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August 1988

Resource Review

Wilderness

Part I

Striking implications for Alaska

by Carl Portman

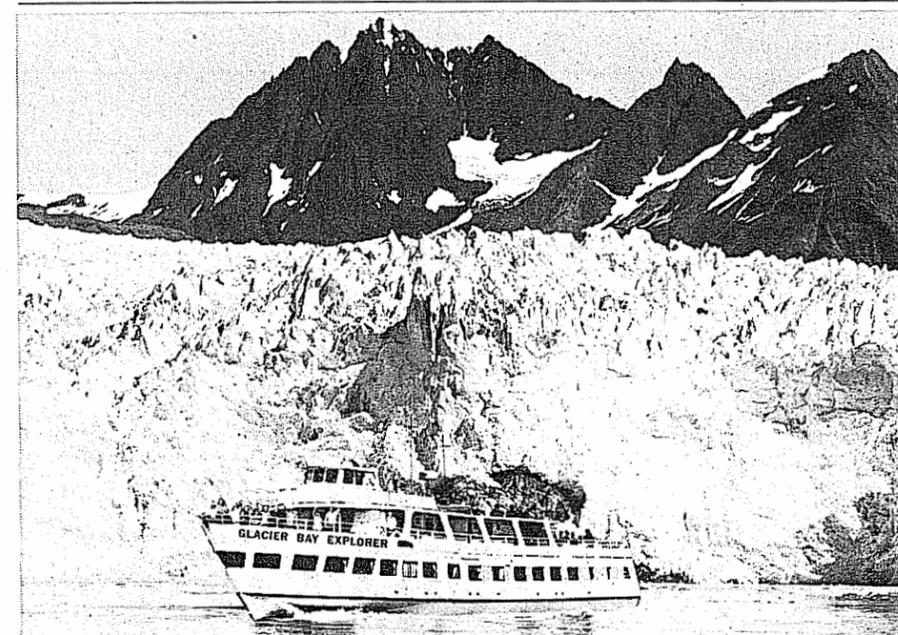
Alaska is indisputably a stunning and diverse land of tremendous resource potential. With vast natural resources of oil and gas, timber, strategic minerals and fish, America's 49th "star" has the means to diversify its economy and generate new wealth for its citizens and the nation.

With proper and practical land use policies which stress multiple uses of the public lands, Alaska's economy has grown to new heights and so has the standard of living for most Alaskans. In one way or another, all Alaskans have come to share in new wealth generated from resource development.

Proper land management procedures, which provide for nature while recognizing the needs of the economy, have encouraged the development of internationally significant arctic and sub-arctic resources. Development has taken place without destruction to public lands and natural resources.

Yet Alaska, which has barely scratched the surface of its vast resource potential, may see many future economic oppor-

Continued to page 4



An expansion of federal Wilderness would only continue a serious trend toward restricting recreational opportunities and access. In Glacier Bay, a proposal to designate certain waterways federal Wilderness would lead to a ban on boats in those areas, limiting visitor experiences. (ATMS photo by Bob Giersdorf)



Message from the Executive Director

By
Becky L. Gay

Multiple use, wise use

Having just been re-energized by attending the 1988 Multiple Use conference in Reno, I can assure you the "war" over multiple use is better defined than ever.

Strategies and tactics were argued, compared and developed. How to fight back, or better yet get on the offensive, was paramount. We must be increasingly better at dealing with the steamroller effect of relentless animosity expressed in multifarious ways towards productive citizenry.

One thing the 300 individuals at the conference could agree on was that we had common foes in the non-development litigators, the "entropy-is-better" philosophers, the monkey-wrench gangs and Earth First! terrorists. Furthermore, those foes are relentless since they do not bear the costs of delays, frivolous lawsuits, litigation (after supposed compromise), marginal environmental protection, enforcement and recreation habitat which requires the foreclosure of multiple use on millions of acres.

We all want a healthy environment. Our foes cannot accept that pro-development people like clean air, water, wildness and recreation opportunities. Their refusal to believe us puts the burden of proof upon productive society to make that case, which is costly, time-consuming and often thankless work.

To battle the elite minority of well-educated and well-funded individuals who form the core of able strategists designing, revamping and raising funds for this "stop-development-at-any-cost" movement is EXPENSIVE. We have to admire our foes' fundraising prowess since they often manage to get the very people they are ruining to give them money! Sadly, many well-meaning individuals and anxious corporations are swept away with the preservationist tide and help strengthen it by funding it. De-funding our foes must become another time-consuming imperative unless our friends will fund us equally, which has not been the case.

To our foes nationwide, Alaska resource developers are at the bottom of the heap, easy targets to kick when down or when we are not watching. Vampire-like, the wilderness movement is after the lifeblood of our state — our land. Fifty-five million acres of designated Wilderness in Alaska has only what their appetite. It is evident they still want Alaska to quench the thirst of a national run amok with good will toward preservation.

Alaska, land of 70% of America's parks, home of 62% of America's designated Wilderness, bearer of the burden of 90% of America's wildlife refuges, is still being carved up, aided by federal actions. For example, this summer RDC will have reviewed and

Getting the most from RDC

By
Anne M. Bradley



Attention RDC Board members!

At RDC we ask a lot of our board members. We send you to Bethel, Barrow, Nome, Ketchikan and all over the state and ask you to meet from sunrise to sunset with people from local governments, television and radio stations and of course, potential members. We ask you to field tough questions even if they're outside your area of expertise. If you're on the Executive Committee, you're asked to meet every Wednesday at RDC headquarters to set policy and give direction to our ambitious workplan. And, of course, you are always strongly encouraged to attend RDC's Thursday breakfast forums, held every week of the year.

We ask a lot because we recognize that **RDC's most important resource is its board.** The RDC Board is a strong working group, a synthesis of diverse backgrounds and interests working toward a common goal — resource development. Much of this strength derives from the comradery and shared perspective developed on an informal basis at quarterly board meetings and other RDC events.

About a year ago RDC decided to emphasize the statewide composition of the board by holding its quarterly meetings in locations that allow us to visit our loyal members. Most recently, RDC's Board held its annual elections in Valdez, one of RDC's strong community members. To convey our sincere appreciation to **Usibelli Coal Mine, Inc., and the Usibelli family** for their long-standing support, we are holding our next board meeting in Healy.

If you have not attended a RDC Board meeting recently, this is your opportunity to contribute your perspective to the working group. The invitation includes a VIP tour of **Usibelli Coal Mine, and Golden Valley Electric Association.** Space is limited. Please call me at 276-0700 for reservations.

commented on 13 separate National Park Service DEIS Wilderness Recommendations. The list goes on and you thought there was "no more" after ANILCA?

Sound overwhelming? It can be. However, we have had enough. Pro-development individuals and groups are on the move. It is an uphill battle with weary soldiers, but RDC is there for you.

How can you help? Many ways, but certainly, if you can't fund us, at least don't fund them. Maybe that will slow their army down and maybe, just maybe, a small victory will be in the making.

Tongass bill faces uncertain future

The U.S. Forest Service will get \$36 million for the preparation of timber sales in the Tongass National Forest in fiscal 1989.

The agreed-upon compromise budget is bigger than a House version, but it does fall short of what the Forest Service sought for timber funding. The compromise budget was set earlier this month by a House-Senate conference committee on Interior Department funding.

Until this year the Forest Service had been guaranteed an annual appropriation of at least \$40 million for timber preparation. But Congress has dropped the automatic funding for two years, making it possible to lower the timber appropriations in 1989.

Earlier this session the House voted 361-47 to revamp the Tongass timber system. The bill, which would end the annual appropriations and the 450-million board foot timber harvest target, next goes to the Senate where Alaska's congressional delegation has predicted it will not pass in its current form. Alaska senators Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski could work for a compromise bill or attempt to filibuster to prevent the bill's consideration.

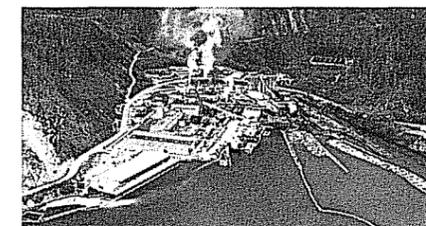
They also have the recourse to ask the administration to veto the legislation.

George Dunlop, Assistant Secretary of

Agriculture responsible for the Forest Service and Soil Conservation Service, said if the bill reaches President Reagan's desk, his department would recommend a veto.

Speaking in Anchorage earlier this month, Dunlop asserted that better resource and land management will result if the timber is part of an overall resource development scheme. "You have to have economic growth to have prudent management," he told concerned Alaskans. Forests that are actively managed or logged hold more value in the economy and will be cared for, he said.

The House bill would also force the renegotiation of two 50-year contracts for timber supply to Southeast Alaska's two major pulp mills.



The Tongass timber harvest accounts for over 9,000 direct and indirect year-round jobs.

Miners file lawsuit to help protect Fortymile environment

The Alaska Miners Association and Miners Advocacy Council have filed a motion in federal District Court in Anchorage that will protect the environment of the Fortymile River drainage from harm caused by the fall out from a lawsuit brought by the Sierra Club.

In response to the Sierra Club lawsuit, the federal District Court issued an injunction in 1987 that prevented the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) from approving long-term camping permits for dredge miners along the Fortymile River, approximately 180 air miles east of Fairbanks.

Dredge miners are gold miners who have small one or two man operations that use suction hoses to pick up gold bearing gravel from the riverbed. Because the Fortymile dredge mines are so remote, miners often set up temporary camps on high ground near their operations.

When the Sierra Club stopped BLM from giving camping permits to the miners, many miners were forced to move their campsites off BLM lands and instead camp on the riverbed, or to establish floating camps right on the Fortymile River itself. The riverbed and river are under state jurisdiction and not affected by the lawsuit which was

The cost of wilderness in the Tongass National Forest

Timber fund is for users of wilderness

One of the biggest myths circulating these days is that of a heavily subsidized timber industry in the Tongass National Forest.

The Tongass Timber Supply Fund was created in 1980 with the passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), which designated 5.4 million acres of the national forest as federal Wilderness. The annual timber appropriation of \$40 million was made to help offset the effect of closing prime timber stands in the newly-created wilderness.

To maintain the timber supply to dependent communities, more intensive and expensive forest management was needed by the Forest Service to prepare smaller and more remote timber stands outside wilderness areas. The annual funding, loggers contend, is the cost of wilderness. The level of funding wouldn't be necessary had the 5.4 million acres remained in multiple use. As a result, industry argues that much of the timber fund is actually a subsidy to those who use wilderness areas, even if just for viewing from a boat. It is a social cost for a (disputable) social benefit of additional wilderness.

Of the 16.7 million acres comprising the Tongass, only 1.7 million acres are open to timber production as one of several multiple uses. Although open to timber production, this small portion of the national forest is strictly regulated with many areas preserved for the viewing pleasure of boaters, kayakers; and ferry and cruise ship passengers.

Over the next 100 years only ten percent of the Tongass is scheduled to be harvested. In any given year, only a small fraction of that total will be logged.

The Tongass timber harvest supports 20 percent of the Southeast Alaska economy, accounting for 9,000 direct and indirect year-round jobs.

Resource Development Council, Inc.

The Resource Development Council (RDC) is Alaska's largest privately funded nonprofit economic development organization working to develop Alaska's natural resources in an orderly manner and to create a broad-based, diversified economy while protecting and enhancing the environment.

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Carl Portman
Editor & Advertising Manager

Wilderness implications ...

Continued from page 5

In a speech before the Nome Chamber of Commerce in July, RDC Education Foundation president Joe Henri said federal land management trends should be reversed. He suggested that some lands should be restored to multiple use, opening selected areas to sensible exploration, development, access and transportation creation.

"Sadly, the spirit of compromise has put way too much of this vast subcontinent off limits, out or reach ...," Henri said. "We must roll back these massive land set asides and restore wider opportunity to this great land," Henri added.

The tremendous acreage of withdrawals might well "embrace a preponderance of the more valuable resources needed by Alaska to develop flourishing industries with which to support itself and its people," Henri said.

Henri and RDC are not alone in opposing new wilderness withdrawals. At the Las Vegas wilderness conference, associations representing almost 10 million people agreed to a common direction on government policy affecting land use, especially federal Wilderness designations. Attendees at the conference formed a steering committee to direct an emerging alliance comprised of a broad spectrum of land use concerns. The group laid a solid foundation of cooperation, opening the door to a unified front in the advocacy and promotion of wise land use.

The diverse group, representing all industry sectors, including sportsmen, agreed to join forces to stop a juggernaut of environmental extremism that some believe is slowly strangling America.

"Grazing doesn't always go with timber, timber doesn't always go with mining, mining doesn't always go with recreation, but you've got to put petty arguments aside and realize that we'll be all history if we don't cooperate," said Charles Cushman of the National Inholders Association.

Western Timber Association vice president Roberta Anderson told conference attendees that "we are fed up with being cast as the bad guys because we produce products from earth resources or recreate on public land."

Since nearly all wilderness designations in the past decade have been made without any consideration of the cumulative, social and economic impacts created by such withdrawals, there is a need to stop and reflect upon the costs of federal Wilderness and a multitude of similar state designations before any further substantial additions are made to the wilderness system. The time has come to consider the scope of the hidden social and economic costs of wilderness designations.

Editor's Note: This summer RDC has submitted detailed comments to the National Park Service on its wilderness review proposals for 13 federal conservation units in Alaska. We thank to those who helped, especially Mary Jane Sutliff, Paul Glavinovich, Chuck Herbert and Mike Abbott. Assistance was also provided through Jim Burling of the Pacific Legal Foundation.

Study shows Valdez water unaffected by oil terminal

A new study by the University of Alaska's Institute of Marine Science indicates the water quality of Port Valdez has been virtually unaffected by operations of the trans-Alaska pipeline's Valdez marine terminal.

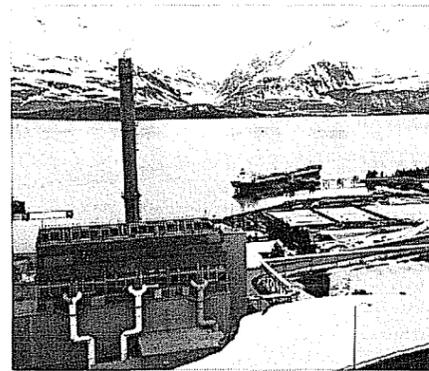
The study contradicts allegations by oil industry critics on the impact of terminal operations on the waters of Valdez Arm. The study was designed by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It was funded by Alyeska Pipeline Service Company.

The new Institute study utilizes bottom sediment samples taken at Port Valdez in the fall of 1987. Investigators on the project were Dr. Howard M. Feder and Dr. David G. Shaw of the Institute's research staff. The two scientists developed the study as a follow-up to earlier research at Valdez, this time incorporating new design requirements established by the ADEC and EPA.

Ivan L. Henman, Alyeska's vice president for environment and engineering, noted the researchers found that "readings for aromatic hydrocarbon concentrations in the Port Valdez bottom sediments were even lower than the low concentrations found earlier."

Drs. Feder and Shaw indicated in the report that the latest study utilized a new and more reliable method of sediment content analysis developed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Henman said though the study could not precisely determine the cause of the lower aromatics concentrations in the bottom sediments, addition of biological treatment to the Ballast Water Treatment System in 1986 reduced aromatics concentrations in the system effluent by 85 percent. He said, "the results show the water quality at Port



Nearly 25 percent of America's domestic oil production flows through the Alyeska Marine Terminal at Valdez. Photo by Becky Gay

Valdez is as least as good as it has been in previous years and may even have improved."

The biological treatment, which stimulates the growth of oil-consuming organisms in the ballast water, supplements several processes which physically separate crude oil from water carried as ballast in tanker ships arriving at the Valdez Terminal. It was introduced in September, 1986, a year before the field sampling was conducted for the latest study.

Help RDC on ANWR

Although legislation to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas development is bogged down in the House Subcommittee on Water and Power Resources, Congressman Don Young reports there is still hope for a vote on the House floor this session.

Legislation to allow oil exploration in ANWR has made important advances in both the Senate and House.

It is imperative that those supporting development on the Coastal Plain immediately write Speaker of the House James C. Wright urging him to advance pro-development legislation this year, despite the obstacles that seem to stand in the way.

Let's not allow the delay tactics of some congressmen to hinder sensible and environmentally-sound oil and gas development.

Send your letters to James C. Wright Jr., Speaker of the House of Representatives, Room H-204, U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C. 20515. Send copies to RDC, Senators Stevens and Murkowski, Congressman Don Young and Gov. Cowper.

Together we can make it happen



Thoughts from the President

by
J. Shelby Stastny

It appears that Congress may not act on ANWR this year. Chances are the federal government's commitments regarding the Tongass will not be honored by the current Congress. Meanwhile, millions of acres of prime Alaskan lands are closed to all but the most hardy traveler.

How have we gotten ourselves into these situations? Since these acts were all made by Congress, it must be that these actions are best for the people of the United States. Right? Wrong!

These actions were taken because the Congress was urged to "preserve" these areas from the public by powerful national and international lobbies set up by various "environmental" groups. Each of these groups with their national membership would be a formidable force when it comes to lobbying Congress, but together, they make a force almost without peer in the body politic.

When it comes to Alaskan issues, another factor is in their favor. Since so few people have been to the locations which need "protecting" and since so little is known about Alaska by those Outside, these protectors of wildlife and wilderness don't need to be bothered with accuracy. Their bulging coffers support so many mass mailings of inaccurate information that before long their propaganda becomes fact to a great many people. Armed with these "facts" they write their congressional delegation to stop the onslaught of those money-hungry developers in America's wilderness.

Our congressional delegation has told us on numerous occasions that a campaign is needed to educate constituencies of key members of Congress with factual information. However, who is to organize such a campaign? Who is to pay for such a campaign? Enormous costs are involved in research, strategy, media, printing, and mailing. It's easy to say it needs to be done. It's much tougher to figure out who is to do it and how it is to be financed.

I have heard members of our organization question why some large corporations give so much more to the "environmental movement" than to pro-development organizations. So few large multinational corporations contribute to organizations like RDC. The pro-development advocates are supported primarily by local citizens and businesses.

We lack a visible pro-development organization of national stature to which large corporations or foundations could make contributions. If such an organization existed, a national campaign could be launched to educate Americans of the benefits of multiple use on public lands.

There are numerous local resource development councils, economic development councils, multiple use councils and similar organizations around the country fighting the same battles that we are fighting in Alaska. I am convinced that all have similar problems. While it is difficult for scattered development organizations to attract major contributions outside of their geographical area, a united front by all of these organizations banding together would certainly give us the political clout to attract major contributions to fund the type of national education program needed, not just for Alaskan issues, but for land use and land planning issues across the country.

I am convinced that a strong national umbrella organization representing the diverse interests of the pro-development community must be formed if we are to have an impact on resource development issues. I urge leaders of all like-minded organizations to consider the benefits of a national association with a national staff and various communication devices to develop national strategies for educating the public and the Congress regarding the benefits of using our lands to their highest potential consistent with appropriate environmental protection. I would invite all development leaders to write us at RDC and make their thoughts known. Together, we can make it happen.

Standard looks to Niakuk development

RDC urges Corps to issue permit

Standard Alaska Production Company has submitted detailed plans to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of an application process for a permit to develop the Niakuk oilfield, one mile offshore Prudhoe Bay.

Despite the care and experience that has been used to design the Niakuk facilities, some environmentalists consider the project unacceptable because of a proposed causeway connecting the production island to shore. The causeway would include a large breach over a natural channel to allow passage of fish.

Causeway opponents prefer that Standard drill the Niakuk reservoir in a horizontal manner from land. However, technological and economic factors make the Corps' alternative infeasible.

The causeway is an essential link in the successful development of the field, which remains highly sensitive to cost factors.

Standard maintains the project has been planned in the safest and most efficient manner. The company says great care went into a design that reflects delicate environmental concerns.

After a thorough analysis of the economic, social, technological and environmental aspects of the project, the North Slope Borough has determined the Standard development proposal environmentally sound and practical. The borough, which considers the project in the best interests of its residents, has issued its own development permit for the project.

In light of technological and economic factors, RDC also believes Standard's causeway proposal is the most viable alternative. Without the causeway, the project does not appear economic.

RDC president Shelby Stastny urged the Corps to grant Standard the permit, noting the causeway proposal is not only environmentally sound, but the most practical route in the development of Niakuk. Stastny said "Niakuk's reserves may be modest in comparison to other North Slope fields, but a great share of Alaska's future oil production will come from small, marginal fields."

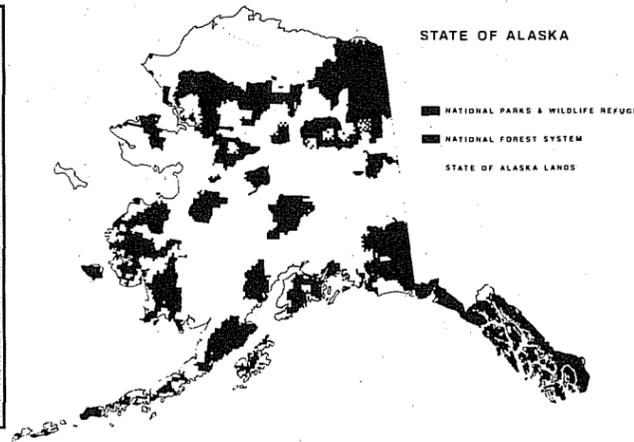
Niakuk's size of 58 million barrels of recoverable oil and its offshore location has made it an uneconomical proposition prior to the development of the Lisburne oilfield, which has pipelines and facilities in the general area. With those facilities in place, plus the experience gained from the successful offshore Endicott oilfield six miles to the east, the Standard proposal for the development of Niakuk makes sense, Stastny said.

The modest Niakuk field will bring many positive financial and job benefits to Alaska. It is estimated Niakuk will generate up to \$130 million in capital expenditures, and in excess of \$290 million in royalties and taxes to the State over a 15-year life. The field will also contribute to domestic energy supplies through the recovery of oil and gas.

41% of Alaska is federal park, refuge and forest

Alaska Land Ownership (millions of acres)

| 1985 Ownership of Alaska | 1985 | Ownership of Alaska |
|--------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Federal lands | | |
| Public domain | 80.00 | |
| Wildlife refuges | 75.4 | |
| Parks, preserves ... | 52.0 | |
| Forests | 23.0 | |
| National Pet. Reserve | 23.0 | |
| Other | 6.6 | |
| All federal lands | 260 | 60% |
| State lands | 80.0 | 28% |
| Private lands | 1.3 | 0.4% |
| Native lands | 33.3 | 11.7% |
| Total Alaska lands | 375 | 100% |



Alaska Land Facts

- 154 million acres, or about 41% of Alaska is locked up in federal conservation units.
- 56 million acres have been designated Wilderness, representing 15% of Alaska. This area would consume all of Idaho, Minnesota, Utah or Kansas.
- Alaska has 62% of the designated Wilderness in the U.S.
- Some 70% of all national parks and 90% of all national wildlife refuges are in Alaska.

Consequences of Wilderness

- *"Wilderness designations represent a lost economic cost. It is vital that the cumulative effects of such lost opportunity be studied before each new wilderness designation is made."*

James Burling
Pacific Legal Foundation

- *"Wilderness does not promote recreation, and those who promote wilderness should not do so by pretending any benefit to the recreational economy."*

Senator Steve Symms
Idaho

- *"Sadly, the spirit of compromise has put way too much of this vast subcontinent off limits, out of reach ... We must roll back these massive land set asides and restore wider opportunity to this great land."*

Joe Henri
President, RDC Foundation, Inc.

- *"We are fed up with being cast as the bad guys because we produce products from earth resources or recreate on public land."*

Roberta Anderson
Western Timber Association

Continued from page 1

tunities vanish under relatively new government policies affecting land use in general and federal Wilderness in particular. These policies have led to the continuing withdrawal of giant amounts of land from productive multiple-use management, leaving striking implications for hunting, recreation, oil and gas, timber, utilities, agriculture, mining, local governments and tourism.

Land withdrawals have clogged, impaired and severed access to a wide variety of resources. Without economical means of shipping the resources to market or the transporting of equipment, labor and materials to the worksite, resource development cannot occur.

In the late days of 1980, when Congress passed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), a staggering 104 million acres of the public domain was withdrawn into conservation units, a great portion of which is entirely off limits to development of any kind. Some 50 million acres had previously been set aside. The grand total of 154 million acres, or about 41 percent of the giant state's land mass, "makes Alaska the largest repository of misdirected goodwill in the world," according to James Burling, an attorney with the Pacific Legal Foundation.

"Square inch for square inch, we have more land purposely taken out of productive multiple use than anywhere," Burling told several hundred delegates at a Las Vegas National Wilderness Conference in June.

One hundred million acres alone is bigger than the state of Montana. It is equivalent to the entire area of California. And on the face of it, many of the withdrawals were made in ignorance of the development values of the land. The small area on which development or access can occur has such a complicated procedure for achieving gov-

"Grazing doesn't always go with timber, timber doesn't always go with mining, mining doesn't always go with recreation, but you've got to put petty arguments aside and realize that we'll be history if we don't cooperate."

—Charles Cushman, National Inholders Assoc.

ernmental permission that in many cases has become a de facto denial of development.

Today Alaska has 70 percent of the nation's national parks and 90 percent of its wildlife refuges. It has 56 million acres in federal Wilderness areas where permanent development of roads, shelters, cabins or lodges is practically impossible. This area alone would consume the entire state of Utah, Idaho or Minnesota. This lock-up represents 15 percent of the state in pure federal Wilderness. Alaska has 62 percent of all the designated federal Wilderness in the United States.

The facts show Alaska has more than its fair share of protected wilderness. Yet, there is no satisfying the voracious appetites of environmental organizations that ceaselessly push to protect what is always "one of our last pristine wilderness areas."

Burling stressed that wilderness designations often represent an economic opportunity cost. He said it is vital that the cumulative effects of such lost opportunity be studied before each new wilderness designation is made.

The National Park Service is now evaluating the suitability of all non-designated wilderness areas is Alaska's national parks for the purpose of making new wilderness recommendations to Congress. In its wilderness review process, the park service has identified some 18 million acres suitable for wilderness classification. At the present time, NPS is considering recommending to Congress that 6 million acres be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System. (The Wilderness Society would like to triple that figure.)

Because wilderness designations clearly foreclose any opportunity for economic and resource development and have serious consequences upon the people who reside in or near these withdrawals, the Resource Development Council is recommending no additional wilderness zones. The Council believes the new additions are unnecessary since they would not significantly increase environmental protection already provided for non-wilderness park lands. Instead, the Council warns such an onerous designation would ultimately impair access, use of the area and adversely impact inholders within conservation units. They could even lead to the destruction of existing hunting cabins and prevent lodge owners near wilderness areas from using chainsaws to cut firewood used to provide heat for guests.

Ironically, the tourism industry would be seriously affected by new wilderness desig-

nations, which preclude destination tourism site development and practical access.

Tourists, especially the international, demand practical access, comfortable accommodations and a variety of visitor opportunities. Most are older tourists who are unwilling and unable to backpack and sleep in a damp tent. They are making the trip of a lifetime. They deserve better.

Wilderness advocates have portrayed themselves as representing tourism, but in reality they represent only a small fraction of the recreation public. They believe dispersed backcountry recreation, as opposed to commercial operations catering to a much larger segment of the general public, should have priority.

Thousands have come to Alaska to visit wild lands, and many have left disappointed and dejected about the very few accommodations available to them or their ability to experience the wilderness. The average tourist finds much of Alaska off limits and out of reach. On the other hand, what attractions which do exist in the very few accessible areas are now reaching the saturation point.

An expansion of wilderness areas within Alaska's national parks would only con-

tinue a serious trend toward restricting recreational opportunities and access. In Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, a proposal to designate certain waterways federal Wilderness would lead to a ban on cruise ships and fishing vessels in those areas.

The parks need facilities and management schemes which will allow greater public use and enjoyment. Access to and from the parks and their facilities for a wide variety of recreational opportunities is needed if tourism is to play a greater role in Alaska's economy. New wilderness designations would lock out a majority of the public and close the door on many new and diverse commercial visitor opportunities.

Since the passage of the Wilderness Act, wilderness visitor use is declining nationally. A recent report prepared for Senator Steve Symms of Idaho shows a marked drop in wilderness recreation. The report warns that 1.4 million acres of new wilderness in Idaho could cost the state's recreation industry \$730 million annually by the year 2000.

Symms said "wilderness does not promote recreation, and those who promote wilderness should not do so by pretending any benefit to the recreational economy."

Even wildlife can suffer in wilderness areas from a lack of management. Fires and insect infestations can rage out of control threatening nearby public and private lands. Several years ago the forest service tried to save a forest in a southwest wilderness area by cutting beetle-infested trees, only to be stopped by a Sierra Club lawsuit.

Continued to page 6



New wilderness designations could lock out a majority of the public and close the door on many new diverse commercial visitor opportunities. (Exploration Cruise Lines photo by Bob and Ira Spring.)