

Alaska State Legislature

Senator John Cowdery, Chair
Phone (907) 465-3879
Fax (907) 465-2069



Senator Jerry Ward, Vice-Chair
Phone: (907) 465-4940
Fax: (907) 465-3766

Senate Transportation Committee

For Immediate Release: April 28, 2001
Contact: Sen. John Cowdery, 465-3879

Senate Defends Authority Over Right-of-Way

(JUNEAU) – The Alaska Senate unanimously passed a resolution today in response to federal encroachment on a state right-of-way.

“Forest Highway 10 passes through the Tongass National Forest, allowing access from Yakutat to a boat launch on the Situk River, a state-controlled waterway” said Sen. John Cowdery (R-Anchorage), chair of the Senate Transportation Committee. “The U.S. Forest Service is attempting to require permits for commercial use of the highway and the boat launch, including fishing guides taking clients out to the river.”

“This highway that allows Alaskans access to their river has historically been under state authority, and the boat launch falls completely in the highway’s right-of-way,” said Cowdery. “It is outrageous that the Forest Service is trying to control access to a state resource along a state right-of-way. If they succeed in this endeavor, it puts all of the state highways that pass through the Tongass and the Chugach National Forests at risk of coming under federal control.”

Senate Joint Resolution 30, sponsored by the Senate Transportation Committee urges the U.S. Forest Service to recognize the State of Alaska’s authority to control public access to state lands and waterways on highways that pass through Forest Service Lands.

A notice of reconsideration was given.

###