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OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

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August 6, 1998

Ms. Meg Mitchell
District Ranger, Yakutat Ranger District
U.S. Forest Service
P.O. Box 327
Yakutat, AK 99869

Dear Ms. Mitchell:

I understand you have been appointed as the new District Ranger of the Yakutat District. Congratulations! I'm sure you are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

As one of the two state coordinators of the state's ongoing participation in implementation of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, I wanted to make contact with you and provide a brief introduction to the state's coordination process. I have attached a briefing paper that outlines the state's ANILCA implementation efforts and lists some of the statewide staff that are regularly involved. In addition to the statewide contacts, you will frequently be working with local/regional state personnel, particularly with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

In light of the upcoming establishment of an interdisciplinary team to look at river management issues on the Situk River, this information will hopefully prove useful to you in designing appropriate coordination with the state. I will be on leave until August 26; although Alan Phipps, the second ANILCA coordinator, will be available prior to that for consultation if necessary. We look forward to hearing from you as the Situk planning process unfolds.

Sincerely,



Sally Gibert
State CSU Coordinator

State Of Alaska ANILCA/Conservation System Unit Coordination

THE STATE'S ROLE

Background: In 1980, the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) established more than 100 million acres of federal land in Alaska as new or expanded conservation system units (CSUs)--parks and preserves, wildlife refuges, wild and scenic rivers, conservation, recreation and wilderness areas. The ANILCA compromise challenges federal land managers to balance the national interest in Alaska's scenic and wildlife resources with recognition of Alaska's fledgling infrastructure and distinctive rural way of life.

ANILCA specifically directs federal agencies to consult and coordinate with the State in numerous processes. The mission of the State of Alaska's ANILCA implementation program is to ensure that the special provisions of ANILCA which are tailored to Alaska are properly implemented and that state interests are considered.

DGC, working with state agencies responsible for natural resources and tourism:

- participates in the development and review of ANILCA land planning issues, policy documents and proposed regulations;
- provides project-specific staff support to the Alaska Land Managers Forum;
- facilitates partnership efforts between the state and federal agencies on related special projects; and
- assists the Governor's Washington Office as requested on national legislation affecting federal land management in Alaska

A few of the ANILCA issues closely monitored by the State include public access for traditional activities; access to inholdings; subsistence; and recognition of state authorities concerning fish, wildlife, navigable waterways, water columns, tidelands, and submerged lands. The state also encourages federal agencies to consider statewide and regional opportunities and constraints during planning for recreation and tourism, and sometimes enters into cooperative planning forums to accomplish this task. While each new state administration influences policy and processes, (e.g. the Knowles administration emphasizes science-based, cooperative decision making) the State's interests and organizational procedures have been relatively consistent since passage of ANILCA.

ORGANIZATION

Since many ANILCA issues cut across the mandates and responsibilities of individual state agencies, the Division of Governmental Coordination (DGC) within the Office of the Governor has been responsible for coordinating the State's participation in day to day ANILCA implementation. Personnel from each participating state agency (see attached list) are designated to work with DGC on the coordinated review of proposed federal plans, policies and regulations.

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas (CACFA) also works closely with state agencies, providing informal technical consultation; although as an autonomous organization, CACFA formally comments to federal agencies independently from the State.

THE STATE'S CSU REVIEW PROCESS

The State conducts coordinated reviews of draft and final plans, regulations and policy documents. When a CSU or ANILCA document is being prepared for public review, we request that the issuing federal agency call DGC in advance to find out how many copies will be needed to cover the state agency distribution list. The number varies depending on location and scope - ranging up to 25 copies. We prefer to arrange for a pick-up or drop-off to conserve review time. DGC then handles distribution to designated state agency representatives.

Formal Reviews. When a document is delivered for review, DGC establishes an internal deadline for state agency comments prior to distribution. Individual agency comments are collected and consolidated along with any generic issues identified by reviewers or DGC. DGC works with the affected agencies to resolve any inconsistencies. A draft state letter is developed and circulated amongst the state agency contributors for internal review. In some instances, constituents outside state agencies may be consulted prior to completion of the final state comments.

Informal Reviews. DGC also coordinates informal reviews of selected documents when mutually beneficial to both the state and federal agency. Such reviews work well to identify and eliminate issues that can easily be resolved informally, and gives all parties a "heads up" about more difficult issues. The scope and participation of such in-house reviews is defined on a case by case basis.

Other Consultation and Coordination. Informal coordination before, during or after formal reviews is encouraged. Such activities may take place through DGC or directly between federal and selected state agencies. When contacts are made at the local level, efforts are made to keep policy level managers (both federal and state) aware of the nature of such contacts.

REGULAR STATE PARTICIPANTS

Updated 5-99

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