

AOC 2008 Annual Meeting

Alaska Outdoor Council (AOC) and Alaska Fish & Wildlife Conservation Fund (AF&WCF) Member Club delegates and individual members will gather in Anchorage on February 7th-9th of 2008 to determine the direction that AOC's Board Members and staff will pursue for the upcoming year.

A review of last year's efforts will be presented along with an outlook of topics needing attention in the near future for the benefit of AOC/AF&WCF membership. Numerous changes to the landscape regarding outdoor activities have occurred this past year and many more changes are appearing on the horizon.

AOC Board Members and staff have spent a considerable amount of time and effort this last year working with the State Administration, legislators, the departments of; Fish & Game, Natural Resources, and Law, and the Boards of Fisheries and Game on critical topics that directly effect the quality and quantity of Alaska's renewable natural resources. Here are a few *timely* examples of topics that directly affect AOCs purposes, as stated in the by-laws, which will be discussed at the 2008 Annual meeting:

1. Article 3. Purpose To perpetuate the natural resource base upon which member group activities depend;

- Assuring adequate protection of fish and wildlife habitat by the State remains an outstanding issue due to changes in the Division of Habitat.
- Enforcement of regulations pertaining to allowable uses of off-road-vehicles still remains to be resolved in the legislative process.
- Some salmon returns continue to come in under the management goals set for escapement. Other salmon runs show declines in returns of size and age classes. Sustainable salmon management continues to be a major concern in certain drainages around the state.
- Predator/prey management continues to be threatened by the lack of necessary funding to provide the level of scientific data required to implement control programs. And once again the Anti-game management advocates have placed another ballot initiative before voters to ban aerial predator management.

Access to Alaska's natural resources on public lands remains an on going struggle in both the State and Federal systems. AOC Board members and staff have participated in numerous land planning efforts to insure that representation of AOC membership is part of the public process. Numerous times AOC and its Member Clubs have been the only voice advocating for continued motorized access for riders, hunters, trappers, and anglers. Again, listed here are a few of the on going topics for Club delegates to discuss at the 2008 Annual Meeting.

2. Article 3. Purpose To insure equality in access and use of these natural resources;

- Public access to State Marine Parks in SE, the Chitina dipnet fishery, Nelchina Basin motorized access, the Willow Creek boat launch, motorized access by Snowmachines in SC State Parks.
- Implementation of Tier II subsistence hunting along road connected areas of SC Alaska.
- Federal takeover of subsistence fisheries on the Kenai Peninsula.

The right to own and use firearms is another topic that has recently risen to national attention. The AOC Board members and staff have been monitoring developments which have now placed the 2nd Amendment right before the U.S. Supreme Court. AOC Delegates will be updated on the AFWCF's legal efforts involving this important case and discussing further actions if necessary.