

AGENDA

February 26, 1980

The Senate Alaska Lands Steering Committee

(1) Formation of the Alaska lands steering committee.

It is essential that senators interested in strengthening the Senate Energy & Natural Resource Committee's version of H.R.39, The Alaska Lands Conservation Act, work cooperatively dividing up the tasks of arranging preferred floor timing and procedure, offering amendments, speaking for amendments, persuading colleagues and doing whip counts. Senate staff and the Alaska Coalition has and will continue to do extensive work, but some things only Senators can do.

- a) Agree to have Senators meet regularly under Senators Cranston and Tsongas auspices--set date of next meeting.
- b) Agree to have a parallel Senate staff group that meets regularly, (called together by Steven Saunders (Senator Hart's office) and Chris Warner (Senator Roth's office)).

(2) Reconsideration of time agreement.

The Senate agreed the evening of February 7 in the text of the time agreement to bring the bill to the floor after the Republican Convention (July 21, 1980) at the earliest. This is most unfortunate because it backs this very important and complicated issue into the end of the Congress. The House has passed a sound bill and the House-Senate conference will be necessarily complicated and will require more time this session than the time agreement allows if there is to be an adequate bill. Several Senators supporting strong legislation are up for re-election and will have less time to work on this issue late in the session. This timing is an attempt by the opposition to back supporters of a strong bill against the wall in an effort to force them to take a severely deficient bill.

"Delaying consideration of the issue until summer gave the Alaska delegation greater leverage," (Senator Gravel, Juneau Empire, February 13, 1980). See attached Anchorage Daily News clipping for additional quotes by Senators Stevens and Gravel.

- a) What is status of time agreement--not yet drafted.
- b) Can the bill be brought up sooner?
- c) Need to have Senators talk to Senate Majority and Minority Leadership.
- d) Supporters of a strengthened bill need three weeks notice to be prepared.

(3) Amendments

The time agreement stipulates that all sides will put forth amendments 30 days from the time of the agreement (March 7). Consequently, decisions about authors need to be made now. The Alaska Coalition is drafting and is recommending the following five amendments.

- (1) Southeast Alaska Amendment: Amend Committee bill to be essentially the same as the House passed bill establishing wilderness areas on the Tongass National Forest. (Senator Tsongas has agreed to sponsor--need one or two strong co-authors.)
- (2) Omnibus National Wildlife Refuge Amendment: This amendment changes the boundaries of Wildlife Refuges back to the House passed version except that it leaves Copper River Delta with the Forest Service and the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska to the Bureau of Land Management. (Senators Hart and Church have agreed to sponsor this amendment with members of the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee).
- (3) Omnibus National Park Amendment: This amendment provides protection especially from mining to provide proper boundaries for national park units.
- (4) Omnibus Wilderness Amendment: Restoration of wilderness protection to the existing Arctic National Wildlife Range and to key refuge areas and for Denali and all of Gates of the Arctic National Park. (Senator Nelson has agreed to the Arctic Wildlife Range Wilderness)
- (5) Alaska Oil Revenues Amendment?