



SEA LION CORPORATION

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RESOLUTION 2022-02

Title: IN OPPOSITION OF BUILDING A ROAD WITHIN THE IZEMBEK NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (NWR)

WHEREAS the Sea Lion Corporation of Hooper Bay is the Alaska Native Village Corporation of Hooper Bay, a village in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta (Y-K Delta), and supports the endeavors of its members; and

WHEREAS the people of the Y-K Delta are primary stakeholders of waterfowl, and our customary and traditional use of birds has long been part of our diet and culture, and because the destructive development and habitat loss conducted by those in areas of the Pacific Flyway throughout the 1960's, '70's and '80's significantly affected waterfowl populations and resulted in curtailing our subsistence hunters and gatherer's practices; and

WHEREAS for decades the people of the Y-K Delta and the Association of Village Council Presidents' Waterfowl Conservation Committee have aggressively advocated international and national migratory waterfowl concerns for white-fronted, black brant, Canadian and cackling geese that nest in the Spring and Summer in the Y-K Delta through the Y-K Delta Goose Management Plan, in cooperation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDF&W), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODF&W), and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G); and

WHEREAS a portion of the road to link the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay would go through the Refuge's primary eelgrass feeding grounds, which are among the largest eelgrass beds in the world that migrating waterfowl feast on to sustain their energy and to continue on to their nesting grounds in the Y-K Delta; and

WHEREAS the 2013 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Land Exchange / Road Corridor Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)* analysis found that a road through the Izembek Refuge wilderness and isthmus would have major effects on black brant, Emperor geese and tundra swans, and would allow greater human access and hunting pressure and disturbance for birds causing displacement from feeding or nesting areas (FEIS, p. 2 – 64); and

WHEREAS the 2015 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers', "*King Cove – Cold Bay: Assessment of Non-Road Alternatives*", found that there are viable alternatives other than the proposed road for medical evacuation and other transportation purposes out of King Cove, including a marine ferry, which at 99.2% dependable is the most dependable option, is comparable in cost and would not impact Refuge waterfowl feeding areas and should be considered; and

WHEREAS Izembek Refuge's eelgrass is important for maintaining a healthy ecosystem, supporting vital subsistence resources for the people of the Y-K Delta, sustaining biodiversity, mitigating climate impacts, and providing foraging areas and shelter for young fish and invertebrates, food for migratory waterfowl, and spawning surfaces for certain fish species; and

WHEREAS the people of the Y-K Delta are experiencing increased food insecurity from environmental impacts due to climate change and other commercial interests resulting in restrictions to our fishing opportunities and access in addition to limited goose hunting opportunities; and

WHEREAS we believe these damaging impacts, deleterious forces and restricted access to our subsistence resources are threatening our livelihood and ultimately will cancel our culture.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sea Lion Corporation of Hooper Bay respectfully asserts our opposition to the proposed King Cove to Cold Bay Road on the grounds that there is scientific evidence that habitat and migrating geese would be significantly impacted by a road connecting the communities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska, and there are other viable transportation options, including for medical evacuation and other purposes, such as a ferry, out of the community of King Cove.

Adopted by Native Village of Hooper Bay, on this day 18 , May 2022



Bosco Olson, Sr. Chairman



Katherine Brower, Secretary

ATTEST
