



Alaska State Legislature

Senate Majority Web: <http://www.akrepublicans.org>

Sponsor: Senator Gene Therriault
Current Version: HCS SB 305 (FIN)
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Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 305

Short Title: Asserting State Title to Submerged Land

Summary:

- Outlines the state's position on the ownership of submerged lands.
- Requires the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources to compile a list of navigable waters.
- Makes available to the public a map of all water in the state that is determined to be navigable.

Benefits:

Clarifying ownership will resolve problems regarding:

- Mineral development
- Gravel extraction
- Public access

Background:

Senate Bill 295, Senate Bill 305 and Senate Joint Resolution 27 are part of the Senate Majority's "Standing up for Alaska's land rights" package. The navigable waters issue dates back to statehood, when Alaska received title under the "equal footing" doctrine to all submerged lands under navigable water and marine waters out to three miles, with the exception of land withdrawn at statehood. The Federal government, however, has been slow to concede any navigability determinations, and fewer than 20 rivers have been determined navigable by the federal courts. The ownership of more than 60 million acres is at stake.