Coastal Zone Management Hearing Tonight in Kodiak

Thursday, 12 July 2012

Jay Barrett/KMXT

One of the required community meetings on the ballot measure to re-establish an Alaska Coastal Management Program will be held this evening in Kodiak. The meetings, being held around the state, will have speakers give pro and con arguments for the citizen-led initiative, and a time for testimony.

Alaska is the only coastal state in the nation without a coastal management plan. Coastal programs were established to guarantee state and local participation in federal decisions on coastal issues, including resource development such as logging, mining and oil drilling.

The citizen's initiative, which will appear on the August 28th primary election ballot, was put forth by the Alaska Sea Party, started by Kodiak Mayor Jerome Selby, Juneau Mayor Bruce Bothello and former Homer Mayor Mako Haggarty. The citizen's initiative was a fall-back plan in case the legislature again failed to resurrect the coastal management program.

Opposition to coastal management comes from pro-development organizations and their supporters, such as the Alaska Oil and Gas Association, Alaska Miners Association and the Resource Development Council for Alaska.

Unsurprisingly, the Alaska State Chamber of Commerce is also against the initiative, and has sent out "action alerts" to its members to testify against the measure when the meetings come to their towns. Yesterday afternoon, the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce had to back-peddle after inadvertently forwarding to its members the entire Alaska Chamber message, including a link to pre-written talking points against the measure.

Less than two hours after the first message, a second e-mail was sent, apologizing for including the State Chamber's position, and stating the Kodiak Chamber of Commerce has not taken a position on the ballot measure.

Find both sides of the issue and the ballot measure language here.

The meeting will be in the Kodiak High School commons from 4 to 7 p.m.