

Introduced by: Popp, Merkes, Brown
Date: 01/09/01
Action: Adopted as Amended
Vote: 8 Yes, 1 No

**KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH
RESOLUTION 2001-005**

**A RESOLUTION OBJECTING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINAL
VERSION OF THE PROPOSED REVISED LAND AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR THE CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST BEFORE A COMPLETE LEGAL
REVIEW OF THE PLAN CAN BE COMPLETED**

WHEREAS, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest were available for public comment until December 14, 2000, and the National Forest Management Act of 1964 regulations require each Forest Plan to be revised every 10 to 15 years; and

WHEREAS, the planning area encompasses over 5.45 million acres within the Chugach National Forest, which is the second largest forest in the United States National Forest System and is subdivided into 3 administrative units, the Glacier, Seward and the Cordova Ranger Districts; and

WHEREAS, the Seward Ranger District of the Chugach National Forest encompasses a significant portion of the Kenai Peninsula Borough and includes a number of Kenai Peninsula Borough communities such as Hope, Cooper Landing, Moose Pass and Seward; and

WHEREAS, the "Situation Statements" of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan describes conflicting public interests and existing conditions that could be improved by changing the 1984 Forest Plan, and that one of these conflicts was identified as a conflict between cross-country skiers and cross-country snowmobile operators that would be resolved by closing a number of existing trails or trailheads to snowmobiles because of these major ecological or social conflicts; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Service has stated that they have not completed any scientific studies to support closing any of the existing trails or trailheads to snowmobiles because of any major ecological or social conflicts; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the 5.45 million acre Chugach National Forest does not allow for reasonable methods of minerals extraction as access to the minimal amount of acreage made available for minerals exploration within the Forest is severely restricted by the Proposed Revised Land and Management Plan because the Revised Plan does not allow for any new roads to be constructed to provide access to newly surveyed mineral deposits within the Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest contains only minimal provisions for the mitigation, harvesting and reforestation of a total of 3,343 acres per year out of the hundreds of thousands of acres of forest impacted by the Spruce Bark Beetle infestation within the 5.45 million acre Chugach National Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest advocates the addition of over 2.5 million acres to restrictive classifications such as Wilderness, Wild Rivers, ANILCA classifications, Backcountry, Scenic Rivers, Brown Bear Core Area, and Recreation-Reduced Noise, all of which may have additional restrictions on numerous user groups and resource development within the Chugach National Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Office of General Counsel for the United States Forest Service has indicated to the Forest Service planners that it would take approximately one and a half years to complete a legal review of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest to, in part, conduct a legal determination of the Proposed Plan for consistency with the legal provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, or ANILCA; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Service has no stated plans to conduct a legal review of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest to provide a legal determination that the Proposed Revised Plan is consistent with the provisions of ANILCA; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly has previously expressed its support for continued public access to Chugach National Forest for all recreational users of the forest through Kenai Peninsula Borough Resolution 2000-108; and

WHEREAS, the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly has previously expressed its support for provisions for expanded timber harvesting and minerals exploration within the Chugach National Forest and has requested a complete legal review of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest through Kenai Peninsula Borough Resolution 2000-112; and

WHEREAS, the implementation of the final version of the Proposed Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest without a complete and thorough legal review to assure that the Plan is consistent with the provisions of ANILCA could cause serious harm to the economy and quality of life enjoyed now, and in the future, by the citizens of the Kenai Peninsula Borough;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH:

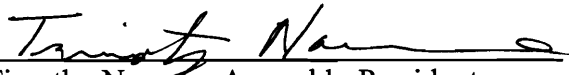
SECTION 1. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly strongly objects to the implementation of the final version of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan

for the Chugach National Forest and reserves its support until a complete and thorough legal review of the final version of the Proposed Revised Plan can be completed that provides a legal determination stating the final version of the Proposed Revised Plan is consistent with the provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act.

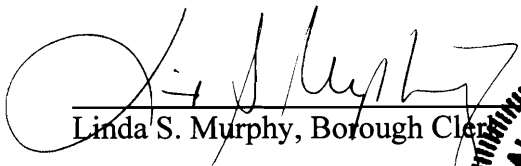
SECTION 2. That the Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly specifically requests a complete and thorough legal review by the Office of General Counsel for the United States Forest Service or other appropriate agency of the final version of the Proposed Revised Land and Resource Management Plan for the Chugach National Forest with the objective to provide a detailed, written legal determination that the final version of the Proposed Revised Plan is consistent with the provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act and other appropriate federal laws.

SECTION 3. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the members of the Alaska Congressional Delegation, the members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough State Legislative Delegation, the Governor of the State of Alaska, and to the United States Forest Service.

ADOPTED BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH THIS 9TH DAY OF JANUARY 2001.


Timothy Navarre, Assembly President

ATTEST:


Linda S. Murphy, Borough Clerk

