

Alaska Economic Development and Access to Resources Act

Alaska has been a world-class producer of natural resources for hundreds of years. First furs, then fish, followed by gold and timber, and more recently oil, gas, coal, and hardrock minerals. Alaska's land, forest and wildlife managers have consistently balanced environmental protection with resource extraction, and we can now add the non-consumptive resource business of international tourism to the list. Unfortunately, the federal government's stewardship of more than 60 percent of our lands typically favors no activity whatsoever. This repressive approach stifles both Alaska's growth and our nation's economy. Our nation imports resources that Alaskans can produce responsibly. Through the Alaska Economic Development and Access to Resources Act, we have crafted a "Buy American" package that allows Alaskans to do what we do best.

Oil and Gas:

- The Secretary of the Interior is directed to develop a plan to add 500,000 barrels per day of new oil production from federal lands to the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System within 10 years.
- A small portion of the Coastal Plain, located within the non-wilderness part of ANWR, is opened for oil and gas exploration and development. The total development footprint is not to exceed 2,000 acres in an area that in total encompasses 19.5 million acres.
- Lease sales are mandated in the Northeast portion of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska that was designated as available for development in the last management plan completed by the Department of the Interior.
- Adds two additional lease sales in the 2017-2022 OCS Lease Plan for each of the Beaufort, Chukchi, and Cook Inlet planning areas.
- Allows for the extension of Alaska OCS lease terms to account for time periods when activity is prohibited.

Mining:

- Establishes a rare earth element refining demonstration project. The U.S. is blessed with large deposits of rare earth elements, but today we are 100 percent reliant on foreign countries for our supply and refining.
- Clarifies a "Catch-22" definition of "mineral activity" that has endangered valid and existing rights of claim holders nationwide.
- Land designations in Alaska that limit activities currently allowed shall terminate within 1 year unless approved by a joint resolution of Congress within that time, and all ACEC's in the State of Alaska are revoked.

Forestry:

- Provides an exemption from the Roadless Rule for Alaska to allow access to areas with valuable timber reserves.
- Facilitates a long-proposed land exchange between the Alaska Mental Health Trust and the U.S. Forest Service to expedite timber to Southeast operators.

- Authorizes the establishment of a state forest.