

*Southeast Alaska
Subsistence Regional
Advisory Council*

Bertrand Adams Sr., Chair

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March 24, 2009

Mr. Denny Bschor
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The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council was formed under Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act as a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations by persons interested in any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. During the Council's February 24-26, 2009 meeting in Petersburg, the Council heard testimony regarding proposed legislation that will transfer Tongass National Forest lands to Sealaska Corporation.

The transfer of land from the public domain into private ownership will remove the preference for subsistence uses on those lands for taking fish and wildlife by rural residents.

Section 802 of ANILCA specified that "It is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress that ...the utilization of the public lands in Alaska is to cause the least adverse impact possible on rural residents who depend upon subsistence uses of the resources of such lands."

Section 810 of ANILCA specifies that "(a) In determining whether to withdraw, reserve, lease, or otherwise permit the use, occupancy, or disposition of public lands under any provision of law authorizing such actions, the head of the Federal agency having primary jurisdiction over such lands or his designee shall evaluate the effect of such use, occupancy, or disposition on subsistence uses and needs. No such withdrawal, reservation, lease, permit, or other use, occupancy or disposition of such lands which would significantly restrict subsistence uses shall be effected until the head of such Federal agency -

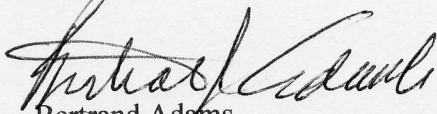
- (1) gives notice to the appropriate State agency and the appropriate local committees and regional councils established pursuant to section 805;*
- (2) gives notice of, and holds, a hearing in the vicinity of the area involved;"*

The Council requests that the US Forest Service advocate for full compliance with provisions of ANILCA regarding disposition of Federal public lands.

Section 810 of ANILCA specifies that "(c) Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit or impair the ability of the State or any Native Corporation to make land selections and receive land conveyances pursuant to the Alaska Statehood Act or the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act."

The Council is in favor of finalizing the transfer of lands to the Sealaska Corporation and supports Section 810(c) of ANILCA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bertrand Adams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "A".

Bertrand Adams

Chair, Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Interagency Staff Committee
Peter J. Probasco, OSM