

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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SENATOR BERT K. STEDMAN

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Stedman & Wilson Preserve Sitka History

Legislation creates historic park from World War II infrastructure

(Juneau) – The Senate Finance Committee passed legislation today protecting an important chapter of Sitka’s history. House Bill 176 sponsored by Representative Peggy Wilson creates the Fort Rousseau Causeway State Historical Park from nearly 60 acres of remaining World War II infrastructure around Sitka Sound.

“History is a bridge to the past,” Representative Wilson said. “It behooves us to preserve Ft. Rousseau’s uniqueness and keep the area as a reminder to residents and tourists alike of what Alaska’s – and Southeast’s – role in WWII was.”

Long-time Sitka resident, Senator Bert Stedman chaired the hearing, and has been a strong supporter of preserving the Fort Rousseau area. “This bill is a great achievement for Sitka,” said Senator Stedman. “It helps preserve a chapter of our community’s history and allows for active management that will make the area more accessible for recreation and visitors.”

In the run-up to World War II, the army built several fortifications encircling Sitka Sound. The construction included a gravel road connecting several small islands west of the Navy Sea Plane and Operating Base in Sitka. The causeway ended at Fort Rousseau on Makhnati Island. The area is already listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been designated as a landmark by the National Park Service. House Bill 176 preserves the area and transfers management of the land from the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities to the Division of Parks & Outdoor Recreation in the Department of Natural Resources.

Senator Stedman will present the bill on the Senate floor when it’s scheduled for a vote.

For more information, contact Cliff Stone at (907) 465-3824

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