



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

Department of Natural Resources
OFFICE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PERMITTING

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March 7, 2024

Janelle Crocker
Acting Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service
PO Box 21628
Juneau, AK 99802-1628

Submitted online at the [ANILCA Cabin Policy Comment webpage](#)

Re: Special Uses Handbook, Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act Cabin Policy
#ORMS-3666

Dear Ms. Crocker,

The State of Alaska (State) reviewed the Forest Service (Service) proposal to revise the policy in the Forest Service Handbook (FSH), Region 10 Supplement for special uses administration. This proposal is intended to update direction on authorizing individual use, privately owned cabins allowed under Section 1303 of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). This proposal would allow for multiple reissuances of special use permits for certain cabins, for traditional and customary purposes.

The State supports the proposed changes to the FSH. It is appropriate to reissue cabin permits, as the traditional and customary uses were specifically protected during the passage of ANILCA. ANILCA 1303(b)(2) says, in part, “traditional and customary uses of existing cabins ... may be allowed to continue in accordance with a nontransferable, renewable five-year special use permit issued by the Secretary.”

The State also supports the administrative change to allow transferal of a cabin for traditional and customary use. Transfer of a cabin falls within the intent of 1303(d) “nothing in this Act or subsection shall necessarily preclude the Secretary from transferring such a lease or permit to another person at the election or death of the original permittee or lessee.”

These revisions ensure continued access to traditional and customary uses on public lands for Alaskans. Cabins are more than just structures; they represent a vital part of Alaska's cultural heritage and way of life. These cabins provide crucial access to the land for subsistence activities, hunting, trapping, fishing, and recreation as cabins often serve as anchors or a base to practice traditional activities passed down through generations.

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The State appreciates the efforts of the Service to be responsive to users of ANILCA cabins, and to uphold the intent and direction of ANILCA. Thank you for the opportunity to review this proposed change; please contact me at (907)269-0880 or by email at catherine.heroy@alaska.gov to coordinate any follow up discussions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catherine Heroy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Catherine Heroy

Federal Program Manager and ANILCA Coordinator

Ecc: Jennifer Berger, Alaska Region Public Services Program Lead, Jennifer.berger@usda.gov