1. **LOGO** Hi, it’s great to see you all here this evening. We encourage everyone to be sure you have signed in at the door, and included your email addresses. For privacy reasons, REI does not share their on line event sign up information. We are thrilled to have the first real meeting of the Alaska Soles chapter of Great Old Broads for Wilderness. We want to thank REI, and especially Martin, for the use of the room and for all their support since we approached them about our organization. Martin introduced us to Eric at the Rock Gym, where we spent a really exciting and fun morning, and Eric has offered us future support and backing. Also there are refreshments on the table and we apologize but we felt that right now it was safer to offer wrapped treats than good fresh cookies and baked goods that had to be handled.

We are the co-leaders, Kathy O’Reilly-Doyle of Anchorage, and Loren Karro of Palmer. Kirstie Williean, of Seward, is the other member of the steering committee to get this off the ground! We all have lived in Alaska for many decades, and have experience working and living in ‘the bush’ and rural areas throughout Alaska. Kathy and I are retired, we’re avid hikers and campers, and we feel we have found our connection to our passion in the Great Old Broads! The mission seemed obvious and the humor was a welcome come on.

I’m Kathy, and I have a passion for the outdoors.  My degree was in Forest Recreation and Resource Management.  My career work included partnership development, habitat restoration and federal subsistence management.  I’ve traveled extensively and realize that the quality and vastness of Alaska’s public lands and wilderness is not only a treasure to Alaskans but to our planet. I joined Great Old Broads for Wilderness to see how bringing wisdom, grace and humor to the table could change the dynamics of the discussion away from short term profits and towards protecting these valuable resources for future generations.

I’m Loren. I was raised in a large family where every vacation involved camping and hiking. With a bio-chem background, of course I grew up to run rural electric and telephone cooperatives in some of the most remote areas in Washington and Alaska, and then to being a hunting guide. I value my time in the wilderness above most else. In working with Great Old Broads, I hope to help preserve the wilderness landscapes I treasure, what Muir called ‘the fountains of life’. I’m also passionate about working to help turn around the threat of climate change. And I value the great wealth of laughter and sharing wisdom of the ages with a wonderful group of women.

2. **OUR STORY** In the late 80s, Sen Orrin Hatch said “Elders don’t need Wilderness. Wilderness is inaccessible to elders. That’s why wilderness should have roads for the aged and infirm.” This enraged a number of elders, who wanted people to realize that many elders can access the wilderness, and even when they are no longer able to do so, they want to know it is there for the generations to come. Sen. Hatch’s comments made the founders of Broad so mad that they started Great Old Broads for Wilderness, and committed themselves to grass roots advocacy to preserve our last wild places for future generations.

3. **OUR VOICE** Great Old Broads is an inclusive group. Broadness is a state of mind, and we welcome all ages, and all genders (there are Bros amongst us also!).

4. **VALUES** The Value of Wilderness and wild lands is always at the heart of the Great Old Broads activities. It is our passion for the outdoors and wild spaces that formed many of us, and is the backdrop to our desire to protect these spaces from harmful and avoidable encroachment for resource extraction or other development. Once developed, can wild spaces ever be brought back to the wild again? If we use it unwisely, will we loose it forever?As Teddy Roosevelt said “the [public reserves] should be set apart forever for the use and benefit of our people as a whole, and not sacrificed to the shortsighted greed of a few”.

5. **WE VALUE** You can read these values yourselves, and hopefully they are dear to all of us.

6. **HUMOR** The Broads’ missions are serious ones, but we value a sense of humor and work to keep fun and laughter in our lives and efforts.

7. **TAKE WORK SERIOUSLY BUT** And Broads recognizes the tempered wisdom that can come with age; we are ourselves a vast and often untapped resource!

8. **DETAILS,DETAILS** Make the effort, but keep the fun in the effort! (*quick 5 second slide*)

9. **WHAT WE DO** The Great Old Broads National Office is in Durango, Colorado, where a knowledgeable and helpful staff are available to assist us when needed. We stress that this is a grass roots organization, and each Broadband sets its own priorities and defines its own efforts, within the umbrella of the three Great Old Broads focus areas, and within the legal constraints of a 501 (c)3, (which means we can promote issues but not political candidates). These efforts can include work in education, advocacy, stewardship, and always, fun!

10. **EDUCATION**: Broads aren’t afraid to open their minds and hearts, to learn about new places and efforts at protection, and they are always looking to help others understand our passions and goals. We want to be a force to educate people about the issues, and to be open to learn from the experiences, talent and knowledge of others. The Broads offer “Glo-call webinars” to members, that focus on specific environmental and land use issues. There was just a terrifying one on the proposed gutting of the National Environmental Protection Act regulations, and it inspired us to get our comments on the scoping document in before yesterday’s deadline.

11. **ADVOCACY**: Broads learn how to effectively contribute to the environmental decision making process, and how to engage policy makers to act. We hope to gain knowledge on how we can politically, socially and economically support alternatives that don’t depend on unsustainable resource extraction, that keep public lands in public hands, and that keep the Wilderness Act intact. Broads work to “**Be the Change**”. We hope to come at it from a more positive perspective than is too often seen in our presently divided nation. We want to facilitate the change, to have conversations, not arguments. So far we have done advocacy work against the possible “Alaska Exclusion” to the roadless rule that will open much of the Tongass National Forest to money loosing timber sales, and in support of keeping the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) intact; and attended a demonstration against the proposed Pebble Mine. We are also researching the proposed road to access the Ambler Mining District.

12. **STEWARDSHIP**: Broads get outside. They work with many agencies, groups, and state and federal land and wildlife managers, to repair, restore and care for public lands and native ecosystems. Each Broadband chooses their own issues, and works in their own areas to further these goals, such as trail improvement, evasive plant eradication, and litter clean up. Any interested Broad can propose a Stewardship project to the group and we can lend a hand to organizations in their ongoing projects

13. **FUN**: (*5 seconds*) In the Broads, you can meet like minded people that are also passionate about leaving the earth a better place. And hopefully we will all laugh a lot! We can join each other for hikes, book meetings, and other social activities. Our passion for the wild lands leaves lots of space for fun, laughter and shared comradery. It is this background that eventually brought us to become Broads (and Bros)! Broadness is a state of mind.

14. **NAT’L EVENTS** There are **Broadwalks** held every year. They focus on in depth experiential education, as well as meeting and learning with passionate Broads from all over the country. This Broadwalk was in the Boundary Waters near Ely, Minnesota. In May, we will be attending the Northwest Leadership Broadwalk in Washington State. Great Old Broads for Wilderness is hoping to hold a Broadwalk in Alaska in the next few years, with a focus on the effects of climate change.

15. **NAT’L EVENTS** **Broadworks** are also campouts, but focused on stewardship projects such as removing invasive plants, restoring or rebuilding public land trails, maintaining or enhancing critical habitat areas etc. These two pictures are invasive plant removal in the Boundary Waters and on Utah’s Escalante River.

16. **BROADBAND CHAPTERS** There are so far over 40 Broadbands (chapters) throughout the country. WE are the **Alaska Soles Broadband**. This is the first Broadband in Alaska. When we heard of Great Old Broads, we were first attracted by the name. After a little research we contacted them. We wanted to know if they were accepting of our Alaskan values, which include sustainable hunting. The reception we got was warm and gratifying. We both attended Great Old Broads Wilderness Advocacy Leadership Training last spring. We realize how many issues there are to work on in Alaska alone, and we hope to get to prioritizing our initial efforts tonight. We have worked to get on top of issues important to Alaska as well as our nation, such as the possible development of the Pebble Mine. We have also attended many events such as the Alaska State Fair, recycling events, and the March for Science, in full Broad regalia, in efforts to engage others in conversation and let them know about Great Old Broads and the Alaska Soles!

17. **FOCUS AREAS** These are the three main goals, or focus areas, of the Great Old Broads. (*Pause and let them read them for a minute)*

18. **WILD LANDS** Keep Wild Land Wild and the Wilderness Act Intact. The photo on the left is the headwaters near where the proposed Pebble Mine exploration is located, at the heart of a vast area of water feeding some of the most important salmon spawning streams in America. On the right is a scene from the Tongass National Forest. There is a proposed Alaska Roadless Rule Exemption before congress that would open up vast, presently protected areas of the Tongass to clear cut logging.

19. **PUBLIC LANDS** Keep Public Lands in Public Hands. In a time when copper kings, timber barons and railroad magnates were dividing up the nation’s public lands, President T Roosevelt had the guts and the vision to stand up to them and work to create what were then called federally owned reserves. We see constant uprisings such as the Sagebrush Rebellion, working to turn federal lands over to the states. And then what happens to them? This is about to be a big issue in Alaska, as our current State administration has publicly vowed to divest the state of much of its state owned lands, putting them in private hands, primarily to open the way for more resource development. “The rights of the public to the national resources outweigh private rights.” T Roosevelt

20. **CLIMATE CHANGE** Make Public Lands Part of the Solution to Climate Change. This means fully evaluating public lands resource development, whether it be off shore drilling, opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and development, clear cutting old growth forests in the Tongass, or open pit mining in Bristol Bay. It might even be about road building through public wilderness or wild lands.

21. **WALTS** This is the group of wonderful women that we attended leadership training with near Sante Fe last spiring. There were scientists, a wilderness ranger, an opera singer from Texas, a former pastor, and homemakers and mothers. Every year, a Wilderness Advocacy Leadership Training program is held for those interested in moving to a leadership role or starting a new Broadband in their area. This year my twin sister is attending WALTS with the goal of starting up a Broadband in Washington’s Methow Valley. It is our goal to see new leaders for Alaska Soles come forth in the next few years, and other Broadbands formed elsewhere in the state, and we encourage interested Broads to look into future WALTS sessions.

22. **PRETTY STRONG** On April 23rd, we will be having our first fundraiser. With help from REI and the Alaska Rock Gym, a screening of the women made movie “Pretty Strong”, about some of America’s top female rock climbers, will be held at the Beartooth Theatre Pub, with a big percentage of the ticket sales going to the Alaska Soles Broadband. The more tickets that are sold, the bigger the share we get. This movie was a sell out in Boulder and promises both inspiration and a sense of fun and adventure. Tickets will go on sale on March 31st through the Beartooth web site.

23. **NOW YOU’VE GONE** **ABROAD** *“*There is nothing more practical in the end than the preservation of beauty. “ T. Roosevelt

24. **QUESTIONS?** Before we move on, are there any questions or comments?