



Sierra Borealis *alaska report*

SIERRA CLUB ALASKA CHAPTER
MARCH 2017



Introducing the 2017 Alaska Chapter Executive Committee New Chapter leaders greet Sierra Club Alaska members

On January 14, past Alaska Chapter chair Pam Brodie announced the results of the recent Chapter election:

Elected to two-year terms:

Toshihide Hamazaki, Susan Hansen, Suzanne Schafer, and Yasuhiro Ozuru.

Elected to one-year terms:

Su Chon, Jared James, and Roxanna Reynolds.

A month later, in mid-February, local Anchorage Chapter members were invited to a gathering to meet the new Excom—as related by Julie Wahl:

“We had a really nice turn out of old and new members for our introduction of the new ExCom held at Simon’s and Seaford’s on Feb 17th. Thanks to everyone that turned out on that snowy evening to celebrate these very committed individuals who will lead us forward in these very interesting times.”

Not long after this introductory event, the new ExCom held its first meeting on February 26, at which the group selected the following officers:

Yasuhiro Ozuru - Chair

Toshihide Hamazaki - Vice Chair

Council Representative - Susan Hansen

Secretary - Roxanna Reynolds

Outing-chair Julie Wahl.

Each of the newly elected executive committee members wishes to greet the broader Chapter membership with a short introductory message:

Yasuhiro Ozuru

I am humbled to serve as an Ex Com member, and Chair of this chapter. I have been living for 7 years in



Yasuhiro Ozuro, Alaska Chapter chair

Alaska and love this place so much. I am hoping to contribute something such that our 1700 chapter members can continue to have a great outdoor experience in this special place.

Toshihide Hamazaki

I am humbled to be elected as board member and serve as a vice chair of the Sierra Club Alaska Chapter. I have been in Alaska over 15 years, and regularly leading hikes for the Anchorage community. As a member I am

interested in expanding

the outing program. If you are interested in leading outings, please contact me.

Su Chon

My name is Su Chon and I am a recent graduate of environmental policy studies. I hope that I can contribute to the Alaska chapter in a meaningful way that will get more

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New Alaska Chapter leadership -- from page 1

Alaskans to realize the beauty of the natural environment that exists in our state and the importance of it.

Susan Hansen

My name is Susan Hansen; I have lived in Alaska since 1973. I have worked as a biologist and as a research anthropologist in Alaska. I am looking forward to reaching out to more Alaskans regarding wildlife conservation issues, renewable energy and many other important issues that affect this great state of Alaska.

Suzanne Shafer

My name is Suzanne Schafer and I live in Anchorage, Alaska. Thank you for granting me the honor to serve as an Executive Committee member for the Sierra Club Alaska Chapter. I seek to help facilitate the operation of the Alaska Chapter in order to involve more Alaskan voices to continue to preserve, protect, and conserve our wilderness, wildlife, and indigenous cultures for present and future generations.

Jared James

Jared works for the Municipality of Anchorage as a community liaison for the Mayor's office, and he has lived in Alaska for just over a year. Previously working in Colorado and volunteering internationally in business/strategy management, Jared would like to increase the Sierra Club Alaska Chapter's reach through targeted partnerships and increased engagement. Jared is also excited to explore more of Alaska's wilderness this year.

Roxanna Reynolds

I am very thankful to be on the Ex Com, and serve as the Secretary. I have lived in Alaska my whole life and love everything about it. I am an eleventh grader at South Anchorage High School and I hope to represent all of the young people in our state when making decisions. I love the outdoors and everything Alaska has to offer.

Chair Yasuhiro Ozuro pointed out that, in addition to the officers already chosen: "We are seeking any chapter members interested taking the following roles:

a) Legal Chair –we need someone knowledgeable about legal issues to help out/ and give advice on legal issues such as lawsuits to support various campaign efforts.

b) External communication - someone who is interested in managing a chapter website that we are planning to update." (see outreach projects, p. 5)

In the Chapter election, in addition to naming new members of the Executive Committee, there was also a ballot measure that passed; so that the ExCom is now formally seven members. ❖

Recent and upcoming Chapter activities January 29 Women's March a massive event



photo: Julie Kwahl

In Anchorage, at the January 29 Women's March

The Alaska Chapter had a presence at the January 29 Anchorage Women's March -- participating in both the march as well as representing the Sierra Club at the follow-up event at The Williwaw. This was a very exciting occasion with an incredible turn out and so many people interested in furthering their commitment to take action to protect Alaska's unique wild environment.

Alaskans were also well represented in the biggest January 29 Women's march -- the one held in Washington DC. As many as 600 Alaskans were present to participate in the big solidarity event in the nation's capital.



DC Women's march photo from Valanne Glooschenko

From the Women's March came "907hub.org" -- a new web site, just launched, that is trying to track as many as possible of the events and organizations that have come out of the Anchorage Women's March in order to help groups coordinate as well as keep people informed on what's up next.

Earth Day coming up -- get ready!

Earth Day is coming up in April -- with an Anchorage event being planned which the Alaska Chapter hopes to support as well as be present for tabling. It will be on Saturday, April 22 at the Anchorage Museum. The March for Science, which is to originate at the Delaney Park Strip, will end there. Get details at 907hub.org.

Also the Alaska Chapter recently teamed up with UAA Sustainability Club and Anchorage chapter of Citizens Climate Lobby to present Episode Seven of National Geographic's *Years of Living Dangerously* which featured the Citizens Climate Lobby and their proposed Revenue Neutral Carbon Fee as a non-partisan, market-based solution to move away from fossil fuels.

Keep informed on upcoming Sierra Club meetings and events by checking the Alaska Chapter's Facebook presence. ❖

Alaska Chapter Outings – get ready for 2017

photos on this page are from Julie K. Wahl

The new executive committee members all agreed on the importance of an ongoing, frequent outings program,



Hike to Exit Glacier after Mt Marathon July 4 event tabling

that will help bring new members into the Chapter and that will follow the historic Sierra Club path to inspire members through outings' close connections to the outdoors and nature--connections that offer physical and mental health benefits to everyone. Outings chair Julie Wahl reports:

While the new ExCom members have been occupied in getting organized, during the transition from the former Chapter leadership, scheduled local outings have been on hold. The extreme cold this winter didn't exactly help lure us out either. But that is about to change, as the Outing chair and hike leaders will meet on March 22 at the Club office in downtown Anchorage to discuss semi-weekly outings that will



2016 Chapter hike to Crow Pass and Raven Glacier

begin later in the spring.

We plan to have a lot of week-end hikes with various levels at least twice a month through May to September. We are also planning a short mid-week hike in the evening during summer months. Last year's weekend hike locations included: Rabbit Lake, Peak 2, Crow Pass trail to Raven Glacier, Harp Mountain, Reed Lake Trail. We plan to do these again plus some additional new destinations. We would

like chapter members to comment or provide advice on any hiking locations they would like to see included.

While presently most leaders of Chapter outings are located in Anchorage, we seek and welcome people living in other areas of the state (e.g. Fairbanks, Mat-su, Southeast, Kenai, etc) to become outing leaders - we would like them to contact us (Julie Walsh at AKfrogprincess@gmail.com or Yasuhiro Ozuro at yasozuro@gmail.com) so that we can guide them to become a certified outing leader.



On the summer 2016 Crow Pass hike

Chapter outings leaders celebrated having led "over a hundred miles of hiking in 2016" at their End of Year hike at Manitoba where the group got to enjoy the Huts facility with an overnight stay after the hike. The "hundred miles" included exploring hidden lakes, glaciers and mountain tops, from Hatcher's Pass to Seward—as well as numerous local walks closer to Anchorage. Manitoba is at mile 59 on Seward highway in the Turnagain Pass area, just before Summit Lake. Alaska Huts is a non profit seeking to create greater access to the outdoors. (See alaskahuts.org) ❖

-- Julie K. Wahl



Last outing of 2016--to Manitoba

U.S. Senate Resolution to eliminate safeguards for Alaska wildlife

FWS protective regulations for bears, wolves to be thrown out?

Action Alert

Alaska Senators Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski are sponsoring Senate Joint Resolution 18 (S.J.R.18) that would repeal and cancel important and much needed recent regulations issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to protect bears and wolves in the refuges from the Alaska Board of Game's "intensive management" and predator control measures. These FWS regulations were the product of a long, deliberate process that included months of scientific review and substantial feedback. Among others, I testified in favor of these environmentally and ethically sound regulations.

The FWS regulations prohibit – on nationally owned and managed refuge lands -- inhumane practices including **shooting hibernating bears with their cubs and killing mother wolves and pups in their dens; using airplanes to scout, land, and shoot grizzly bears; and baiting and trapping black and grizzly bears with steel-jawed leghold traps and neck wire snares.** These cruel methods of killing wildlife are already disallowed on almost all federal lands outside of Alaska.

The Alaska senators' resolution is the same as that of Alaska Rep. Don Young's that has already passed the House, as H.J.Res. 69.

Alaska Governor Bill Walker supports the Alaska delegation with his lawsuit challenging the FWS rule and a similar rule by the National Park Service for the national preserves. For a comparison of the rules by the two agencies see <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/Sierra-Borealis-September-16.pdf>. Alaska Chapter leadership is considering taking action on the lawsuit to support the federal agencies. (see adjacent article, p. 5, on Chapter goals.)

As expected, Young, Murkowski, and Sullivan invoked the Congressional Review Act (CRA) in their attempt to sabotage the FWS rule. Under the CRA, a federal agency rule adopted after May 31, 2016 is subject to review and potential revocation by Congress. The FWS rule was published in August of last year, whereas the comparable NPS preserve rule was final sufficiently earlier--on January 1, 2016, and thus has escaped the CRA net.

As with other Obama Administration rules reviewable under the CRA, SJR 18 can pass on a majority vote, a filibuster is not allowed, and the federal agency is prohibited from adopting a new similar rule. A resolution passed by both houses then goes to the President for approval or veto.

Alaska legislators' arguments flawed, harmful to wildlife

The argument that Don Young, Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski have been using is that they feel the Federal protections of predators represent Federal overreach. They argue that the State of Alaska has the authority to manage fish and wildlife on Federal preserves.

This claim is false. Through ANILCA (Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act), the state of Alaska can manage fish and wildlife as long as their management does NOT conflict with the Federal priority of supporting natural biodiversity of wildlife (including predators).

The Courts have repeatedly upheld the FWS' authority to issue such regulations. That authority is not ceded to the state of Alaska by the Statehood Act, ANILCA, or otherwise. And, there is enormous public and political opposition to these practices nationally.

Also, a Memorandum of Understanding between The Alaska Department of Fish & Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service states that both parties "agree to manage fish and resident wildlife populations in their natural species diversity on Service lands." This was signed on March 13, 1982 and updated more recently.

Since the State of Alaska enacted the Intensive Management Law in 1994, the Alaska State Department of Fish & Game has attempted to increase the population of moose, caribou and sheep through killing of wolves and bears. These management policies have escalated in recent years--even though only 14 percent of Alaskan residents have hunting licenses and many Alaskans enjoy photographing and observing *living* wildlife.

Sometimes this focus of ADFG on increasing ungulate populations for hunters clashes with the Federal priority of maintaining natural diversity of ALL wildlife populations.

This clash not only affects predator populations on Federal Preserves but has affected populations of wolves and bears within National Parks—because wildlife cannot respect arbitrary human geographic boundaries.

For example at Denali National Park, there is a sliver of state land that juts into the northeast boundary of the park. Local hunters and trappers have laced this state land with bait stations using hog carcasses.

The bait stations lure radio-collared and Alpha (breeding) wolves into the Stampede Trail where they are shot and killed or trapped. Two of Denali National Park's wolf packs have been decimated by being shot or trapped near these bait stations. For the last four years the viewing of wolves in Denali NP has declined dramatically.

— continued on page 5



ADFG kills wolves and bears from helicopters: very expensive "intensive" management

New Chapter outreach project and two conservation issues

A website platform to connect Chapter members



Alaska Chapter chair Yasuhiro Ozuro explains the ExCom's outreach project in this way:

"We have about 1700 members state wide. We believe that these members share common interests and passions, including a love of the outdoors in general and in particular, this beautiful natural environment and wildlife in Alaska, as well as a desire to do something to protect it. Unfortunately members in different communities are often not aware of the presence of other members who may live close by and/or share similar interests. That is a shame - there a lot of people waiting to be connected! Such closer connections would enrich members' lives and energize our chapter as a whole.

So we would like to to set up a communication platform (like a functional web-site) that people can use to keep track of on-going chapter activities; share with or inform other members about issues, ideas, proposals, and events to expand the network

Wildlife threatend--oppose S.J.R 18 -- from page 4

In the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve in eastern Alaska, biologists gave up their research studies on several wolf packs that denned inside the Preserve. Between 2005 to 2015, 90 wolves with ranges in Yukon-Charley have been killed, including 13 radio-collared wolves that were essential to the preserve's wolf studies. Each of the preserve's nine wolf packs lost a member, and three packs were entirely eliminated. The number of collared wolves killed by ADFG. played a role in ending the study.

This issue is of National concern. If Federal agencies cannot prioritize the natural biodiversity of wildlife on Federal lands in Alaska, it is a matter of time before protection of predators in Preserves in ALL states will be eliminated.

of people that share common values. We'd like to have all chapter members propose, plan, and execute ideas and events that enrich our activities, improve the quality of our outdoor life—and end up letting our organization have a bigger impact.

Two issues for Alaska Chapter focus

Natural Gas Leak in Cook Inlet

Alaskans are aware there is a natural gas leak in Cook Inlet from a gas line owned by Hilcorp. Chapter leaders are considering if they should intervene by working with other groups such as Cook Inletkeeper.

A gas pipeline supporting offshore drilling platforms in Cook Inlet has been leaking into the ocean for over two months now. Inexcusably, the pipeline will be allowed to continue leaking until fixes are made in May. While the leak began in December 2016, Hilcorp's "inadequate inspections of the 8-inch steel pipeline meant it did not discover and disclose the problem until February", according to Cook Inletkeeper. Cook Inletkeeper reports that its "Notice of Intent to Sue" is meant to press Hilcorp to address the larger issue of relying on antiquated infrastructure as part of its Cook Inlet business model—which mainly wants to maintain production and profits without interruption.

(See <https://inletkeeper.org/>)

Alaska Chapter chair Yasuhiro Ozuro hopes Chapter members will let him know if they think the Chapter ought to get involved in this issue -- email him their concerns or ideas at yasozuru@gmail.com.

↩ ↪ What you can do now -- two things

What You can Do—FIRST: Inform the Alaska Senators of your strong opposition to their SJR 18 via letters, phone calls, faxes, and twitter. SECOND, ask your friends and family members in other states to urge their own senators to oppose SJR 18. (Alaska's Senators, the VILLAINS on this issue, will not help—although they need to hear that many Alaskans oppose their actions.)

Concerned Alaskans must reach out to other states to defend wildlife in Alaska's national interest lands.

Contact Information for Alaska's Senators:

Sen. Lisa Murkowski	Sen. Dan Sullivan
202-224-6665 or 907-271-3735	202-224-3004 or 907-271-5915
fax: 202-224-5301	fax none
twitter: lisamurkowski	twitter: sendansullivan

Other states:

Of special concern are Senators in Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, S. Carolina, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and W. Virginia. ❖

Protecting Wildlife in Preserves and Refuges

The other immediate issue for Chapter action is concerned with wildlife protections. Sierra Club Alaska Chapter joined over a dozen conservation groups to file a request in federal court to defend regulations protecting wildlife in Alaska. This is in response to two separate lawsuits filed by the State of Alaska and the Safari Club last month to challenge National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulations prohibiting aggressive sport hunting methods targeting bears and wolves on Preserves and Refuges. The State wants to kill wolves and bears to increase moose and caribou for the benefit of hunters. The State and the Safari Club's lawsuits support use of cruel and inhumane hunting methods simply to increase human harvest of moose and caribou. The Chapter joined this litigation in the belief that most Alaskans and Americans oppose these cruel methods. Also we believe that the lawsuits filed by the state and Safari Club run counter to Alaska's economic interests: "Visitors to Alaska come to see wildlife, particularly bears."

(See related article on Congressional efforts to overturn FWS protective wildlife regulations.) ❖

-- by Susan Hansen

(Jack Hession and Deborah Williams helped prepare this article.)

Art can do its part for public lands

-- by Tim Lydon, in *Writers on the Range*

Dozens of artist's residencies have sprouted on public lands across the West. Most are hosted by national parks, national forests and wildlife refuges, but research stations and even conservation groups also offer programs. These grassroots efforts foster important connections between people and place at a critical time. [In Alaska, one such program is the Voices of the Wilderness residency.]

The link between art and the American landscape runs deep. Early on, artists such as George Catlin and Thomas Cole helped create a national identity by celebrating the wildness of American lands and contrasting them with the far-tamer European landscape. The connection was well established by 1872, when Thomas Moran's paintings and William Henry Jackson's photographs helped inspire Congress to designate the world's first national park at Yellowstone.

Soon after, John Muir's prose brought vivid images of Yosemite, the giant sequoias and Alaskan glaciers to the public mind, sparking further conservation efforts. Later, Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson bridged art and science, introducing readers to lands and oceans and voicing prescient warnings about extinctions and pesticides.

Today's residencies offer a chance to further the tradition. And amid an unfolding climate crisis and a plutocratic rise to power that threatens not just the health, but the very existence of our public lands, the inspiration of artists is more important than ever.

In 2015, Frederick J. Swanson wrote in *Ecosphere* about the growth in artist's residencies, describing examples at parks and research stations from Antarctica to Oregon to Alaska. He noted benefits that included building support for public lands or scientific research and innovative collaborations between artists and scientists.

Swanson and others have also observed the important role that artists can play in an era of change. When writers or artists portray receding glaciers or threatened species, they spark fresh ways to engage the public. And when they use stunning imagery to reveal the interconnected processes that result in wildfires and other natural events, they help agencies convey modern conservation messages. Smart residency managers already nudge artists toward these goals.

Residencies also offer broader connections to the land. To celebrate its 2016 centennial, the National Park Service offered over 50 residencies nationwide. Ongoing programs include stints at Crater Lake, Zion, Glacier and Petrified Forest national parks.

National forests participate, too, including a long-standing example in Montana's Bob Marshall Wilderness. In a common model, artists are treated to a stay in a remote cabin, where they're free to tap their creativity among wild rivers and deep forests, with bears and wolves and other wildlife as their neighbors. Each artist donates a piece of work, for outreach or for sale by the Bob Marshall

Wilderness Foundation in support of local trail maintenance. Each also hosts a public "extension," a workshop or other event, providing added publicity.

Conservation groups also turn to artists

for assistance. The Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance has long engaged painters, writers and photographers to celebrate the Colorado Plateau and its need for protection. Other examples include the Idaho Conservation League and Oregon Wild, which hosted a children's art contest surrounding the West's most famous travelling wolf, OR7, as he roamed into California.

In Alaska, the Voices of the Wilderness residency

This break-out program in recent years is a combined effort by the National Park Service, Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that offers nearly a dozen annual residencies scattered across Alaska. They range from the Chugach and Tongass national forests in the south to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the north.

More than its grand scope, the Voices program is notable for exposing artists to public-land stewardship. Participants spend part of their time alongside biologists, rangers and others, pulling invasive weeds, gathering marine debris, or contributing to climate-change research. As one program manager in Prince William Sound put it, "We believe the way people care for the land is every bit as inspirational as the land itself."

This stewardship component can be transformational, leaving artists with deep intellectual and emotional connections and long-lasting loyalties to place. The results are visible on the Voices of the Wilderness [website, https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r10/specialplaces/?cid=fseprd519877](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r10/specialplaces/?cid=fseprd519877), where poems, prose, paintings, sculpture, music and film celebrate lands across Alaska.

That kind of inspiration is what these programs seek. Because as history shows, if artists emerge inspired by a landscape or important event, huge cultural and political shifts can follow. And we need that promise for any number of reasons — from renewing public interest in science and getting kids to go outside, to encouraging citizens to oppose the sell-off of our public lands and resist leaders who deny climate science.

So dust off your portfolio, artists, and apply this winter for your dream residency in support of public lands. ❖

--This article first appeared in *High Country News*. Tim Lydon is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the opinion service of *High Country News* (hcn.org). He writes in Alaska.



"Drifting Clouds" by Denali NP artist-in-residence Kesler Woodward, featured in the Voices for the Wilderness 2014 art show

Photo: Vicky Hoover

Brown bears in jeopardy in two Alaska parks

NPS management actions in Katmai and Wrangells harmful to bears

Brown bear baiting begins this spring in Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park and Preserve. In April of last year the Federal Subsistence Board, which regulates subsistence hunting and trapping on public lands in Alaska, authorized subsistence hunters to bait brown bears in the park and preserve from mid-April to mid-June in 2017 and 2018 (*Sierra Borealis*, June 2016.)

Park wildlife supporters were angered when the National Park Service, a member of the Subsistence Board, voted in favor of opening the park and preserve to the baiting, given that the agency had voted against a previous Subsistence Board proposal to open the Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge to brown bear baiting. And in January of last year the NPS prohibited baiting of brown (and black) bears by sport hunters in the national preserves.

Opening the park/preserve is unprecedented; brown bear baiting has never been allowed in any unit of the National Park System. The agency's vote in favor of baiting was a cave-in to local subsistence users who had urged the NPS and the FSB to allow the practice. This precedent could lead to brown bear baiting in other parks and preserves.

As with other national parks established by the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), Wrangell-St. Elias National Park is open to subsistence where traditional prior to the Act. National preserves, including WSE National Preserve, are open to both subsistence and sport hunting and trapping.

Tourist facilities win over bears in Katmai

In Katmai National Park and Preserve the NPS has abandoned its plan for a bears-only area where park and private lodge facilities (Brooks Camp) now occupy prime brown bear habitat and travel routes adjacent to Brooks River. Now the agency intends to operate the camp indefinitely, brushing aside a park-funded scientific study of bear-human interactions that found that the facilities and NPS's overall management of the Brooks River area risk the safety of visitors and harm the brown bears by interfering with their natural behavior. The study recommends a day-use program that would require relocating most Brooks Camp facilities to or near the gateway community of King Salmon just outside the western end of the park--as Congress had directed in ANILCA.

Compounding the problems at the river, construction begins this fall on a \$5,400,000 Brooks River bridge and boardwalk to replace the seasonal floating bridge that presently connects Brooks Camp with the bear-viewing areas. The new elevated bridge is scheduled to be completed in time for the summer 2018 visitor season (*Sierra Borealis*, Sept 2012). The scientific study concludes that the bridge/boardwalk will not reduce bear-human encounters. It will make reform far more difficult as the agency digs in at Brooks Camp. ❖

--Jack Hession

Keeping the Coal in the Ground

The Eyak Preservation Council (EPC) has worked for 20 years to preserve wild salmon habitat, for the Cordova and Copper River communities and for the Indigenous people all over Prince William Sound.

One of the largest obstacles to EPC's mission has been a coal-rich historic coalfield in the Copper, Bering and Martin River watersheds. It is the 73,000-acre surface and subsurface private inholding owned by the Native corporation: the Chugach Alaska Corporation (CAC). Although back in 1906 President Theodore Roosevelt first took steps to conserve them, these coalfields were chosen for mining and development in CAC's Alaska Native Claims Settlement process in 1971. Since the mid-1990s, EPC has been working to retire these coalfields for conservation. We organized in '98 to stop the effort to build a road across the Copper River Delta to the coalfields. We succeeded.

And now-- at last the surface lands and waters are to be conserved as part of a carbon offset trade. The shareholders of the Chugach Alaska Corporation will be paid to leave their trees standing, and to keep Bering River coal in the ground. The Native Conservancy land trust holds the conservation easement to 62,000-acre CAC coal title, so for the first time in 105 years the Indigenous people are stewards of their ancestral lands. EPC and its founder, Dune Lankard, organized the Native Conservancy in 2003 to try to acquire the coal title with conservation requirements. This has finally happened.

Like so many conservation victories, this one is not quite finished. 11,000-acres of bituminous coal owned by a private corporation in South Korea still needs to be purchased and retired. The owner, Korea Alaska Development Corporation, is still a willing seller for conservation, so the EPC is reaching out to find the right buyer(s) ASAP! "We seek to retire this bituminous coal title, as it is now still a viable option for mountaintop mining in one of the world's wildest and largest wetlands complexes."

The Alaska Chapter was represented at an earlier meeting with the owner of the Korean company that owns the remaining Bering River coalfields and confirmed the owners' interest in selling the property. Sierra Club's "Beyond Coal" Campaign is also intensely focused on retiring coal-fired power plants as well as keeping coal in the ground in coalfields nationwide. See <https://content.sierraclub.org/coal/> ❖

-- Based mostly on a March 8, 2017, release from Eyak Preservation Council



Update:

Southeast Alaska's Road to Nowhere goes nowhere

BLM launches Central Yukon Management Planning

BLM is in the early stages of revising its resource management plan for the Central Yukon Planning Area. The Bureau manages 13.1 million acres, in various tracts within the 56 million acres of the planning area. A draft Resource Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement is forthcoming.

Of major interest is the future management of the Dalton Highway Utility Corridor north of the Yukon River. In addition to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, Haul Road, and related facilities, the corridor adjoins the eastern boundary of Gates of the Arctic National Park, much of the western boundary of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and the eastern boundary of the Kanuti NWR.

Detailed information on the planning process is available at www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/planning/Central_Yukon_Planning_Area.html

Alaska Chapter members will be urged to send comments for a strong, protective plan, once the draft RMP/EIS appears. Stay tuned. ❖

After 20 years, and many close calls, Governor Walker finally put an end to the dead-end road extension! In late December, 2016, he announced he was selecting the 'No Build' alternative for the Juneau Access Project, and better still, the nearly \$40 million in state funding previously appropriated to the project will be redirected to improve existing infrastructure, including the Alaska Marine Highway System.

It is great news for the people of Haines, Skagway, and Juneau who support and rely on a viable ferry system. It's also a good reminder that public interests can win over special interests, and that together we can make a difference. With a long and challenging political road ahead of us, it is more important than ever to remember our victories and to stand up to those who threaten our land, water, and communities.

(This report comes from Emily Ferry at Southeast Alaska Conservation Council.)

Sierra Borealis has followed news of the proposed road from Juneau for many years--and highlighted the numerous arguments against it. (See *Sierra Borealis*, June 2011)

Editor's note: This road meant to connect Juneau with the U.S. highway system went no where. But unnecessary road projects come time and time again and we will be alert to others: remember the road to Umiat? (see *Sierra Borealis*, March and Dec. 2012). And beware for news upcoming on the proposed road within designated wilderness of the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge. (see *Sierra Borealis* March 2012, Sept. 2015.) On the alert! ❖

Sierra Borealis / alaska report

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Lions Head in Berners Bay: this pristine bay north of Juneau would have been severely impacted by the proposed Juneau Road

Sierra Club members! You just had a Chapter election--now, till April 21, please vote in the Sierra Club national election, for members of the Club's Board of Directors. Your vote matters!

