



Alaska Outdoor Council

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May 24, 2011

The Honorable Chairman Jeff Bingaman
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee,
By electronic mail
RE: Senate Bill 730 - Transfer of National Forest Lands to Sealaska Corporation.

Dear Senator Bingaman and Members of the Senate Natural Resources Committee,

As the largest statewide outdoors organization in Alaska, since before statehood, the Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) advocates for equal access for all Alaskans to public resources. AOC's memberships, of over 10,000 Alaskans, are dependent on regulations that allow public access to federal lands. The "Southeast Alaska Native Land Entitlement Finalization and Jobs Protection Act", S.730 is an unwarranted attempt by the for profit, Sealaska Corporation to seize National Forest Lands that have been designated as multiple-use through a laborious public process.

Transfer of lands selected by the Sealaska Corporation in the 2008 letter to Ms Ramona Chinn, Deputy State Director, Conveyance Management, can be achieved without further federal legislation. Section 403 of the "Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act of 2004" established a deadline of June 10, 2008 for Alaska Native Corporations to select remaining entitlement. Sealaska Corporation complied and submitted prioritized land selections. AOC finds no compelling reason to open up further amendments to the "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971" (ANCSA) in order to complete Sealaska's land conveyances. S.730 has the potential of igniting years of further ANCSA amendments and possible litigation regarding land conveyances already agreed upon by the other Alaska Native Corporations created by ANCSA. Such actions could lead to years of negotiations and cost to individuals, public conservation organizations, and the State of Alaska as it tries to complete ANCSA lands transfers once and for all.

Alaska's congressional delegation continues to ignore the concerns of outdoors people and the residents of coastal communities in southeast Alaska by re-introducing legislation that was strongly opposed in 2010, S.881. The divisiveness among Alaskans created by the introduction of S.730 far outweighs the economic advantages that could be realized by shareholders in the Sealaska Corporation. AOC does see merit in having BLM complete the transfer of the remaining ANCSA lands to the Sealaska Native Corporation pursuant to the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act of 2008.

Sincerely,

Rod Arno

Executive Director
Alaska Outdoor Council

Bill Iverson

President
Alaska Outdoor Council

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The Official State Association of the National Rifle Association.*