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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My father Robert "Swede" Haffner and my brothers built a cabin up the Berners River for recreation and subsistence in the 1960s/1970s. When the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) was enacted on Dec. 2, 1980, my father was issued a permit to keep his cabin and lease the land it was on from the federal government. He was allowed one transfer, and the cabin was passed to my brother Ron Haffner when my dad could no longer safely travel up there. Ron died not long after in 2018. Luckily, gratefully, the forest service let us pass it one more time, to me.

I am 54 years old and not outdoorsy, but I'm holding on to the permit so that my Alaskan-born and raised niece Shadoe Haffner Burke can use it. The current permit only allowed it to pass to a direct relative born before 1980, which was me. Shadoe was born in 1990, so although the family wanted her to have it, it was not to be. Now we are out of transfers, and it still cannot go to Shadoe under the current regulations. When I pass, the cabin will need to be removed from the land as per the lease agreement, a huge, expensive undertaking, and heartbreaking to remove this piece of our family's history, and active recreation/subsistence cabin!

90% of our family's fish for the year comes from this river, as well as 100% of the cranberries, thanks to Shadoe and her husband Forrest Burke. The cabin makes subsisting there much safer due to unpredictable weather and the high density of brown and black bears. The cabin also serves as an emergency shelter for anybody who traverses the river system. The ashes of both Swede and Ron are spread up there as well. It is a very important and special cabin.

If the proposed policy change goes through, I would likely be able to allow Shadoe to take over the lease under a new code and continue to use and maintain the cabin as she has been doing with my full permission. When she becomes unable to use it anymore, she could then pass it down to anybody who would be able to use and maintain it regardless of age or relation so long as it was used for the same purpose. It would be very un-Alaskan for this new policy to be denied. I SUPPORT this change.

The picture attached is my dad Swede at the cabin in one of the last years he could travel there.