

The Silencing Alaskans Act (HB 77)

Anti-Salmon, Anti-Democracy, Anti-Alaskan

Background: Last session, Governor Parnell introduced House Bill 77 (HB 77). The bill got rammed through the Alaska House of Representatives without serious scrutiny. Now it sits in the Alaska Senate, ready to be taken up when the Legislature reconvenes in January 2014. HB 77 will undermine fish habitat protections and cut Alaskans out of decisions affecting our water and wildlife resources.



What's So Bad About HB 77? Just about everything. While Governor Parnell has tried to frame the bill as way to improve our permitting system, in reality HB 77 is a gift bag full of fish and game habitat rollbacks for large mining corporations. Just a few of the worst provisions include:

- **New Government Super Powers:** HB 77 allows the DNR Commissioner to ignore all other laws and rules in the process of issuing general permits for mining and other activities on state lands. Equally disturbing, DNR can bypass the normal public comment process, and ignore Alaskan voices entirely. *As a result, HB 77 is a massive concentration of power in state government at the expense of everyday Alaskans.*
- **Cutting Alaskans Out of Resource Decisions:** HB 77 limits public participation in numerous ways, and makes it extremely difficult for Alaskans harmed by bad or illegal DNR decisions to challenge them. Large corporations, however, would retain the ability to challenge decisions they don't like.
- **State Land Giveaway:** HB 77 would authorize DNR to permanently give away state land to private developers, in the hope the development would somehow benefit the state. It does not, however, require any guarantee that the hoped-for benefit will actually occur.
- **Strips Away Alaskans' Right to Keep Water in Salmon Streams:** HB 77 would prohibit individual Alaskans and groups from filing applications to reserve water in streams to protect salmon. A state court recently found DNR violated the Alaska Constitution when it refused to allow Alaskans to keep water in their salmon streams. Now, instead of obeying the law, the Parnell Administration just wants to change it.

For more information, see www.standforsalmon.org or call Inletkeeper at 907.235.4068.

