

STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE TOOTHMAN, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, CULTURAL RESOURCES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SCIENCE, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE AFFAIRS OF THE HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE CONCERNING H.R. 3110, TO ALLOW FOR THE HARVEST OF GULL EGGS BY THE HUNA TLINGIT PEOPLE WITHIN GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK IN THE STATE OF ALASKA.

February 5, 2014

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present the views of the Department of the Interior on H.R. 3110, the Huna Tlingit Traditional Gull Egg Use Act.

This legislation provides for the restoration of an important cultural connection to Glacier Bay by the Huna Tlingit, and provides for the environmentally preferred action identified in our studies. As such, the Department supports enactment of H.R. 3110 with two amendments.

Glacier Bay National Park is the traditional homeland of the Huna Tlingit who harvested eggs at gull rookeries in Glacier Bay prior to, and after the park was established in 1925. Egg collection was curtailed in the 1960s as Migratory Bird Treaty Act and National Park Service (NPS) regulations prohibited the activity.

The Glacier Bay National Park Resource Management Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-455) directed the NPS to study whether gull egg collection could resume without impairing the biological sustainability of the gull population in the park. The NPS conducted the study, wrote an environmental impact statement, and in August 2010 issued a record of decision which found that collection under certain conditions would be sustainable. Those conditions, addressing the frequency of harvest and an annual harvest plan, are reflected in H.R. 3110.

Section 2 (c) of the bill contains a condition for the Secretary of the Interior to develop an annual harvest plan jointly with the Hoonah Indian Association. To clarify that the Hoonah Indian Association's role is purely advisory, we recommend the attached amendment. We also recommend a technical correction to Section 2 (b) of the bill that would insert a section number of a law that is missing from the bill as introduced.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to testify on this matter. I will be glad to answer any questions.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 3110

On p. 2, line 18, strike "the Secretary and the Hoonah Indian Association." and insert "the Secretary in consultation with the Hoonah Indian Association."

On p. 2, line 7, strike "sections and 816" and insert "sections 203 and 816".