



ORUTSARARMIUT NATIVE COUNCIL P.O. Box 927, Bethel, AK, 99559 Office: 907-543-2608 Fax: 907-543-2639

March 27, 2017

Senator Peter Micciche  
Senator Cathy Giessel, Senate Resources Chair  
Email: Senator.Peter.Micciche@akleg.gov  
Senator.Cathy.Giessel@akleg.gov

RE: Alaska Senate Bill 92, Derelict Vessel Accountability Act

Dear Senators Micciche & Giessel:


The Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) is writing to support Senate Bill 92, an act that holds people accountable for abandoning boats on public waters and streamlines the state's ability to prevent and manage derelict vessels.

The Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) is a federally recognized governing body per Federal Register/Vol. 6, No. 49, notices for the native village of Bethel, Alaska. ONC's ability and capacity to lead numerous aspects of governance services per PL 93-638, a law provided by the Federal Government to utilize Indian self-determination by its membership.

Currently there are hundreds of documented derelict and abandoned vessels in Alaska. Out of those hundreds there are over 40 large abandoned barge vessels in Steamboat Slough. These have become uneconomical abandoned vessels mooring among the tidal grounds of the slough or pulled up on land. Over the past decade, ONC and other organization in Bethel have been asking for assistance to remove the vessels. After the "Shanks Ark" sunk in the middle of Steamboat Slough. The vessel became very dangerous and hazardous to motorized boats, vehicles, people, subsistence harvesting, and the environment. There are no agencies that have the ability to help remove any of the vessels, especially the more hazardous sunken vessel, "Shanks Ark."

SB92 will provide a program with pro-active strategies to address such occurrences as Bethel's derelict vessels. Without this action towns like Bethel will continue to suffer the dangerous burden of derelict and abandoned vessels. They will continue to be a hazardous to traffic, human life, and our ecosystem. We strongly urge and recommend your support of this important legislation.

Thank you,

  
Ron Hoffman, Executive Director  
Orutsararmiut Native Council