

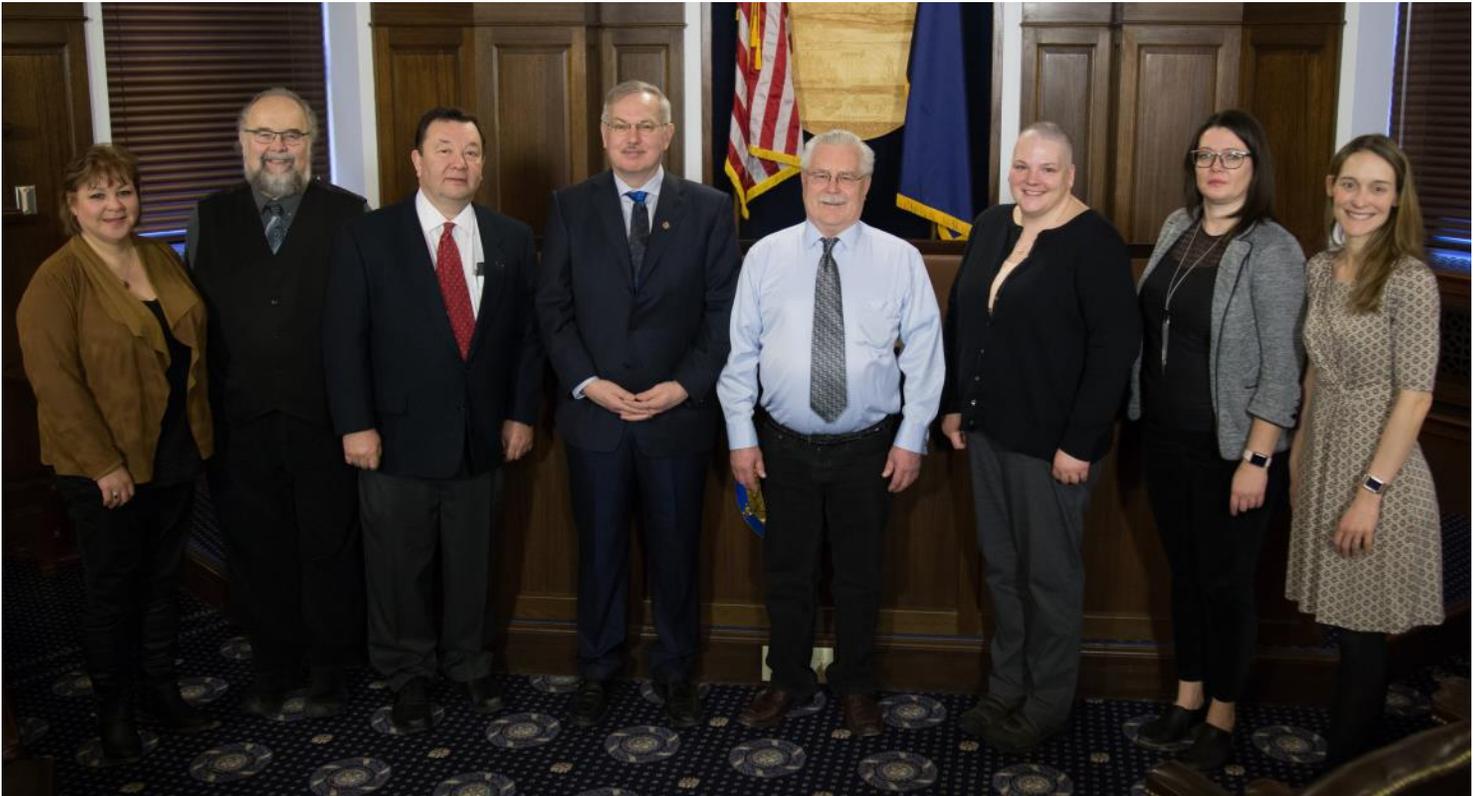
## House Speaker Bryce Edgmon's *Legislative Update*



Volume XII, No. 2

January 26th, 2018

### Landmark Agreement for King Cove-Cold Bay Road



The King Cove/Cold Bay/Aleutians East Borough Delegation with Speaker Edgmon this week. L to R: Cold Bay Mayor Daily Schaack, King Cove City Manager Gary Hennigh, AEB Mayor Alvin Osterback, Speaker Edgmon, King Cove Mayor Henry Mack, Cold Bay Administrator Angela Simpson, King Cove Assistant City Manager Amber Jusefowtch, and Aleutians East Borough Administrator Anne Bailey.

On Thursday this week I had the pleasure of sitting down with old friends from King Cove, Cold Bay, and the Aleutians East Borough to congratulate them on their breakthrough agreement with the Department of Interior, signed in Washington D.C. on Monday.

This land exchange between the federal government and the King Cove Corporation will finally allow the road from King Cove to the all-weather airport at Cold Bay to move forward. This has been a health-and-safety priority for the people of King Cove for more than three decades, and one that I have shared ever since I entered the Legislature in 2007.

I could not be more pleased to see my constituents' years of effort and perseverance result in this landmark accomplishment. During my years serving House District

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37, I have passed several bills and resolutions in support of the road, the most recent being House Joint Resolution 6, which enjoyed the Legislature's unanimous support in 2017, and which I hand-delivered to Senator Murkowski upon her visit to the Capitol last February.

In last year's Capital Budget I carefully guarded a \$10 million appropriation for the road's construction, and it is now my hope to see this project move ahead as quickly as possible. Over the past three decades 11 people have died during flights into or out of King Cove, and 8 lives have been lost because of weather hindering the transportation of sick or injured King Cove residents to medical care in Anchorage in a timely manner. The sooner this reliable land link to Cold Bay medivacs is available, the better.

In the meantime, congratulations to my King Cove constituents for reaching this week's inspiring milestone.

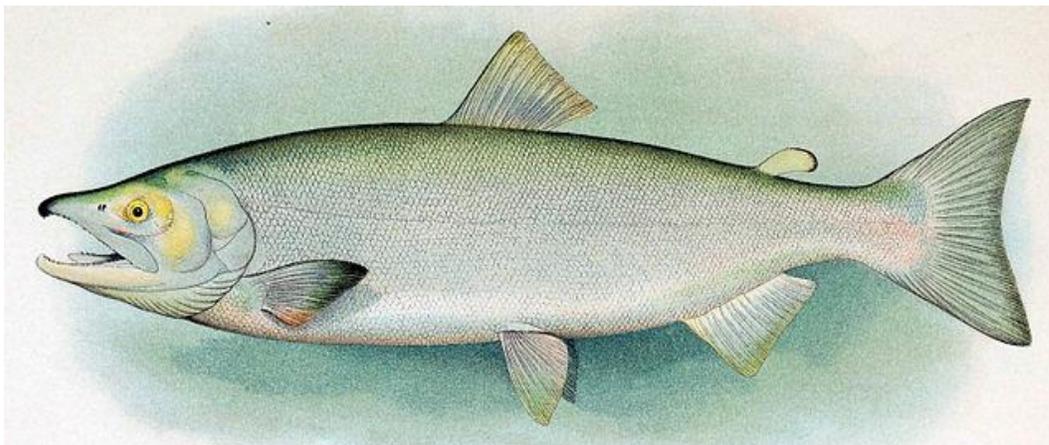
## EPA Suspends Pulling Proposed Heightened Protections for Bristol Bay

In another outstanding decision from Washington D.C. this week, the Environmental Protection Agency announced today that it would suspend withdrawal of proposed restrictions on hard-rock mining in the Bristol Bay watershed. Last year the agency began a process to consider voiding the restrictions, which were based on conclusions in the 2014 Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment that large scale mining would have "unacceptable adverse impacts" on the watershed.

This is welcome news to the people of Bristol Bay.

The threat of large-scale mining by the Pebble Partnership has caused far too much stress for far too long in the region. Subsistence users, sport fishermen, and a commercial fishery that employs more than 14,000 people each year depend on the watershed to produce the largest sockeye run in the world—a renewable resource that brings abundance to the Bay year after year.

I commend the EPA for crediting the extensive scientific evaluation that led the agency to this conclusion. The struggle to protect Bristol Bay is not over, but today's EPA decision encourages our resolve to continue with the fight to ensure Bristol Bay is protected for generations to come.



## Edgmon Bill to Help Boroughs Collect Local Revenues Heard in C&RA

On Thursday morning HB 267, my bill to help local governments increase their revenues, was given a successful hearing in the House Community & Regional Affairs Committee.

This bill gives municipalities that bring in revenues through modest levies on guided hunting and fishing access to records collected by the state that detail such activities. That way the local governments could cross reference the information to make sure they are receiving the revenues due to them from guiding companies.



At yesterday's meeting the bill was amended to ensure that all such guiding information would be kept strictly confidential by everyone concerned. This will make it easier and more efficient for the state agencies involved to provide the municipalities access to the data.

Edgmon staffer Tim Clark, left, presenting HB 267 in the House Community & Regional Affairs Committee yesterday.

There seemed to be a lot of agreement among the committee

members that with state cuts resulting in higher costs and more responsibilities for local governments in recent years, we should provide them this tool to maximize the revenues called for in their local ordinances.

HB 267 is scheduled to be taken up again by Community & Regional Affairs next Tuesday at 3:00 p.m. If all goes well, the bill should be moved from committee at that hearing, and we can prepare to present it to House Resources as soon as possible.

## House and Senate Bills to Early-Fund Education Finding Wide Support

Two similar bills making progress in the House and Senate would create significant benefits for our school districts through fast-tracking the Legislature's funding for public school education.

HB 287, introduced by House Finance Co-Chair Paul Seaton (R-Homer) and co-sponsored by the entire Alaska House Majority Coalition, including me, is essentially an independent major budget bill designed to pass separately from the Operating Budget, where education funding is traditionally addressed.

To quote from Rep. Seaton's sponsor statement, "The bill is intended to pass...early in the session to prevent school districts from issuing mandatory teacher layoff notices. Many lawmakers agree that education funding cannot withstand further cuts without negatively affecting Alaskan children. An early, separate appropriation for education that has existing funding identified would prevent these problems and will allow school districts to finalize their budgets on time."

Resolutions and letters in support of the bill—including from HD 37's Southwest Region School Dis-

trict—elaborate on these benefits. They point out that early budget certainty helps with the recruitment and retention of excellent teachers and allows more time for teachers to prepare quality instruction plans and attend cultural orientations.

A similar bill in the Senate is Sen. Gary Steven's (R-Kodiak) SB 131. It differs from the House bill in several ways, including that it requires the funding appropriation to be completed by April 1<sup>st</sup> each year, every year going forward.

However, as currently written SB 131 would not take effect until July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018, meaning that it would not require early funding this year. This means that, at least in my opinion, ideally both bills would pass this session—Rep. Seaton's bill so that early funding occurs this year, and Sen. Stevens bill to ensure it happens every year in the future.

My office will be tracking both bills as they move through the committee process, and we'll be sure to keep you posted on their progress.

## Introducing Speaker's Office Intern Bobbie McNeley, in Her Own Words



I am interning with Speaker Bryce Edgmon's office through the University of Alaska Senator Ted Stevens Legislative Internship Program.

My Unangax (Aleut) name is Yuġyan. My parents are Ellen Lori McNeley (Johnson) and Mark McNeley. I graduated from Mt. Edgecumbe High School in 2014. Currently a senior at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), I am completing a Bachelor of Arts in Alaska Native Studies with a concentration in Alaska Native Law, Government, and Politics, and an Associate of Applied Science in Tribal Management.

I will be graduating in May 2018 from UAF. In 2016 I received a certificate in Diesel Mechanics and Heavy Machinery. I am a very dedicated student at the university, having taken classes during every term since starting in 2014, to stay on track with my degrees. I take 16-18 credits during a typical semester, the most credits I have ever taken was 27 in a single semester. Along with my

studies I have always maintained a job on campus, ranging from the campus post office to working for the Office of Admissions and the Registrar.

I grew up in Nelson Lagoon, a village on the Bering Sea side of the Alaska Peninsula, where my family currently lives. I am a member of the Unangam Tunuu (Aleut Language) Advisory Committee, which oversees the progress of the Unangam Tunuu Revitalization Project. In 2016 I started the first Unangam Tunuu club at the Fairbanks campus. I taught language lessons to a small group of students on the weekends. In 2016 to 2017, I completed my undergraduate thesis "Charles J. Franz School: A Case of Rural School Closure." This project involved research on the trauma of rural school closures and dually funded tribal and state K-12 public school systems. I also started the process for my tribe to take over ownership of our school building and teacher living quarters.

In 2017, I attended the Korea Arctic Academy in South Korea, where I presented on the topics of Nelson Lagoon, Unangax Language, and my senior thesis. Following this academy, I attended the Arctic Circle Assembly in Iceland, as a youth representative for the Aleut International Association with the Arctic Youth Ambassadors. At this conference, I presented on the importance of youth in-

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volvement in Arctic issues and policy. After this, I was invited to return to South Korea for the Arctic Partnership Week, to present on education in the Arctic and the need to redesign the education curriculum for K-12 schools around the world to include the proper history of Alaska Natives, Native Americans, and other Indigenous people of the world.

I am passionate about showing my Unangax culture, representing the Unangax and Aleutian people, tribal affairs, Arctic policy, Indigenous rights, fisheries management, environmental issues, and education. Following UAF graduation and my internship with Speaker Edgmon, I hope to attend law school, with a focus on Federal Indian and Alaska Native Law.

Edgmon Intern Bobbie McNeley, center, with the Speaker and her aunt, Daily Schaack, who as Mayor of Cold Bay was in Juneau this week with the King Cove/Cold Bay/Aleutians East Borough Delegation.



Last week we had a visit from Canadian/U.S. Olympic figure skater Keegan Messing. Keegan holds dual citizenship and will be competing for Canada during the upcoming games in South Korea.

# On Deck Next Week...

## Monday

### **(S)FINANCE**

Jan 29 Monday 9:00 AM

Presentation: Department of Transportation and Public Facilities FY19 Operating Budget  
Marc Luiken, Commissioner

### **(H)MISCELLANEOUS MEETING**

Jan 29 Monday 12:00 PM

Lunch & Learn:

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay - The AK Network on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault on the wage gap & other important issues

### **(H)JUDICIARY**

Jan 29 Monday 1:30 PM

HB 129 FISH & GAME: OFFENSES;LICENSES;PENALTIES

## Tuesday

### **(H)FINANCE**

Jan 30 Tuesday 9:00 AM

HB 287 APPROP: EDUCATION/STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

HB 213 PUBLIC SCHOOL TRUST FUND

### **(H)FISHERIES**

Jan 30 Tuesday 10:00 AM

HB 188 COMM. FISH. ENTRY PERMITS; LOANS; TRUSTS Continuation of Introduction of Committee Substitute

### **(H)FISH & GAME**

Jan 30 Tuesday 11:00 AM

Overview: Dept. of Fish & Game Budget, cont

### **(H)HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES**

Jan 30 Tuesday 3:00 PM

HB 54 TERMINALLY ILL: ENDING LIFE OPTION; HB 162 DHSS CENT. REGISTRY;LICENSE;BCKGROUND CHK  
HB 268 OPIOID PRESCRIPTION WARNINGS

## Wednesday

### **(H)EDUCATION**

Jan 31 Wednesday 8:00 AM

Mt. Edgecumbe Boarding School  
Libraries, Archives & Museums

### **(H)FINANCE**

Jan 31 Wednesday 1:30 PM

FY19 Dept. Budget Overviews:

- Dept. of Fish & Game

- Dept. of Commerce, Community, & Economic Development

## Thursday

### **(H)FISH & GAME Finance**

Thursday 10:00 AM

Division of Commercial Fishing

### **(H)FISHERIES Special Committee**

Feb 01 Thursday 11:00 AM

Presentation by John Jensen, Chairman, Board of Fisheries

### **(H)TRANSPORTATION**

Feb 01 Thursday 1:00 PM

HB 263 TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR HUNTERS

### **(H)HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES**

Feb 01 Thursday 3:00 PM

Presentation: Update from Governor's Council on Disabilities & Special Education

### **(H)HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES**

Feb 01 Thursday 3:45 PM

Behavioral Health

Office of Substance Misuse & Addiction Prevention

## Friday

### **(S)RESOURCES**

Feb 02 Friday 3:30 PM

HB 130 GAME REFUGE/CRIT HABITAT AREA BOUNDARIES

## Keep in Contact

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