

Mr. Cliff Judkins

February 6, 2012

RC117

Chairman, Alaska Board of Game

Dear Chairman Judkins and Alaska Board of Game Members.

The Alaska Falconers Association (AFA) is requesting the Alaska Board of Game to act on proposal 40 (establishing a nonresident raptor take in Alaska) by passing a regulation at this meeting that enacts the main elements of the recommended features of a nonresident raptor take listed on page 10 of the documented entered under PC 201.

The AFA and the Department are fairly close to a consensus on the main points of a nonresident raptor take regulation. The AFA wishes to have a regulation in place at this March meeting with an implementation date no earlier than July 1, 2014 (this date could be extended for another year if the department feels it is necessary for administrative reasons). This delayed start date will allow the department the time needed to create a set of permit conditions and an administrative fee structure under their discretionary authority that will allow a seamless implementation of an initial nonresident take starting September 1 of 2014 or later. AFA is not requesting an expensive nonresident falconry tag fee that must be approved by the Alaska Legislature, but only an administrative fee and application fee that all permit applicants can afford and will cover all department costs in developing and implementing this program. An expensive tag fee for a five bird quota is not reasonable in this case.

During the January 2012 statewide meeting, the American Falconry Conservatory, sent one individual to testify during the public comment period. After this individual testified, he left the state prior to deliberations on proposal 40. There were two Alaska falconers who testified that they would like to see a more liberal nonresident take than what is recommended in the AFA's white paper (PC 201). The remainder of the testimony at the meeting, including that from the President of AFA representing the members of the association, supported the conservative take listed in the White paper (PC201).

The nonresident take issue was thoroughly discussed and vetted for 18 months prior to the January 2012 statewide meeting. During this in-depth discussion, the large majority of Alaska falconers were adamantly opposed to a non resident take. After the January 2012 meeting when the constitutional issue requiring the state to provide a nonresident opportunity became evident, the AFA again had an in-depth discussion about how a nonresident take should be structured. After this second vetting of a nonresident harvest process, the large majority of the

AFA members are still opposed to a nonresident take but understand that a constitutional requirement will mandate a nonresident take. These members support the conservative approach championed in PC201. The AFA's white paper was compiled after this second discussion and has since been presented to the Board at this meeting.

Attached below from page 10 of PC 201 are the issues that AFA would request the Board to implement at this meeting. The asterisks features are the ones that AFA request the Board to place into regulation at this meeting. All remaining criteria would be left to the Department to implement under their discretionary authority.

5. Recommended Features Of An Alaska Non-Resident Raptor Take

***Restricted to U.S.citizens.**

***Limit non-resident take to five birds total annually.**

***Award five non-resident take permits per year by lottery.**

***Non-resident applicants winning permits may take one bird per permittee per year of any species allowed to resident falconers.**

Standard fee of \$5.00 per application to enter permit drawing.

The department should take steps to prevent individual applicants, or applicants and their proxies, from dominating the selection process.

A successful applicant must purchase a non-resident hunting license, pay any non-resident raptor take fee determined by the department (we suggest at least \$100.00 per permit), and present proof of being legally permitted to practice falconry in his/her home state.

***A non-resident may take a passage raptor only.**

***Non-resident take allowed 1 September to 31 December annually.**

Each successful applicant must notify the appropriate regional falconry representative prior to undertaking trapping activities, and must report in person to the department area biologist for the area where the permittee intends to conduct trapping activities, and present his or her non-resident hunting license, falconry permit or license from his or her home state, written permission from landowners, if pertinent, and provide any other information the department may require.

A permittee must report in person to the regional falconry representative before leaving the state, whether successful in trapping a bird or not. If successful, a permittee conditions require presentation of hunting license, capture permit, any bird taken.

Any bird taken by a non-resident, regardless of species, must be banded with a locking, non-reusable, black nylon numbered marker band issued by the Department upon check-in prior to attempting to capture a raptor.

***For at least five years after take, non-residents successfully trapping birds must file annual reports designed to track the movements, transfers, and disposition of birds.**

***No one may offer or accept anything of value in exchange for raptor guiding services or any activities intended to assist a non-resident in taking a raptor for falconry.**

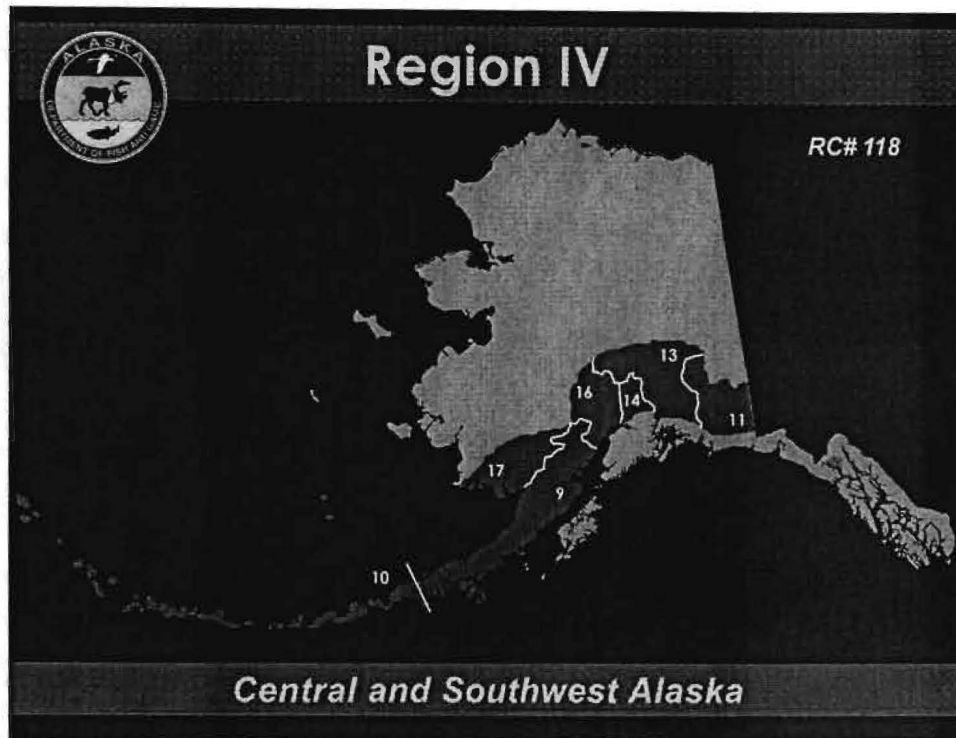
***A successful applicant may not apply for another non-resident take permit for at least five years, whether or not he or she was successful in trapping a raptor.**

***No new quotas or fees shall be imposed on resident falconers.**

Board review of the entire non-resident raptor take scheme is required by 31 December 2014; scheme sunsets 31 December 2016.

Thank you

William R Tilton, President Alaska Falconers Association



Predator Control Reports

Region IV Annual IM Report (RC 4 – Tab 8)

- *Unit 9D (SAP) – Wolf Predation Control - Deferred*
- *Unit 13 (Moose) – Wolf Predation Control*
- *Unit 16 (Moose) – Wolf and Bear Predation Control*

Inactive Program

- *Unit 10 (UCH) – Wolf Predation Control*

New Programs

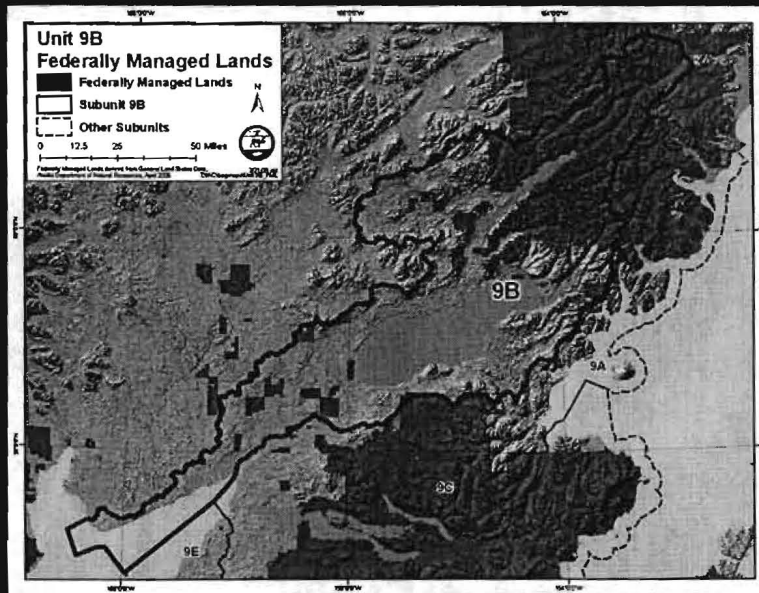
- *Unit 9C/9E (NAP) – Wolf Predation Control – Jan 1, 2012*
- *Unit 17 (MCH) – Wolf Predation Control – Mar 1, 2012*

Proposal 238 – Predator control

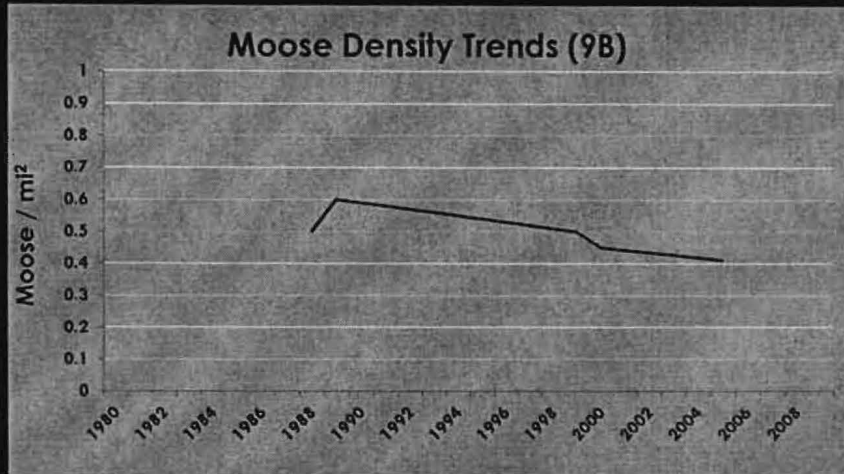
Implement a predator control plan for wolves in Unit 9B.

Do Not Adopt

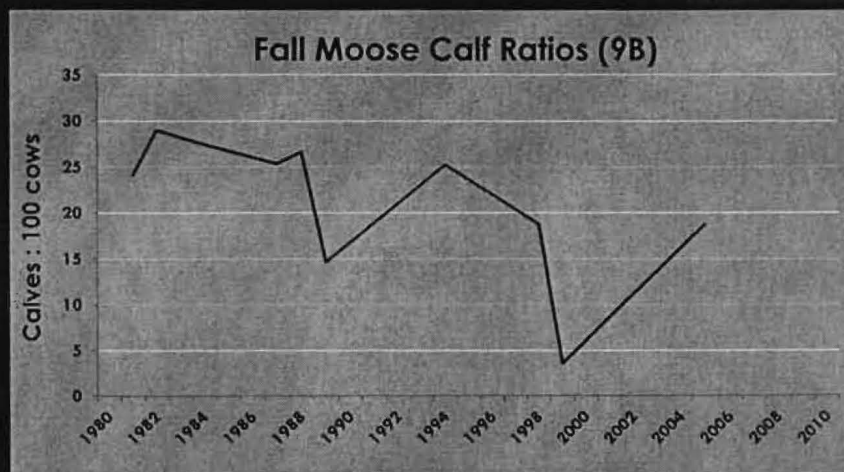
Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B



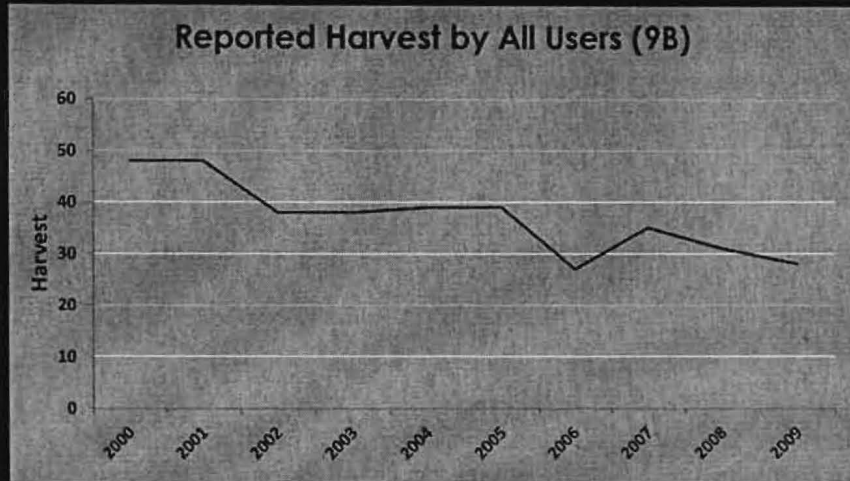
Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B



Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B



Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B



Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B

Moose Issues

- Nutrition does not appear to be limiting factor in good habitat
- Moose habitat is patchy
- Survey data is infrequent
 - Low density moose
 - Difficult to detect population changes
- Predation is believed to be a limiting factor
 - Wolf (7-10 wolves/1000 km²)
 - Black Bear (150 black bear/1000 km²)
 - Brown Bear (50 brown bear/1000 km²)
- Harvest is under-reported

Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B

Predator control issues

- Predator regime similar to Unit 16
- Illegal moose harvests are likely a significant factor
- Difficult to measure “success”
 - Population size
 - Harvest
- Federal lands
- Limited pool of pilots common to all Region IV IM programs
- Region IV has 4 active IM plans, 1 deferred, and 1 inactive

Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B

Statutory Considerations

- Has the big game populations been identified as important for high levels of human consumptive use (i.e. intensive management)?
 - Yes
- Has the board established population and harvest objectives?
 - Yes
- Have the population and harvest objectives been achieved?
 - Unknown
- Has there been a significant reduction in take?
 - Unknown
- Is predation an important cause of the failure to achieve population or harvest objectives?
 - Predation is a Factor
- Can a reduction in predation reasonably be expected to aid the reaching of the objectives?
 - Unknown

Proposal 21 Predation control / Subunit 9B

Other Considerations

- Reduced seasons, reduced bag limits, elimination of nonresident hunting, etc.
 - FSB liberalized season
 - State - 45 day resident season
 - Small nonresident harvest
- Feasibility and cost effectiveness (i.e., what are the effects of weather, terrain, land ownership).
 - Insufficient data
 - 40% Federal Lands – 60% of moose habitat
 - Weather conditions variable
 - High fuel costs

Proposal 238 – Predator control

**Implement a predator control plan for wolves
in Unit 9B.**

Do Not Adopt

Proposal 260 – Brown Bear in Unit 9B

Modify Brown Bear Seasons in Unit 9B.

No Recommendation

Proposal 261 – Brown Bear

Naknek/Kvichak ACR – Unit 9C

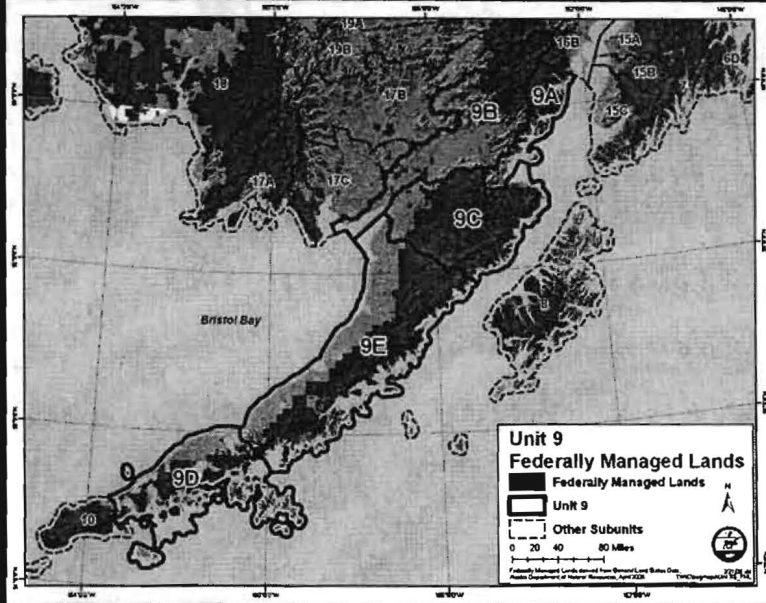
Original ACR ***Moose and Brown Bear Seasons***

Modified by AC ***Limited to Brown Bear***

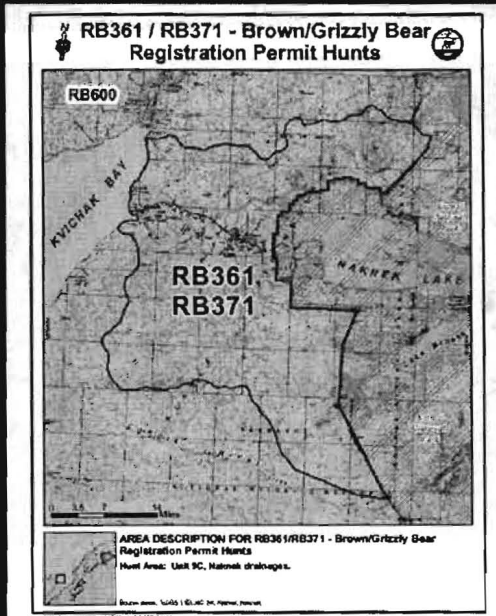
**Reduced opportunity and
Bear predation on moose and caribou**

Do Not Adopt

Proposal 261 – Brown Bear



Proposal 261 – Brown Bear



Proposal 261 – Brown Bear

Current:

Unit 9C

- Residents and Nonresidents - locking tag required
1 bear/4 years Oct 1-21 May 10-25

Within 5 miles of communities

- Residents only - no locking tag required
1 bear/year Jul 1-Jun 30

Proposed:

Unit 9C

- Residents – no locking tag
1 bear/year Jul 1-Jun 30
- Nonresidents – locking tag required
1 bear/year May 1-Jun 30 Sep 1 – Oct 31

Proposal 261 – Brown Bear

- **Current regulations**
 - focus bear harvest near communities
 - liberalizes opportunity to hunt and harvest
 - reduces “special hunt” area
 - harvest appears unchanged
- **Proposed regulations**
 - Increased opportunity to take trophy bear
 - Not sustainable for trophy management
 - Increased harvest will not increase calf survival
 - Harvest is not longer focused near community
 - Implications for Katmai Preserve Issues

Proposal 261 – Brown Bear

Naknek/Kvichak ACR – Unit 9C

Original ACR ***Moose and Brown Bear Seasons***

Modified by AC ***Limited to Brown Bear***

Do Not Adopt

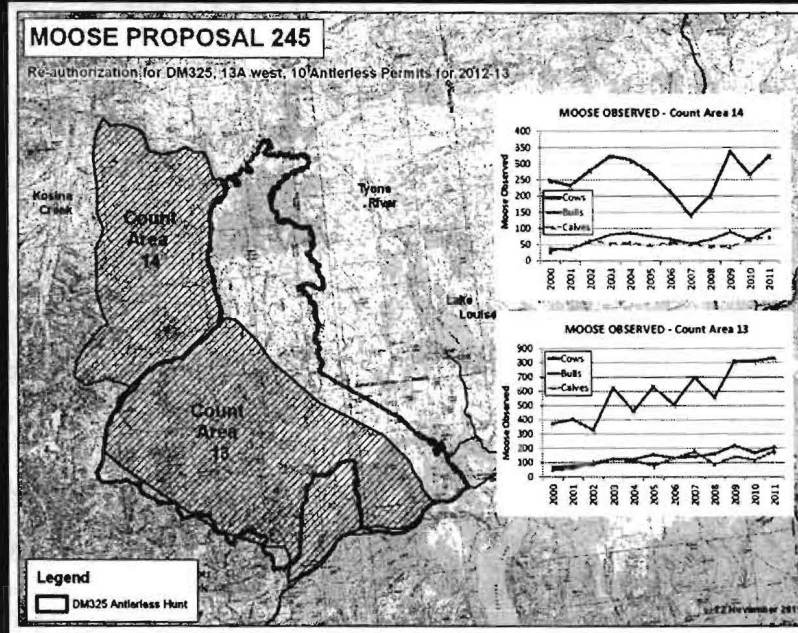
Proposal 245 – Moose in Unit 13

Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13

Adopt

Copper Basin	Support
Paxson	Oppose
Slana	Support
Denali	Support

Proposal 245 – Moose



Proposal 245 – Moose in Unit 13

Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13

Adopt

Copper Basin	Support
Paxson	Oppose
Slana	Support
Denali	Support

Proposal 246 – Moose

Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt in Unit 14

Amend and Adopt

Mat Valley

Support

Proposal 246 – Moose

Amendments

Draw season dates:

Current: Jan 1 to Feb 25

Amend: Nov 1 to Dec 25

**Note: Does not affect the "Hot Spot" hunt season dates*

Number of permits:

Current: Up to 500 permits may be issued

Amend: Up to 1,000 permits may be issued

Mat Valley

Support

Proposal 246 – Moose

Regulatory Year 2012 (RY12)

Unit 14A - Antlerless moose draw hunts cancelled in RY12

Deep Snow winter

- High calf mortality*
- Increased moose-vehicle collisions*
- Unknown affect on moose productivity*
- Unknown population size*

Precautionary Measure

- Reassess next fall*
- May issue antlerless permits in RY13*
- Expect to increase the number of permits issued in the future*

Proposal 246 – Moose

“Hot Spot Hunt”

First year of the hunt

Designed to address moose problems

Current Application

- Areas with more frequent moose-vehicle collisions*
- Defending locations and can't be drive away*

Current Harvest 32 moose (25 cows, 7 bulls)

Proposal 246 – Moose

Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt in Unit 14

Amend and Adopt

Mat Valley

Support

Proposal 254 – Moose

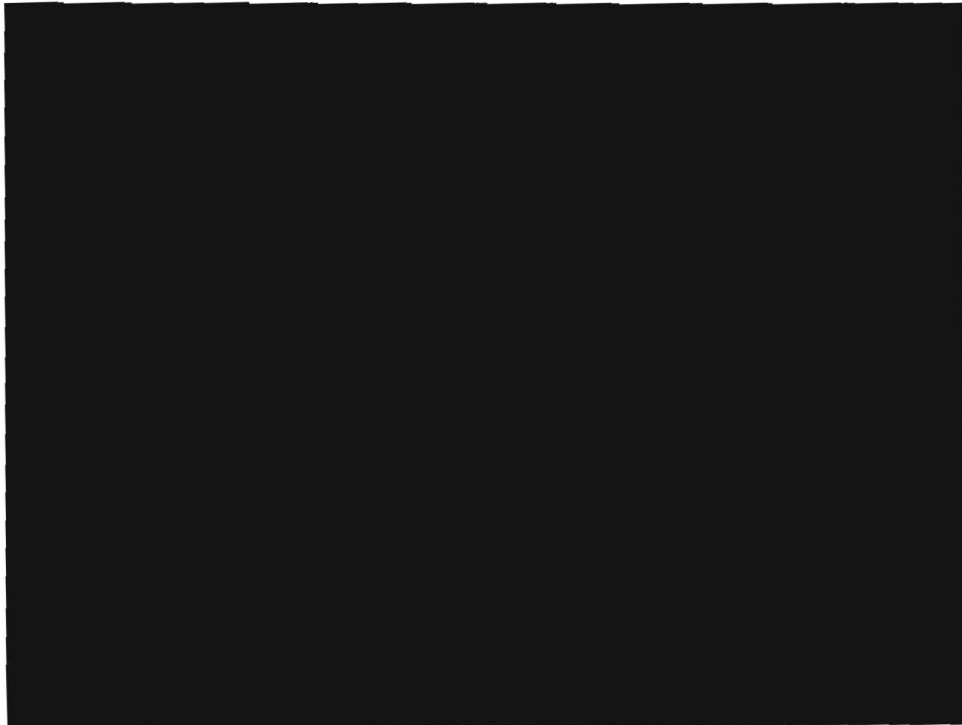
*Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt on
Kalgin Island, Unit 16B*

Adopt

Proposal 255 – Brown bear

*Reauthorize brown bear tag fees exemptions
in Region IV*

Adopt



STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

RC119
SEAN PARNELL, GOVERNOR

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February 28, 2012

Mr. Cliff Judkins
Chairman, Alaska Board of Game
c/o Boards Support Section
Alaska Dept. Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: Appointment of a Board member to a SE Alaska Black Bear Harvest Team

Dear Chairman Judkins:


As you are aware, the Alaska Board of Game (Board) took regulatory action during its November 2010 meeting in Ketchikan to address concerns about black bear harvests in Southeast Alaska. Subsequent to that meeting, questions arose about the Board's intent relative to its actions on this subject, and differences of opinion were expressed by members of the guide industry and our department. To discuss and sort out the nature of the differences, the department convened a teleconference earlier today. Included in the teleconference were guides; Jim Rosenbruch, Brad Dennison, and Keegan McCarthy; U.S. Forest Service use permit officer, Bill Tremblay; Board member, Ted Spraker; SE management coordinator, Neil Barten; and me.

During our discussion we collectively agreed to implement black bear harvest guidelines in SE Alaska based on numbers of hunts authorized by the Forest Service to each guide. At the same time, it was understood that these authorized hunts will ultimately dictate the numbers of bears harvested and that adjustments to the numbers of authorized hunts may be necessary in the future, if harvests fall above or below established sustained yields for each of ten discrete management areas identified for black bear harvesting in SE.

As a key step in implementing this approach, it was recognized by the members of the teleconference that more specific guidelines and processes are needed in order for future actions to be effectively and fairly taken to ensure long-term sustainability of SE Alaska's black bears. To that end, the group agreed to create a team to identify the needed guidelines and processes, and draft them into a document for broader review before being adopted and implemented. There was agreement that having a Board member on this team would be beneficial to the process. I'm therefore coming to you to respectfully ask that you appoint a Board member to serve on this team. While I'll leave it to you to decide whether this is appropriate and, if so, who would best fill this role; I will offer that member Sparker has expressed a willingness to serve on this team, if afforded the opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to learning your decision.

Sincerely,



Doug Larsen
Regional Supervisor, Southeast Alaska

cc: Ted Spraker, Dale Rabe