

Clearcut logging is costing animal habitat

Dear Editor:

As I look out my living room window, across Port Frederick at our massively clearcut mountainside, it reminds me of a couple of slogans I've heard and read lately. Take in mind that this clearcut is approximately six miles long and in some places right down to the beach and still expanding rapidly. This once beautiful, pristine mountainside was also excellent deer, bear and other wildlife habitat. From my home I can see erosion, rock quarries and piles of scrap limbs and logs dumped over the side of the logging roads.

This is Senator Ted Stevens' campaign slogan as he solicits funds for reelection: "Protecting Alaska, defending our lifestyle, and putting our interests first are at the heart of my job as your senator!"

Sealaska Corporation's slogan as sponsors for ballgames and television's "Rain Country:" "Sealaska Corporation safe-

guarding cultural ties to the land and the people of Southeast Alaska."

I wonder whose lifestyle, interests, culture and land Senator Stevens and Sealaska Corp. are safeguarding?

Our leaders talk about fish habitat and watershed but seldom, if ever, is wildlife habitat brought up. I suppose this is because wildlife takes up so much timber habitat.

Sec 41.17.910. of the Forest Practices Act reads "(a) The Department of Fish and Game and the Commissioner shall work cooperatively with private forest land-owners and timber owners to protect, maintain, and enhance wildlife habitat to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with the interests of the owners in the use of their timber resources.

(d) This section does not alter or diminish the authority and responsibility of

Letters

2

• Logging costs habitat

the state over wildlife on private land.”

Taking into consideration the long term impact of clearcut logging of deer habitat on private land under present management, the ADF&G made this final observation, which I took out of a five page report in the Hoonah Coastal Management Plan: “The original habitat quality in these Northeast Chichagof WAAs was excellent. The pristine habitat in the Icy Straits WAAs was generally very good. However, substantial amounts of habitat

have been lost due to logging. By 1993, every stream drainage in Northeast Chichagof WAAs had been subject to substantial logging . . . When considering management strategy, ADF&G expects that nearly all habitat on private land will eventually be eliminated.”

Floyd Peterson
Sealaska Shareholder
Hoonah, AK