

# STATE OF ALASKA

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

### OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET DIVISION OF GOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

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August 20, 1996

Mr. Phil Janik  
Regional Forester  
US Forest Service  
PO Box 21628  
Juneau, AK. 99802

Dear Mr. Janik,

I have had several discussions with interested parties since the Division's responded to the Forest Service Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Helicopter Landings in Wilderness, (Alan Phipps to Bill Tremblay, July 19, 1996). Based on these conversations, it is important that I elaborate on the State's letter.

Our DEIS response addresses technical matters to be considered should the Forest Service proposal go forward. Our comments primarily relate to wildlife effects and monitoring. The State also makes the point that increased access to Wilderness should be considered within the broader context of tourist demand for access to the Tongass. Our letter goes on to constructively criticize the narrower context of the DEIS, but goes too far in calling for withdrawal of the Draft. We understand the document took 10 years to develop and did not intend to use NEPA to unduly delay your consideration of the broader legal questions. We regret others perceived this as our intent.

Should the federal government proceed to allow helicopter landings in Wilderness, the State believes that the levels should be based on consideration of all user interests and monitored for actual usage and impacts; to both wildlife and other users of Wilderness.

Sincerely,



Diane Mayer  
Director

cc: Bill Tremblay, Team Leader, Forest Service, Petersburg, AK  
John Litten, Prewitt Enterprises, Sitka, AK  
Alan Phipps, DGC, Anchorage, AK  
Bob Englebrecht, Tempco Helicopters, Juneau, AK  
Ken Leghorn, Alaska Discovery, Juneau, AK