

USDA Forest Service,

I am writing to voice my support for the ANILCA cabin policy change. The owners of these cabins are aging, and under current policy, have no way to pass down their cabins to their children or heirs born after 1980. The proposed changes would allow these families to continue their way of life subsisting and recreating where they have for generations. I applaud the Forest Service for listening to these families, and acting to implement a policy change to benefit them and the Alaska way of life.

My grandfather along with my father and uncle built a cabin up the Berners River for recreation and subsistence decades before ANILCA was established in 1980. My parents fell in love up there. I spent a lot of my childhood at the cabin, and even caught my very first fish on the banks of the river just down the trail in 1994. My dad and grandpa's ashes were spread in the river and at the cabin. Every year, my family catches most our fish for the year from that river, and I pick a couple gallons of berries for cooking over the winter. I put in for a moose permit every year, though I haven't been drawn yet. Having a cabin on the river makes our trips up there much safer due to the remote location, unpredictable weather, and high density of brown and black bears. Regulars on the river know they can use it for an emergency shelter if they get into trouble as well.

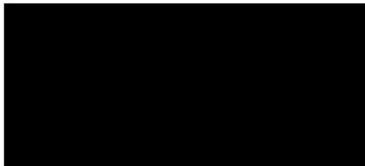
I want to impress upon you just how important this cabin is to my family, our history, and our way of life. It is the single most enjoyable part of my life spending time in the most beautiful place on earth recreating and subsisting like my parents and grandparents before me. Having to remove the cabin after my aunt, Heidi Haffner (current lease holder) passes away would utterly devastate our family and negatively impact the way we live.

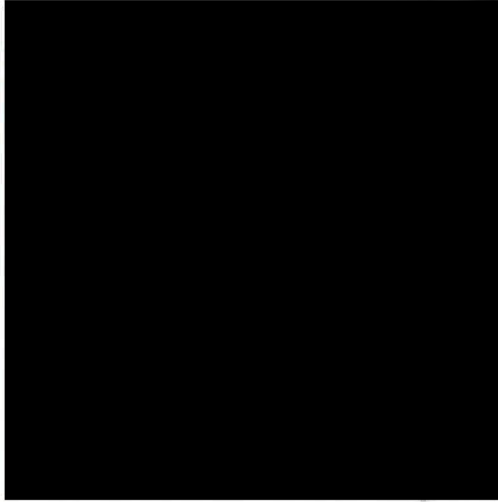
These proposed policy changes would likely allow the younger generations to take over their family's cabins, use and maintain them, and continue their way of life. This is the way it should be. I know there are many other people with similar stories and I hope this policy change happens for us. It has my full support!

Thank you,



Shadoe Haffner





My grandfather, Robert "Swede" Haffner, sitting in the cabin on one of his last trips up there before he passed.



My dad, Ron Haffner, standing on the banks of the Berners with a coho.



Our cabin on the Berners Summer 2023. My favorite place.

