

JAY S. HAMMOND, GOVERNOR

WATER RESOURCES BOARD

323 E. 4TH AVENUE
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501

279-5577

July 14, 1980

Jay S. Hammond, Governor
State of Alaska
Pouch A
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Governor Hammond:

At our June 25-27, 1980 meeting in Fairbanks we heard testimony from representatives of the Division of Parks and the Department of Fish and Game on maintaining access at sport fishing sites on lakes and rivers. The reason the Division of Parks and the Department of Fish and Game requested this presentation was the immediate and growing problem with the build up of trash at the many non-maintained recreational areas adjacent to lakes and rivers in Alaska, particularly sites in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. These places are usually the most accessible locations on lakes and streams popular for fishing and are often on state land.

Several state agencies are involved: the Department of Fish and Game because they are the fish and wildlife managers and because they stock many of these lakes and streams which attract people; the Division of Parks because they are the state's recreation specialists and maintain recreational areas that are designated as parks or waysides; the Division of Forest, Land and Water Management because many of the problem areas are state land which theoretically should be managed by that division; the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities because they maintain the state's road system and also have their own wayside program; and the Department of Environmental Conservation because they are responsible for water quality and solid waste management. None of the agencies are accepting responsibility for this problem. Staffs of these agencies are aware of the problem but no one has gone to the legislature requesting funds for maintaining these sites nor have the agencies ever meaningfully resolved their areas of responsibility.

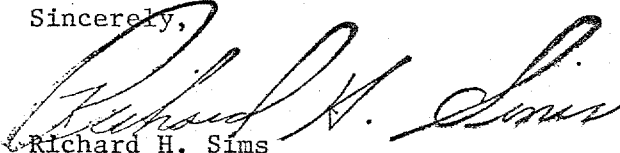
It is apparent the agencies need direction from your office. The immediate solution appears to be to have one agency accept responsibility for maintenance, request funds from the legislature and go out and pick up the trash. At first glance it appears the Division of Parks is the logical choice but upon closer examination -- perhaps through an interagency discussion led by your staff -- other arrangements may be more appropriate. At any rate the Board feels this item should be addressed in the upcoming budget cycle.

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The trash problem is the most visible of a wide range of problems that are developing within the general topic of water based recreation management. Among the problems touched on at our meeting were: long-range maintenance and access problems created by Department of Fish and Game fish stocking programs, noncompatible recreational uses of lakes and streams (i.e., float planes vs. power boats vs. canoes, rafts, and kayaks), land disposals in traditionally popular recreational areas, and the effect of the trash problem on water quality. Alaska is renowned for the variety and magnitude of its recreational opportunities. As our population increases and more tourists visit us, our present programs of simply stocking lakes and streams with fish and providing litter maintenance at a relatively few designated parks and waysides are becoming visibly less adequate with each summer season.

We hope you give your attention to this problem. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Richard H. Sims
Chairman

cc: Commissioner Ronald Skoog, ADFG
Commissioner Ernst Mueller, DEC
Commissioner Robert LeResche, DNR
Commissioner Robert Ward, DOT/PF
Mr. Theodore Smith, Forest, Land and Water Management - DNR
Mr. Chip Dennerlein, Division of Parks - DNR
Mr. Rupert Andrews, Division of Sport Fisheries - ADF&G