Alaska Pacific Bank commends the Resource Development Council for their work in promoting economic development in Alaska. They have worked tirelessly to broaden Alaska's economic perspective through diversification, without losing sight of sensitive environmental considerations. We appreciate and support their continued efforts to improve the quality of life for all Alaskans through sound resource development.

Alaska coal, evolving supply and demand patterns, will be examined at the sixth annual RDC conference which is designed to assess Alaska's competitive position in global resource production.

The registration fee for the conference is $195 for those who register before January 1 and $225 thereafter. The fee includes luncheons, conference program, educational materials, coffee breaks and hosted receptions. A special rate is available for full-time students.

For additional information, write the Resource Development Council at Box 100516, Anchorage, Alaska 99510 or call 907-276-0700.
Integral Visitas

Analyzing issues of potential importance to Alaska's economy is a challenging responsibility. In this issue, we take seriously, knowing which issues are developing on the public policy agenda — and monitoring them — is made easier by our interaction with individuals and groups throughout the United States. Many of these citizens are deeply concerned about our nation's growing inability to maintain a strong industrial base, to produce food and fiber, to explore and produce energy and minerals, and to achieve firmly-stated national security objectives. Others have different priorities.

As a nation we are committed to clean air, clean water and a safe environment. We are also committed to providing jobs for the people of this nation; but we are less and less able to support those who don't have them.

Sometimes our priorities get really muddy. Take the matter of protecting "integral vistas," a bureaucratic term for the panoramas and landmarks viewed from the nation's parks and wilderness areas. We've followed this issue since 1980, hoping it would disappear over the horizon like the views it seeks to protect. Integral vista protection would ideally assure that if you are standing at an observation point in a national park, you could see the horizon as far as the eye could see and not have that view "destroyed" by, heaven forbid, a plume of smoke from some useless industry outside the park.

There has never been a speck of debate over whether integral vista protection should be a national goal or whether it should take precedence over other national goals. Moreover, the National Park Service should admit its collective embarrassment over having proposed the regulations in the first place and get on with managing the parks. That means not concerning itself with controlling resource production that supports national priorities taking outside the parks.

"How could you be so unsympathetic to this environmental issue?" some might ask. To those I would say, "It's easy. It's because I have common sense."

When the national parks and wilderness areas were created, conscious decisions were made to draw their boundaries large enough so that the purposes for which they were created would not be impinged upon by activities on non-park lands. That was a sensible policy, but it wasn't enough to protect the nation.

Now we have state regulations in effect which assure that no adverse impacts to visibility within boundaries of national parks and other federal Class I areas are permitted. The regulations also require states to assess whether existing sources cause significant visual impairment, and if they do, the states can require they be refitted to remediate the impairment. States can also require that new facility site locations be changed, downsized or not constructed at all.

So what we have is an implicit policy that says your right to hike in a park or wilderness area and not see a plume of smoke 200 miles away from the park is more important than the right of others to produce raw materials used by the same person walking in the park! It's crazy! There are some statistics we quote in RDC's policy statement on minerals and materials that are of importance to this discussion. Every American requires some 40,000 pounds of new minerals annually. The average newcomer citizen requires a lifetime supply of over 1,500 pounds of iron, 1,050 pounds of zinc, 4,555 pounds of aluminum, 91,000 pounds of iron and steel, 360,000 pounds of coal, and 1,357,000 pounds of stone, sand, gravel, concrete, etc. Unfortunately, these materials don't have the luxury of choosing where they will be found. Sometimes they are indeed within one or two hundred miles of a constant plume of smoke, sometimes they will be viewed from a distant "integral vista."

The National Park Service would like more control over permitting activities outside the parks. But to allow that would result in confusion, confrontation, uncertainty and costly litigation. The industries that support our national economy and priorities can do without such "help," thank you.

By Paula E. Easley

Resource Development Council

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

RDC members and the general public to its weekly breakfast meeting featuring local and nationally-known speakers on economic and resource development issues. The meetings are held on Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. in the Northern Lights Inn. Reservations are required by calling 276-0770.
WASHINGTON

COMMENTS

Sen. Frank Murkowski

The Cook Inlet Oil Decision

With the approval and strong support of the White House, the U.S. Commerce Department will soon issue a permit to allow the export of Alaska Cook Inlet oil to foreign nations.

This is a breakthrough we have long sought in our effort to begin export- ing Alaska oil abroad.

And even though the ruling only pertains to the 60,000-barrel-a-day Cook Inlet project, it does not underestimate the significance of this action.

This small beginning can be a catalyst to overcome the previously unpene- trable barriers to the eventual export of our North Slope oil and gas.

Nothing has been accomplished by the Department of Interior's efforts since it began to negotiate with the owners of Cook Inlet oil, all of whom have stopped pushing for Cook Inlet oil to be available for sale overseas.

So far our office has been approached by South Korean, Taiwanese and Japanese companies and oil and gas companies that are interested in purchasing Cook Inlet oil.

The Alaska Congressional Delegation has worked closely together in con- vincing the Administration to lift the ban on Cook Inlet oil, which is both in our national interest and in the interest of Alaska. Now it is our governor's turn to take the issue and negotiate proposed sales agreements with our Pacific Rim neighbors.

When the White House made the announcement, spokesman Larry Speakes said that the President, in making his decision, sought nothing in exchange. However, he noted, "We have made it clear to our friends in Asia that we would like to see them move more rapidly in opening their markets to U.S. products to- ward that end.

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Park Service says it's "making every effort" to reopen mining in parks

"The National Park Service is making every effort to allow environmentally-sound mining operations to reopen in the national parks," according to Boyd Evison, new Regional Director of the National Park Service.

The NPS is issuing guidelines and sample plans to assist miners in preparing the plans. The plans of operations, which include detailed environmental reports, are required by each miner to obtain a permit to mine in a national park.

In an effort to meet the December deadline, the Park Service released the nine plans simultaneously last spring for public comment. The 90-day comment period was extended to 120 days after Alaskans with various interests complained that not enough time was provided for sufficient study and comment on the lengthy documents.

The Park Service received about 2,000 written comments and thousands more verbal comments at public hearings held throughout Alaska.

The Resource Development Council believes the extension is an indication that the Park Service has a real interest in the environment and that the federal agency needs to do a better job of taking account of the massive amount of public comment on the nine plans.

In its initial responses to the nine plans, the Council said the management plans reveal a serious trend of restricting recreational opportunities and access on park lands. While the Council said the management plans requirewrite guidelines that reflect the necessary action to insure that mining can resume on valid claims within national parks next summer.

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Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve is pictured above.

The National Park Service will allow additional public comment on management plans for nine Alaska parks and monuments. The Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve is pictured above.

NPS extends comment period on park plans

The National Park Service has announced it will reopen public comment on management plans for nine national parks, monuments and preserves in Alaska.

The parks, spanning some 40 million acres, doubled the size of America's park system when they were created or expanded by Congress in December 1980. Congress gave the Park Service five years to write management plans for them all.

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