



U.S. Department of Energy

Alaska Power Administration

2770 Sherwood Lane

Juneau, Alaska 99801

August 29, 1996

Mr. Robert G. Ylvisaker
Right of Way Administrator
Matanuska Electric Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 2929
Palmer, AK 99645

RE: Public Fishing Access at the Eklutna Power Plant

Dear Mr. Ylvisaker:

Recently a member of my staff had an informal contact with Mr. Kevin Delaney, Director of the Sport Fishing Division of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). Their conversation related to public access for sport fishing at the Eklutna Power Plant, and management of the large number of sport fishermen that frequent the site. The location, because of its association with the Cook Inlet Aquiculture Association fish hatchery, enjoys very large returns of coho, chum and sockeye salmon. APA has found that management of the tailrace and camp area has progressively become more difficult over the years.

Currently, APA has an agreement with the ADF&G which grants permission to ADF&G on an annual basis to manage the Eklutna campground and tailrace for sport fishing. ADF&G provides dumpsters, waste pickup and disposal, and portable latrines. In addition, they have ADF&G staff periodically inspect the area and check fishing licenses. Because of the high interest in sports fishing, ADF&G has been picking up all cost associated with this management. Future ADF&G involvement will be based upon availability of State funding for sport fish enhancement projects, and will be subject to annual State Legislative approval.

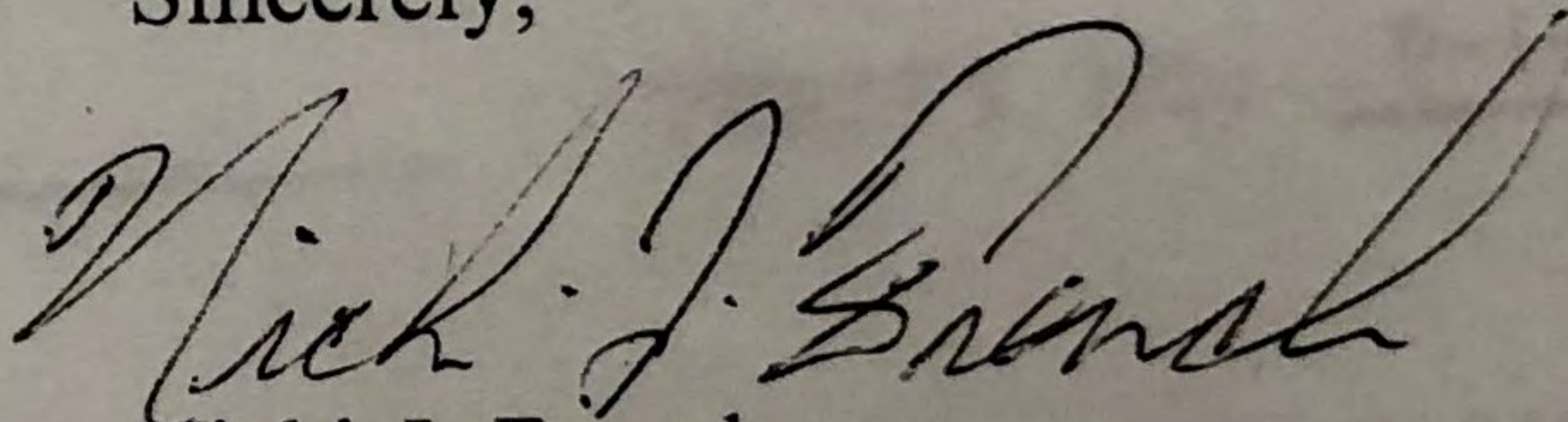
Mr. Delaney showed interest in furthering ADF&G's involvement in the area. He stated that in the long-term ADF&G is interested in making improvements to the site, such as permanent bathrooms, picnic shelters, parking and other camping facilities. However, in order to take those steps, ADF&G would need to gain greater control of the site. He suggested ADF&G acquire the site permanently by way of fee title or long-term lease. Acquisition of the location by the Sport Fish Division will increase the likelihood of continued funding of the project as a line item in the ADF&G budget.

APA feels that if Eklutna was not going to be sold to the Purchasers, that in-house management decision would support transfer of the fishing site to the ADF&G because of the difficulty associated with fisheries management. Our recommendation to the Purchasers is that consideration be taken to evaluate sale, lease or transfer of that fishing site to the State. There is a great deal of good public relations that can be gained from involvement in sport fishing enhancement, while only considerable negative points are realized in managing lands that are utilized by so many. We generally agree that it is best to leave fishery management to the State and power generation to the utilities.

Currently, APA has taken no further actions on this issue; however, we do request of the Purchasers a consolidated position on how this issue should be handled during transition. If the Purchasers feel that it is in your best interest to initiate discussions at the current time with ADF&G, then APA can actively facilitate those meetings.

Please attempt to provide APA with your thoughts on this issue by the end of September. If you have any questions, you can contact my ES&H Officer, Rob Waldman, at (907) 586-7405.

Sincerely,



Nicki J. French
Assistant Administrator

cc: Kevin Delaney, Director Sport Fish Division, ADF&G
Tom Donek, Access Coordinator, Sport Fish Division, ADF&G

bcc: Rodney Adelman