

RC 010



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## March BOG Meeting

6 messages

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Michael McBride <michael@alaskawildernesslodge.com>

Tue, Mar 3, 2015 at 11:41 AM

To: dfg.bog.comments@alaska.gov

Bcc: halibuts@gmail.com

Please print this message and give to each member of the BOG

Greetings members of the Board of Game,

I have been a hunter and trapper for most of my life. I have held Master Guide License #49 since 1988. I own a wilderness lodge which we started from scratch almost 50 years ago. Three generations of our family are thus employed. I am a commercial pilot and have flown for this entire period. I am intimately familiar with the areas on the Kenai and in Kincaid Park and their animals that will be under discussion at your March BOG meetings.

I support the rights and appropriate opportunities of hunters and trappers. **I firmly believe that the BOG has the responsibility to represent all Alaskans, not just hunters and trappers, for the game of Alaska belongs to us all, not to the few.**

**I request that you vote yes on proposals to limit brown bear hunting and restrict trapping near recreation areas on the Kenai.**

Steep declines in the bear population on the Kenai from DLP and other reasons should lead you to protect these valuable animals.

I request that you **vote no on a plan to hunt moose in the Kincaid Park** regardless of the fact that it might serve the disabled. As a military veteran I have great compassion for military or civilian disabled persons but this is not the place to express compassion for those persons. The park's highest and best use is just as it was designed, for people to engage in nature for exercise and inspiration. The park was not designed for hunters, simple as that.

I hope that I can bring a broad, even global perspective into this discussion by virtue of my career of working for what is best for the future of Alaska. I was elected as the first Alaskan to the Smithsonian's National Board in Washington where I served for 6 years. I have worked with several of Alaska's Governors in appointed and volunteer positions. I have served on Alaskan and international boards of directors.

Our wilderness lodge has won many international awards for excellence. Wearing these diverse hats gives me, I believe, certain big picture insights into the importance of the decisions of the BOG as they relate to the upcoming and future meetings.

I wish to bring the needs and interests of the Alaskan non-hunters to your attention. They far outnumber hunters. The Board of Game itself does not, I believe, support the majority of Alaskans. Here is a chance to bring a little balance into this equation.

The proposals before you now are but a tiny part of the larger discussion underway. I call on you to put them into that larger context. The world is changing, Alaska is changing and it is time for the BOG to abandon the hunter vs. non-hunter conflict and embrace the process of representing the majority with fairness.

Both factions can and should be equitably served.

Former Governor Jay Hammond, respected and beloved by most Alaskans, often had trouble with the Board of Game when it did not seem to represent the needs and wishes of the majority of Alaskans. Indeed, he said, "I came to realize that the game was more noble than the hunters".

The majority of my clients come to Alaska from overseas and the Lower 48 and all hope to see animals. The State's Economic Multiplier says that the income to our small business, to ourselves and our staff multiplies in the State's economy to about \$3.5 million per year in spite of the fact that we are only a small operation. It does not make good economic sense that one hunter shoot a brown bear for example in an area where hundreds of people may see that same bear, adding immeasurable to their Alaskan experience. Animals that may be seen close to human populations are worth a great deal of money to the state's tourism/economic portfolio, simple as that.

I hope that you can bring wisdom into your circle of management by

giving a voice to those of us who support doing what is best

for Alaska and for Alaska's economic well being. You have, I believe, a responsibility, and indeed a mandate to represent non-hunters and their concerns for these animals.

I ask you to do your part to see that in the future there is equitable representation of non-hunters and non-trappers in the makeup of the Board.

The animals belong to everyone, not just to hunters and trappers.

**Michael McBride**

**Master Guide Lisc #49 since 1988**

**Homer Alaska**

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