



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
MAYOR DAVE BRONSON

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

February 19, 2024

Dear Eklutna Hydroelectric Project Owners,

I write to express support for the draft Fish and Wildlife Program and the inclusion of the AWWU Portal Valve alternative.

Given the critical importance of Eklutna Lake as our municipality's primary source of clean water, safeguarding its integrity and the integrity of AWWU water treatment infrastructure is vital. Preserving AWWU's rights and interests in the Eklutna lake and river system is of key importance. The 1984 Agreement requires the Owners to take no action which degrades the quality of Eklutna Lake as a drinking water source and the 1991 Agreement requires the consideration of municipal water supplies. I am pleased with the robust efforts undertaken by the project owners to ensure that the Fish and Wildlife Program prioritizes the protection of our drinking water. The Owners have coordinated heavily with AWWU to protect and account for the need for drinking water throughout the alternative evaluation process. Furthermore, these collaborative endeavors assessed infrastructure improvements and explored multiple viable solutions through the alternative analysis process. I believe the draft Fish and Wildlife Program will result in even stronger protections for AWWU and improved drinking water safety for all of Anchorage.

The significance of the Eklutna Hydro Dam to energy security cannot be overstated. It plays a pivotal, if understated, role in supplying energy reliability to consumers in southcentral Alaska. The recent cold snap in late January/early February highlighted this crucial role when available gas supply in the region was challenged. At the request of ENSTAR, Chugach and MEA adjusted operations at the Project to increase hydroelectric generation and decrease consumption of natural gas. These efforts avoided a switch to diesel fuel power generation and preserved ENSTAR's gas for other consumers. The timely hydroelectric utilization provided clean, storable, and dispatchable green energy instead of a switch to less sustainable and greenhouse gas emitting alternatives. Without the Eklutna Hydroelectric Project operating in the current configuration, such a switch and savings likely would not be possible. In light of the ongoing challenges to Southcentral's energy security, it is imperative that we preserve and optimize every available energy supply especially one as reliable, green, and cost effective as the Eklutna Hydroelectric Project.

I also wish to commend the Hydro Owner's adherence to the process outlined in the 1991 Agreement. For the last several years, the Owners have coordinated and cooperated with various stakeholders and interested parties, including the various state and Federal resource agency signatories to the 1991 Agreement and the Native Village of Eklutna. I know this is only a draft plan and that public comment and discussion are ongoing but I



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believe the current draft holds great promise. The expected further revisions will only enhance and build upon the great work already accomplished. Despite expressions of impatience or desires to value singular interests over the whole, the Owners have progressed through the process diligently and conscientiously listening to and engaging with a variety of perspectives and alternative approaches to achieve the goals “to, protect, mitigate damages to, and enhance fish and wildlife”. I trust that this will continue to serve as a robust framework for the remainder of the current process and will again be effective into the future when the process repeats every 35 years.

I appreciate the unwavering commitment to the well-being of the entirety of our community expressed in the draft Fish and Wildlife Program and look forward to the final version and the decision of the governor. Thank you to the Hydro Owners, the Native Village of Eklutna, AWWU, and the various stakeholders and members of the public who have participated and commented throughout this process.

Sincerely,

Mayor Dave Bronson
Municipality of Anchorage