

Conversation Contents

Fwd: Izembek

Attachments:

- /3. Fwd: Izembek/1.1 KCC letter to DOI.pdf
- /3. Fwd: Izembek/2.1 KCC letter to DOI.pdf

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Fri Jun 23 2017 12:14:36 GMT-0600 (MDT)
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Fwd: Izembek
Attachments: KCC letter to DOI.pdf

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

[Redacted]

Subject: Izembek

[Redacted]

I'm not sure you were provided a copy of the letter from King Cove Corporation to Secretary Zinke requesting a land exchange so here it is. I understand it King Cove is not going to make this request public but rather let the Department roll it out when it is ready.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]

Sent: Fri Jun 23 2017 12:59:45 GMT-0600 (MDT)

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Fwd: Izembek

Attachments: KCC letter to DOI.pdf

Attached is the letter from King Cove to the Secretary. In my consultation with the SOL, we are advised that the State of Alaska's permit request aligns with the proposal under review to the Secretary of Interior to enter into a land exchange under the authority of § 1302(h) of ANILCA as amended; 16 U.S.C. § 3192(h).

[REDACTED]
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service- Alaska Region
1011 E Tudor Rd, MS 374
Anchorage, AK 99503

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Fri, Jun 23, 2017 at 10:14 AM
Subject: Fwd: Izembek
To: [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

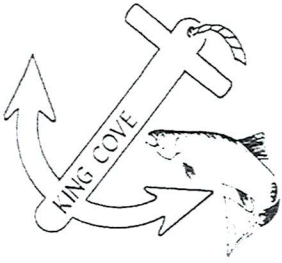
Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Izembek

[REDACTED]
I'm not sure you were provided a copy of the letter from King Cove Corporation to Secretary Zinke requesting a land exchange so here it is. I understand it King Cove is not going to make this request public but rather let the Department roll it out when it is ready.

[REDACTED]
Alaska Region - Dept. of the Interior
Anchorage, Alaska
[REDACTED]





KING COVE CORPORATION

May 24, 2017

Honorable Ryan Zinke
Secretary
United States Department of Interior
1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Zinke:

The people of King Cove, Alaska request that the Department of Interior (DOI) commence a land exchange process under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) and Alaska National Interest Lands Act (ANILCA) that would allow King Cove to complete a road connection between King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska. Constructing such a road will save the lives of our residents who continually require medical emergencies and need to be medevaced to Anchorage. This road will also provide a quality of life that our people deserve as Americans.

King Cove, Alaska is located at the western end of the Alaska Peninsula and the start of the Aleutian Islands. There are two Department of Interior recognized tribes in King Cove, the Agdaguux Tribe and Native Village of Belkofski. Our ancestors have occupied this area for over 4,000 years and, as descendants, we are proud of our heritage and are good stewards of all the resources in our region.

Although King Cove is only 12 miles from Alaska's fourth longest paved civilian runway, at Cold Bay, the residents of King Cove cannot regularly reach the airport. The weather in our area is some of the worst in Alaska and will often prevent us from accessing the Cold Bay airport by small aircraft. This weather is subject to radical change even during the same day. So, it is only possible to schedule air travel from our small airstrip about 50% of the time with any certainty of safety. Twelve persons have died in the past years trying to get to and from the King Cove unpaved, gravel landing strip.

In addition, we have had many "near miss" events. For example, Etta Kuzakin, President of the Agdaguux Tribal Council was medevaced from King Cove while 34 weeks pregnant to give birth by cesarean section in Anchorage. She was flown to Cold Bay on a Coast Guard helicopter from a Coast Guard ship, which fortuitously was in the area. There were 60 knot winds that forced her to fly a circuitous route to Cold Bay that took 40 minutes. Had the Coast Guard not been there or able to fly her to Cold Bay she could not have given birth because the King Cove clinic lacks the ability to perform a cesarean section.

A landing craft travelling 14 miles over open ocean between King Cove and Cold Bay in the wind, wave, and storm conditions of Cold Bay (body of water) is simply not a substitute for a road during such medical emergencies.

Although historically used trails have long existed in the Izembek Isthmus, the idea of a road connecting King Cove and Cold Bay has been discussed since at least the 1940s. Maps show the path of roads that were constructed through the Peninsula by the military during World War II. Residents of the King Cove community have long desired and advocated for a road as the only safe, reliable and affordable means of year-round access to Cold Bay and its all-weather airport.

Nevertheless, in 1980, without any consultation with our people, or consideration of our unique need for a road, Congress designated the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge (which had been established in 1960) as wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

The King Cove Corporation owns land in fee title and under selection rights it received as a Native Village under ANCSA. Our corporation owns very important and valuable land located within the physical boundaries of the Izembek Refuge and Wilderness and the adjoining Alaska Peninsula Refuge, with which it could complete a mutually beneficial exchange.

Accordingly, this letter requests that DOI enter into a process to consider a land exchange between the King Cove Corporation (KCC) and the U.S. Government and Department of Interior in accordance with ANSCA, ANILCA and other pertinent laws. Such an exchange would result in KCC owning sufficient land to construct a road connecting existing roads. This includes a route previously authorized by Congress in the Omnibus Public Land and Management Act of 2009 under section 6001 et. seq. known as the King Cove Access Project road and the existing, extensive road system on the Cold Bay side now used and managed as part of the two refuges and available for use by sport hunters, tourists, and other users. The exact location of the best route for the road will be determined by work we are doing cooperatively with the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities.

The land exchange would be:

1. Equal value as required by federal law;
2. Utilize land owned in fee by KCC conveyed and selected under ANCSA; and
3. Utilize federal land located within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge and also the Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge, if necessary.

KCC is working with the State of Alaska, the Agdaguux Tribe, the Native Village of Belkofski, the Aleutians East Borough and the City of King Cove to determine the best, least impactful route for this road. However, there is currently enough information available regarding the location of the route from previous reviews for DOI to begin the process of considering such an exchange.

KCC owns land located within the physical boundaries of both Refuges. KCC also holds a pending land selection within the Izembek Refuge Wilderness. It also owns fee title to land physically located within the Izembek Refuge Wilderness. In *Land Protection Plan Options for the Protection of Fish and Wildlife Habitats in the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Complex* (1998) the USF&WS identified the 2,604 acres of KCC land between Kinzarof Lagoon and Cold Bay as "High Priority" for addition to the Izembek and Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuges. In the 1998 Land Protection Plan the Service said that there

was an “urgency” in acquiring the lands because of potential future development. The Corporation intends that this land be offered to DOI for consideration as part of the exchange.

Obviously, if an agreement on a land exchange can be reached, it could also lead to a settlement of the current litigation between the State, King Cove Group litigants and the Department of Interior.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let me know if you have any questions. KCC looks forward to your reply and beginning these proposed negotiations.

Sincerely,

