

# STATE OF ALASKA

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

**SEAN PARNELL, Governor**

550 W. 7<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE, SUITE 1430  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501  
PH: (907) 269-7529 / FAX: (907) 334-2509  
[susan.magee@alaska.gov](mailto:susan.magee@alaska.gov)

September 23, 2011

Andy Loranger, Refuge Manager  
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge  
P.O. Box 2139  
Soldotna, Alaska 99669-2139

Dear Mr. Loranger:

As stated in our January 7, 2011 letter, and as expressed at a meeting with representatives from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) on February 7, 2011, the State has concerns regarding Mr. Tim Mullet's snowmachine/soundscape study, which is being conducted in or adjacent to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

Our understanding is this study stems from objectives identified in the Revised Kenai Refuge Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Snowmachine Compatibility Determination (CD) to determine whether there is a need to limit snowmachine use on the refuge. As you know, snowmachine access is protected under ANILCA Sections 1110(a) and 811(b); therefore the State has considerable interest in ensuring that any studies used as a basis for limiting ANILCA protected access are based on methodology that is supported by scientifically valid research.

In a recent article published in the Peninsula Clarion on September 5, 2011 and the Anchorage Daily News on September 11, 2011 entitled "On Soundscapes and Snowmachines," Mr. Mullet made several statements that again cause us to question this study.

More than once, Mr. Mullet was quoted as stating that the study is not driving any management decisions. He also stated that the public's concern that the study will close the refuge to snowmachine use is not true. While in the short term there may be some truth to these statements; the long term objective to conduct this and possibly other studies is clearly stated in the CCP and Snowmachine CD. To state otherwise is misleading to the public.

In addition, the following statement ignores the very reason the unique provisions of ANILCA apply to designated wilderness in Alaska.

*"Snowmachines are allowed to go into the wilderness areas and to experience solitude in the presence of snowmachines — it's kind of an oxymoron," he said referring to the requirement of Congressionally designated wilderness. "You can't do it."*

We appreciate your continued consideration of these concerns and further request assurance that the study will be conducted in an objective manner to ensure that any future management action will meet the high standards set by ANILCA.

Toward that end, we also appreciate the invitation to meet with you and Mr. Mullet to discuss the status of the project and plans for the winter, including any use of the Moose Research Center. Please contact Brad Palach at (907) 267-2145 to make arrangements to meet with ADF&G Division of Wildlife staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Magee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a stylized "M".

Susan Magee  
ANILCA Program Coordinator

cc: Tracey McDonnell, Refuge Supervisor  
Timothy Mullet, UAF Ph.D. Student in Biological Science and Principal Investigator