

RC 061

1790 Doncaster Dr.

Anchorage, AK 99504

March 15, 2015

To: Ted Spraker, Chairman; Alaska Board of Game

Board Members, Alaska Board of Game

SUBJECT: USFWS Proposal 170. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

I am writing today on behalf of the Advocacy Committee, Friends of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. Proposal 170 addresses the impact of recent high levels of human-caused mortality on the Kenai Peninsula brown bear population. The proposal states: 'The potential for continued high mortality levels under the current harvest management strategy, particularly of adult females, is high and is of concern, as are resulting population level impacts'.

I attended yesterday afternoon's public session, and heard Chairman Spraker's question to a biologist from the Kenai area, after that individual's presentation (which was made as an individual, not for ADF&G). The Chairman asked whether he supported amending the current brown bear hunting season dates for 'front country and 'back country' areas of the Kenai Peninsula, as recommended by Proposal 170.


(The goal for this proposed amendment is to 1) DECREASE both the overall number and proportion of adult female sows in the harvest, and 2) apply different season dates/in-season management using HCM caps for adult female sows in these areas.)

However, the individual hesitated, then replied that he did not see why there would be different hunting seasons for the 'front' and 'back country'. He did not address the rationale for the proposal, or the need to conserve adult female brown bear sows particularly in the 'back country'.

I was concerned by his reply, spoke with him immediately afterwards during the break, showing him the proposal and what Dr. John Morton, USFWS, had specified in order to decrease both the overall number and proportion of adult female sows in the harvest. It was clear from our conversation, that he had not read the proposal in depth, and therefore did not understand this issue.

The Refuge is committed to working toward a strategic, coordinated approach with the Board of Game, Alaska Dept of Fish and Game and the affected public to ensure a healthy brown bear population on the Kenai peninsula. We urge the Board to support this important proposal, to ensure long term brown bear conservation goals are met!

Sincerely,



Valanne Glooschenko, M.Sc.

Advocacy Committee, Friends of Kenai NWF

Cc: Mr. Andy Loranger, USFWS; Dr. John Morton, USFWS; Dr. David Raskin,