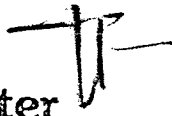


Northern Alaska Environmental Center

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June 4, 1982

Commissioner Ronald O. Skoog
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 3-2000
Juneau, Alaska 99802

Dear Commissioner Skoog,

As you know, my organization has worked with others to support a \$200,000 appropriation through the Legislature to study the potential of upper Susitna River salmon enhancement. I wish to thank you and your staff for the helpful background information describing how ADF&G would approach this study.

We based our decision to pursue this funding for the ADF&G on your letter of March 20, 1981 which stated that the present arrangement between your agency and the APA would not include any assessment of upper Susitna River salmon enhancement potential. More specifically, our motivations in supporting this funding are outlined in the following questions that hopefully this study will answer:

1. Can the Devils Canyon hydraulic barriers to the migration of the five species of salmon (chinook, coho, chum, sockeye and pink) be altered or bypassed to permit the passage of these species to both tributaries and connecting lakes above Devils Canyon in absence of the proposed Susitna hydro project?
2. If fish passage through Devils Canyon is feasible, what would the potential benefit of salmon production from the tributaries and lakes upstream of Devils Canyon be to the sport, commercial and subsistence fishermen?
3. What would the biological impacts be to other species presently residing in the upper Susitna?
4. If the Susitna dams are built, how would this effect the potential of upper Susitna River salmon enhancement?

It is our hope that this baseline study can be integrated into the ADF&G's Susitna hydro investigations to obtain the maximum understanding of the feasibility of providing access to and from the habitat of the upper Susitna. We believe that this knowledge is absolutely essential to determining whether the instream flows of the upper Susitna are best suited for fishery enhancement or hydro development or both.

In conclusion, the results of the first phase of the Susitna studies show that if the proposed Susitna dams have benefits, they are over a fifty year or longer period. It is our belief that the benefits of the potential salmon enhancement of the upper Susitna should also be examined in the same context. Just as the Railbelt will experience

increased demand for electricity over the long term, the Railbelt could equally experience increased demand for Susitna salmon. Both potential developments of the Susitna must be understood to allow Alaskans the ability to make an informed decision on what are the best uses of the Susitna River.

In anticipation that the Governor will not veto this appropriation, I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss this appropriation in more detail if you so desire. I would also appreciate being informed on how you intend to implement this study and its progress as it evolves.

Sincerely,

Jeff Weltzin