



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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Access to Outdoor activities in Alaska

By Rod Arno, AOC Executive Director

For most of us our outdoor activities take place on either State or Federal lands or waters. At statehood Congress gave Alaska up to 102 million acres to regulate public access on. Alaska native corporations were given 44 million acres for their private lands. The feds kept the remaining 238 million acres or 63% of the entire state for themselves. Most of this federal land has been divided up into various Conservation System Units (CSU) managed under the US Departments of Interior and Agriculture.

Upcoming Events

MAT-SU Outdoorsman Show

Wasilla Curtis D. Menard
Memorial Sports Center
MARCH 25, 26, & 27th
Friday noon to 7 pm
Saturday - 10am to 6pm
Sunday 10am to 5pm

The Great Alaska Sportsman Show - Anchorage Sullivan & Ben Boeke Arenas

March 29 - April 1
Thursday: 4:00pm to 9:00pm
Friday: Noon to 9:00pm
Saturday: 10:00am to 9:00pm
Sunday: 10:00am to 6:00pm

Fairbanks Outdoor Show

The Carlson Center
April 20, 21, 22, 2012
Friday: 2:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Saturday: 10:00 am - 7:00 pm
Sunday: 11:00am - 5:00 pm

Annual Kenai Peninsula Sport, Rec Trade Show

The Soldotna Sports Center
May 4-6, 2012
Friday: 3pm 8pm
Saturday: 10am - 8pm
Sunday: 10am - 5pm.

The Alaska Federal Lands managers just completed their DRAFT plan on how people will be accessing these CSU lands, U.S. Parks, Forests, Refuges, and BLM lands for the next 20 years. (Link to [DRAFT Alaska Federal Lands Long Range Transportation Plan](#) is available on the AOC website).

Currently the majority of "visitors" to federal lands in Alaska are tourists, not residents. 2.2 million tourists visited four National Parks in Alaska last year; Kenai Fjords, Denali (both road connected), Glacier Bay, Klondike Gold Rush, and Sitka National Parks (all three cruise ship connected). Those four National Parks accounted for 90% of all the visitors to National Park Service lands in Alaska. If you've been to any of these



Our Happy Place

four National Parks in the summer you know how crowded the accessible parts are. You would think these folks would appreciate spreading out some over the next 20 years while visiting Alaska's Park Lands.

It's hard to say how many of the 700,000 Alaskans actually spend much time out of doors. If you assume all of Alaska's rural population, about 17% or 122,000 people, spend time gathering wildfood harvests you could count them as outdoors people. Add to that 100,000 Alaskans who fish, another 85,000-90,000 who purchase hunting, trapping,

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Presidents Message

By Bill Iverson, AOC President

AOC Supporters

I would like to stress the importance of you supporting the Sustaining Business Members and Advertisers in this newsletter. They have committed their time and reputation by aligning the names with AOC and deserve acknowledgement of their commitment to Alaskan's. By you frequenting their business it shows them you care.

Annual Meeting

We had our annual meeting on February 3-4th in Juneau this year. It had great speakers and if not for the bad weather that keep many away, it was one of our most informative meetings. Many issues were discussed of interest to the member clubs who attended or sent delegates. Interior Airboaters Association donated \$5000 and Alaska Outdoor Access Alliance donated \$2000 at the meeting. The Awards banquet, again because of the weather, was smaller than we expected but everyone had a great time. Governor Sean Parnell spoke to the crowd on DNR's redirect to get back to basics and protect the equal protection clause of the constitution for the benefit of all Alaskan's.

Anchorage Banquet

The Anchorage Banquet was a great success even though the turnout was not what we had hoped for. Fortunately the people who showed up did a great job in supporting us. I would like to thank each and every one of them for being involved in what is happening around them and attending.

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The fund is the associated conservation arm of AOC

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.

Kasilof Hatchery stocking program

AOC worked on getting more allocation of resources for the Kasilof River Hatchery program. Nothing was changed on the current plan, even with all the written testimony given by AOC, KRGA and KRSA supporting increasing the amount of fish stocked back to its pre-2000 levels. I personally would love to see this once great fishery returned to its former glory. The management plan currently being used will not do that.

4 Wheeler Raffle sponsor

The Raffle sponsor for the 4 wheeler this year is Ron's Honda of Soldotna. They will be providing a 2012 Honda Fourtrax Foreman 500 4-Wheeler ATV.



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AOC Annual Meeting Report

By Rod Arno, AOC Executive Director



The 2012 AOC Annual Meeting held in Juneau early in February was extremely informative and productive. High winds across the panhandle kept flights from arriving and AOC delegates and speakers waited on standby from Seattle to Anchorage until late Friday evening.

The Friday work session was lively with numerous questions from AOC members being fielded by expert speakers after their presentations;

- Ed Fogels, Deputy Commissioner of DNR, started out the morning with an update on extensive efforts by DNR staff and DOL lawyers to assure public access to federal lands and waters. Fogels stated that the Parnell administration and Commissioner Dan Sullivan are actively pursuing all avenues available to regain State authority to regulate activities on State managed navigable water and to assert RS2477 right-of-ways in areas where the federal land managers have been denying public access. Funds have been made available to DNR to repair sections of the Rex trail in GMU 20 that have been degraded due to a high level of ORV travel during the fall hunting season.
- McKie Campbell, staff for Senator Lisa Murkowski, reviewed provisions of the Sealaska Lands bill before Congress and assured AOC that before Congress voted on the bill AOC would have a chance to review changes to the bill that were currently being made.
- Don Mitchell, Anchorage attorney, provided attendees with a history of how the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) was drafted to exclude tribal designation in Alaska and how former Dept. of Interior official Ada Deer's administrative action to recognize 220 tribes in Alaska could allow sovereign immunity on 44 million acres of Alaska. Mitchell has filed a suit on behalf of an Alaskan individual in the US Supreme Court to overturn the AK Supreme Court decision concurring with tribal sovereignty, which could affect management of publicly owned fish and game resources on private lands.
- Alaska House of Representatives Craig Johnson, Bill Stoltze and Mia Costello, took time off from their duties in the Capital to come down and reassure AOC members of their commitment to increasing opportunities to participate in Alaska's outdoor heritage of hunting, trapping, fishing, and accessing public lands.
- John Quinley, Assistant Director, NPS-Alaska, made it in from Seattle after the winds died down to give an overview on the NPS lands in Alaska and noted that while Park visitation was down nationally, Alaska Parks continued to grow in the number of visitors. Quinley noted the common interests of NPS and AOC in maintaining functional, intact habitats necessary to support strong fish and wildlife resources. Comments from AOC members regarding the importance of continued public access to Alaska's Park lands were numerous.



Governor Sean Parnell, Byron Haley



John Lang, Governor Sean Parnell

- Craig Fleener, ADF&G Deputy Commissioner, gave wide ranging remarks on the importance of continuing predator/prey management and assured attendees that the department was committed to gathering the data necessary for the BOG to adopt implementation plans to achieve current population and harvest objectives of game. Fleener understood the importance of promoting public understanding of IM programs and noted that the department was continuing to prepare information for distribution.
- Charlie Swanton, Sport Fish Division Director, ADF&G, gave a much appreciated and informative overview of the boating access programs overseen by Sport Fish Division which derives its funding mainly from the sale of sport fish license in Alaska and a tax on fishing gear nationally. Income available for new projects is down due to recent decreases in fishing license sales in the state.
- Wayne Regelin, past ADF&G Commissioner and President of TSI, gave a report on his concerns of changes to the current ESA definition of "range" of an endangered species that were currently being proposed by the USF&W Service and the NMFS in the Federal Registry. The proposed changes could potentially cause a species that was listed as endangered in the lower 48 states to be listed in Alaska, even if it wasn't endangered here.

All that were present at the AOC Annual meeting work session were grateful of our guest speakers for taking their time to keep AOC delegates up to date on very important events affecting AOC membership's ability to continue our outdoor activities in Alaska.

The AOC Awards Banquet that evening was attended by Governor Sean Parnell, his wife Sandy, and Chief of Staff Mike Nizich. The governor took the time to speak with evening guests one on one and then spoke to all on his commitment to battle back against federal intrusion into the State's right to manage its resources, hampering Alaskans ability to access public resources and travel across federal lands.

29 AOC clubs sent delegates and proxies to brave the high winds in Juneau for the 2012 Annual Business Meeting. AOC members reviewed efforts made by AOC board members and staff to execute priorities given them by AOC delegates at the 2011 AOC Annual Meeting. Continued funding for AOC staff and attorney fees incurred by AOC board actions remains the highest concern for delegates for 2012.

Two new AOC board members were elected by the delegates; Dave White, a TSI member from Juneau and Gene Gerken, a PWC member from Anchorage. They will be filling the seats vacated by Ralph Seekins, who is running for a Senate seat this year from Fairbanks, and Richard Yamada, who has his application in to the Governor for a seat on the NPMFC. Both Gary Stevens and Mel Grove were re-elected for another term on the board.

The AOC Clubs are the backbone of this organization, they are the eyes and ears of what regulatory actions affect AOC membership's ability to participate in outdoor activities. As you read through the articles in this issue of the AOC newsletter you will notice that AOC Clubs are taking the lead on a number of issues affecting our membership. The support from AOC clubs is essential to AOC's success. If you don't belong to one of AOC's Clubs look one up in your area and join.

Wood Bison are Ready to Ramble

By Randy R. Rogers, former ADF&G wildlife planner

After several years of study and preparation in June 2008 the Alaska Department of Fish and Game imported 53 wood bison from Canada. There are now over 100 of the shaggy beasts being held at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center in Portage awaiting their chance to ramble in the wilds of Alaska. As many as 30 calves will be born this spring.

ADF&G has conducted habitat studies and determined the Yukon Flats, Minto Flats and the lower Yukon/Innoko Rivers area could each support a herd of 400 or more wood bison. The Yukon Flats may be the largest expanse of prime wood bison habitat in North America and could likely support a herd of several thousand wood bison. The Yukon/Innoko area is now proposed as the initial wood bison release site.

AWCC provides quality care for the wood bison through a cooperative agreement with ADF&G. The bison have successfully completed a two-year quarantine and health certification program. The only remaining hurdle is to address concerns about the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Because wood bison are an endangered species, there are concerns that reintroducing them could result in restrictions on other natural resource development activities. To address these concerns, ADF&G has been working with the Alaska Department of Law and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop regulations to designate wood bison in Alaska as a "nonessential experimental population" under section 10(j) of the ESA.



Photo by: Doug Lindstrand

This type of regulation has never been applied in Alaska and would cause wood bison to be treated differently than any other endangered species in our state. The regulations will remove virtually all the regulatory requirements that normally apply under the ESA and designate the state to have primary management authority over wood bison herds. Most recently ADF&G has been working to ensure the ESA regulations will provide the state with the authority to manage future wood bison harvest. The proposed regulations should be released for public review and comment in the near future.

In addition, consideration is also being given to seek congressional action to address concerns about wood bison and the ESA. Either the 10(j) regulations or congressional action could provide the necessary protection for other resource development activities so that the wood bison project can proceed. As wood bison herds in Canada and Alaska grow, it is likely they will be completely removed from the ESA before herds have grown enough to support sustained yield hunting.

While bison are not specifically included in the state Intensive Management laws, wood bison restoration is a way to enhance Alaska's wildlife resources and hunting opportunities for many years to come. Wood bison restoration in Alaska will continue the legacy of the North American wildlife conservation model where sportsmen's organizations have taken the lead in restoring wildlife populations.

There are now over 1,200 wood bison in the herd in the Yukon and hunting opportunities are rapidly increasing. If sportsmen's organizations and other Alaskans continue working together wood bison will soon be thriving in Alaska once again.

Legislative Update

By Jeff Logan, AOC Lobbyist

With a month to go before the Alaska Legislature adjourns in Juneau (on April 15th) there's still plenty on the table for AOC members. Budgets, bills, and board confirmations will all be dealt with in the next 4 weeks.

As in most years, as the end of the session draws near legislation starts dropping off the table. A number of bills AOC has worked on - for and against - are looking dead for this year. Legislation dealing with fish guide licensing will wait until next year, as will bills focused on Kenai River dipnetting, and establishing a priority for personal use fishing.

On the game side, solutions to the problems with the Delta bison herd will likely not pass this year. Legislation to give a hunter a one-time pass if he turns himself in for shooting a sub-legal moose will also likely have to wait until next year. A recently introduced bill to establish a no net-loss policy for state land used for hunting, fishing and trapping has attracted a bunch of co-sponsors, but it is also

unlikely to pass this year.

The operating budget, that funds ADF&G and DNR operations, is working its way through the House and should be over to the Senate soon. The Senate will start the capital budget process in another week or two, and then pass it over to the House. The capital budget has a number of items of interest to AOC. ADF&G has requested funding for Kenai River salmon counting sonar equipment, and funding to study the effects of East Cook Inlet set net salmon harvest. DNR has proposed funding for a Kasilof River boat take out and snowmobile trail development. Individual legislators will be proposing to fund district projects as well, and AOC will have their eye on those.

One of the most important issues left this session will be the confirmation of Governor Parnell's nominees to the Boards of Fish and Game. As of this writing the Governor's only nomination is Lynn Keogh to the Board of Game. There are two more seats to fill on the BOG and two on the Board of Fish. AOC is engaged in this process to establish boards who will honor the common use clause of the Alaska Constitution and respect the Alaska lifestyle.

Predator management program (or the lack of) on the Kenai Peninsula.

By Mike Crawford, President Kenai Peninsula Chapter of Safari Club International

To my fellow Outdoorsmen,

I wanted to take this opportunity to write in support of the predator management program on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2011, the Board of Game made drastic changes to the moose hunting regulations on the Kenai Peninsula. The new regulations eliminated nonresident hunting, spike fork, and restricted the taking of large bulls to 50 inches or larger, or 4 brow tines. This reduced hunting opportunity resulting in 32 animals taken during the last hunting season, compared to an annual average of 516 over the last decade.

The decline in the moose population is due to several factors, but primarily predators. For the long term recovery in GMU 15A (Northern Peninsula) habitat enhancement is essential, though, removal of predators is crucial at this time to stop the decline. Calf survival is low and therefore recruitment is below the minimum level to even stabilize the population. If the impact of predation is not reduced and calf survival not increased, the population will continue to decline. Only 4 of the 32 moose were harvested were in 15A compared to over 350 in the early 1980's. A current census needs to be conducted in this subunit to determine the impact of the severe winter. GMU 7 & 15B are currently in the same condition as 15A, however, 7 & 15B do not qualify for an Intensive Management Program since harvest levels never exceeded 100 animals. There is a lot of political pressure to stop the aerial predator management program. Twinning rates in 15A at 16 percent reveal habitat is at a sustainable level, equally important, the un-hunted Skilak Loop area has very good habitat with a moose population estimated at half of what is used to be. We need to give moose a chance to recover; reducing the predator's impact will achieve that objective. Sitting on our rear ends and watching the moose disappear is not an acceptable plan.

In 15C (Southern Peninsula) habitat is not an issue due to over 160,000 acres that burned or were logged in the past 15 years, yet calf survival is critically low due to predation. The lack of recruitment has resulted in low bull/cow ratios.

In a perfect world, we would have prescribed burns and crushing projects to increase habitat, and a pro-active program for managing predators.

Large scale burning and crushing is not a reality for the Kenai Peninsula due to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge's restrictive policies. With 70 percent of the Kenai being refuge lands this makes habitat enhancement options very limited. To complicate matters, the refuge concluded a brown bear study in November of 2011 and has yet to release the population number, only stating "the number is much higher than what we believed". The Board of Game has authorized a registration brown bear hunt this fall, in addition the black bear baiting opportunities have been liberalized.

So what can you do? Write a letter to the Governor or call (907-465-3500) and leave a message. Write your State and Federal legislators supporting predator management on the Kenai Peninsula. While most of you Alaskans who reside north of the Peninsula are thinking this is not your problem..... it may be, rest assured there is a Kenai Peninsula hunter looking at a map of your hunt area, where predator control programs have been successful and moose populations are healthy.



Kenai Peninsula Moose Predation Facts

If the Kenai moose population is still around 7000 animals, approximately 4900 (70%) of those would be cows and about 3920 (80%) of those cows would had bred the previous fall. Assuming a twinning rate of 16% (found in Unit 15A in 2011), resulting in an annual production of 4547 calves.

A calf moose mortality study on the Kenai revealed black bears killed 34% of the radio-collared calves suggesting approximately 1546 calves peninsula wide, wolves killed 273 (6%) calves and brown bears killed another 273 (6%).

Calf mortalities by these three predators equal about 2092 (46%) calves born each spring (from late May to July 15).

Using the average of 244 moose killed per year by vehicles, 134 (55%) are calves. Black bears alone (in the spring) are capable of killing that many calves in less than four days.

A study by the Fish and Wildlife Service showed wolf predation during winter was comprised of 47% calves and each pack (over 20 packs documented in Nov. 2011) averaged one kill every 4.7 days and 75% of their kills were moose.

Wolves alone kill four times the number of moose killed by vehicles each year and at least twice the number of adult cows.

Reports of black bears killing adult moose are uncommon; however, brown bears prey on both calves and adults during their non-denning period, whereas, wolves prey on moose all year long.

and fishing licenses and it's safe to say at least half of Alaska's population spends time outdoors, and that's not counting hikers, boaters, or just recreational ATV and snowmachine riders who don't hunt, trap, or fish.

Unless you're willing to just walk the perimeter or line a boat into the interior of any of these federal conservation system units (CSU) in Alaska, you're going to need a motor for summer access. (Winter travel would provide an opportunity for motor free dog sled access to many federal conservation units in the interior and northwestern areas of Alaska). Today, commercial bus, aircraft and cruise ship transporters provide the public with access to many of Alaska's Federal CSUs, as well as to public domain lands owned by the state of Alaska.

How will the Alaska Federal Lands LRTP affect individual Alaskans who fly, boat, snowmachine, or drive out to federal public lands over the next 20 years? The record number of access closures to federal public land in Alaska since the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980, doesn't give us much hope for future opportunities for Alaskans to enjoy federal lands without hiring a commercial concessionaire.

Since the passage of ANILCA 30 years ago, we have lost access on parts of 63% of Alaska for aircraft, boats, hovercraft, airboats, personal water craft, large swamp buggies, ATVs, and off-road-vehicles on federal lands across Alaska.

The Alaska Federal Lands LRTP could either be the best thing that has happened for independent travel on Alaska's federal lands or the beginning of the end of access by individual motorized means. The current DRAFT LRTP plan will set the "sideboards" for what types of motorized access will be appropriate on Alaska's federal lands, if adopted.

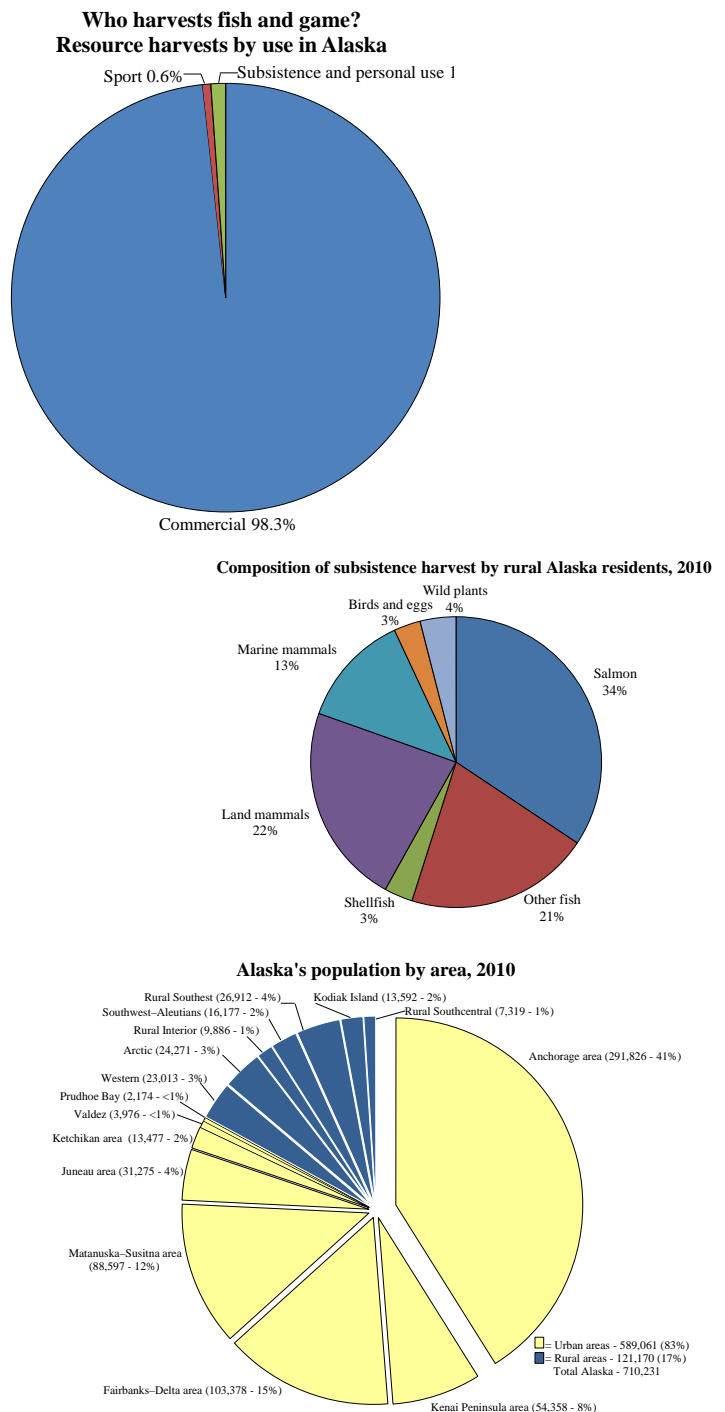
If the federal land managers want access to Alaska's federal lands to be provided by regulated concessionaires they could make it their priority for the next 20 years. Individual access for Alaskans is guaranteed by federal law (ANILCA) for **Rural** Alaskan residents only. That means Alaskans not living in federally qualified rural areas, that's around 590,000 Alaskans or 83% of the states' total population, could lose individual means of motorized access to federal lands if the managers determined individual methods of motorized access was an **inappropriate activity**.

To win **more** access to Alaska federal public lands individual Alaskans will have to let the governor, Alaska's congressional delegation and their legislative representatives know that they want access to federal public lands in Alaska in order for us and future generations to continue to hunt, trap, fish and recreate.

So far, AOC is the only pro-access conservation organization at the table during the state's involvement in the Alaska Federal Lands LRTP advocating for greater opportunities for the public to access federal public lands in Alaska. There are no planned new roads or trails in the draft LRTP. But one of the actions to first take place is to develop trail standards (T-Roads) for all terrain vehicles.

While a current lack of federal funding may delay the construction of any new road or trails to federal lands in the near future AOC will work to try and make sure overly restrictive travel standards that may hamper the building of new trails for the next 20 years, are not adopted by the federal land managers.

AOC will be advocating for reasonable, sustainable trail standards that won't unnecessarily block motorized access for individuals while at the same time minimizing the impacts on terrain and spawning areas in rivers. By supporting AOC financially you are making sure your interests to continue accessing public lands in Alaska are represented in the regulatory process.



Alaska Moose Federation: A Year in Review

By Gary Olson

The winter of 2011-12 is quickly becoming one for the record books and in a very bad way for Southcentral Alaska moose. The snows have come early and deep driving many moose to the roads and railroad tracks to find easier routes for travel. A series of major programs has been initiated by AMF, thanks to grants provided by the Alaska Legislature and the Parnell Administration under permit from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. These programs have helped the state with workable solutions for the growing public safety problem of moose on Alaska's highways.

This winter's moose salvage program has proven itself in its effectiveness at increasing safety on Alaska's highways. The Mat-Su program picked up 24 moose in its first week of operating in January along with an amazing 24 hour period on February 2nd of 17 salvage moose picked up by AMF personnel between Talkeetna and Eagle River. Even though this was an amazing accomplishment, the AMF does not want to be recognized only as the experts in picking up dead moose. By late February of 2012, well over 600 vehicle collisions have occurred in Southcentral Alaska.

The AMF had originally begun the moose salvage program in Anchorage during the winter of 2009. Past DOT grants enabled the AMF to outfit two donated trucks that hauled whole moose to charities rather than the charities coming to the road surface. This program has proven to reduce the Anchorage Police Department's time needed at the collision scene by 2.5 hours.

In addition, the data that was gathered from the collision scenes by AMF drivers has proved another very dangerous component to moose living on Alaska's highways: orphaned calves appear to live on the roads until they cause additional vehicle accidents. According to DOT statistics, 50% of all collisions are caused by calf moose. Because of these observations, the AMF requested two grants to expand AMF moose salvage to a statewide program and an additional grant to allow for the equipment needed for the rescue and relocation of orphaned moose calves in an attempt to reduce vehicle collisions.

After requesting permission to relocate moose in September, 2011, a permit was issued by ADF&G in late February, just a month away from the season completion date of March 31, 2012. Part of the permit requires that all relocated moose are to be radio collared with ADF&G approved frequencies. Thirty approved frequencies were received February 16 from ADF&G after being requested in November. Radio collar delivery times are at least 60 days leaving AMF to depend on ADF&G for collars at this time. AMF has been lent 3 approved collars from ADF&G stock to perform the

first season's relocation work this March, even though AMF has the capacity to relocate hundreds of moose. Due to deep snow in most areas south of the Alaska Range, the targeted destination for relocation will be out in the Copper River Valley.

A program in Salt Lake City, that has relocated moose to Colorado for over 30 years, is the template for non-profit and government agencies cooperating in wildlife relocation. Safari Club International and others were instrumental in providing funds and support to transplant these moose to help re-establish and supplement herds in Colorado. The participation between the state agencies and non-profits is a model that the AMF hopes will continue to gain strength in Alaska.

ADF&G also issued a diversionary feeding permit to the AMF to provide cleared locations ¼ mile away from paved roads along known moose collision corridors. Locally grown haylage is the targeted diversionary feed for the animals this winter. This follows a proven program from the late 1980's where ADF&G personnel set up these stations to help the moose during deep snow winters. ADF&G has studied captive moose at the Ag Farm in Palmer for the past decade to see what feed will most benefit moose in the wintertime.

The AMF is excited with the new leadership in ADF&G who have been instrumental in working for a solid public & private partnership to provide better public safety solutions for Alaskans. We advocate for stronger wildlife management message than "it's nature's way" that has led to wholesale declines in moose while highways and the railroad continue to take their toll on our local moose herds. We urge all Alaska citizens to contact their legislator and encourage them to support active management and not allow record snow years to devastate our Southcentral herds. Before oil & gas were discovered, our permanent funds were our salmon and our moose. After the oil & gas are diminished, we better hope we have abundance fish & wildlife for the people of Alaska!



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Lawsuit protecting the use of Alaska's Navigable Waters

By John Sturgeon

A lawsuit has been filed in federal district court that will affect all our rights to access our favorite hunting and fishing spots. The State of Alaska has title to, and the right to govern, Navigable waters and the submerged lands between them. This right was granted Alaska at statehood and is rooted in the constitutional "equal footing doctrine". Under this doctrine, new States enter the Union "on an equal footing" with the original 13 Colonies and succeed to the United States title to the beds of navigable waters within their boundaries. Section 6(m) of the Alaska Statehood Act explicitly applies the Submerged Lands Act to Alaska. In practical terms, this means the State of Alaska owns all Navigable rivers and lakes and their submerged lands!! As an example, the Yukon River, Fortymile River, Susitna River, Kuskokwim River, Koyukuk River, Stikine River, Nuahagak River, and hundreds of other navigable waters and tidelands are undisputedly owned by the State of Alaska. This ownership applies even if they run through federal lands.

To the hunter and fisherperson this means when we are in Navigable waters we are on State land even if that waterway runs through a federal preserve, forest or refuge. That the State of Alaska owns the submerged lands between ordinary high water marks on Navigable waters is not in dispute. For example, when you land an airplane on a gravel bar on the Yukon River you are on State land. If you beach your boat, canoe or raft on a gravel bar on the Susitna River you are on State land. That is not in dispute. What is in dispute is who has the right to manage those lands. Unfortunately, some Federal agencies such as the National Park Service think when State land is within the boundaries of one of their Preserves or Refuges; they have another layer of authority over the State of Alaska.

In addition, when ANILCA was passed it included a clause, Section 103c, that specifically said regulations promulgated by ANILCA designated conservation unit do not apply to State and private inholding. Federal agencies like the National Park Service have chosen to ignore that regulation.

As we have all experienced, the Federal government is much less supportive of our rights to hunt and fish than the State of Alaska and is even less concerned about our rights to access our favorite hunting and fishing spot. In addition, most would agree the Feds have been unresponsive to the many concerns of Alaska's hunting and fishing enthusiasts. In fact, they pretty much ignore our input. The State of Alaska has always been much more supportive of our rights to access our favorite hunting or fishing spot. The lawsuit filed by moose hunter John Sturgeon in Sept. of 2011 seeks to take the Feds out of management of State land and put the State of Alaska in charge of managing their own lands. The State of Alaska recently intervened in support of this very important lawsuit. This lawsuit will decide who will manage Alaska's state owned Navigable waters, the oppressive feds or the more supportive State of Alaska.



If you float or use a powerboat on a Navigable river to hunt or fish, if you land your airplane or helicopter or beach your raft, boat or canoe on a gravel bar, if you charter a plane that lands on a gravel bar or lands in the water, if you set a tent up on a gravel bar or anything similar, this case is important to you!! These lawsuits, to protect our most basic hunting, fishing and access rights are very expensive.

Your help is urgently needed. You can help by sending a donation to the Alaska Outdoor Council attention the "Navigability Lawsuit". Time is critical, the federal government is taking away more of your rights every day! The time to stop them is now. Donate today at www.alaskaoutdoorcouncil.org

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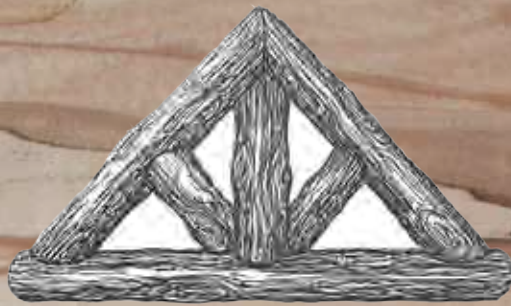
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Who Owns/Manages Alaska?

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

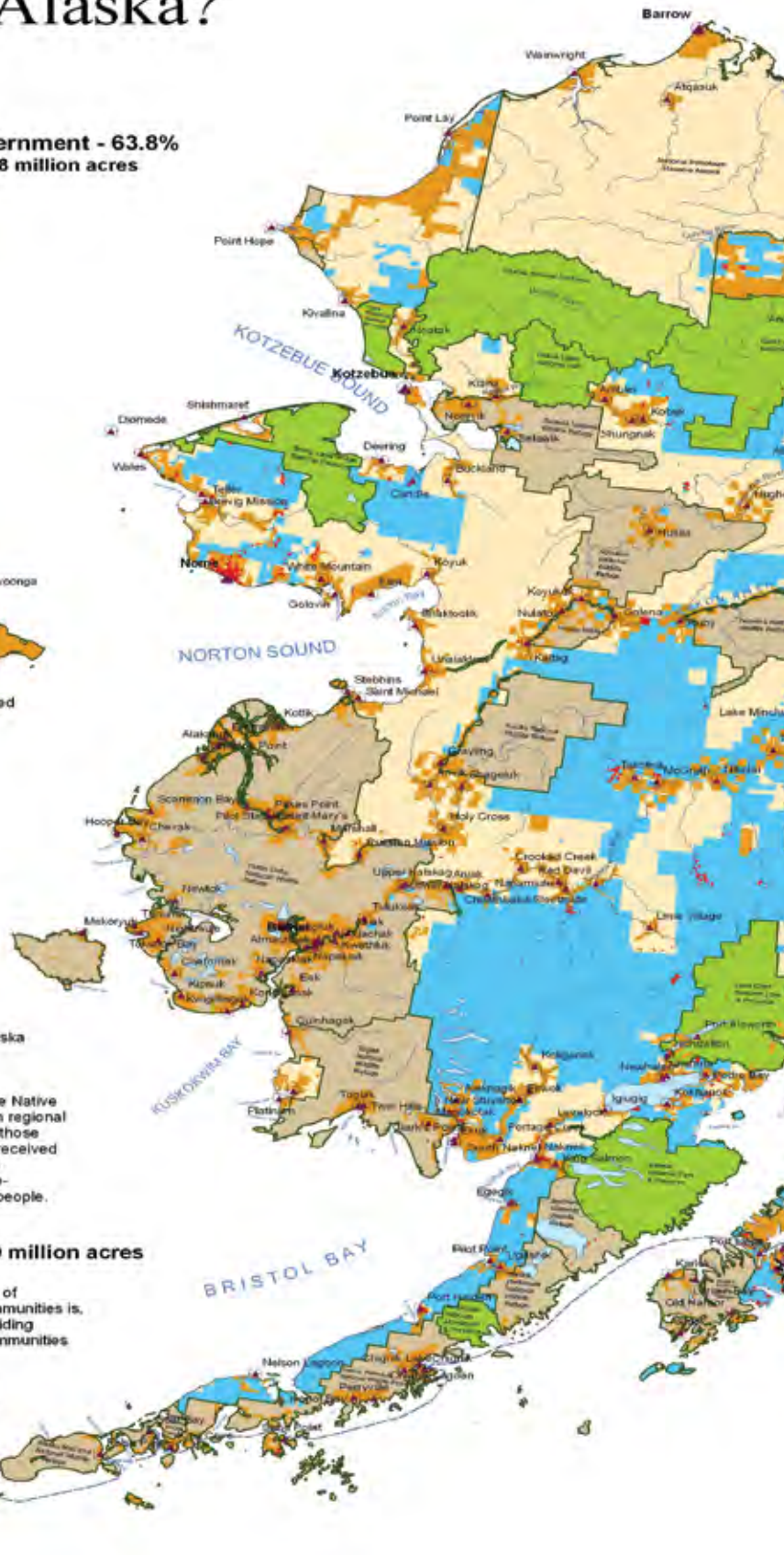
On December 18, 1971, P. L. 92-203, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act was signed into law. The purpose of ANCSA was to legislate the terms by which Alaska Natives could acquire title to their lands. This claim had been unresolved for more than 100 years since the United States purchased Alaska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

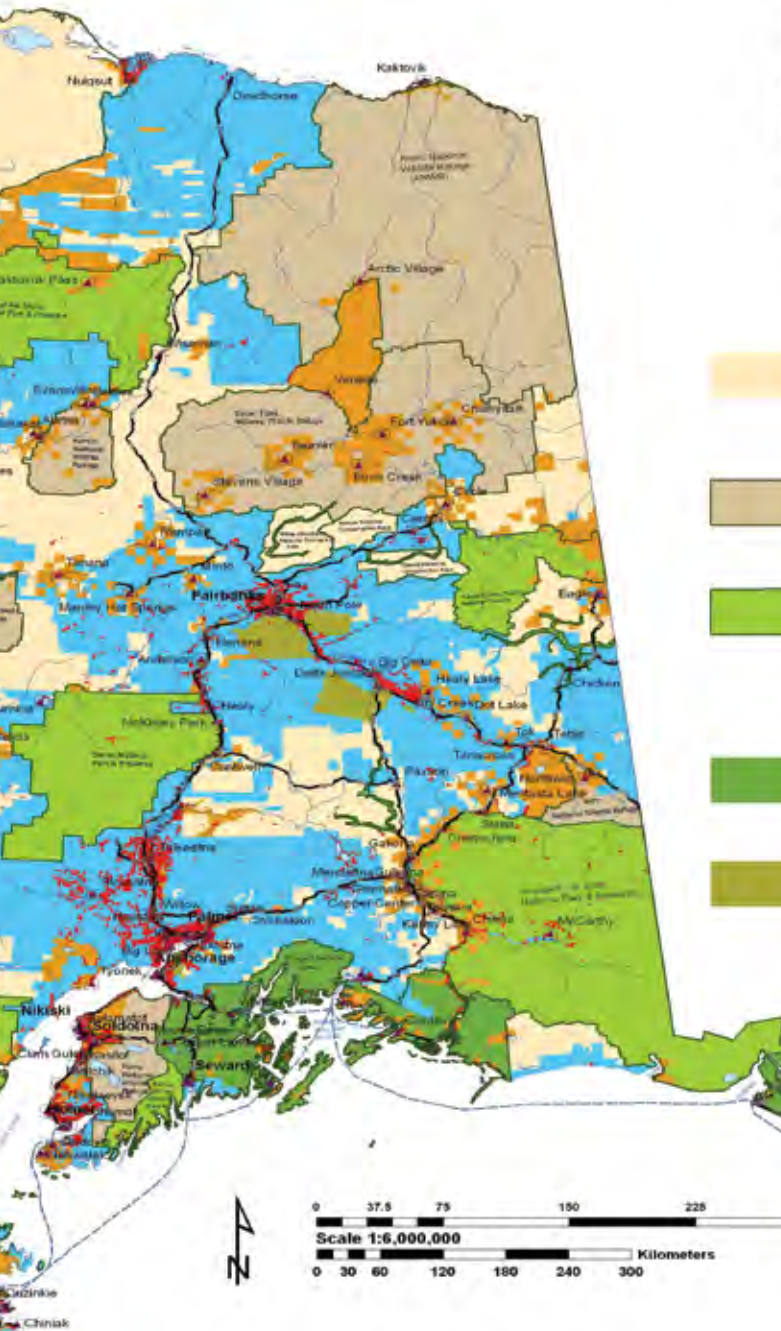
Non-ANCSA Private & Local Government - 5.9 million acres

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:

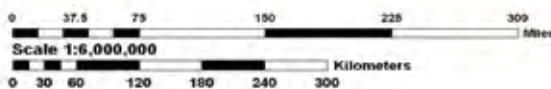
- Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve - 13,175,901 acres
- Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve - 8,472,506 acres
- Denali National Park & Preserve - 6,075,030 acres
- Katmai National Park & Preserve - 4,093,229 acres
- Lake Clark National Park & Preserve - 4,030,025 acres

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
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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. And 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.

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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

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.

Baked Salmon (or Halibut)

By Pam Iverson, AOC Administrative Director

When you get tired of fixing salmon on the BBQ, try this method of cooking.

It was one of my Mom's favorite ways to cook salmon.
A filet of salmon, skin off, bones out or just use the tail sections
In a small bowl mix equal parts of mayonnaise and sour cream
(The amount will depend on how big the piece of fish is)

Lay the fish in a shallow baking dish; pour a small amount lemon juice over the fish

Salt & pepper to taste

Lay the mayonnaise-sour cream mixture across the top of the fish, sprinkle with Dill weed

Bake for 20 to 30 minutes at 350 degree oven, until the top is slightly turning golden brown

(The fish should flake but don't over-cook)

(This is also a way to keep moisture in the fish that has been in the freezer too long)

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Doug Buchanan, 1947 -2012. RIP

Doug passed away Feb 7. Doug was an early activist in the reorganized Alaska Outdoor Council in 1963, fueled by his unrelenting disdain for federal regulations, especially those of the National Park Service. He even served a short time early on as Executive Director.

But it seemed that AOC moved too slowly, and Doug was off again on his own unique odyssey before long. One of his better publicized protests was to mail a package of dried bull (or horse) manure to the Secretary of Interior in protest of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) during Congress's deliberations. Much to Doug's delight, the Postal Service was unable to find a rule under which to charge him with some infraction.

Although Doug didn't continue as an active AOC member, for many years he continued his scathing advice to AOC on how it should be acting to save Alaska from the federal government - in long, uncomplimentary letters, noting that he often wrote them for his own amusement, since he didn't expect AOC to comprehend his advice.

Doug lived large as a mountaineer, iconoclast, and Alaskan. This quote from an article on his website well reflects his perspective: "Mention the stinking government as the stinking government, and the real Alaskans will know you are a fellow human."

Friends will hold a celebration of Doug's life in Fairbanks on May 19, 2012, his birthday.

Dave White

New AOC/AFWCF Board Member

I moved from Oregon to Alaska in the fall of 1992. I have lived in Juneau since coming to Alaska. I have enjoyed fishing and hunting my entire life so I immediately fell in love with Alaska and all it has to offer. In 2002, I became a partner in a retail business. Our store has a large sporting good and marine department. We are also an Alaska Fish & Game vendor. I have had the opportunity to get to know quite a few fishermen, hunters, charter captains and lodge owners.

I am a member of the A.O.C., NRA, Ducks Unlimited and the Juneau Gun Club. My wife, Carla, and I are co-chairs of the Juneau Chapter of Ducks Unlimited.

The future of hunting and fishing in Alaska is important to me. I think that it is important to educate our youth in fish and wildlife conservation. It is important that our youth know how to adhere to fish and game regulations as well as promote firearm safety. I want to help make sure that there will be fish to catch and game to hunt for my children's children as well as future generations. I think all Alaskans should have an equal opportunity and right to hunt and fish anywhere in the state. I also feel that all sportsmen should abide by the same set of regulations.

I have been very active with donations of time, merchandise and money for several organizations that share these same values. I have been involved with yearly fundraisers for groups such as Alaska Outdoor Council, Ducks Unlimited, Territorial Sportsmen, and



Friends of the NRA. I have also been supportive of the Becoming an Outdoor Woman workshops as well as Family Fishing Day at the lake and Hooked On Fishing.

In looking at the mission statement and goals of the A.O.C. I decided that I would like to run for the board. I believe in A.O.C.'s mission and I want to do whatever I can to help. I feel that I know and get along very well with the sportsmen in Juneau. I am looking forward to meeting with and working with other clubs in Southeast. I am a good listener and am certainly willing and able to present any of your comments and concerns to the board.

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Alaska Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation	Anchorage	Interior Alaska Trail Riders Association	Fairbanks
Alaska Charter Association	Homer	Juneau Gun Club	Juneau
Alaska Frontier Trappers Association	Palmer	Juneau Rifle and Pistol Club, Inc	Juneau
Alaska Gun Collectors Association Inc.	Anchorage	Juneau Shooting Sports Foundation, Inc.	Juneau
Alaska Interior Marksmanship Committee	Fairbanks	Kodiak Island Sportsman's Association	Kodiak
Alaska Moose Federation	Anchorage	Matanuska Valley Sportsmen, Inc.	Palmer
Alaska Motor Musher's Club	Wasilla	Mat-Su Anglers	Wasilla
Alaska Outdoor Access Alliance	Palmer	McKinley Mountainmen Muzzle Loading Rifle Club	Eagle River
Alaska Professional Hunters Association	Anchorage	Personal Watercraft Club of Alaska	Anchorage
Alaska Rifle Club	Chugiak	Prince William Sound Charter Boat Association	Valdez
Alaska State Snowmobile Association	Anchorage	Ruffed Grouse Society/SC AK Chapter	Anchorage
Alaskan Marine Dealers Association	Anchorage	Safari Club International, Kenai Chapter	Soldotna
Anchorage Snowmobile Club, Inc.	Anchorage	Safari Club International/AK Chapter	Eagle River
Chitina Dipnetters	Fairbanks	Sitka Charter Boat Operators Association	Sitka
Clear Sky Sportsmen's Club	Nenana	Sitka Sportsman's Association	Sitka
Cook Inlet Archers	Wasilla	Slana Alaskans Unite	Slana
Cook Inlet Sportfishing Caucus	Willow	South Central Alaska Dipnetters Association	Wasilla
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Fairbanks Retriever Club	Fairbanks	Tanana Valley Rifle & Pistol Club	Fairbanks
Fairbanks Snow Travelers Association	Fairbanks	Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association	Fairbanks
Fairbanks Trap Club	Fairbanks	Territorial Sportsmen, Inc.	Juneau
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open letter from RGS to create the Susitna State Forest



DEDICATED To IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT
FOR RUFFED GROUSE, WOODCOCK, AND OTHER FOREST WILDLIFE
South Central Alaska Chapter
7650 Delridge Circle, Anchorage, Alaska 99507

February 13, 2012

The Honorable Linda Menard State Capitol Room 9 Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Menard,

The South Central Alaska Chapter of The Ruffed Grouse Society would like to thank you for submitting Senate Bill 159, creating a State Forest west of the Susitna River. We support creation of this Forest for a multitude of reasons not the least of which is the ability to manage our forest resources for wildlife.

The area west of the Susitna is one of the last remaining large blocks of state land in Southcentral Alaska. Establishing a state forest will ensure that the ever increasing population of this area has access to the outdoor recreation for which our state is famous and that our timber, land and wildlife resources can be managed for the benefit of all Alaskans. A state forest will also help establish and solidify a timber industry for this area. Managed timber harvests benefit wildlife that needs an age diversified forest to thrive and would help reduce the potential for devastating fires such as the Miller Reach catastrophe.

Designation as a State Forest is, we believe, one of the least restrictive land categories possible. It allows for most uses, but would require planning and thought before implementing changes such as roads, mining, campgrounds, etc. The one restriction we know of is transfer of land into private ownership. In the past, the State has been able to meet the recreational needs of the Southcentral population through land transfers to individuals. However, the population is growing and most land with easy access, such as that bordering lakes and rivers, has already been transferred. The net effect is to block access to the remaining area. We realize there are access corridors reserved, but these are not particularly effective when it means parking your plane in front of someone's cabin to walk the right of way to a stream. Land owners tend to view such as an intrusion and clashes ensue. Additionally, owners of private land tend to want to manage all lands within view of their property. This leads to conflict when trying to manage resources on state land. In the Matanuska Valley it has hobbled the ability of Forestry to conduct timber sales and ADF&G to implement habitat improvement projects.

As currently described in SB 159, the State Forest is a convoluted collection of detached parcels taking 16 pages to describe the boundaries. A person out for recreation will have a difficult time trying to determine if they are in or out of the forest. Future disposal of land surrounding these parcels could complicate road development and access to proposed timber sales. Private ownership bounding the forest could result in the NIMBY problems we are already dealing with in other parts of Southcentral.

We would encourage you to expand the proposed boundaries to incorporate all unencumbered state land west of the Susitna River, south of the Denali Park Boundaries, North of Beluga Lake/Beluga River draining into Cook Inlet. As a minimum, the forest boundaries need to be simplified and expanded to create a buffer against threats to proper forest management by private ownership and to ensure reasonable access to the forest is available. This would preserve public access, insure multiple use of our land, and enhance our wildlife resources for all Alaskans, now and in the future, while encouraging development of a comprehensive timber industry.

This forest will complement the three other state forests that have been successfully established. We urge the legislature to expand and pass SB 159 this session.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Griffin
President, SAC RGS

20th ANNUAL SPORTSMEN'S BANQUET



South Central Alaska Chapter



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