



# Hoonah Indian Association

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16 March 2010

Representative Nick Rahall  
2307 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Rahall:

The Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) wishes to go on record as opposing Senate Bill 881 and House Resolution 2099. While we fully support the timely finalization of Sealaska's land claims, we are opposed to aspects of the Bill and Resolution related to the acquisition or cooperative management of lands within Huna Tlingit traditional territory. We have sought direct resolution of our concerns with Sealaska to no avail and openly opposed Senate Bill 881 in a 16 June 2009 letter addressed to Senator Lisa Murkowski. We are disappointed that our expressed concerns have not been addressed.

HIA was chartered in 1939 as a federally recognized Tribe in accordance with and by authority of the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat. 984), and May 1, 1936 (49 Stat. 1250). We represent Huna Tlingit clans whose traditional homeland includes all of Glacier Bay National Park and portions of the Tongass National Forest. Our ancestral ties to the lands and waters of Glacier Bay, Icy Strait, Cross Sound, the outer coast of Glacier Bay, and the northern portion of Chichigof Island are long-standing, irrevocable, and undisputed. We maintain that the Hoonah Indian Association, representing the clans who traditionally claim these areas, retains the sole right to, and responsibility for, lands and waters within our tribal territory. We oppose any legislation that attempts to convey ownership or management of such lands to any entity other than the traditional owners. Specifically:

- HIA opposes the acquisition of sites with sacred, cultural, traditional, or historic significance within Huna Tlingit territory by Sealaska (site #'s 71, 1140, 767, 1322, 29) on Attachment B). These sites are claimed by individual clans represented by the Hoonah Indian Association.
- HIA opposes the acquisition of native future sites within Huna Tlingit territory (site #'s 28, 29, 43 on Attachment D). These sites are claimed by individual clans represented by the Hoonah Indian Association.
- HIA does not support the acquisition of native future sites outside of Huna Tlingit territory, but adjacent to lands and waters used by our tribal members for food gathering purposes (site #'s 17, 23 on Attachment D). We are concerned that

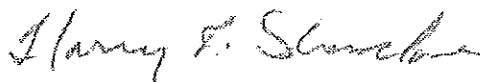
development activities at these sites could significantly affect traditional harvest activities our tribal members engage in at, or near, these sites.

- HIA opposes the development of a cooperative management agreement by the NPS with "...Sealaska, other Village Corporations and Urban Corporations, and federally recognized Indian tribes with cultural and historical ties to Glacier Bay National Park..." as described in Section 3 (2) (A) and (B). While we respectfully acknowledge that individuals of other clans may have visited our homeland as guests of the Chookaneidi, Kaagwaantaa, T'akdeintaan, and Wooshkeetaan clans of Huna, these clans alone hold cultural title to such lands and are well represented by the Hoonah Indian Association. As a sovereign nation, we retain the sole privilege of, and responsibility for, cooperatively managing lands in Glacier Bay. Senate Bill 881 and H.R. 2099, as worded, encroach on our unique government-to-government relationship with the National Park Service (NPS) by directing NPS to enter into agreements with Sealaska and an array of unnamed tribal entities. We believe that any cooperative management effort involving additional entities - especially those with corporate interests serving diverse shareholders with no spiritual ties to Glacier Bay - would be confusing, contentious, complex, and ultimately damaging to our homeland and to the relationship we have worked to build with NPS.

We have been forced to accept federal ownership of much of our traditional homeland and the resulting loss of certain traditional hunting, fishing, gathering, and access rights continues to chafe our people. However, we work cooperatively with the NPS and the USDA Forest Service (FS) through Memoranda of Understanding signed in 2003 and 2006, respectively to incorporate tribal concerns in all aspects of managing these lands and waters. Through open, honest discussion; sensitive negotiation; and mutual respect we have developed stronger relationships with the federal entities that now manage places we hold dear.

We believe that Senate Bill 881 and H.R. 2099 abrogate our singular right to cooperatively manage traditional lands in the best interest of the Huna Tlingit. We ask that you oppose H.R. 2099 and recommend that Sealaska work cooperatively with federally recognized tribes to craft legislation that addresses their need to resolve land claims while honoring the rights of tribal governments to cooperatively manage their traditional territory.

Sincerely,



Harry Sharclane  
President