

By:	Linn McCabe
Introduced:	6/2/2025
Public Hearing:	8/18/2025
Action:	Approved

MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH
PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 25-15

A RESOLUTION OF THE MATANUSKA-SUSITNA BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A WATER BODY SETBACK TASK FORCE TO REVIEW AND ADDRESS PUBLIC COMMENTS AND CONCERNS REGARDING WATERBODY SETBACK ORDINANCE 25-073.

WHEREAS, the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission has reviewed Waterbody Setback Ordinance 25-073; and

WHEREAS, significant public input and comment have been received regarding the proposed ordinance since its publication, highlighting diverse perspectives and concerns; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that unresolved issues, including potential restrictions on mining activities within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, require further evaluation to ensure balanced and fair regulation; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that certain provisions of Ordinance 25-073 may impose overly restrictive limitations on private land use near water bodies, potentially impeding landowners' rights to the reasonable use and enjoyment of their property; and

WHEREAS, the previous Water Body Setback Task Force did not adequately address the costs or methods of enforcement for the proposed ordinance, particularly for properties located off the road system, creating uncertainty for implementation and compliance; and

WHEREAS, the borough has not conducted comprehensive water quality testing on the lakes with the greatest number of properties that are not in compliance with existing setback regulations, leaving uncertainty about the environmental impact of such properties; and

WHEREAS, the previous Water Body Setback Task Force did not include sufficient representation from lakefront property owners, whose perspectives are critical to developing fair and effective setback policies; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recognizes the importance of protecting water bodies while balancing economic, recreational, and especially the property rights interests of Borough residents; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a new dedicated task force would provide a structured process to thoroughly review public comments, assess the impacts of the proposed ordinance, and develop new recommendations that address the concerns of all stakeholders,

including those more rural and off the road system, as well as mining and commercial interests.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission recommends that the Borough Assembly establish a New Water Body Setback Task Force to:

1. Review all public comments and concerns submitted regarding Waterbody Setback Ordinance 25-073;

2. Evaluate the potential impacts of the ordinance on mining, agriculture, recreation, and private property rights within the Borough;

3. Assess the costs and methods of enforcement for the proposed ordinance, with specific consideration for properties located off the road system;

4. Engage with all stakeholders, including landowners, industry representatives, environmental groups, and rural community members, to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive review process;

5. Develop recommendations for a revised water body setback ordinance that balances environmental protection with the economic and property rights interests of Borough residents; and

6. The new Water Body Setback Task Force shall:

a. Provide for and prioritize water quality testing on the ten lakes within the Matanuska-Susitna Borough that have the greatest number of properties not in compliance with existing setback regulations, utilizing actual water quality data to assess whether setbacks closer than 75 feet have caused environmental harm;

b. Be composed at least one third of members who are lakefront property owners within the Borough to ensure adequate representation of those directly affected by waterbody setback regulations;

7. Submit a report to the Borough Assembly within six months detailing findings and proposed revisions to Ordinance 25-073.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Planning Commission urges the Borough Assembly to defer final action on Waterbody Setback Ordinance 25-073 until the Task Force has completed its review and submitted its recommendations.

ADOPTED by the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Commission this 18th day of August, 2025.



RICHARD ALLEN, CHAIR

ATTEST



LACIE OLIVIERI, PLANNING CLERK

(SEAL)

YES: McCabe, Glenn, Collins, Carpenter, Allen

NO:

