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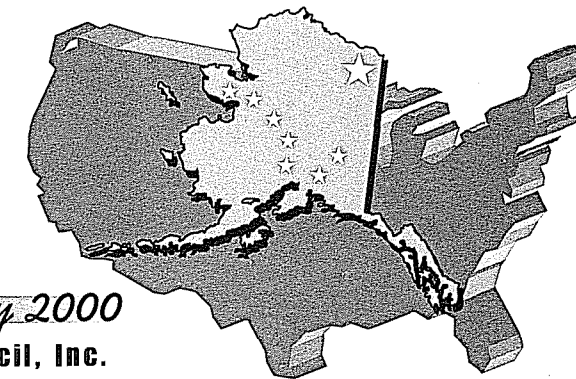
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Resource Review

February 2000

A periodic publication of the Resource Development Council, Inc.



Prospects bright for Alaska's major export industries

By Greg Wolf
Director, Alaska Division of Trade and Development

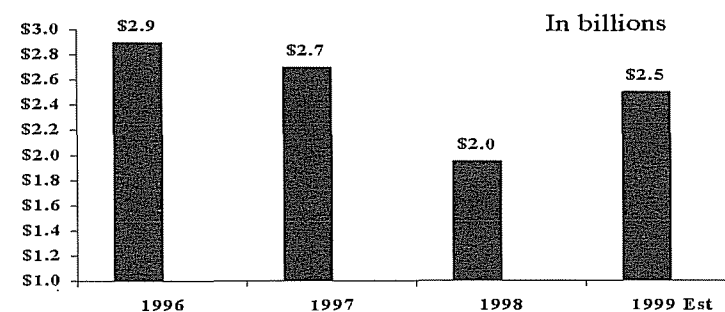
As the New Year gets underway, prospects appear bright for Alaska's major export industries, an increasingly important sector of the state's overall economy. This positive prognosis is based primarily on the strong economic recovery occurring in Asia, the market for nearly 80% of Alaska's resource exports.

The increase in industrial output by these countries is also having the affect of driving up prices of many of the commodities that Alaska exports to the region. Rising demand from these key markets and higher commodity prices bodes well for Alaska exporters.

For the first 10 months of 1999, overall exports from Alaska to the world increased by over 29% compared with the same period of the previous year. Exports to Alaska's two largest trading partners, Japan and Korea, rose sharply, up 55% and 49% respectively. As these two countries alone account for 72% of the state's total exports, the recovery in these markets is a very positive development. Overall, for the full year 1999, the Division of Trade and Development (DTD) is forecasting total exports to reach approximately \$2.5 billion, just below the pre-Asian economic crisis level of 1997.

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Alaska's Exports
Full Calendar Year



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, compiled by Division of Trade & Development

Forest Service gets bundles of post cards on roadless policy

The U.S. Forest Service has reportedly received more than 150,000 pre-printed post cards from throughout the U.S. demanding that the Tongass and Chugach national forests be included in President Clinton's proposed roadless policy.

The 150,000 count represents just the post cards and emails environmental groups collected from their members nationwide during a public comment period ending December 20. A substantial number of other comments were received by the Forest Service, but the agency's official count will not be compiled until late February.

"How many of those who signed these cards and emails were informed that 98 percent of the Tongass roadless areas are already protected," asked Jack Phelps, Executive Director of the Alaska Forest Association.

Most of the non-roaded areas of the Tongass and Chugach are already under some form of protection, ranging from federal Wilderness to designations such as "remote recreation" and Wild and Scenic Rivers.

The Forest Service will use public comments to prepare a draft environmental impact statement which will analyze several different alternatives for the roadless proposal. The draft EIS is expected to be released by spring,

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Message from the Executive Director by Ken Freeman

Steer clear of regulatory pitfalls

With a new year at hand, it is a unique time to do an assessment of some of the regulatory challenges facing Alaska exports.

A significant portion of RDC's focus is to promote or many times oppose public policy decisions that drive the regulatory climate in Alaska. When one exams the hurdles facing Alaska exports, time and again we are led back to policy and regulatory decisions that hamper the development of our resources, which in turn hampers the availability of commodities to export.

Uncertainty and a lack of predictability with regard to regulations is also a major barrier to long-term investment or long-term sustainable supplies of commodities.

As noted in the cover story,

prospects for our export sector look good, but we need to be mindful of the regulatory hurdles at all levels of government. Though local governments many times best understand the importance of promoting economic development, there are some problems at the local level and some at the state level, but the primary source of Alaska's regulatory woes can be found in the federal arena.

One issue that RDC has closely tracked over the last year is the potential listing of the Cook Inlet Beluga whale as an endangered species. The implications of such a listing are dramatic, considering the amount of goods and raw materials that flow in and out of Cook Inlet. We should all be very concerned about the negative economic effects the State of Alaska, particularly the Southcentral area, will experience from a listing under either the Marine Mammal Protection Act or especially the Endangered Species Act.

It is problematic that although community and resource development activities in Cook Inlet do not play a part in the decline of the Beluga, they could be significantly hampered by the regulatory burdens imposed by a listing.

Under either type of listing, third party lawsuits remain a real concern, and additional regulation under a listing could cause delays in shipping or require schedule changes.

If a listing moves forward, all types of activity in and around Cook Inlet could be at risk, including oil and gas, timber and mining. Port MacKenzie and the related dredging and vessel traffic will also be a target for those interests using an "endangered" listing to stop projects they don't like. If Cook Inlet is selected as a terminus for an LNG project, the hand-writing is on the wall as well.

All of this taken together will have a

direct and indirect impact on any Alaska exports that will travel out of Cook Inlet. Unfortunately, this may only be the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

There are other major challenges facing our export potential, including the President's proposed policy to ban new road construction in roadless areas of our national forests.

At the state level, the Department of Environmental Conservation has been locked in a heated battle with the legislature over the agency's budget. Once again, regardless of one's political opinion, the results of this debate will affect development in the state. ADEC permits certifications are essential for many ongoing and new development activities throughout the state.

Due to last year's unallocated cut in ADEC's general fund appropriation, the agency may lose primacy of the state's water program to the Environmental Protection Agency. Currently ADEC is just finishing up a stakeholder group process to determine what services in the water program deserve priority.

It is unclear at this time whether the state will continue to provide 401 certifications under the Clean Water Act or 404 dredge and fill permits in conjunction with the Army Corps of Engineers. Without state certification, site-specific criteria, mixing zones and zones of deposit will be lost.

Another regulatory issue at the state level is the Division of Governmental Coordination's review of the state's coastal zone program's consistency determination regulations. The Alaska Coastal Zone Management Program has a great deal of oversight into development activities not only throughout the state's coastal areas, but also in all areas that affect coastal Alaska. Once again, Anadromous streams expand the jurisdiction of this program immensely. DGC has just begun its review process and extent of public involvement has not yet been defined.

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"Reality doesn't matter to the Forest planners. Muscle power or carbon fuel — be it winter or summer, disabled or spry, old or young, backcountry skier or lift skier, in view of the proposed Plan you're mostly a destructive nuisance in need of severe limits. Now, our recreation needs in central Colorado are second fiddle to goals of the land manager bureaucrats who lap up the latest theories of green activists, partisan wildlife biologists and bio-diversity fanatics."

I've wandered the backlands of White River National Forest for over thirty years. While this is not virgin rain forest, it's arguably decent and bio-diverse. Logging is so politically incorrect it's nearly extinct in the White River Forest. Mining has all but ceased as an industry, and in retrospect caused little lasting or incurable damage (when considered as percent of the total land). In fact, one of the most heavily mined places in the White River Forest is the Aspen area, now considered by many to be one of our state's most beautiful places, and the chosen home of many outspoken environmentalists. Go for a hike or jeep ride and the lush forest will astound you with its wealth of flowers, bugs, birds and beasts. Travel in winter, and you'll enjoy thousands of peaceful acres dormant under a protective white blanket. Sure, in some areas you can still step in a cow pie or hear a snowmobile, but overall we have a huge tract of prime backcountry around us.

And the future? It's always amusing to watch anyone of any political stripe trying to base policy on a crystal ball. In some cases it's necessary, but so often proves to be a joke. In the case of recreation we have seen some large increases. But let's not forget alpine skiing, which is flat or shrinking. What's to keep other forms of recreation from following the same pattern as alpine skiing? Most importantly, demographics show an aging population with most of our population growth coming from other cultures that don't participate heavily in outdoor recreation. Thus, implementing present restrictions based on future growth could well be unnecessary.

But reality doesn't matter to the Forest planners. Muscle power or carbon fuel — be it winter or summer, disabled or spry, old or young, backcountry skier or lift skier, in view of the proposed Plan you're mostly a destructive nuisance in need of severe limits.

Now, our recreation needs in central Colorado are second fiddle to goals of the land manager bureaucrats who lap up the latest theories of green activists, partisan wildlife biologists and bio-diversity fanatics. When theories fit their agenda they become facts that support the claim we're being shut out to help the forest. That's a false claim. This apocalyptic shift in management policy has deeper roots.

Follow the green trail back to Washington. With the demise of extractive industry, along with spending cuts, the Forest Service has less money for recreation management. On top of that, national USFS policy is now slanted towards an anti-human view based on faulty environmental ideals. Divided, we recreationists have about as much political clout as cow dung, we cost money to "manage," and we give little money back. What's more, without logging and mining to beat on, we recreators are now whipping boys for the environmentalists: our ski areas are too big, our cars use the roads too much, our huts are developments, our dogs pollute, our tracks deface pristine slopes, our tents are ugly, our vibram soles erode the trails, snowmobiles are the devil...

The whole process bears a nightmarish resemblance to lethal injection execution. Here's how it works. The first step in government termination is when they strap you down in the execution room. In the same way, we recreationists are immobilized by divisiveness. Then comes the intravenous sedative Pentothal. In the case of backcountry access your drug is the warm, fuzzy and often misinterpreted concept of "bio-diversity," which can define anything from a zoo to a game preserve — and does not include humans.

The next step of lethal injection is a huge hit of curare derivative to lock up your lungs. In the same way, our voices are locked by the poison of political correctness. Mention that humans have rights on the land, and you're considered a right-wing wacko. The last step of lethal injection execution is a squirt of potassium that burns through your veins like the fires of hell, then sends your heart into an excruciating cramp.

When your soul calls you to the backcountry, but the sign at the trailhead says "no humans allowed" and crushes your heart, will you try to scream? Sorry, it's too late: you've been immobilized, sedated, suffocated and killed.

The Forest Service says they'll make incremental changes to the Proposed Management Plan, based on public written input. It's then likely the Plan will be appealed by divided recreation groups with no consensus, and consequently little effect. Furthermore, while in various newspaper writings the environmental groups appear

to support the Plan, it's likely they'll appeal it as well (or use it as a philosophical launching pad for more extreme restrictions such as the Roadless Initiative). The nightmare is that we recreationists are now working from zero. We're reduced to actually justifying our right to recreate, no matter what form our use takes.

Chances are, any National Forest near you is in, or close to beginning a plan revision — with the needle of lethal injection aimed at the heart of your backcountry sport.

What to do? First, look at recreation as a whole, and join a group that promotes responsible multi-use of public land. You might actually shake hands with another type of user, but you'll be surprised how much you have in common. Avoid clubs or political groups that bicker with other user groups. Be wary of groups that call attention to user "conflicts" to further their agendas of use restrictions. People can get along, and emphasizing their differences is nothing less than exploitation. Most of all be willing to share. Backcountry skiers should stop feeling superior because they use blood sugar instead of gasoline. Snowmobilers should drive with courtesy and use their wallets to vote for quieter machines. Mountain bikers should work with hikers and equestrians.

Sure, we can divide the pie once in a while. Any multi-use group worth it's tires or boot rubber — or steel edges — should be comfortable with occasional use restrictions (helicopter skiing comes to mind, and a quantity of legal wilderness and game preserves is desirable). But the underlying philosophy of most land management should value human recreation in the equation. In most cases, we should only restrict recreation when it causes massive, irreversible damage — not a bit of trail erosion, a tent visible by a lake, or even one group being seen by another.

After you've hashed out your differences and figured a few solutions that include humanity, mail opinion letters to your local Forest Service office and your government representatives. Remember that just because a Forest Plan looks good for your own form of recreation doesn't make it a good plan. If the underlying philosophy does not support recreation in a broad sense, you'll eventually feel the pain. Work hard, compromise, and be open minded about all forms of recreation. Otherwise, it won't be pretty — lethal injection never is.

Louis Dawson lives in Carbondale, Colorado. He is an active outdoorsman, specializing in writing about ski mountaineering, and is well known as the first man to ski down all 54 of Colorado's 14,000 foot peaks.

Resource Review is the official periodic publication of the Resource Development Council (RDC), Alaska's largest privately funded nonprofit economic development organization working to develop Alaska's natural resources in an orderly manner and to create a broad-based, diversified economy while protecting and enhancing the environment.

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Guest Opinion

by Louis Dawson

Lethal injection

Executing our right to use federal lands

By Louis Dawson

Editor's Note: This article covers the U.S. National Forest Management Planning process, as exemplified in the White River National Forest, Colorado. It was originally published in Couloir Magazine, December, 1999 and is reprinted here with permission from the author, Louis Dawson, who is primarily a muscle-powered recreator. He believes a anti-human philosophy underlies the proposed management plan for the White River. Dawson says that "in time, this philosophy will adversely affect every sort of recreation, motor or muscle powered." While much of what Dawson is writing about is specific to the White River, he notes that other national forests, including the Chugach, are in the planning process, and the Clinton Roadless Initiative has the potential to severely curtail public access for recreation and resource development. While some readers may find his opinion hard-hitting, it is not the intention of RDC to offend the Forest Service or others with different views.

Divide, conquer and kill. If radical environmentalists in central Colorado are not repeating that mantra, they should be. The Forest Service here just released Proposed Revised Forest Management Plan "D" for White River National Forest. By taking a major departure from present management style, the Plan views recreation as a destructive activity to be regulated and restricted. Machine or muscle powered user, our land is being jerked out from under us like the proverbial rug.

Up front, the proposed Forest Plan appears to limit roads and motorized recreation, while letting most muscle powered recreation continue as-is. That's somewhat true — for now. Indeed, it appears the Forest planners took great pains not to offend vocal "moral highground" groups such as elk hunters, hikers and backcountry skiers. If you read the plan with care, you'll get a chuckle out of the obvious placation bones

thrown to these groups (of which I'm a member). But in evaluating the Plan you have to look twice. You must look at the details of the plan documents — and you must look at underlying philosophy that will drive thousands of management decisions not written into the documents. As a total outdoorsman I've done both those things, and I'm alarmed.

The proposed plan is based on a form of management known as "closed unless posted open," which means that any recreation, including hiking, is done by permission from the federal government. What's more, the underlying philosophy of the Plan is tilted towards managing for "biodiversity." That sounds good, until you realize that "biodiversity" can mean different things to different people. The Forest Service definition of the term appears slanted towards the radical environmentalist side: the view that recreation and biodiversity are, in most cases, mutually exclusive — that humans are a scourge on the land.

Each National Forest in the United States is required by law to periodically revise its management plan. These massive documents define use for every square inch of federal land within Forest boundaries. The first step in revision is a massive gathering of data, much of this being subjective and influenced by biased observation, bogus assumptions, and the latest political trends.

Example: Plan documents state that "cross-country skiers...prefer...non-motorized areas outside of Wilderness; winter access in Wilderness is minimal because of avalanche..." That's flat wrong. Many skiers enter legal Wilderness boundaries in the White River Forest. Indeed, one of our most popular lift accessed backcountry ski areas is in Wilderness behind Snowmass Ski Resort. What's more, the huge Flat Tops Wilderness lives up to its name and includes plentiful cross-country ski terrain safe from avalanche. Much of our other Wilderness, though somewhat steep and rugged, also has terrain with little or no

avalanche danger.

If backcountry skiers such as myself need more terrain without snowmobiles, the logical solution is to snow plow or build a few more roads and trailheads that access Wilderness boundaries. Keep such access open in winter and we will automatically have all the non-motorized terrain we could ever ask for. After all, the White River Forest is 1/3 legal wilderness!

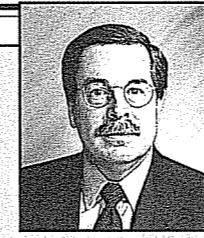
The new Plan, with an anti-human bent predicated on false assumptions, seeks to concentrate everyone in small areas near existing trailheads such as Vail Pass.

Example: Shed your assumptions about foot travel, an activity most of us assume is sacrosanct and virtually un-regulated. In Plan D, thousands of acres of land are proposed for "Primitive" and "Pristine" use levels, which turn out to be almost deserted. For example, join six hikers on a trail in a classified "Primitive" area, and according to the Plan you'll need to be the only users on about 6 miles of trail — otherwise you'll exceed the maximum use level! Sure, staffers at the Forest Service office will tell you that "Plan D doesn't restrict hiking." What they don't tell you is "for now." And all this assumes trails exist.

Amazingly, there is even talk of closing several mountain trails and obliterating them through "restoration." As for mountain biking, trail after trail has been slated for closure. Why the closures? There is only one answer: in view of the Plan's underlying philosophy, mountain bicycling is destroying biodiversity and must be curtailed.

With such false data and bogus assumptions to work with, the fed's next step is the public scoping process, wherein those who can spend the most money and throw the most paper have the most influence — provided such input is aligned with the Forest Service's anti-human, anti-recreation direction.

For example, funded by Aspen area wealth, our local environmental groups have made a religion out of negativity and naysaying. According to them, White River Forest is on a quick road to oblivion. The USFS appears to consume such sentiment with gusto, then use it to justify their anti-human stance. But is our forest damaged enough to need draconian action? Or, as the environmentalists claim, does the future bode so ill we need to start heavy recreation restrictions immediately? No to both.



Thoughts from the President

by Jim Branch

2000 legislative and administrative priorities

This February, as in previous years, a delegation of RDC board members and staff will present the organization's new legislative and administrative priorities to state lawmakers during the annual fly-in to Juneau. The 2000 priorities will guide RDC's legislative and administrative actions throughout the new year, and it is our hope that legislators will embrace these guiding principals as they seek action to support a vibrant and productive economy.

The need for a responsible long-range fiscal plan is one of RDC's top priorities in 2000, as well as equitable and stable tax and royalty policies which stimulate job growth, capital investment and economic development. Further efforts to privatize state government services is also an area of interest.

In the coming months, RDC will work with a broad coalition from the private sector for a reasonable permit fees system which is uniform, predictable and equitably allocates costs related to permitting activity. In addition, RDC will advocate for clear, streamlined and equitable state and federal permitting systems based on sound science.

RDC will ask the Legislature and the State to support the establishment of a co-management agreement between the National Marine Fisheries

Service and the Cook Inlet Marine Mammal Council to promote the recovery of the Cook Inlet Beluga whale population. We, however, recommend the State oppose a federal or State endangered listing for the whale.

RDC will continue to support the Legislature adopting a proposal to place a constitutional amendment before the voters to regain state management of Alaska's fish and game resources.

In the oil and gas arena, we will work hard for legislative and administrative initiatives to encourage new exploration and development, as well as enhanced production from existing fields. We will advocate for continued use of the areawide leasing program and encourage public policy decisions which may improve the commercial viability of developing Alaska's stranded natural gas resources. Of course, RDC will continue to educate and advocate for the opening of the Coastal Plain of ANWR to oil and gas development.

For the mining industry, RDC will support legislative and administrative initiatives to encourage new exploration and development. The Council will also advocate for continuation of the airborne geophysical mapping program.

Heading up our priorities for fisheries is support for policies which

improve access, markets and revenues for Alaska fishermen and a healthy competitive environment for an Alaskan seafood processing industry. Other measures include support for efforts to reduce waste and better utilization of the fishery resources, improved product value and development of new product forms. Support for industry and federal funding of fisheries and marine mammal research in the North Pacific and formulation of a marine mammal institute in Alaska is also included among our priorities.

In forestry, RDC will continue to advocate for a reliable and economical long-term federal and state timber supply. Adequate funding and enforcement of the Alaska Forest Practices Act on public and private lands is also a priority. We will also encourage forest management initiatives to address forest health and reforestation.

RDC will continue to vigorously support the Alaska Minerals and Energy Resource Education Fund (AMEREF), as well as general education on responsible resource development.

As always, RDC will continue to beat the drum for increased access to and across public lands for responsible resource development. By working together, we can accomplish this agenda and build a better Alaska.

Regulatory issues could dampen export potential

(Continued from page 2)

All of these regulatory burdens could have significant direct and indirect impacts to the future of exports. Obviously there are others I did not address here, but I wanted to highlight some of the major burdens that may have an impact on Alaska exports.

There is still a great deal of activity in all resource sectors, and our future

export picture looks bright as indicated in this month's cover story, but we need to do everything we can to foster and promote stability and predictability, in order to promote commodity production and subsequent exports.

Alaskans can and should be optimistic. We still have a very strong and increasing streamlined oil and gas industry, there's new exploration in the

mining industry and production is expected to increase. Tourism continues to grow and fishing is still a huge component of our economy. In timber we welcome Gateway Forest Products and its efforts to expand a value-added forest products industry.

We are on sound footing, but Alaska needs to steer clear of these regulatory pitfalls if it is to harness its full potential.

Trade's impact on economy to grow

(Continued from page 1)

It is appropriate as we start the New Year to reflect on the importance of international trade to the state's economic well-being. Too often, when considering the importance of a particular industry to the state's economy, the role of exports is overlooked. With only a small local market for resources and a larger, but limited market in the Lower 48, it is the overseas markets that enable Alaska's resource industries to make such an important contribution to the state's economy in terms of revenues and jobs.

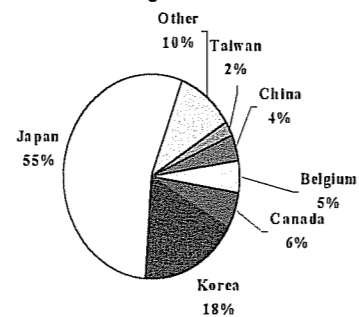
A few examples illustrate this point: the only Alaska coal currently exported outside the state is that purchased by KEPCO, a major utility company in Korea. The only LNG exported from Alaska is shipped to Japan to power electrical utilities in that country. In the case of seafood, Alaska's largest export resource, it is estimated that approximately 40% of the annual seafood production is exported to foreign markets, primarily to Japan.

As previously mentioned, exports play an important role in the state's economy. Just how important? There are several ways to answer this question. First, by measuring the amount of exports on a per-capita basis. Using this method, Alaska ranks third among all states. Another way is to consider exports as a percentage of the state's gross state product (GSP). The GSP represents the sum total of all goods and services produced in a given year. Using this measurement, Alaska ranks seventh among all states.

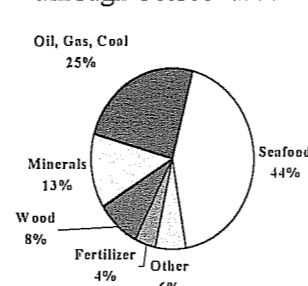
And finally, consider the rate of growth. A recent study by the U.S. Census Bureau revealed that Alaska ranks number one in the nation for growth in the number of exporting companies. According to the study, between 1992 and 1997, the number of companies engaged in export grew by more than 200%.

Two other pieces of information shed light on trade's role and importance. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, 97% of all U.S.

Alaska's Top Export Markets
Totals through October 1999



Alaska's Top Export Products
Through October 1999



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, compiled by Alaska Division of Trade and Development

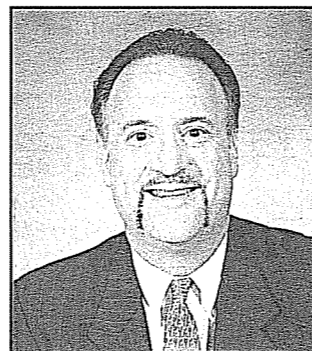
exporters are small businesses. They also report that the fastest growth in the number of exporters has been among those companies that might be described as the "smallest of the small"—firms with 20 or fewer employees. Certainly our experience at DTD bears out this data: while the division works closely with the larger export companies, the lion's share of the division efforts are focused on the smaller firms working to grow their export operations.

It is also worth noting that not only are the jobs of thousands Alaska linked directly or indirectly to export activities, export-related jobs typically pay 13 to 16% more than those connected solely to the domestic economy. Again, Alaska's experience supports this finding. One only has to look at average wages paid to those in the seafood, oil and mining industries to draw the conclusion that exports play a valuable role in our economy.

Clearly, Alaska is one of the most trade-oriented states in America. And there is reason to believe that the impact of trade on Alaska's economy will only continue to grow as countries around the world seek natural resources to meet the needs of their growing economies and populations. For Asia, still the fastest growing region of the world, Alaska is particularly well positioned to continue to serve as a

prime supplier of commodities and products. Alaska is resource-rich and much of Asia is resource-poor. Alaska also offers geographic proximity and political stability, both important factors to countries who depend so heavily on imports.

In the year ahead, DTD will continue to work closely with Alaska's exporters to identify and pursue new trade opportunities. Working hand-in-hand with the private sector, the state can play an important role in improving the global competitiveness of Alaska's companies. This is accomplished by providing trade assistance, information and helping to open doors that can lead to new or expanded business opportunities.



Greg Wolf is the director of the Alaska Division of Trade and Development. Previously he served as the vice president of the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation and the State of Alaska's trade representative in Japan.

Forest Service compiling Chugach alternatives

The Chugach National Forest is drawing up a final range of alternatives for managing the 5.3 million-acre forest and is expected to soon release a preferred alternative.

Forest planners have cut nearly three dozen options down to six alternatives, ranging from minimal intrusion to more hands-on management. A seventh choice is for the status quo. Two alternatives provide some level of development opportunity.

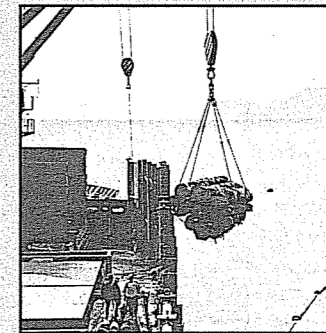
Forest Supervisor Dave Gibbons approved the range of alternatives on December 21. In February, Gibbons will choose a preferred alternative and release the package to the public for comment. Gibbons says he will try to strike a balance in the preferred alternative to satisfy as many interests as possible.

RDC, as well as other public interest organizations — both non-development and pro-development — have been participating in a long series of Forest Service meetings on the management plan revision process for the forest. In those meetings, Forest Service planning team members have covered six main topics, including fish and wildlife,

recreation, tourism, subsistence, hunting and fishing and resource development.

RDC continues to closely track the issue and will forward recommendations to its membership once the final range of alternatives are released.

A final updated management plan is expected to be completed by the end of the year.



Logs from the Chugach National Forest are loaded on to a ship off Montague Island.

Governor responds to proposed roadless policy

(Continued from page 1)

when there will be a second round of public comment. The President is expected to issue a final policy establishing new roadless areas by the time he leaves office.

Both RDC and the Alaska Forest Association have written the Forest Service, pointing out that the Tongass and Chugach merit exemption because of their peculiar circumstances.

The Tongass has just gone through an extensive 11-year plan revision process which cost the American taxpayer \$13 million. The plan withdrew more than half of the land previously available for development, leaving such a small amount of acreage available for timber harvest that a further decline in timber jobs in the region is a virtual certainty.

At a gathering of Southeast Alaska mayors in Sitka last September, Undersecretary Jim Lyons stated that the 1999 Record of Decision for the Tongass was the final action of the Clinton administration with respect to Tongass management. Yet a mere four weeks later the President announced the roadless initiative, which if applied to the Tongass, would obviate the land

allocations arrived at in the revised Tongass plan.

Governor Tony Knowles, in comments to the Forest Service, said "it is not acceptable for the federal government to supercede the exhaustive Tongass Land Management Plan (TLMP) process with a federal initiative out of Washington, D.C., that could erode the balance, stability and certainty TLMP was to bring to the economy of Southeast Alaska." Knowles pointed out that "roadless areas were carefully considered in TLMP, and another review is not appropriate."

Knowles also told the Forest Service that it is not appropriate for the federal government to supercede an ongoing planning process on the Chugach National Forest.

"The consideration of roadless areas on the Chugach forest must respect a public process and be consistent with a fair forest planning process," Knowles said. "If the federal government expects the people of Alaska to continue the process in good faith, any actions should be based on sound science, prudent management and a meaningful public process."

The Governor insisted that Alaskans are "playing by the rules when it comes to forest management." He pointed out that Southeast Alaskans have worked hard in pursuit of a balanced Tongass forest plan based on sound science and public process.

"We are committed to prudent forest management and have a solid track record of working through the federal forest planning process," Knowles added. "When Alaskans play by the rules we expect the federal government to also play by their own rules and respect the forest planning process."

A major management plan revision process has been underway in the Chugach for two years now and it is expected to be completed by the end of the year. As with the Tongass, including the Chugach in the roadless policy would make a sham of the Forest Service planning process.

The Western Governors Conference recently passed a resolution urging the Forest Service to exclude from the proposed roadless initiative any forest with a recently completed forest plan or a forest plan which is projected to be completed by the end of 2000.