments
 1031 W. 4th Ave., Suite 200
 Anchorage, Alaska 99501-1994

You only have until **August 31, 2017 to comment**. (Unless Governor Walker can be shamed into extending the comment deadline until after hunting season. Which would have been the reasonable timeline to comment for those Alaskans out gathering their public food resource)

Mike Dunleavy is a proven leader on outdoor issues. Whether it's representing all Alaskans in Juneau in the state senate or at home in the Mat-Su Valley, Senator Dunleavy has stuck to his pledge to put Alaskans first

Senator Dunleavy has no connections to commercial harvesters of Alaska's fish and game resources.

As Chairman of the Senate Finance Fish & Game subcommittee during the 28th and 29th Legislatures (2013-2016) Senator Dunleavy recognized that Alaskan hunters, trappers, and anglers pay their way - their license and tag fees go into the state Fish & Game Fund. For years AOC played hide-and-seek with ADFG trying to track revenues into, and appropriations out of, the Fish and Game Fund. As chairman, Dunleavy insisted on transparency from the department. Outdoor folks were reassured once we could see the money we contribute to the system was being spent to improve our opportunity. Today expenditures from the F&G Fund are easily tracked and available to all on the ADF&G website - it wasn't that way before Sen. Dunleavy insisted on reforms.

Alaskans need someone in the governor's office who understands how important fish and game are to Alaskans. Dunleavy has lived around the state and understands how regular Alaskans depend on these resources because he and his family harvest and eat wild fish and game themselves. Imagine having a governor who can field dress a moose, fillet his own fish and repair his own snowmachine, something we haven't had in a long time. Mike Dunleavy would be a strong advocate for the Alaska outdoor lifestyle because he lives it.

Sen. Mike Dunleavy has earned AOC's trust. Based on his performance in the state senate, we're confident that our membership can count on him to enforce the laws that grant Alaskans access to public resources. That is all AOC membership could ask for, a governor who will enforce state laws rather than try to circumvent them, as the current administration insists on doing.

My name is Mike Dunleavy.

I am running for Governor as a Republican in the 2018 election, and I am asking for your support.

Like you, I love Alaska and everything it has to offer. I came to Alaska in 1983 straight out of college, and I've never looked back. As a hunter, fisherman, trapper, hiker, boater, snowmachiner, and all-around outdoorsman, I thought I had died and gone to heaven when I moved to Alaska. This great land has lived up to its reputation and then some. For most of my first 20 years in Alaska, I lived and worked in small towns in western Alaska in the middle of some of the greatest hunting and fishing on earth! All my free time was spent out in the country. It didn't matter if it was -40 degrees, we still went hunting by snow machine, or if it were pouring rain we still went fishing.

By the time we moved back in 2004 things not for the better. populations were average Alaskan their access to curtailed. it is nothing disaster. You the paper reading about salmon, rivers to sport or fishing, our to trails being and hunting curtailed further.



to the Mat-Su Valley began to change, and Fish and moose in trouble, and began to have the outdoors Today however, short of a can't pick up daily without the low runs of being closed personal use access rights bargained away, seasons being

I ran for the Senate in 2012 due in part to fix our fish, game, and access issues. To that end, I was named Chairman of the Budget for the Department of Fish and Game. We fought hard to protect our fish, game, and access rights, and it is disturbing to see this Governor side with special interests on these issues against everyday Alaskans like you and me.

This is one of the reasons why I am running for Governor. As a member of AOC, I believe in this state and all it has to offer, but we are going to lose what makes this Alaska – hunting, fishing, and access to our favorite hunting and fishing spots unless we have the right Governor that will fight for these issues and protect the rights of everyday Alaskans against the special interest groups. As your Governor, I will make fishing, hunting, and access a priority of my administration. I won't just talk about it – I will do something about it.

Sincerely,
Mike Dunleavy
Candidate for Governor of Alaska
2018 Election.

**To donate or help with the campaign, please go to
“www.AlaskansforDunleavy.com”**

Actions in the House of Representatives during the 1st Session of the 30th Legislature

A Wasted Effort for many Conservationists

By Al Barrette (past AOC Board Member, trapper, hunter, big game guide, taxidermist, and active member of the Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Board)

As I am writing this commentary, the Alaskan Legislature is mid-way through their second special session dealing with the states' budget. Yet during the normal session the house, majority (Democrats) spent countless hours in committee hearings and floor sessions passing bills that would rescind subsistence priorities/protections, giving boroughs and municipalities the authority to regulate method and means in the taking of game trumping the Alaska Board of Game's (BOG) authority, reducing funding for Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC), and restricting non-resident hunters to a guided only opportunity for harvesting caribou north of the Yukon River.

HB 211, passed the house on party lines of 22 to 18. This bill was sponsored by Representative Westlake, would require a non-resident to hire a guide to hunt caribou north of the Yukon River. He advocated that this was necessary to protect the subsistence users, their culture, future generations of use and knowledge, and avoid conflicts with non-residents in the field.

Representative Westlake introduced this bill because he was concerned about the Western Arctic Caribou Herd, the Teshekpuk Caribou Herd, and the Central Arctic Caribou Herd populations which have been in decline, although the Porcupine Caribou Herd is abundant and increasing in population. With excess and unused harvestable surplus, HB 211 would potentially be a \$10.5 million-dollar loss to DWC. About 3,000 non-resident hunters hunt north of the Yukon River annually. They are required to buy a state hunting license \$130.00, a caribou tag \$650.00 totaling \$880.00 per hunter. DWC then receives a federal match (Pitman & Roberts Act of 1937) of 3 to 1 from the sale of licenses and tags for a total loss to DWC per hunter of \$3,520.00. Multiply by the 3,000 hunters equals \$10.5 million.

The irony is, the Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) and other consumptive outdoor organizations such as Territorial Sportsmen, the Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA), and the Alaska Chapter of Safari Club International got a bill introduced (HB 286) in 2015, advocating an increase in hunting, trapping, fishing licenses and tag fees to future fund ADF&G.

ADF&G for the most part is self-funded by the users of wild

resources in Alaska. AOC and others spent the next two years lobbying the legislature to pass what is now our new fee structure for harvesting wild resources and ensuring that ADF&G will have funding to manage those resources for future uses. Yet the passage of HB 211 in the House could jeopardize this effort. DWC has not even received one dime from this new fee increase and the same Democrats that passed the fee increases, now passed a bill to potentially decrease DWC funding by \$10.5 million dollars.

To further twist the knife, in our backs, an economic report that contracted APHA suggests that non-residents that hunt north of the Yukon River contribute \$20 million dollars to the economy, through the sale of food, lodging, transporters, local airlines, vehicle rentals, fuel, meat processing, trophy preparation, shipping, sight-seeing and Alaskan gifts. The passage of HB 211 was \$30 million-dollar vote, a loss to DWC and the state economy.

Then there is Representative Andy Josephson from South Anchorage district, who declared himself the representative for all Alaska. Instead of focusing on balancing our state budget, which is mandated by the constitution, he had time to introduce two bills (the Legislature is in its second special session, and no budget yet), HB 201 to protect off leash dogs and giving boroughs and municipalities the authority to regulate method and means of taking game within their boundaries. Trumping any BOG regulation. Thank goodness it is still held in committee.



HB 105 on the other hand passed the house on party lines, 22 to 18, once again.

Representative Andy Josephson pontificated on the house floor how his bill would save tourism in the state and protect the state's wolves that den inside the 6 million-acre Denali National Park and occasionally roam outside the park, which in his opinion the BOG would not do. He evangelized that the subsistence users of this area did not need the constitutional and statutory protections that his colleague, Representative Westlake lectured on, to house floor members (HB211), "That subsistence is the highest priority and should be protected". Representative Josephson proselytized that subsistence users do not have the right to participate in a custom and traditional practice because tourism has a higher priority.

I am flabbergasted by the hypocrisy of the House majority. They want to tax Alaskan's incomes, but lose 30 million dollars in revenue. They want to protect subsistence users in one part of the state, but rescind those rights to other Alaskans. They want a BOG, but they want municipalities to control how, when and who can harvest game within their boundaries.

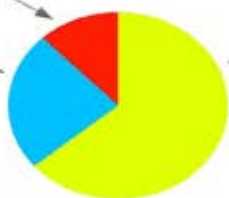
It is ever more obvious, that if you are not a member of AOC, you should be. I know most of us lead busy lives and don't have the time to participate in the legislative process. But with your membership AOC leadership can be a voice for you and I.

Who Owns/Manages Alaska?

Private Ownership - 12.1%
45.2 million acres

State of Alaska - 24.1%
89.8 million acres

U.S. Government - 63.8%
237.8 million acres



Russian traders arrived in Alaska in the mid-1700's and established small, scattered trading posts and settlements. Alaska Natives (the Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut peoples) continued as the primary landowners during this period of Russian occupation. On October 18, 1867, Russia sold Alaska to the United States government. As a result, the federal government owned the Alaska Territory, approximately 373 million acres - about one-fifth the size of the rest of the U.S.



State of Alaska - 89.8 million acres

Under the terms of the Alaska Statehood Act of 1959, the federal government granted the new state 28% ownership of its total area. Approximately 103,350,000 acres were to be elected under three types of grants:

- 1) Community - 400,000 acres
- 2) National Forest Community - 400,000 acres
- 3) General - 102,550,000 acres

Additional territorial grants for schools, university and mental health trust lands, totaling 1.2 million acres were confirmed with statehood.

All grants combined gave the State of Alaska approximately 105 million acres. To date, 89.9 million acres has been granted with the balance expected to be granted by 2009.

ANCSA Native Corporation (Private)
39.3 million acres

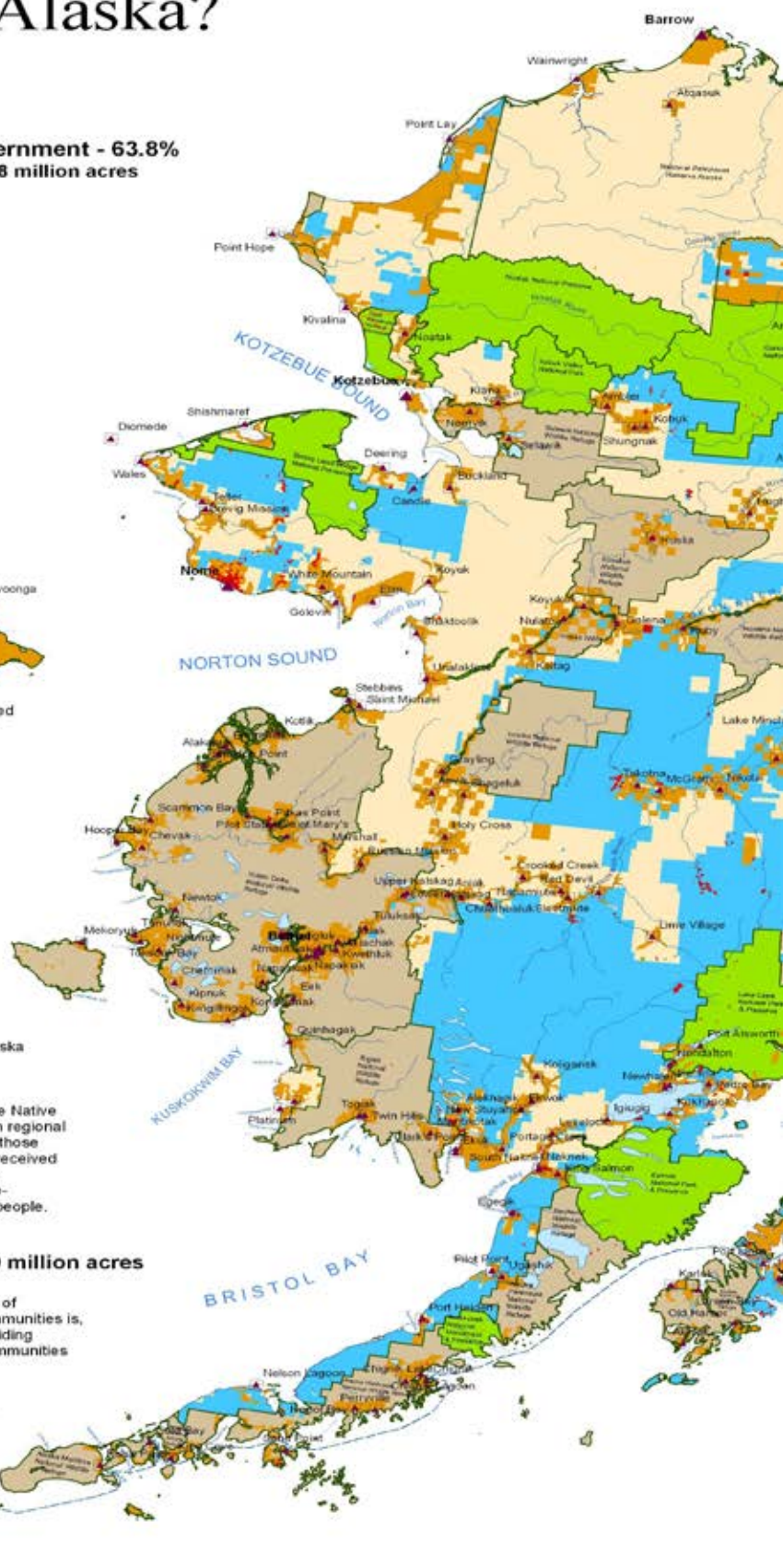
On December 18, 1971, P. L. 92-203, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was signed into law. The purpose of ANCSA was to legislate the terms by which Alaska Natives could acquire title to their lands. This claim had been unresolved for more than 100 years since the United States purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867.

Native lands are private lands. ANCSA mandated the creation of regional and village Native corporations to manage 44 million acres and payment of one billion dollars. Thirteen regional corporations were created for the distribution of ANCSA land and money. Twelve of those shared in selection of 16 million acres, the thirteenth corporation, based in Seattle, received a cash settlement only. 224 village corporations, of 25 or more residents, shared 26 million acres. The remaining acres, which include historical sites and existing Native-owned lands, went into a land pool to provide land to small villages of less than 25 people. To date, 39.3 million acres have been transferred to ANCSA corporations.

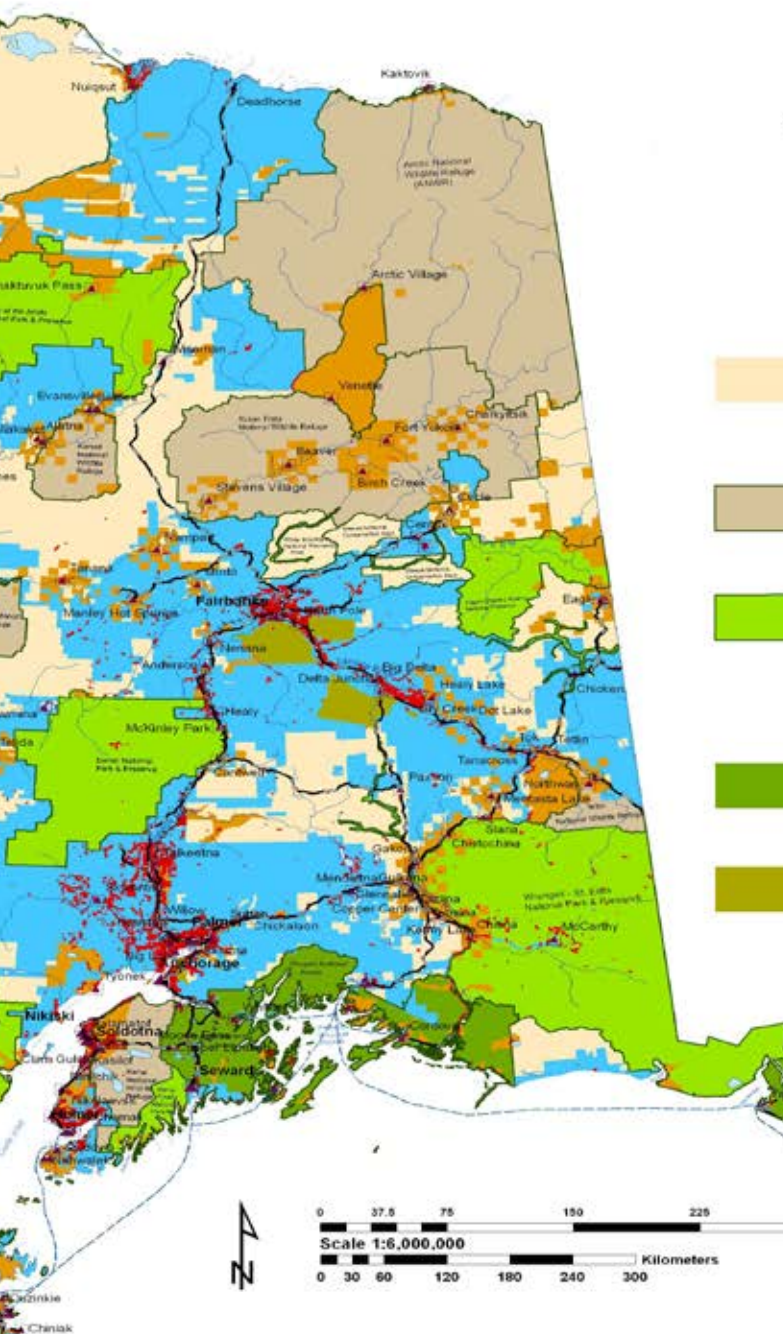
Non-ANCSA Private & Local Government - 5.9 million acres

Land in private ownership (other than Native land) comprises less than one percent of the total land in Alaska. Much of the best land for development around Alaska's communities is, or will be, privately owned. Private land development meets people's needs by providing places to live, work, shop and recreate. It also provides a tax base for cities and communities to help support public services.

Because local governments in Alaska have individual methods of transferring land into private ownership, land currently owned by them is grouped into this category.



Alaska is one-fifth the size of the conterminous 48 states.



Bureau of Land Management - 82.5 million acres

In Alaska, BLM's focus is conveying land, wildland fire management, overseeing the Joint Pipeline Office (a partnership with the state and other federal agencies with oversight responsibility of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline), and responding to the public demand for use of the land they manage.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service - 78.8 million acres

The USFWS manages 16 wildlife refuges in Alaska. The two largest are the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge and much storied Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), both of which are approximately 19 million acres.

National Park Service - 52.4 million acres

There are eight national parks in Alaska, including the five largest in the national park system:

- Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve - 13,175,901 acres
- Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve - 8,472,506 acres
- Denali National Park & Preserve - 6,075,030 acres
- Katmai National Park & Preserve - 4,093,229 acres
- Lake Clark National Park & Preserve - 4,030,025 acres

U.S. Forest Service - 22.3 million acres

The USFS manages two National Forests in Alaska. The Tongass NF, 16.8 million acres, and the Chugach NF, 5.5 million acres are the two largest national forests in the U.S. The USFS manages these lands for a wide range of goods and services while conserving and protecting them.

Department of Defense - 1.7 million acres

Dept. of Defense lands in Alaska provide for a unique training environment, most notably at the Northern Warfare Training Center in the Tanana Valley in the Interior.

- Highway
- Alaska Marine Highway System (state ferry) Route
- Town, population more than 2500
- Town, population less than 2500



Maps produced by the
Alaska Dept of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry

Losing our Dall Sheep

By Becky Schwanke, Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation representative and former Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game wildlife biologist

It started with a single infected ram. The disease was mild at first and went undetected. The one ram made contact with another. Soon the leader succumbed to the pressure in his lungs, he could stand no more. Younger rams soon found their way into lamb and ewe country, taking with them a silent killer. The herd one at a time began to cough and breathe heavy. Lambs drowned from fluid build-up in their lungs. Ewes found solace in numbers, passing the deadly bacteria between themselves, until they all suffered from the fatal outbreak of pneumonia.

Sheep hunting in the Chugach Mountains has been closed, **indefinitely**

This will be the eventual headline if just a single Chugach Dall sheep comes in contact with an *M. ovi* positive domestic sheep or goat. This bacterial infection is brutal and it is not something we can risk.

I am talking about the bacteria *Mycoplasma Ovipneumoniae* (*M. ovi* for short). A pathogen that has wreaked havoc in bighorn populations across the western states by causing chronic and often fatal pneumonia. There is no vaccine and currently no effective treatment available.

For several years now Alaskans have struggled with low sheep numbers in some of our most popular hunting areas. The impact of declining

sheep numbers on hunters has been rough, and there's no shortage of opinions on the topic. Now consider these declines magnified by 10. This is the scenario we will face if we allow *M. ovi* into our wild sheep or goat populations.



To date none of the declines seen in Alaska's sheep populations have been linked to *M. ovi* or widespread pneumonia. So far we have been lucky to have escaped this devastating disease.

Considering the source of *M. ovi* is domestic sheep and goat stock, this is where we need to start. The prevalence of *M. ovi* in domestic sheep across the western states is high, with over 88% of all commercial operations testing positive. Domestic goats are also carriers. While domestics may carry the bacteria and show no sign of disease, transmission of *M. ovi* to wild sheep has been responsible for widespread pneumonia and death from Nevada north to British Columbia and Alberta.

The threat is real.

While Alaska has less than 2000 domestic sheep and goats, the prevalence of *M. ovi* in our domestics is unknown. Until we have a solid grasp on the extent of this bacteria in our domestic stock, we have no choice but to be vigilant and keep domestic sheep and goats away from our wild populations. This bacteria is passed by nose-to-nose contact, but can

also be transmitted over distances up to 100 ft when the animal is suffering from pneumonia. This is not something we can ignore.

Alaska is uniquely positioned in the fight against *M. ovi*. We can stop this deadly bacteria before it takes hold in our state. No matter our background, Alaskans overwhelmingly value wildlife resources and understand that keeping them healthy is the key to the future.

This is not a battle between them and us. This is a collective fight we must all take on.

Pro-active steps are being taken but there is more work to be done. The Alaska Department of Fish & Game is actively testing for *M. ovi* in wild populations, and owners of domestic sheep and goats are now starting to test their own flocks. Cooperation is ongoing between the USDA, the State of Alaska, the Alaska Farm Bureau and a network of veterinarians, to achieve statewide domestic sheep and goat testing.

The next step will be critical. If *M. ovi* is found in domestics, some difficult decisions will have to be made. A single *M. ovi* positive animal will lead to more, posing a serious risk to our wild populations. The best long-term solution is to go Disease Free.

The Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation has made a significant commitment to this effort. Keeping sheep on the mountain has never been more important. The steps to ensure this reality include:

- ✓ Testing of all domestic sheep and goats
- ✓ Replacement or quarantine of infected animals

- ✓ Changing rules on import of domestic sheep and goats to *M. ovi* Free
- ✓ Establishment of an *M. ovi* monitoring program by the State Vet
- ✓ Compensation to owners/producers to off-set expenses

By working together on a solution, we can be pro-active and prevent potentially catastrophic



Sheep photo by Joselynn Finch

losses to our wild populations. In the end, by going Disease Free, as Alaskan residents we all maintain our freedom to own and use domestic sheep and goats, while knowing we helped protect our wild sheep and goats from disease.

M. ovi is an extremely dangerous bacteria and a single case of *M. ovi* caused pneumonia in Alaska's Dall sheep, mountain goat, or muskoxen populations is unacceptable. Failing to take steps now to protect Alaska's wild populations from this deadly bacteria would be incredibly irresponsible and unjustifiable.

Get involved and ask questions. Together, we can keep sheep on the mountain.

ALASKA FISH & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND

For 32 years AOC's sister corporation, the Alaska Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund, has sponsored a banquet and auction fund-raiser for the Fund. This year's event is Saturday November 4, 2017, at the Westmark Hotel.

For most of its history the Fairbanks event has been the leading fund-raiser for the Fund. The tremendous support of Interior residents has enabled the Fund to defend in court the privileges of all Alaskans to be equal under the law with regard to fishing, hunting, trapping and public access to public lands and waters.

Donations to the Fund help support lawsuits important to Alaskans continued use of our fish and wildlife resources. For example, the Fund has made substantial donations in support of the Sturgeon case which challenges federal overreach. See AOC website for details

On March 22, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of Sturgeon, rejecting the argument that the "Alaska Lands Act" (ANILCA) gives federal land managers authority over both federal "public" lands and state/private lands within the boundaries of National Park Service lands created by ANILCA. Chief Justice Roberts wrote in the opinion: "The parties' arguments in this respect touch on vital issues of state sovereignty, on the one hand, and federal authority, on the other. We find that in this case those issues should be addressed by the lower courts in the first instance."

So the battle continues over Alaska's management authority over the beds of navigable waterways. Let's hope that the "break in the lines" of federal overreach provided by the U.S. Supreme Court decision can ultimately end in victory for the State and its citizenry.



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Remember to think of AOC when estate planning.

Alaska Trust Fund – A Gift to Alaska

-- investing the resources of today to protect fishing, hunting, trapping & access for the Alaskans of tomorrow.

By Mary Bishop, Secretary, Alaska Trust Fund

How can you and I be assured our younger generations can learn the values associated with harvesting wild foods? How can we defend the opportunity to harvest now and in the future?

The AOC and Alaska Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund help. In 2002 the Fund established an endowment account called the **Alaska Trust Fund** to build an account large enough so the interest would cover the operating costs of the parent Fund. the goal of the Alaska Trust Fund is to reach the endowment level of \$1 million.

Every dollar invested in the Trust is protected - only the interest it generates can be spent. Every dollar



donated to the Trust stays right here at home - protecting the outdoor heritage you and I have grown to love and enjoy.

Trust Fund trustees Warren, Byron, Kenton, Ron, Dick and I **ask you to consider an annual gift to the Trust Fund.** Become a Trustee by donating \$250. Make it permanent by adding \$750 over 3 more years. Other donation options are available.

Please use the form below to donate – or inquire by calling me at 907-455-6151 or Warren Olson @ 1-907-346-4440.

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Maud Road Shooting Range Committee (now the Kenny & Patti Barber Shooting Range)

By Patti Barber

The crown jewel of the Knik River Public Use Area (KRPUA) is the KRPUA Shooting Range. In 2013, with the help of then-Representative Bill Stoltze and Senator Charlie Huggins, funding for Phase One of the range was supported by the legislature. Phase Two funding followed in 2014 with support from then- Governor Sean Parnell.

The range site is 2.7 miles from the end of the pavement on Maud Road, it was chosen because it is within the KRPUA and yet distant from homes and the high traffic area of the Knik river bed. To address public concerns and get ideas for a suitably-designed range, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) met with the Maud Road Shooting Range Committee to gather input. One initial concern was the 100-yard range access trail was too steep for the handicap to access the range. As a result of public input, the trail and range were lowered and made easier for wheelchairs and people with disabilities. Construction began on the 100-yard range in 2014.

The Maud Road Shooting Range Committee was formed through the Alaska Outdoor Council to work with DNR as a group sounding board and to alert DNR and the Alaska State Troopers if violations occur at the range. In the summer of 2015, volunteers from the Maud Road Shooting Range Committee, the Alaska Frontier Trappers, and friends met to build 22 benches with funds obtained from a rifle raffle held at many of the gun shows around the Valley. The Alaska Raceway Park generously donated many trash barrels to aid in keeping the range clean. Spenard Builders in Palmer also was able to give a substantial donation for the lumber used to build the benches. Volunteers are needed to keep the range free to use by helping with weekly maintenance, critically in the high use summers.

Travis Jensen, the KRPUA Land Manager (269-8503), and volunteers are there on the only closed day, Wednesday, to clean and repair facility as needed. As long as this volunteer maintenance work continues, the range will remain fee-free to use. The Maud Road Shooting Range Committee has a Facebook page that is well used by the public and is monitored often to offer help and answer questions. The State of Alaska also maintains a website at <http://www.knikriver.alaska.gov/#krpua=4>. Not on Facebook? Call Kenny Barber at 745-4446.

Directions to the range: Old Glenn Highway (out of Palmer, approximately 3-4 miles) to Maud Road

Maud Road Shooting Range Committee Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/Maud-Road-Shooting-Range-Committee-1418234718422497>



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Teresa Burnett

New AOC/AFWCF Board Member

I have lived in Alaska for over 30 years and am currently an Associate Broker with REMAX Dynamic Properties. I decided to join the Alaska Outdoor Council and then run for the Board of Directors after watching many of the areas of my most cherished childhood memories become unavailable to the next generation.

I have witnessed access to favorite fishing holes and camping spots become unavailable to the public. The hunting and fishing regulations have become convoluted and complicated. Sitting back and complaining wasn't enough anymore, so I decided to get active in an organization that I feel is making a positive impact on these issues.

My connection with the outdoors and nature is the primary reason I continue to live in Alaska. I am proud to say that my family has taught me to respect nature and cherish the bounty that it provides, and have been given me the skills to do so.

When I am not helping my clients buy and sell real estate, I'm enjoying the beautiful state that I live in, hunting, fishing, riding my motorcycle and gardening. And of course, traveling to warm beaches in the off-season.



AOC Member Clubs (to get contact info go to our website)

Alaska Backcountry Adventure Tours	Palmer	Fairbanks Trap Club.....	Fairbanks
Alaska Charter Association	Homer	Golden North Archery Assoc.....	Fairbanks
Alaska Frontier Trappers Association.....	Palmer	Houston Chamber of Commerce	Wasilla
Alaska Gun Collectors Association Inc.	Anchorage	Interior Airboaters Association.....	Fairbanks
Alaska Interior Marksmanship Committee	Fairbanks	Juneau Gun Club	Juneau
Alaska Machinegun Association.....	Chugiak	Juneau Rifle and Pistol Club, Inc.....	Juneau
Alaska Moose Federation.....	Anchorage	Juneau Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.	Juneau
Alaska Outdoor Access Alliance.....	Palmer	Kodiak Island Sportsman's Association	Kodiak
Alaska Professional Hunters Association.....	Anchorage	Matanuska Valley Sportsmen, Inc.....	Palmer
Alaska State Snowmobile Association	Anchorage	McKinley Mountainmen Muzzle Loading Rifle Club	Wasilla
Alaska Waterfowl Association	Anchorage	Personal Watercraft Club of Alaska	Anchorage
Alaska Waterfowl Association	Anchorage	Prince William Sound Charter Boat Association.....	Valdez
Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation	Anchorage	Ruffed Grouse Society/SC AK Chapter	Anchorage
Anchorage Snowmobile Club, Inc.....	Anchorage	Sitka Sportsman's Association	Sitka
Chitina Dipnetters.....	Fairbanks	Slana Alaskans Unite	Slana
Clear Sky Sportsmen's Club.....	Nenana	Snomads, Inc.....	Homer
Cook Inlet Archers	Anchorage	Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association	Fairbanks
Delta Sportsman's Association, Inc.....	Delta Junction	Territorial Sportsmen, Inc.	Juneau
Fairbanks Snow Travelers Association	Fairbanks	Tok Shooters Association.....	Tok



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