

Note from our Executive Director, Polly Carr

June 15, 2014

I started with Alaska Center for the Environment (ACE) a year ago by sitting down at my new desk and thinking about uphill battles. What we had ahead of us ranged from threats to salmon and salmon habitat, the effects of climate change in communities big and small, and relentless attacks on Alaskans' rights to have a voice in statewide decision making.

The greatest threat came in the form of the Silencing Alaskans Act (HB 77), a bill that would have paved the way for projects like the Pebble and Chitna mines while removing Alaskans' voices from the public process. So over the course of a short few months, we got organized. We worked with fishermen, Alaska Native tribes, sportsmen, guides, and many other individuals across the state. Testimony on the bill at public hearings was overwhelming against it. In short: we fought back. Hard.

And together, we won.

We know we were successful in defeating the Silencing Alaskans Act because of people power. That's why **ACE is organizing our first-ever Organizing Academy to train new and emerging volunteer organizers, of all ages, this summer.** This 6 week program runs every Thursday from June 26th through August 7th, 5:30-8pm, and will offer organizers tools to work on issues that matter to Alaska's future.

We also know how important it is to help young leaders step up! In May, ACE's Trailside Discovery Camp trained 50 counselors who will help thousands of Alaskan kids discover the outdoors this summer. Meanwhile, through the Conservation Internship Program 10 young adults are kicking off summer-long internships with conservation organizations working on salmon, energy, and public participation statewide.

If we are going to continue to win, we will need every single supporter who can to help.

You are a part of this growing movement. We are reaching out because in the fast-paced world of organizing, we've been sending lots of emails and making calls, but we realize it's been a while since we updated via mail. Please tell us how you'd like to hear from us in the future by calling Alli at (907) 274-3667 or alli@akcenter.org. If you have questions or would like more information about the Organizing Academy, Contact Kelsi at kelsi@akcenter.org or (907) 793-8679.



If you would like to make a contribution to support our work, you will find an envelope enclosed. This gift will secure your ACE membership, renew your membership if it's expired, or serve as an additional gift toward our programs!

Thank you for your support of ACE!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Polly Carr".

Polly Carr
Executive Director

Preparing the Next Generation of Conservation Leaders

Throughout the summer, we'll be sharing the inspiring stories of the young adults that are involved with our youth programs - and how our programs grow leaders. This month, meet Zoe - an Alaska Youth for Environmental Action (AYEA) grad, Trailside Discovery Camp instructor, and so much more!

Name: Zoe Olivia Fuller

Age: 21

Hometown: Palmer, AK

Fun fact: Zoe's favorite meal is fresh garden vegetables with scallops and aïoli!



"After spending this past year working with Alaska Youth for Environmental Action and the awesome teens in the program, I'm excited to transition to Trailside Discovery Camp and train a new group of environmental educator youth through the Teacher Naturalist in Training program!"

Zoe's early years were spent climbing trees, munching greens, and jumping off hay bales at her home outside of Palmer. She loves the land there more than most things, and almost as much as the people that make up the Matanuska Valley. It was this love that led her to AYEAs as a teen, and to return to Alaska as a young adult. Her experience as an AYEAs Youth Organizer, and subsequent work with the program has provided ways for her to build the skills, passion and connections necessary to make change.

Zoe sees building interest, love, and connection with the natural world as part of a necessary and wonderful process in making change, and a key part of building a sustainable movement in Alaska. This past winter, Zoe worked at ACE as AYEAs Youth Leadership Specialist through the Americorps program, and in past summers she was a Trailside Discovery Camp instructor. She truly loves sharing her passion for the land with youth.

Once she finishes her summer with Trailside, Zoe will be headed to Prescott College in Arizona to study social justice and environmental studies. We hope to see Zoe return to Alaska as a Conservation Intern!



2014 Legislative Session Recap

The 2014 legislative session wrapped up last month and lawmakers from across the state have returned home. A chaotic end saw the session run beyond the statutory 90-day limit to deal with a number of issues. Fortunately, the current administration's signature natural resource legislation, the Silencing Alaskans Act (House Bill 77), stayed exactly where we hoped it would during the extra time: locked in committee. **When the legislature finally adjourned on April 25th, House Bill 77 was officially dead.**

Despite this high note at the end of session, it has been a tough two years for conservation in Alaska. A number of bad bills passed in 2013 that weakened pollution control standards for cruise ships and cut Alaskans out of the process. Except for a few positive moves on renewable energy, very little good has been coming from Juneau.

Now that the legislature is adjourned, we can all catch our breath. **But there will be more challenges ahead.** The Silencing Alaskans Act may be dead for now, but we are only between legislative sessions. It is highly likely more bills will be introduced to silence Alaskans and hand over the keys to our state to Outside corporations that don't understand our values. We are building our momentum to fight back. We need your help. Call Kylee at (907) 793-8629 for volunteer opportunities.

We'll keep you informed on conservation issues and how you can take action before the next legislative session. **Watch for the 2014 Legislative Scorecard this summer and see how your lawmakers performed this session!**

