



# CONSERVATION VOTER



Alaska Conservation Voters

[www.acvoters.org](http://www.acvoters.org)

Summer 2006

## ACV Sees Climate Change Triumph in Legislature!

Throughout Alaska, the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident; whether it is via damage to our infrastructure, revenue sources, irreplaceable cultures or fragile ecosystems, the issue of climate change touches us all. Thanks to the recent passage of the Alaska Climate Impact Assessment Commission Resolution (HCR30), Alaskans can begin the conversation of how to work towards solutions, even before more serious problems arise.

The Resolution, championed by Rep. Joule (D-Kotzebue), introduced in a similar form (SB278) by Sen. Olson (D-Nome), and strategically supported by Rep. Samuels (R-Anchorage), creates an eleven-person panel of legislators and related experts to focus on translating existing information into effective policy recommendations. The passage of the resolution, which garnered unanimous, bi-partisan support in both houses, was a notable feat considering the conservative climate of the current legislature. The measure represents their first step to address this important issue.

“As the state on the frontline of the climate crisis, Alaska is already feeling the impacts of warmer temperatures,” commented Kate Troll, Executive Director of ACV. “Passage of this bill represents a small but significant step to work towards finding solutions. Our state can now join the ranks of the 28 other states

that have already enacted action plans to proactively address this critical issue.”

Under the direction of ACV’s contract lobbyist, David Rogers, ACV coordinated a coalition with the Alaska Conservation Foundation and Alaska Conservation Solutions to pass the resolution and line up a broad range of support from key scientists and representatives from industry, tourism, and fishing groups.

“David Rogers was absolutely critical to the conservation community’s work on the climate commission legislation,” said Susanne Fleek from the Alaska Conservation Foundation. “He worked effectively with Representative Joule, Senator Olson, Representative Samuels and others to keep us focused on the best strategies to get the bill passed.”



*Rep. Joule’s staff member, Mikayla Saito (left), stands with ACV Lobbyist David Rogers and Legislative Manager Suzanne Bostrom.*

The Commission will conduct eight hearings around the state and deliver a preliminary report of its findings by March of 2007. Steps to examine candidates for the Commission are already underway and hearings are likely to begin later this year. ACV will stay engaged throughout the process to ensure the initiative’s success.

For more information on how to get involved with ACV’s efforts on the Climate Change Commission, email [Kate@akvoice.org](mailto:Kate@akvoice.org). ☑

### ***In Brief* >> Anchorage Municipal Elections Victories!**

Anchorage’s Municipal Election was a huge success for Alaska Conservation Voters. ACV helped Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich fend off anti-conservation challenger Jack Frost by contacting and turning out our conservation voters. ACV also endorsed School Board candidates Jeff Friedman and Macon Roberts, who both won re-election, as well as newcomer Mike Layne who lost to incumbent Crystal Kennedy. While Anchorage voters support conservation candidates, they rejected the ACV supported parks bond. ☑

### **Navigating the Legislative Seas**

While some Alaskan fishermen are just beginning to gear up for their season of working on the high seas, ACV’s efforts in navigating a different kind of sea—the second session of the 24th Alaska Legislature—have finally come to a close and there is much to report.

During the second session of the 24th Alaska Legislature, ACV continued to focus on getting a “seat at the table.” By putting a moderate face on ACV’s positions, choosing our battles wisely, participating in negotiations, working to reach compromises, and attempting to build new alliances, ACV worked to improve the image of conservation in Alaska.

The session presented ACV with a number of unique challenges; with a strong legislative focus on the Petroleum Production Tax for the majority of the session, limited time was left at the end to fix bills or work out issues. Additionally, there was strong pressure from the administration on measures such as the Public Interest Litigants bill (SB86) and for “mega projects” like the Juneau Road Extension.

With the generally difficult environment for green groups

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Alaska Conservation Voters protects Alaska's environment through public education and advocacy, and supports pro-conservation candidates for public office.

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Alaska Conservation Voters  
 P.O. Box 100660  
 Anchorage, AK 99510-0660  
 Phone: 907.258.6171  
 Fax: 907.258.6177  
 www.acvoters.org

## Letter from the Director >>

Six months ago, according to my letter of employment, I signed up “to demonstrate my ability to advance one of the most important causes in the world: protecting Alaska’s magnificent natural environment.” With such a noble directive, I am very appreciative of the opportunity to be back in a saddle of leadership; charging ahead with a very active legislative session. At the same time, I have been focused on getting grounded within the conservation community and within this fine organization.

So where is Alaska Conservation Voters going? Onwards and Upwards. And as you can see in this newsletter we are already on our way. Most significant among the legislative accomplishments, is the establishment of the Climate Impact Assessment Commission. We played a critical behind-the-scene role to keep this proposal moving. We also helped to pass 2 other pro-conservation bills, modified 2 problematic bills into acceptable conservation bills, and stopped 3 anti-conservation actions. By Alaskan standards this is indeed a very successful legislative session.

The progress we made this last legislative session is testament to 1) the coordinated team approach of the conservation community, 2) the skills and relationships of our professional lobbyist, 3) the value of being ‘strategic and sensitive’ (minimizing the green imprint and working through alliances) 4) the ability to apply grassroots and grassroots pressure at key junctures and 5) showing a moderate face. Now we must keep the momentum going. We must continue to build a non-partisan corps of moderates who will act to implement conservation minded policies. With the upcoming elections such an opportunity is knocking at our door.

To help guide us through the upcoming election cycle, we have a core of returning Board members as well as four new Board members – Pat Pourchot, Jane Angvik, Jamie Kenworthy and Gregory Vickery. As you can see, Alaska Conservation Voters is geared up more than ever to be *the political arm of the conservation community*. To keep us there we need your support; we need you to call in your donation (see back) and recruit your friends and neighbors to be part of this noble cause.

Sincerely,



From left to right, ACV Staff: Suzanne Bostrom, Baby GG & Bobi Rinehart, Caitlin Higgins, Kate Troll and Dwayne Lee.

### The ACA Connection

If the Alaska Conservation Voters is the political arm of the conservation community, then the Alaska Conservation Alliance (ACA) is the strategic thinker. ACA brings more than 35 member organizations together to prioritize issues and to speak with one voice to Alaskans, government officials, and the media. Although ACA and ACV are separate organizations, both support the mission of advancing conservation through the civic arena. ACA engages in policy discussions and educates Alaskans and decision-makers about conservation issues; ACV works to support pro-conservation candidates and to ensure those issues are addressed in the political arena. Together, both organizations advance conservation policy in Alaska – the brains and the brawn. ☑

# ACV Conservation Score Card >>

24th legislature | session 2, 2006

**CONSERVATION RATINGS >>** Rather than single out conservation supporters based simply on floor votes, we thought it would be more useful and accurate to once again provide a qualitative ranking that better captures the nuances of the Alaska legislature. Given the legislative successes and establishment of some new relationships, we also opted to focus on the positive more than the negative attributes of our legislators. As such, we are purposely not including an antagonist category for this past legislative session.

The following are legislators whose actions in this legislative session merit acknowledgement as a champion, ally or potential ally. **It is important to note that most legislators acknowledged last year as an advocate or ally remained a supporter. These legislators are Senator Gretchen Guess, Senator Albert Kookesh, Rep. Sharon Cissna, Rep. Kevin Meyer, Rep. Harry Crawford, Rep. Berta Gardner, Rep. Gabrielle LeDoux and Rep. Woodie Salmon.** Please visit our website at [www.acvoters.org](http://www.acvoters.org) for more information on conservation legislation.

## CHAMPION

Some are true promoters of conservation, friends you can rely on to safeguard the real Alaska and our quality of life. Others are willing to take a risk by sponsoring and/or advancing pro-conservation legislation. Advocates also take pride in their efforts to inject balance and accountability into government decision making.

## ALLY

These independent lawmakers frequently vote for conservation in Alaska and are often the sponsors of important pro-conservation legislation.

## POTENTIAL ALLY

These lawmakers have been known to show independence from industry influence or voting along party lines and on occasion take a stand for pro-conservation legislation.

## The Senate

### CHAMPIONS



#### **Senator Johnny Ellis (D-Anchorage)**

Senator Ellis, minority leader for many years, has continually remained a tried and true conservation champion and a strong but pragmatic voice for the Democratic caucus. He is quick to support pro-conservation issues such as the Climate Change (HCR30) and Exxon Valdez (HJR9) bills and encourages no less than the same from his fellow legislators. His dedication to safeguard the interests of Alaska is to be commended and we appreciate his support.

#### **Senator Kim Elton (D-Juneau)**

Known for asking questions that get to the heart of contentious issues, Senator Elton is, as ever, a strong voice for conservation in the Democratic caucus and has an open door to the conservation community. As a Resources committee member, his strong sense of reason and careful consideration of anti-conservation bills such as the Fish and Game overhaul (SB170) further underscore his commitment to protecting Alaska. Among other things, he cross sponsored the Climate Change resolution (HCR30) in the Senate and also backed the Exxon Valdez bill (HJR9).



#### **Senator Hollis French (D-Anchorage)**

Senator French continually acts as a strong voice for reason in the Senate. Whether on the floor or in the Judiciary committee, he is recognized for asking tough questions and for trying to encourage balance in the legislative process. Among other things, he sponsored and pushed for Exxon to be held accountable for the aftermath of the Exxon Valdez spill (SJR17, HJR9) and pursued good changes to recreational provisions in the Eminent Domain bill (HB318).

# The Senate

## ALLIES



### **Senator Donny Olson (D-Nome)**

As the sponsor of the Climate Change Task Force bill (SB278), Senator Olson led the charge in the Senate to take a closer look at the impacts and solutions for climate change in Alaska. He also attempted to insert an amendment on the Senate floor to the infamous Dalton Highway ORV bill (SB85) that would not allow the bill to take effect unless a management plan was developed and agreed upon by impacted groups.

## POTENTIAL ALLIES

### **Senator Gary Stevens (R-Kodiak)**

Though his floor votes tend to fall along party lines, Senate Majority leader Gary Stevens sponsored Senate versions of the mixing zones (SB225) and the invasive species (SB245) bills which, though they failed to move, show promise for his desire to advance legislation that will safeguard Alaska's natural environment and protect clean water. Senator Stevens also cross sponsored one of the Exxon Valdez resolutions (HJR9).



### **Senator Thomas Wagoner (R-Kenai)**

Generally not seen as a conservationist, Senator Wagoner's opposition to the controversial SB85 as the sole Republican vote against the bill in the Senate and his opposition to key elements of the new mixing zone regulations demonstrate his strong sense of reason in an often partisan body. As the Resources committee chair, Senator Wagoner tries to promote balanced discussion of bills and is someone we can talk to who is often sympathetic to our causes. He was very helpful with the climate change bill and was sensitive to the Knik Arm Public Use Area (HB307) enforcement concerns raised by locals and users. His careful consideration and failure to move a controversial Fish & Game Overhaul (SB170) in the final, rushed weeks of the session was also notable.



# The House of Representatives

## CHAMPIONS



### **Representative Les Gara (D-Anchorage)**

Rep. Gara's telling questions and debates in the Education and Judiciary committees and on the House floor are known to get to the heart of issues and highlight him as a champion of conservation issues. His endorsement of the Exxon Valdez bill (HJR9) and the Pebble Mine Management Plan (HCR29) underscore his role as a clean water and fish advocate. His attempts to clarify legislative intent on the Knik River bill (HB 307) to protect the interests of non-motorized users and insert amendments in the Eminent Domain bill (HB318) and University Lands resolution (HCR14) to protect recreational access to streams and other resources were noteworthy.

### **Representative Beth Kerttula (D-Juneau)**

Time and time again, Rep. Kerttula proves herself to be a true champion for conservation issues. Her accessibility and tireless motivation to act on the concerns of the conservation community on key issues such as the Knik River Public Use Area (HB307) and to kill the Hatcher Pass bill (HB306) are exemplary. Her long list of co-sponsored and sponsored conservation bills—including the Pebble Mine management plan (HCR29), the mixing zones bill (HB328), the Climate Change resolution (HCR30), and a slew of renewable energy bills (HB445, HB335)—are a testament to her dedication to protect Alaska.



# The House of Representatives

## CHAMPIONS

### **Representative Paul Seaton (R-Homer)**

Rep. Seaton proved himself, once again, to be an important and fearless ally to the conservation community by sponsoring a bill and leading an uphill effort to prevent a regulatory roll back of the former ban on mixing zones in spawning streams (HB328). As chair of the State Affairs Committee, he took a stand to stop the Public Interest Litigants bill (SB86) despite significant pressure from the administration. His willingness to listen and take risks is appreciated. His sponsorship of bills to safeguard recreational use of private lands (HB415) and to revamp a weak mining tax structure (HB418) show him as legislator that works to protect the interests of Alaskans.



## ALLIES



### **Representative David Guttenberg (D-Fairbanks)**

Rep. Guttenberg worked tirelessly to remove additional as well as previous funding for the ill-planned Stampede Road project and was a willing and friendly leader for both his constituents and the conservation community. His pro-conservation voting record as well as his support of legislation such as the Climate Impact (HCR30) and Exxon Valdez (HJR9) resolutions further highlight his concern for the future of Alaska. He is always there when we need him.

### **Representative Reggie Joule (D-Kotzebue)**

As the primary sponsor of the Climate Impact Assessment Commission (HCR30), Rep. Joule stood out this session as an individual that was more than willing to work with and listen to the concerns of the conservation community. His passion and dedication to addressing the concerns of people living in the Arctic likewise deserves special recognition.



### **Representative Mary Kapsner (D-Bethel)**

As a member of the House Resources, Transportation, and Fisheries committees and as a steadfast advocate for native, subsistence and rural issues, Rep. Kapsner distinguished herself by voting to close loopholes for mixing zones in spawning streams (HB328) and by giving a strong thumbs down to legislation that would open the Dalton Highway to ORV use (SB85). She is also to be commended for her co-sponsorship of renewable energy bills (HB335, HB196) and the climate change commission resolution (HCR30). Rep. Kapsner is another good friend.

## POTENTIAL ALLIES

### **Representative Jim Elkins (R-Ketchikan)**

As the co-chair of the Transportation committee, Rep. Elkins took a strong stance as one of the votes to stop the Dalton Highway from being opened to ORV use (SB85). His support of renewable energy (HB445) and the Exxon Valdez bill (HJR9) is also commendable, but we were sorry to see him co-sponsor the bill to expand bonding authority for building the Knik Arm "Bridge to Nowhere" (HB471).



### **Representative Carl Gatto (R-Palmer)**

We were proud to see Rep. Gatto's stance to safeguard salmon streams and promote clean water through his sponsorship of the Mixing Zones bill (HB328). In the face of strong pressure from the administration, the independent thinking Rep. Gatto also made a difference as one of the key votes on the State Affairs committee to not pass the Public Interest Litigants bill (SB86). However, his vote to move SB 85 from the Transportation Committee to open the Dalton corridor to ORV use was disappointing.

# The House of Representatives

## POTENTIAL ALLIES

### **Representative Mike Hawker (R-Anchorage)**

As an individual whose floor voting record has not historically pointed to a strong conservation ethic, we were notably impressed by Rep. Hawker's decision to sponsor a controversial resolution (HCR29) calling for a "closer look" at the proposed Pebble Mine. While the bill failed to move from House Resources, his initiative to delve into the issue in the face of intense industry pressure was notable.



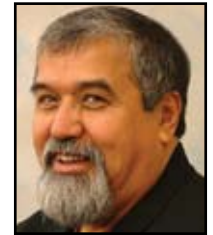
### **Representative Bill Stoltze (R-Chugiak)**

This Finance committee vice-chair distinguished himself this session through his willingness to listen carefully to his critics and to find and support reasonable compromises for the Knik River Public Use Area bill (HB307). Despite pressure to the contrary, Rep. Stoltze also withdrew his highly controversial bill to convey Hatcher Pass Public Use Area to the Mat-Su Borough (HB306), citing the many unanswered questions on the potential adverse effects from private developers' plans for the area. His sponsorship of a bill that would increase bonding authority for the entity that would push to build the Knik Arm "Bridge to Nowhere" (HB471) raises concerns.



### **Representative Bill Thomas (R-Chugiak)**

We were encouraged to see his strong support for Renewable Energy (HB445) and greatly appreciated his firm stance and hard work to block funding for the Juneau "Dead-End" Road Extension. Though his initial version of the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve bill (HB378) raised hackles, we were encouraged by his eventual willingness to listen to the concerns of constituents and the conservation community in reaching a compromise.



## Worth Noting

Every legislative year there are surprises when it comes to conservation issues. Some are surprisingly supportive; some not. While their legislative actions fall outside this ranking system, they are very much worth noting.

### **Senator Lyda Green (R-Wasilla)**

While Senator Green's voting record does not point to a strong pro-conservation ethic, she deserves a hearty thanks for her willingness to listen to the concerns of the citizens of the Knik River area on HB307. Had it not been for her efforts to increase funding in the bill, the outlook for this dangerous area would have been bleak. She also moved the Climate change bill out of Finance despite some initial concerns expressed by co-chair Wilken. As co-chair of Senate Finance, she presided over a Capital Budget that removed funding for the Stampede Road, but ultimately kept in money for the "Bridges to Nowhere" and the Juneau Road Extension.



### **Senator Ralph Seekins (R-Fairbanks)**

This Senate Judiciary chair, who runs a very good and fair meeting, and member of the Senate Resources committee is an emerging Republican leader known in the conservation community for sponsoring controversial bills such as SB85, which would open the Dalton Highway corridor to ORV use, and SB170, a 26-page overhaul of Fish & Game's authority that would make drastic—and often ill-conceived—changes to game management. Despite "anti-greenie" tendencies and a voting record slanted heavily towards less than conservation-friendly legislation, Senator Seekins should be given a pat on the back for opposing funding in the capital budget for the Stampede Road extension.



### **Representative Jay Ramras (R-Fairbanks)**

House Resources co-chair Ramras held a couple of hearings but ultimately refused to move the mixing zones bill (HB328) from his committee due to concerns about impacts on the placer mining industry. We were disappointed by this decision but we also want to acknowledge and thank Rep. Ramras for his strong support or sponsorship of the Climate Change resolution (HCR30) and renewable energy initiatives (HB196, HCR3, HB335, HB196, HB9).



Stay up to date on important legislation during the Alaska legislative session by subscribing to ACV's *Conservation Watch*.

Go to [www.acvoters.org](http://www.acvoters.org) and click on **Legislation** to subscribe.

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and voices, ACV elected to take a behind the scenes role by partnering with alternative messengers and allies—such as fishermen on Mixing Zones and Women's Advocacy Groups on the Public Interest Litigants bill—to push through legislation and testify on bills. One key element of ACV's new strategy in the legislature was the addition of a professional lobbyist, David Rogers, to navigate the conservation community's priorities

through the legislature.

Below are a few brief highlights on the ups and downs of this year's legislative session. With the progress made this session to build new alliances and promote pro-conservation issues like Renewable Energy, ACV looks forward to further successes in next year's legislative session. For more information, visit our website at [www.acvoters.org](http://www.acvoters.org) and click to read the latest *Conservation Watch*.

## LEGISLATIVE HIGHLIGHTS >>

- ✓ **Dalton Highway ATV Use [SB85]** - SB85 was poised to open the Dalton Highway Corridor to ORV use. The bill died after a 3-2 vote stopped it from moving from House Transportation in the last few days of the session.
- ✓ **Knik River Public Use Area [HB307]** ACV and others fought long and hard to turn around this controversial bill to establish the Knik River Public Use Area. With a few language adjustments and the addition of a beefed up fiscal note, this bill swiftly became a victory.

- ✓ **Public Interest Litigants [SB86]** ACV teamed with women's advocacy groups to kill this bill, which would have limited the award of attorney fees to public interest litigants. Despite significant pressure from the administration, the bill died 3-1 in House State Affairs.
- ✓ **Exxon Valdez [HJR9]** This resolution became the vehicle for both the Exxon Valdez Reopener and the push for Congress to honor the damages judgment from the Exxon Valdez case. HJR9 passed the legislature on the last day of the session.
- ✓ **Stampede Road Funding** We were happy to see the additional \$9 million requested by Gov. Murkowski to extend this ill-planned road north of Denali removed from the budget.
- ✗ **Mixing Zones [HB328]** One of ACV's top priorities, this bill would have prevented a rollback to the ban on mixing zones in spawning streams. The bill died in House Resources when co-chair Ramras refused to move it.
- ✗ **Renewable Energy** While interest in renewable energy appeared to be at an all time high, little time was left to work out issues on a number of bills, including Rep. Thomas' promising Alternative Energy Grant Fund [HB445]. Nevertheless, the issue is alive and well and will be back on the table next session.
- ✗ **Juneau Road Extension & Bridges to Nowhere** After a long, uphill battle, partial federal funding for the Knik Arm & Gravina bridges as well as \$45 million in state money for the Juneau Extension remained in the capital budget. Thankfully, the Bridges did not receive any additional state funding.

*Want to help with pro-conservation legislation?  
Email [Suzanne@akvoice.org](mailto:Suzanne@akvoice.org).*

## Donor Profile - **Bonnie Lembo & Robert Bundy**

Bonnie Lembo and her husband, Robert Bundy, have been long-time champions of Alaska conservation and Alaska Conservation Voters. Besides providing ongoing general support, they are the primary sponsors of ACV's Green Attorney event.

They came to Alaska in 1971 and met while working as attorneys in Anchorage. Later, they were married in Nome and lived the village life in Kiana before returning to Anchorage to raise their twin daughters.

Bob is the sort of man you would want to have with you if your airplane ever goes down in the Bush – he is an accomplished outdoorsman and spends lot of time hunting, fishing, and clamming. Bonnie embraces Alaska by berry picking and working in her vibrant organic garden, a jewel in her downtown neighborhood.

She supports Alaska conservation because she sees an

investment in a healthy environment as one of the best ways to give back to her community. Clean water, clean air, thriving parks and trail systems, she believes, enable our children to live as part of nature and have healthier lives.



*Bonnie Lembo lives what she believes: Here she is holding canned cherries from her lush, 100% organic garden.*

Having conservation-minded people in office, is an effective way to ensure that a healthy environment is a priority in our state. By giving to ACV, Bonnie says, she supports conservation-minded candidates across the state, strengthening our legislature (even if a strong candidate does not happen to be from her district). She also likes the fact that ACV is a non-partisan organization, encouraging a respectful dialogue between candidates. This approach brings a refreshing civility to the political process.

We thank Bonnie and her husband Bob for their commitment to ACV. ✓

*Alaska Conservation Voters has accomplished much to keep Alaska healthy, but none of our great work would be possible without your generous support. Please help ensure a safe, healthy environment for years to come by contributing today.*

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Please do not share my name, address, or email with other organizations.

Membership:  \$35 Student/Senior  \$50 Individual  \$100 Family

Donation:  \$100  \$250  \$500  
 \$1,000  Other \_\_\_\_\_

One-time charge (amount): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please charge my credit card every month (amount): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Type (circle):  Visa  Mastercard

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to ACV. Note: Up to \$1,000 per year of your contributions may be transferred to our Political Activity Fund (where they can be used to help elect pro-conservation candidates). If we transfer your donation to our PAF, we must by law identify your name, address and occupation. Contributions to ACV are not tax-deductible.

## How can I help?

There are numerous ways you can make a difference in ACV's efforts. To become a member or make a donation simply fill out the form to the left and mail it to

**P.O. Box 100660  
Anchorage, AK 99510,**

fax it to

**907.258.6177**

or call in your donation to  
**907.258.6160.**

Would you like more information on how to support ACV's work?

*Please contact Bobi Rinehart at  
907.258.6160 or  
Bobi@akvoice.org.*

**Thank You for  
Your Support.**



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