

## **Southeast Conference**

### **Resolution 18-06**

#### **A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PROPOSED FOURTEEN-SECTIONED SALMON BALLOT INITIATIVE 17FSH2 WHICH WOULD AMEND, REPEAL AND REENACT PROVISIONS OF AS 16.05 REGARDING FISH HABITAT, DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN ACTIVITY**

WHEREAS: On July 14, 2017, Ballot Initiative sponsors, known as Stand for Salmon, filed amended petition 17FSH2, “An Act providing for the protection of wild salmon and fish and wildlife habitat”, and on October 18, 2017 Stand for Alaska was formed to oppose the ballot initiative; and

WHEREAS: Southeast Conference has supported strong protection for fish habitat and our fisheries resource in Southeast for more than five decades and will continue to do so; and

WHEREAS: The proposed ballot initiative will have a significant and negative impact throughout Southeast Alaska; and

WHEREAS: The ballot initiative places unattainable protection standards on municipal and village development, both large and small. For example, under the proposed initiative’s permitting process Southeast Alaska road projects, water projects, wastewater treatment projects would require a major permit and NEPA-like review as described by the initiative language; and

WHEREAS: Southeast Alaska communities would bear the costs of obtaining those permits under the ballot initiative language, resulting in a severe negative impact on community and economic development; and

WHEREAS: Permitting of the Greens Creek, Kensington, Palmer, and Ucore Mines; hydro and other renewable energy projects; timber sales; and municipal treatment facilities could be rendered difficult if not impossible under the ballot initiative language; and

WHEREAS: The ballot initiative would also have costly impacts on other projects in the state, including the proposed gasline. Not permitted under the ballot initiative would be projects like the Parks highway upgrades, Donlin Gold Mine, Fort Knox Mine, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline or other projects; and

WHEREAS: Enhancements, such as hatcheries and moist air incubation, would not qualify as mitigation for impacts on fisheries to obtain permits under the proposed language; and

WHEREAS: If this initiative becomes law, revenues from resource development on ANCSA lands would be directly impacted; resulting in negative impacts to 7(i) payments; and

WHEREAS: Alaska Statute 16.05.871 is repealed under the bill initiative as of the effective date of the bill, and no regulatory regime will be in place until new regulations are adopted, leading to an uncertain process for an unspecified period of time; and

WHEREAS: The time and cost for permitting and re-permitting processes will increase and create a negative effect for Southeast Alaska communities, and the uncertainty of what is being proposed

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under the initiative could be a major problem for anyone or any company seeking future permits or permit renewals; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska currently has a robust and protective permitting process for all development projects across the state, and there is no stated need to repeal the current process which has worked very well since Statehood; and

WHEREAS: The State of Alaska Department of Law has determined that the proposed ballot language is unconstitutional and the matter is on appeal to the Alaska Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS: Any fish and wildlife habitat regulation reform should take place in an open and transparent legislative public process, not as a multi-page, non-amendable, initiative created outside the public process; and

WHEREAS: The proposed initiative limits the ability of ADFG to make science-based decisions to reverse or deny permits; and

WHEREAS the proposed initiative limits the ability of ADFG to issue blanket permits for a specific use in a geographic area.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: The Southeast Conference endorses the protections to Alaska's fish and fish habitat as provided by the current laws and regulatory regime that has proven highly successful from Statehood and continues to support natural resource projects and activities in Alaska that are done responsibly with a strong focus on protecting the environment, cultural activities, fish and wildlife and provide good-paying jobs, quality of life, and opportunities which allow Southeast Alaskans to remain in their communities.

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that Southeast Conference opposes the proposed 17FSH2 ballot initiative and encourages our members to oppose the ballot initiative.

**ADOPTED BY THE SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ON February 21, 2018.**

Witness:



Jan Hill - President

Attest:



Robert Venables – Executive Director