

# STATE OF ALASKA

## **ANILCA IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM Office of Project Management and Permitting**

**SARAH PALIN, Governor**

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March 19, 2009

Robin West, Refuge Manager  
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 2139  
Soldotna, AK 99669-2139

Dear Mr. West:

The State of Alaska reviewed the proposed Amendment to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Cabin Management Plan (Amendment). The following comments represent the consolidated views of the State's resource agencies.

The State supports the following proposed actions, which will improve opportunities for the public to participate in outdoor-oriented activities on the Refuge.

- Move the proposed Headquarters Area Cabin to Kelley Lake.
- Change the status of the Big Bay Cabin from an administrative and interpretive cabin to a public use cabin.

The proposed Amendment indicates the ENSTAR maintenance cabin would not be relocated and placed on the public use reservation system as indicated in the original plan but would instead remain in place and used by the public only for safety or emergency purposes. This cabin would also continue to be available to Refuge staff and industry for Refuge and right-of-way management. The proposed Amendment provides limited information regarding the basis for the change. While it generally references public safety and structural issues, it does not specify what those are or how they preclude the cabin's use under the public use reservation program. The document also indicates an alternative reservation cabin would be available elsewhere on the Refuge; however, it is not clear where that would be located. Although it appears possible that the Big Bay cabin, described under number three, could serve as the alternative cabin, that intent is not clear. We request the Refuge clarify these points in the final decision document.

While we appreciate the ENSTAR cabin could still be used for emergency shelter and the nearby Big Creek Cabin is available under the reservation program, the ENSTAR cabin has received considerable public use over the years in support of outdoor recreational activities, particularly waterfowl hunting. And while we also understand the importance of the cabin to ENSTAR for maintenance of the pipeline right-of-way, it is likely that

both uses could continue to be accommodated. To that end, we recommend retaining the cabin under the category of *“Public Use-Non-reservation, “First-Come-First Serve” Cabins,*” with specific caveats that afford ENSTAR priority over public use as needed for pipeline repairs and maintenance. Notice of that priority and any scheduled use could be posted on the Refuge’s website and on-site at the cabin to ensure ENSTAR’s use would not be impeded. In addition, we encourage the Refuge to consider partnering with ENSTAR to help defray costs for any needed repairs or maintenance and to address any safety issues associated with the cabin to ensure its continued availability to ENSTAR, the public, and the Refuge.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact me at (907) 269-7529 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Magee', written in a cursive style.

Susan E. Magee  
ANILCA Project Coordinator

cc: Sally Gibert, ANILCA Program Coordinator