

A SUMMARY OF PUBLIC RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSED  
ALASKA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLANS

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ALASKA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLANS

VOLUME I

STATE OF ALASKA

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
PUBLIC MEETINGS RESPONSE . . . . .	4
<u>Characterization of Public Meetings</u> . . . . .	6
Urban Communities . . . . .	9
Rural Communities . . . . .	11
Village Communities . . . . .	12
<u>Statewide Summary of Public Meeting Comments</u> . . . . .	13
General Comments on the Proposal . . . . .	14
Purpose . . . . .	14
Design . . . . .	14
Emphasis . . . . .	15
Incorporation of Public Response . . . . .	16
Comments Relating to Management Goals . . . . .	16
Nonconsumptive Use . . . . .	16
To Provide for an Optimum Harvest . . . . .	18
Subsistence . . . . .	19
To Provide the Greatest Opportunity to Participate in Hunting . . . . .	22
To Provide an Opportunity to Hunt Under Aesthetically Pleasing Conditions . . . . .	23
To Provide an Opportunity to Take Large Animals . . . . .	24
Comments on General Management Issues . . . . .	25
Responsiveness of Department and Board of Game . . . . .	25
Department Staffing and Funding . . . . .	26
Management Information Requirements . . . . .	27

Public Information and Education . . . . .	27
Enforcement . . . . .	28
Allocation of Use . . . . .	30
Permits . . . . .	31
Use of Vehicles . . . . .	32
Land Uses . . . . .	33
d-2 Legislation . . . . .	33
Management Jurisdiction on Private Lands . . . . .	34
Cooperative Management . . . . .	35
Guiding . . . . .	36
Either-Sex Hunting . . . . .	37
Wolf Management . . . . .	37
Transplants . . . . .	37
COMMENTS ON PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARIES . . . . .	38
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE . . . . .	39
<u>About the Respondents</u> . . . . .	40
Distribution of Response . . . . .	40
Respondent Use of Wildlife . . . . .	41
Location of Use . . . . .	41
Number of Uses Reported . . . . .	42
Type of Use Reported . . . . .	43
Importance of Wildlife Uses . . . . .	45
<u>General Response to the Proposal</u> . . . . .	48
Comments on the Plans . . . . .	48

Proposal Concept, Appearance and Content . . . . .	48
Proposal Inadequacies . . . . .	49
Public Input . . . . .	50
Comments on Management Goals . . . . .	52
Comments on Wildlife Uses . . . . .	57
Nonconsumptive Use . . . . .	59
Subsistence . . . . .	60
Trophy Hunting . . . . .	61
Guiding . . . . .	62
Hunting . . . . .	62
Aesthetics . . . . .	63
Optimum Harvest . . . . .	63
Existential Appreciation of Wildlife . . . . .	64
Maximum Sustained Yield . . . . .	64
Trapping . . . . .	64
Comments on Wildlife Management Programs and Issues . . . . .	65
Relationship of the Department of Fish and Game with Other Agencies Or Land Use Interests . . . . .	65
Land Ownership and Use . . . . .	65
Management Authority . . . . .	67
Cooperative Management . . . . .	67
Legislation . . . . .	68
Department Management Programs and Issues . . . . .	68
Public Input to Management . . . . .	68
Public Information and Education . . . . .	69

Department Staffing and Funding . . . . .	70
Coordination Among Department Divisions and Programs	71
Ecosystem Management . . . . .	71
Research . . . . .	72
Habitat Management . . . . .	72
Predator Management . . . . .	73
Enforcement . . . . .	74
Either-Sex Harvests . . . . .	74
Transplants . . . . .	75
Miscellaneous Comments . . . . .	75
User Management Issues . . . . .	76
Preferential User Considerations . . . . .	76
User Restriction or Facilitation . . . . .	79
Mechanized vehicles . . . . .	79
Access development . . . . .	79
Primitive weapons . . . . .	80
Seasons and bag limits . . . . .	80
Registration and report systems . . . . .	81
Permits . . . . .	81
Miscellaneous . . . . .	81
<u>Response to Individual Species Plans . . . . .</u>	83
LETTER RESPONSE . . . . .	109

## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes public response to the proposed Alaska Wildlife Management Plans, published in February, 1977, by the Division of Game, Alaska Department of Fish and Game. As a beginning step in long term planning for beneficial uses of wildlife, the Plans were designed primarily as a proposal for public consideration and comment. The Plans contained the Division's recommendations for management of alternative uses of wildlife, by species and area, for the entire state of Alaska. Secondly, the Plans were intended as a reference document, providing much information on the status and use of Alaska's wildlife populations previously unavailable in written form, and supplementing information previously published in 1973 in Alaska's Wildlife and Habitat.

In soliciting public comment on the proposal, the Division of Game expended considerable effort to put the proposal before the public and to obtain the public's response. The availability of the Plans was extensively advertised in the various media throughout the state.

Copies of the plans were issued to the general public through all offices of the Department and were mailed to State and Federal agencies, Native corporations and organizations, and conservation and sportsmen's groups. Public meetings were held in 66 different communities throughout the state to explain and discuss the plans. Approximately 5,000 copies of the proposal were distributed to the public during 1977. In addition to the booklets and maps containing and explaining the Plans, the proposal included a mail-back questionnaire soliciting written public response. As of this writing, 670 questionnaires and more than 80 letters have

been received. Occasional requests for copies of the proposal are still being processed.

Much useful information was obtained in the public response, not only with reference to the proposal alone, but also as it applied to Department management programs and wildlife issues in general. This report is only a summary of the response. Conclusions regarding the significance of the response, modifications of the original proposal, and recommendations for Department or Board of Game actions are deferred until the Division of Game staff has had an opportunity to evaluate the issues and positions identified in the response.

This summary report has been organized into two volumes. Volume I contains the statewide summaries of: 1) oral comments received at public meetings, 2) written questionnaire response, and 3) letters received on the proposal. Volume I will be sent to all people who responded to the proposal, and it will be made available to anyone who requests a copy from any office of the Department.

Volume II contains, as a series of appendices, more detailed informational summaries from which Volume I was developed. In Volume II, material relating to public meetings includes a listing of dates, locations and attendance of public meetings, reports and summaries of individual public meetings, and written responses to public meeting summaries.

Also in Volume II, material relating to the questionnaire response includes an example of the questionnaire, a list of communities from



which questionnaire response was obtained, tabulations of the responses to individual questions, and summaries of responses to individual species plans. Finally in Volume II, are copies of all letters received in response to the proposal.

Copies of Volume II will be available for public inspection at all offices of the Department. In addition, copies of Volume II will be provided, for the cost of reproduction, to anyone who requests a copy from:

Alaska Wildlife Management Plans  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

## PUBLIC MEETINGS RESPONSE

Public meetings and hearings are an accepted and expected mode of public input to government programs. Although they have limited value as a vehicle for expression of representative public attitudes, meetings and hearings do provide an important alternative method of public expression which often identifies issues of public concern.

Public meetings on the wildlife plans were scheduled in communities throughout Alaska to expand public exposure to the proposal and to increase the public's opportunity to review and respond to the plans beyond that available in written form alone. For logistical reasons public meetings were considered the best method of getting the plans to interested residents of many rural communities, explaining what the plans meant, and obtaining feedback.

From April to mid-July, 1977, 70 public meetings were held in 66 different Alaskan communities. Six additional meetings were scheduled but were not attended by the public. Total attendance was 1,382 people, with attendance at individual meetings ranging from one to 75 people.

Meetings were scheduled for most communities with 1970 census populations greater than 500 and for many smaller communities geographically distributed in all areas of the state. Selection of meeting places was made by the staff after suggestions for meeting locations were solicited from all native regional corporations. In the Kotzebue area, villages were

apprised of the wildlife plans and were asked to request meetings if they so desired. In addition to scheduled meetings, a meeting was held in the southwestern Alaska village of Egegik after that village petitioned the Department for a meeting, and several meetings were held in or near Anchorage at the request of interested organizations.

Public meetings were announced and conducted by local Department field staff with assistance of central coordinating staff. Announcement of meetings was usually made two to four weeks in advance of the meeting by means of local radio and newspaper announcements, notices posted in public places, and through written and personal contact with individuals.

The meetings were generally loosely structured. That is, comments on the plans and on any aspect of wildlife management of interest or concern to the public were solicited, and the discussions often followed a course determined by the participants. Most meetings lasted two or more hours and consisted of an explanatory slide show followed by general discussion. People were encouraged to comment on the plans or on any wildlife management topic of interest to them. The discussions were kept informal to encourage participation. Some of the meetings were tape recorded.

All meetings were reported on by the staff. Summaries of the discussions were prepared for about half of the meetings and were mailed to the participants as a check against accuracy and to provide extended opportunity for additional comments.

The sometimes wide-ranging discussions provided useful information which supplemented that received in written form. Such information helped identify issues with geographical areas, addressed some topics not covered adequately by the questionnaire, and represented input from many people who did not respond in writing. The public meetings also provided increased opportunities for Department staff to personally contact the public.

#### CHARACTERIZATION OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

Most people who attended the meetings did so because they had a strong interest in wildlife. Most were local residents, with local interests. Many came to the meetings representing their own individual outlook, but there were also resource agency personnel, members of conservation organizations and sportsmen's groups, and members of local fish and game advisory committees in attendance, and their input was in some measure reflective of their various affiliations and constituencies.

As a rule, people had not read the plans before attending the meetings. Many were unaware of the proposal. Consequently the majority of comments were related to the regulations and management programs of recent years and to the direct personal experiences of use by those attending. As expected, most comments were critical. People tended to be much more vocal and specific about what they didn't like or what was not being provided to them than about management or regulatory provisions with which they agreed.

It is difficult to generalize on the comments received at the public meetings. Because the proceedings were loosely structured, the discussions varied from meeting to meeting, reflecting the issues of local concern. A dominant topic at one meeting or in one area of Alaska might have been only superficially considered in another community or area. The range and depth of discussions also varied. For example, some meetings addressed a host of issues such as the planning process, public input to management, alternative uses, quality of use, protection of habitat, program priorities, and so on, while discussions at other meetings were limited to the status of local game populations or concentrated on the issue of subsistence.

The following interrelated considerations were probably important determinants of the kinds of comments offered by individuals.

1. Interaction with wildlife. A person's dependence on wildlife (particularly for food), his frequency of use, whether or not his use was long-standing, and the physical versus abstract context of his use influenced his opinions on user preference, priority of different uses, and orientation toward resource protection or toward resource use.
2. Use experience. Past freedom of use, exposure to competition, and experience with eroding success and quality of experience influenced acceptance of increasing restrictions, tolerance for other users, and attitudes toward designated management for alternative uses. Recent trends and impending changes in availability of use (both quantity and quality) were reflected in the degree of concern for retaining use opportunities.

3. Relationship to the land and other resources. Some private landowners had a proprietary attitude toward wildlife on their lands which was reflected in comments addressing such things as user preferences, priority of use, and public access. Mandated responsibilities and objectives of resource agencies were brought out in comments regarding public use, management priorities, and resource development conflicts on lands they administer. Loggers, miners, farmers, developers and recreationists questioned restrictions on their activities that might result from implementation of the plans.
4. Exposure to change in Alaska. Although growing competition and increasing restrictions on use of wildlife (resulting from rapid increases in population and development) have affected people in all parts of Alaska, concern for habitat protection and retention of use opportunities, and recognition of the need for management planning were most prevalent near growing population centers and development sites.
5. Understanding of the management system. Knowledge of and experience with Alaska's wildlife management system affected comments relating to agency responsibilities and jurisdictions, public participation in management (particularly in terms of local representation), and responsiveness of management to public input.

All public meetings were characterized by two central concerns: people wanted to maintain their preferred (usually traditional) uses of wildlife,

and they wanted to minimize competition. These concerns were expressed in different ways. For example, people claiming dependence on wildlife for food argued for preferential treatment in restrictions of use, while recreationists argued for common use and equal rights under the law. Rural residents, who have a relative abundance of wildlife close to home, urged reduction of nonlocal users, while urban residents, by necessity having to range into rural backyards, opposed exclusion from any public areas. Increased restrictions on methods were generally opposed except when they applied to someone else.

Different issues and attitudes dominated discussions at different meetings, but similarities of comments were evident in meetings within areas with common use patterns and between communities with common socioeconomic characteristics. In general there were similarities in those meetings held in the three major urban communities, in those held in major rural communities (Southeastern Alaska and road system communities in Interior and Southcentral Alaska), and in those held in villages.

#### Urban Communities

Meetings in Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau generally had strong representation by conservation groups, resource agency personnel, sportsmen's groups, and local fish and game advisory committees. Nonconsumptive use interests were strongly represented. Consumptive use interests were almost exclusively recreational. Comments were, to a large extent, concerned with management philosophies and management systems rather than local concerns or day-to-day problems. Attendees were relatively knowledgeable about the

State's legal framework for management, and such changes to management as they desired were suggested within the established system.

Comments at the Juneau meeting centered on maintenance of quality hunting, increased management emphasis on nonconsumptive uses of wildlife, and improved management through inter- and intra-agency coordination and cooperation.

Persons attending the Anchorage meeting also were concerned with quality of use and urged greater management attention to nonconsumptive uses, but they were more critical of the Department's "hunter-oriented management philosophy" and questioned its ability to protect the resource. The plans were criticized for omitting fundamental considerations of protection of habitat and conservation of wildlife before its use by man. Comprehensive ecosystem management was suggested as an improvement over present species-oriented programs.

People in Fairbanks spoke to some extent to quality of use and to nonconsumptive uses, but the strong orientation of a number of participants toward resource development and the personal freedom advocacy of many people at the meetings substantially offset the support for such considerations. Fairbanksians did not favor proposals affecting methods and means of hunting, and increasing restrictions such as permit systems were strongly opposed.



### Rural Communities

Representation at public meetings held in rural communities was predominantly by local private interests and members of local fish and game advisory committees. Local State and Federal agency personnel were present at some meetings. Consumptive use interests (primarily recreational) predominated although some participants considered themselves at least partially dependent on wildlife for food. In most cases comments focused on local concerns: game population status, enforcement problems, conflicts between users, and current or proposed regulations. Management philosophies and systems were usually not discussed. These people also looked for desired changes in management through working within the established legal system.

Comments at rural meetings, although differing somewhat between regions were basically similar in the major issues raised. People in these meetings did not like increasing restrictions on use, resented the influence of "lower 48" interests on Alaskan wildlife management and on d-2 legislation, were opposed to increasing management for nonconsumptive use, felt that local residents should have more input to regulations and that urban people have too much influence on management decisions, and were apprehensive about being excluded from native lands.

In Southeastern Alaska there were few major concerns except for the status of local game populations and the effects of d-2 legislation on wildlife use opportunities. Illegal hunting, predator control, effects of logging on wildlife, and competition with nonresidents were other subjects discussed.

On the Kenai Peninsula and to a lesser extent in Southcentral Alaska, where people have experienced the greatest recreational impacts of a rapidly expanding urban population, people were primarily concerned with possible increased restrictions on use which would further aggravate the highly competitive nature of use which occurs there. Special use areas which might attract additional recreationists while reducing the amount of area available for established uses were questioned.

Kodiak Island meetings were attended by people whose principal interests were in fisheries. Their comments related strongly to fisheries conflicts with marine mammals and brown bears.

In Interior Alaska rural meetings people were concerned over maintaining traditional, local use. They wanted regulations which favor local use but did not ask for racially based exclusive rights. They also sought more enforcement and urged that hunting be controlled only by limiting seasons and bag limits rather than by permits or restrictions on methods and means.

#### Village Communities

Village residents predominated at most public meetings held in villages. Some meetings were also attended by teachers and personnel of other State and Federal agencies, as well as by members of fish and game advisory committees. Interest in wildlife expressed at these meetings was almost exclusively consumptive in nature with many people claiming a strong, traditional dependence on wildlife for food. Most comments

dealt with local concerns. There was strong resentment against use of wildlife by nonlocal people. Villagers were concerned about competition from outsiders, and they called for increased enforcement efforts, particularly with regards to wanton waste violations.

Subsistence use was the dominant issue in all village areas, with many people urging that preferential or exclusive use be granted to Native subsistence hunters. These people also asked that their seasonal needs for food be accommodated in regulations. Villagers in Southwestern and Western Alaska expressed stronger demands for preferential subsistence allocations than villagers further north and greater concern with competition from nonlocal residents. Spring waterfowl hunting was an important issue, particularly in villages of the lower Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers.

Most villagers knew little about the relevant legal system of management. They often suggested solutions to the problems they saw in management that were outside the established legal framework. Some were in favor of seeking Federal resource management, believing it to be more protective of their interests.

#### STATEWIDE SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETING COMMENTS

In the following review comments are summarized as those that addressed general aspects of the proposal such as its design and emphasis, those that related to the proposed management goals, and those that spoke to general management issues. Comments specific to individual species plans were incorporated into the summaries of written comments on individual

species plans (contained in Appendix 7, Volume II of the Summary Report).

### General Comments on the Proposal

#### Purpose

Some people questioned the need or purpose of the plans. They said the plans offered nothing new for wildlife management in Alaska. Some thought the plans would be used to justify increased expenditures and staffing or to promote an expanded permit system.

#### Design

The length and complexity of the proposal were the design features most often faulted. Because they were so voluminous some people did not have the time to go through the plans, or else they lost interest before reading very much. This problem was thought by some to impair adequate public review. On the other hand, some people considered the proposal interesting and valuable as a reference document.

The abstract and ambiguous nature of the proposal and the technical terminology used in the narrative were also criticized. People had difficulty visualizing the end product of the plans. Some thought that an example of an operational plan would have been helpful in understanding how the plans would be used.

Some objection was voiced to the presentation of only one recommended approach instead of providing the public with several alternatives to choose from. As presented, the public could only accept or reject the six-goal framework.

The order in which the recommended management goals were explained caused some confusion. Many people assumed the order of goals was indicative of the importance that the Department assigned to each goal. Some felt the Department deliberately misrepresented its emphasis of the various uses by placing the order of the goal explanations in such a way as to lead people to believe those goals listed first were most important. It was suggested that the Department should have listed the goals in order of importance and clearly stated that to be the case.

#### Emphasis

The most pervasive criticism of the proposal was that it did not demonstrate a fundamental concern for the welfare of the resource. Instead of conservation the Department appeared to be concerned only with allocation. In many meetings the Department was urged to be more conservative, to emphasize protection and management of habitat and wildlife before considering uses, and to consider uses as tools of management, not as goals.

The plans were criticized by some for being single-species oriented. It was suggested that an ecosystem approach be used instead because single species management fails to account for the interrelationships of all the different components of the biotic system.

Some people, primarily urban residents, characterized the plans as being predominantly hunter oriented and not considering the needs or desires of the general Alaskan public. Much more emphasis on nonconsumptive use was suggested. Others, primarily rural residents, criticized the Department for "selling out to the conservationists," and for having too many no-hunting areas. They wanted more consideration given to local users of wildlife.

Many people disliked the increasing restrictions that the proposal represented.

#### Incorporation of Public Response

People were generally appreciative of the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the proposal and on actions of the Department. The question of how public response would be incorporated into a final draft of the plans was frequently raised. Many people wanted continuing review and input opportunities as the plans are developed and implemented. Many were also interested in what other Alaskans had to say about the proposal and requested copies of any reports summarizing the public response.

#### Comments Relating to Management Goals

Nonconsumptive Use (To provide an opportunity to view, photograph and enjoy wildlife; to provide an opportunity for scientific and educational study.)

Comments on nonconsumptive use of wildlife were generally strongly pro or con, with most support expressed by urban residents (primarily from Anchorage and Juneau) who favored increased management emphasis on nonconsumptive use. Rural residents generally opposed more nonconsumptive use if it came at the expense of hunting. Relatively few people expressed "middle of the road" opinions.

People in favor of increased emphasis on nonconsumptive use said the plans made only token efforts to accommodate nonconsumptive user interests, reflecting the bias of the Department toward hunters. These people wanted more areas closed to hunting, especially near population centers where conflicts between hunters and other recreationists occur. They also felt that hunting and non-hunting uses of wildlife were incompatible, particularly if the same species were involved.

Objections to hunting in viewing areas were based primarily on reduced opportunity to observe animals due to removal of animals by hunters and increased wariness of animals subjected to hunting. Some people also felt it aesthetically objectionable to be aware of hunting in the area, even if hunting occurred at a different time of year. Others were concerned that hunting activity might endanger public safety.

The majority of people at meetings held outside of Anchorage and Juneau opposed establishing new areas closed to hunting. These people were somewhat skeptical of proposals for areas actively managed for both hunting and non-hunting uses because they feared eventual prohibition of hunting in those areas. They pointed to the year-round opportunities

for nonconsumptive use now available in most parts of the state, in contrast to limited hunting seasons available to consumptive users. They also said that existing national parks and additional park areas to be established by d-2 legislation are more than adequate to satisfy demands for exclusive use by nonconsumptive users.

Some consumptive users recognized the desirability of managing for nonconsumptive use in some areas but urged a selective approach to hunting closures. They said hunting should be used to control animal populations in viewing areas as in other areas, and pointed to human/animal conflicts that sometimes arise when animals are afforded total protection. If more nonconsumptive areas are to be established, these people felt the Department should encourage observation of wildlife in natural surroundings by not developing roadside "parking lot" viewing areas and tourist facilities common to National Park management areas.

Relatively few comments were received that were specifically directed to scientific and educational study of wildlife. Many of those commenting on nonconsumptive uses in general were speaking to study of animals as well as to recreational activities. Some people suggested that studies of animals be an integral part of management of any wildlife area.

#### To Provide for an Optimum Harvest

Of the six goals proposed, that of providing for an optimum harvest was the one least understood by meeting participants in all parts of the state. The explanation of the goal provided in the publication was



considered by some to be too general. Many felt optimum harvest should be the major goal statewide and that the kind of management which would emphasize yield or production of animals should have been titled differently.

Many villagers were concerned that subsistence was not treated as a goal in itself, instead of being hidden within the definition of optimum harvest. To the extent that natives understood the inclusion of management for subsistence within the optimum harvest goal, they were dissatisfied that optimum harvest management did not grant preferential or exclusive use to subsistence users. The fact that anyone could hunt in an optimum harvest area was taken to mean that it was the same kind of management as that which maximizes recreational opportunity.

### Subsistence

Subsistence was generally the dominant issue discussed in the villages. Comments offered in village meetings reflected the dependency on wildlife as a food source and the year-round interaction with wildlife traditionally experienced by these people. Because most villagers had not familiarized themselves with the plans their comments did not usually relate directly to the way the plans addressed the subsistence issue. Instead, their comments reflected a concern that the plans represented a potential for change from their subsistence way of life, that the proposal for alternative uses might mean other uses of wildlife would supplant subsistence.

Underlying all village discussions of subsistence use was the importance of the dependency of subsistence users on wildlife as a source of food

and commodities which overrides that of recreational benefits or vicarious satisfactions enjoyed by other users. These people called for special consideration of subsistence needs in allocation of the resource.

Villagers view increasing use by outsiders as a threat both to their physical welfare and to the continuation of their lifestyle. Much of their concern stems from changing patterns of use and regulation that they have experienced in recent years or anticipate in the near future. Most comments by villagers concerned the inadequacy of regulations to accommodate subsistence user needs, and competition from nonlocal users. They see existing regulations as an imposition of an alternative (cash) life style.

Much of the discussion on the inadequacy of regulations to accommodate need related to spring waterfowl hunting. Villagers said their need for food or for fresh meat in the spring transcends existing laws. Limited spring waterfowl bag limits were most often suggested as a partial solution. Many of these people do not understand that the State cannot legally provide for spring use of waterfowl.

Other regulations cited as examples of failure to accommodate subsistence user needs included lack of year-long seasons which prevent people from obtaining wild meat whenever the need arises, poor timing of seasons which prevents taking animals when their physical condition makes them most desirable or when the animals are locally available, closed trapping seasons on beaver, and costly permit hunts for muskoxen.

Regarding competition from nonlocal users, subsistence users wanted protection from use by "outsiders" who do not have the degree of dependency on the resource that local users have. Many people cited wanton waste as evidence of this. Outsiders, it was claimed, often waste meat. Recreational hunters were said to care only for their trophies or "horns." Specific instances of wanton waste violations were cited and increased enforcement of wanton waste provisions was requested. In contrast, subsistence users were said to kill only what they needed, and to completely utilize all animals taken. In some cases where salvage of meat is not always required by regulation (as with brown bears) some people would like to see hunters required to salvage the meat for use by local residents if it is not utilized by the taker.

In general there was opposition to encouraging use of non-subsistence species because outsiders drawn to the area for such use would also take or otherwise adversely affect subsistence species. To determine the importance of various species for subsistence use, surveys of such use were suggested at several meetings. However, it was recognized that some villagers (as in the Y-K Delta) are reluctant to supply information on their use of wildlife because they fear it will be used against them, resulting in either increased enforcement or in increased regulatory restrictions on take. Increased education and involvement of the people in the regulatory process were suggested as ways to overcome such reluctance.

Subsistence was not a major issue at public meetings held in urban and rural non-village communities. People in rural communities recognized the needs of subsistence users. Many considered themselves subsistence

users although their dependency on wildlife is not as great as that of many bush residents and villagers. However, these people did not want any special privileged user group established. By creating a subsistence user category some felt they would be excluded from use of a resource owned in common by all the people. Some also thought that misuse of subsistence allowances by people without a real subsistence need would occur.

Urban residents, especially those in the Anchorage area, commented on subsistence in a more philosophical vein, perhaps because they probably are, among the state's residents, most removed from a dependency relationship with wildlife. These people supported the concept of subsistence. They recognized that subsistence users have real needs and said that "something must be done" to maintain the subsistence way of life. These people suggested that specific provisions for subsistence be included in the plans.

#### To Provide the Greatest Opportunity to Participate in Hunting

Opinions were mixed with regards to management being proposed to maximize opportunity to participate in hunting. Those not in favor of such a goal included some rural residents who did not like the prospects of increased use by outsiders suggested by the goal. Although they see increases in hunting pressure as inevitable, they did not want to encourage increased use of remote areas. Many urban and rural people expressed concern that providing the greatest opportunity to hunt would result in reduced game populations and unwanted concentrations of hunters. Some

of these people were in favor of less frequent but better quality hunting. Many also advocated controls on mechanical transport methods. Access, they said, is the key to controlling hunting pressure.

Support for the concept of unlimited opportunity to participate in hunting was equally widespread. People in favor of the goal opposed increased restrictions on mechanical transport and on participation. They suggested that use (hunting pressure) will govern itself, that within the constraints of allowable harvests hunting pressure would be governed by hunters' expectation of success.

#### To Provide an Opportunity to Hunt Under Aesthetically Pleasing Conditions

Most comments on this goal related to the restrictions which would be required to maintain or achieve aesthetically pleasing hunting conditions. Some people were willing to accept limitations on participation and controls on use of motorized vehicles to obtain high quality experiences. However, comments in support of aesthetics were outnumbered by those in opposition to increased restrictions. Many people who for a long time have hunted where and how they pleased under liberal regulations are unhappy with the increasing number of permit hunts and increasing limitations on the use of motorized transport methods. These people see in the proposed aesthetics goal a great increase in restrictions of their hunting activities. A commonly expressed view was that opportunities for hunting under aesthetic conditions don't have to be managed for, they already exist under the present system. Also, some people questioned whether the Department has any business imposing its values on the public by regulating aesthetics.

## To Provide an Opportunity to Take Large Animals

Proposed trophy management drew considerably more opposition than support at public meetings, but most objections were against indirect effects of such management rather than against the concept of providing the opportunity to hunt large animals. Most opposition was voiced in rural communities where local residents felt that establishing trophy areas will draw outsiders to these areas where they will compete with local residents for all species. There was a very strong association of trophy hunting with wanton waste violations expressed by these people, and any management which encourages hunting by nonlocals, particularly nonresident recreational hunters, was objectionable to these people who place a high value on wild food sources.

Some urban residents expressed the feeling that encouraging competition for large animals is inappropriate as a goal because considering animals as status symbols demonstrates a shallow regard for the resource.

Comments in support of trophy management usually were made with respect to sheep and brown bears. Some people suggested that species not important for their meat be emphasized for use by nonresidents while "meat species" be managed for the benefit of residents. The need to establish criteria for trophies was pointed out.

## Comments on General Management Issues

### Responsiveness of Department and Board of Game

Rural residents, particularly those in the western half of Alaska, expressed dissatisfaction with the unresponsiveness of the Board of Game to their desires. Many of these people felt they had no input to decisions and that the Board was "too far away" to deal appropriately with local situations. Many rural residents said they thought the Board is excessively influenced by hunters from urban areas or by people from outside Alaska.

New regulations promulgated to protect wildlife from increasing pressure by outsiders are resented by local rural residents. Some of these people thought the plans would become instruments for outside interests. The Department and the Board were urged to consider local opinions to a greater extent.

Other suggestions were offered to improve management performance. One was to have greater involvement of people through the established Fish and Game Advisory Committee system to increase citizen input to regulatory decisions. A few people suggested obtaining greater representation of local interests in Juneau decision-making. The majority of comments dealing with the Legislature's role in management were in favor of less legislative interference in fish and game management. Several people called for keeping politics entirely out of management.

## Department Staffing and Funding

People in all areas felt there are increased management needs for information that necessitate expanding the staff to gather the information. Some people in rural communities felt there are too many biologists sitting in offices pushing papers; to improve management the Department needs to expand its field staff.

Most comments on funding suggested a general recognition that funds are inadequate to conduct needed research and management programs. Some people in remote areas said they are the first to suffer when insufficient funds are allocated to statewide programs; they suggested that funds be earmarked for areas that have been "ignored" in the past.

Funding sources, as they relate to existing or future management programs dealing with consumptive and nonconsumptive uses of wildlife, were a prominent discussion topic in most urban and large rural communities. Those people with a consumptive use orientation felt strongly that management should be responsive to its funding source: because non-hunters contribute little to the Department's funding for wildlife programs they should not expect management programs which benefit nonconsumptive users primarily. These people feel that users should pay for what they get.

People with nonconsumptive interests generally acknowledged that they do not contribute to management funding but pointed out that the Department's



constitutional and statutory responsibilities are for management of all of the state's wildlife resources for all of the people, not just game species for hunters. They suggested that financial support from nonconsumptive users could more easily become a reality if the Department would align its programs and management emphasis in a less partisan manner. General fund appropriations were the most often mentioned source of funds that would distribute costs among all beneficiaries of management programs. Additional suggestions included special taxes on recreational equipment and special user fees.

#### Management Information Requirements

Many people were concerned that the Department does not have enough information on wildlife or its use to manage effectively. Most concern with inadequate information was associated with declining, depressed, or controversial game populations.

Suggestions were received ranging from investigating specific factors to more comprehensive studies of ecosystems. The Department was also urged to "do more surveys," "increase research," and "spend less time behind desks."

#### Public Information and Education

If any single thing was made clear in the public meetings, it was that the Department has not communicated well with the public. People are generally unfamiliar with the Department's responsibilities, authority,

activities, or rationale behind its programs. This lack of understanding by the public was reflected in many of the comments and suggestions offered at the meetings on a wide variety of subjects.

The need for increased emphasis on public education activities was identified statewide. People wanted more information from the Department - on wildlife population status, harvest information, regulations, and management programs. In part this desire stemmed from curiosity with a resource many feel strongly about, but the desire to participate in decisions affecting local use patterns was repeatedly expressed. In this regard people requested greater contact with area biologists (indeed, requested more area biologists), urged greater efforts to publicize advisory committee activities, and called for improving the effectiveness of citizen input through educational programs.

A need for greater emphasis on hunter education and training activities was expressed by people who see a growing public safety problem where hunting activity occurs near residential areas or along popular roads, trails, and camping areas.

#### Enforcement

People everywhere expressed the belief that increased enforcement efforts and better quality enforcement of wildlife regulations are needed. The illegal activities of most concern were wanton waste and poaching. Wanton waste was repeatedly brought up in discussions in small rural communities and villages. Wanton waste was associated most

with activities of nonlocal hunters, particularly "trophy" hunters. Poaching was a concern of both urban and rural residents who felt that local residents as well as outsiders were guilty of violations.

Some people charged that enforcement efforts are discriminatory. Villagers in several meetings complained that violations by local people, committed in the attempt to satisfy their needs for food, are more stringently investigated than wanton waste violations by people exploiting the resource for trophies. On the other hand, some people are disgruntled with the leniency exhibited toward native hunters who take waterfowl in the spring. They felt enforcement should treat all people equally.

A number of suggestions were offered to improve the state's enforcement capability. The need for more enforcement officers and increased funding for enforcement activities was widely recognized. People in several communities suggested deputization of citizen wardens. If deputization did not prove feasible, they felt that state enforcement officers should at least avail themselves of local knowledge to improve their effectiveness. Increased efforts should be made to educate the public in reporting illegal activities and in providing information useful in investigations of violations. In some areas villagers do not understand the regulations. Compliance could be improved there if the regulations and the reasons behind the regulations were better explained. Many people felt that more severe penalties are needed to discourage illegal activities.

## Allocation of use

Concern with competition in use of wildlife underlaid many of the comments offered at the meetings, regardless of the specific topic at hand.

People reacted negatively to aspects of the plans or to regulations which represent potential increases in competition, or which might place them at a competitive disadvantage.

The nature of comments differed to some extent between rural and urban participants in that rural residents were concerned with losing wildlife use opportunities they have enjoyed in the past, while urban residents were concerned about acquiring opportunities for use, or at least not being excluded from participating in use.

Rural residents in general opposed any proposals or developments that would bring nonlocal users to their area or reduce participation by locals. For example, establishing trophy areas was seen as an attractant to nonresident trophy hunters. Outsiders attracted by one species were often seen as a threat to other species. Hence even proposals that would increase outside use of a species not important to local residents were opposed.

Outsiders were said to have mechanical transport advantages over local residents, particularly in the use of aircraft, and because of such advantages they were said to be too efficient. This was considered unfair competition, and increased transport restrictions on outsiders were requested.

Nonlocal competition was equated with recreational use which, in turn, was considered less important than local use of animals as a food source. In some areas local users preferred to forego hunting seasons of desirable length or timing (in terms of weather or accessibility of animals) in favor of less desirable seasons which reduce nonlocal competition.

Urban residents also disliked increasing competition, but because their solution to the problem has been to find "new," lightly hunted areas, they were concerned about being excluded from use of areas by such things as subsistence area designations, blocking of public access across private lands, restrictions of use on federal lands, and increasing restrictions on mechanized transport methods.

#### Permits

Permit systems are not popular among those Alaskans who have enjoyed relatively unrestricted hunting opportunities in past years. Many recognize the necessity for permit hunts in some areas, but their reluctance to accept an expanded permit system was evident in comments received at the meetings. Aside from those situations which require permit controls to prevent overharvests, support or opposition to permits depended on whether or not people were willing to accept restrictions in participation in return for improved quality hunting and longer hunting periods.

People who supported permit systems suggested that permit allocations be "equitable." Most often this meant that residents should be assured of

receiving permits. Many people thought residents should receive proportionately more permits than nonresidents, with proportions depending on the species and area.

It was suggested that permit hunts should be established in less accessible areas so the actual loss in opportunity would not be as great as if participation were restricted in an area already receiving heavy use.

Dissatisfaction with permits was a common sentiment in meetings held all over the state. In addition to the prospects of being excluded from some areas, objections to permits included the assertions that hunters apply for and participate in permit hunts who would otherwise not hunt in the area, thereby excluding long-time users; that permits are confusing and result in unintentional violations; and that permits require advance application, preventing "spur of the moment" decisions to hunt. The Department was often requested to explore alternative methods of limiting the number of hunters in any given area.

#### Use of Vehicles

There was relatively little discussion about use of motorized vehicles at the meetings. Those people in favor of such use said motorized vehicles are necessary to reach remote hunting areas. Without mechanized access, they said, little use of large areas of Alaska would occur. Also, mechanical access was said to be necessary to salvage meat in remote areas before it spoils. People who had traditionally used motorized vehicles to hunt were opposed to restrictions on vehicles, suggesting

instead that where the Department needs to reduce harvests it limit the number of hunters.

Those people who opposed use of vehicles said such use resulted in excessive hunting pressure and damage to habitat. They advocated discouraging use of motorized vehicles and, where vehicles are allowed, limiting them to designated corridors and aircraft landing strips.

#### Land Uses

Comments received on land uses related to such uses as they affect wildlife or its habitat. Mineral extraction, logging, oil pollution, off-road vehicle use, construction and other development activities were seen as threats to wildlife habitat. New roads or developed access were said to result in overharvests. People suggested that management of affected wildlife populations must make adjustments in harvests to reflect developmental impacts and must control such land use activities to reduce detrimental effects. Many people fear the effects of uncontrolled development on wildlife.

#### d-2 Legislation

People at many of the meetings pointed out that finalization of any comprehensive wildlife management plan must await passage of d-2 legislation.

Many people acknowledged the desirability of establishing some new national parks, wildlife refuges and wild and scenic rivers in Alaska, but the majority of comments reflected concern with the potential loss or restriction of wildlife uses that could result from the legislation. People were concerned that restrictive federal management over large areas of some of the best wildlife lands in the state, particularly national parks, will mean loss of hunting opportunity, increased competition and reduced options for use on areas remaining unrestricted. The prospect of large new wilderness areas with their concomitant prohibitions on use of motorized vehicles was of special concern. Many people resented the fact that decisions on areas and uses addressed by the legislation are being made by people with little knowledge of the state, and they were skeptical of "special exceptions for Alaska conditions" promised or alluded to by agency officials or congressional representatives promoting the legislation.

The Department was requested to try and retain hunting opportunities over as much of Alaska as possible. The possibility of legislatively - mandated Federal management authority leaves the question of jurisdiction over resident wildlife on d-2 lands uncertain until passage. Most of those commenting on management jurisdiction favored retention of management authority by the State.

#### Management Jurisdiction on Private Lands

The impact upon wildlife management resulting from placement of large land areas into private ownership was a subject raised in most meetings.



Many people are concerned about the loss of recreational opportunity that may result if public access to or through private lands is denied. The Department was urged to try to keep lands accessible for public use.

Comments by natives at many meetings suggested a general misconception held by new landowners that ownership and control of the land means ownership and control of the wildlife on that land. Some of these people were not aware that the State would retain management authority over wildlife on all private lands.

#### Cooperative Management

Some people with a background in agency resource management work were critical of unilateral management efforts by State and Federal wildlife agencies. They said a spirit of cooperation between State and Federal agencies has been lacking in recent years and that this go-it-alone attitude on the part of the Department was evident in negative language contained in the wildlife plans as well as in recent State-Federal confrontations over resource issues. It was suggested that because Alaska's wildlife habitats are largely not in Department of Fish and Game ownership it is imperative that the Department cooperate closely with government and private landowners whose policies and practices may greatly affect wildlife populations and their use. Some people remarked that wildlife plans should be drafted concurrently by all agencies and private landowners who influence wildlife significantly. It was suggested that such coordinated planning would facilitate "ecosystem" management. The Department was urged to take a leadership role in establishing

cooperative relationships with other agencies or landowners. A few people were aware of, and remarked on, the fact that there are numerous cooperative agreements between the Department and other agencies currently in effect.

#### Guiding

Most comments relating to guiding were made by villagers who want to benefit economically by becoming guides. Their remarks were directed to the present regulations controlling the guiding industry. These people felt guide qualification (apprenticeship) requirements and exclusive guide districts discriminate against local residents who want to become guides because, in practice, they preclude entry to newcomers. People in several communities thought they should be allowed to guide on native lands without having to contend with cumbersome procedures. They indicated that as private landowners they will limit outside guiding activity on their lands.

Relatively few comments regarding the effects of the wildlife plans on guiding were received. A few guides were concerned that the exclusive guide districts to which they are limited would lock them into the type of use opportunities coming out of the planning effort. If use opportunities in their guide district were not attractive to guided hunters the guide would have no alternative areas to which they could turn.

A few people expressed the view that guides have had a disproportionate influence on regulations and on the Legislature in obtaining measures favorable to the guiding industry and to individual guides.

### Either-Sex Hunting

Surprisingly little was said about either-sex harvests in view of the controversies over antlerless moose hunts in recent years. Reference to past cow moose hunts as a cause for reduced moose populations was made by some people in Southcentral and Interior Alaska, and the desirability of either-sex deer hunts was discussed in some Southeastern Alaska meetings.

### Wolf Management

The very controversial subject of wolf management did not surface as a major discussion topic at the meetings. Comments on wolf management dealt more with desired control measures than with protection, although some balanced discussions took place.

### Transplants

People in a number of communities suggested the Department transplant wildlife species to their areas. The reasons presented with such suggestions included new use opportunities provided by transplanted species, reduced hunting pressure on species already present, redistribution of species from high density to low density areas, and development of alternative food sources. Species and transplant locations suggested included deer to interior Alaska; elk to Hagemeister and Prince of Wales Islands; moose, caribou, and spruce grouse to the Kodiak Island group; muskoxen to Kodiak and Togiak, reindeer (feral) to northwestern Alaska, and ground squirrels to Nelson Island.

## COMMENTS ON PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARIES

Summaries of public meetings were mailed to attendees of about half of the meetings, to provide a check on accuracy of summaries and to extend opportunities for comment. A number of people returned the summary forms with comments about the summaries themselves, or with additional thoughts on the proposal or wildlife management in general. These written comments were useful additions to the oral comments from the public meetings and were incorporated into the general summary of oral response. Individual written responses to public meeting summaries are contained in Appendix 2, in Volume II of the Summary report, following the specific meeting to which they correspond.

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

The questionnaire was the primary vehicle for receiving written response on the plans. A questionnaire was included with booklets and maps as part of each proposal "package" distributed to the public. Approximately 5,000 sets of plans and questionnaires were distributed to the public in 1977 following publication of the proposal in late February. At the time responses were compiled in November, 1977, 663 questionnaires had been returned by respondents. An additional 7 questionnaires were received by March 1978, but were not included in this summary report.

The questionnaire was organized into three sections. Section I provided a rough profile of respondents in terms of their area of residence and how they use wildlife. Section II focused principally on the management goal framework around which the plans were structured, but also solicited public opinions about use of wildlife including the relative importance of different uses, who should benefit from use, and what present and future management controls over use are necessary or appropriate. Section III solicited comments on individual species/area plans.

### ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Portions of the questionnaire (Section I and questions 11 and 12 of Section II) provided information on respondents, including their residence, their use of wildlife, and a general indication of the importance they attach to wildlife uses. Most questionnaire respondents (95%) completed these portions of the questionnaire.

### DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSE

A total of 663 questionnaires was received from all parts of the state. Although half of the questionnaires came from only five communities (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Delta Jct., Juneau and Petersburg), more than 100 communities were represented in the response. The geographical distribution of responses, segregated according to 11 mutually exclusive response areas was as follows.

Arctic (A)	2	Southcentral (SC)	55
Northwestern (NW)	38	Kenai Peninsula (K)	54
Western (W)	12	Anchorage (Anch)	149
Southwestern (SW)	53	Southeastern (SE)	76
Interior (I)	52	Juneau (J)	28
Fairbanks (Fbk)	144		
		Total	663

In terms of human population in the response areas, Arctic Alaska, Western Alaska, Anchorage and Juneau were underrepresented in the response, whereas the other response areas were either proportionately represented or were overrepresented.

## RESPONDENT USE OF WILDLIFE

Respondents reported use of wildlife in one or more of seven regions of the state and indicated which one or more of five listed uses\* of wildlife they participated in. The response did not provide information on the frequency or duration of use, the extent to which uses were opportunistic (in contrast to uses achieved through planned expenditure of time, effort and resources), or the extent to which two or more uses occurred simultaneously.

## LOCATION OF USE

Because a large number of data units were available from the grid response (11 geographical areas of response, 7 regions of use, and 31 possible combinations of the 5 listed uses), the response regarding location of use was tabulated in terms of uses reported within the region of residence of respondents and uses reported outside of the region of residence.

Most respondents to Section I (97%) indicated use of wildlife within their region of residence. More than half (56%) indicated use of more than one region. The proportion of respondents reporting use in more than one region generally decreased as the number of regions reported

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\*Recreational hunting or trapping

Hunting for food

Viewing or photography

Commercial hunting or trapping (including guiding)

Scientific or education study

Note: Underlined words are used in the discussion as abbreviations of the respective uses.

used increased. Southcentral Alaska was the most commonly listed region where use was reported, followed in order by Interior, Southwestern, Southeastern, Western, and Arctic and Northwestern.

When use was reported in more than one region, use in regions other than the respondents' region of residence was most often reported in adjacent regions. Highway vehicle access between regions may be an important influence on the number of regions used by respondents. Sixty-two percent of the respondents residing in regions with highway vehicle access to other regions reported use of more than one region, whereas only 25 percent of the respondents without highway vehicle access to other regions used more than one region. When these same groups of respondents were compared in terms of use of regions to which no highway vehicle access is available, the proportions of respondents reporting such use were similar, 23 percent and 25 percent, respectively.

#### NUMBER OF USES REPORTED

Most (92%) of the respondents who reported use of wildlife in their region of residence indicated making more than one use of wildlife, and they generally used wildlife in more ways in their region of residence than in other regions (Table 3). As the number of uses reported for one or more regions increased, the proportion of such use occurring within the region of residence increased. Only 25 percent of those reporting just one use of wildlife did so within their region of residence; 63 percent of those reporting 2 uses, 87 percent of those reporting 3 uses, 91 percent of those reporting 4 uses, and 94 percent of those reporting 5 uses did so within their region of residence.



Of those reporting more than one use in their region of residence, 41 percent indicated 3 uses, 31 percent indicated 2 uses, 22 percent indicated 4 uses, and 6 percent indicated 5 uses.

#### TYPE OF USE REPORTED

Within their region of residence respondents most frequently reported viewing as a use (29%), but it was followed closely by use for food (27%) and recreational use (26%). Use for study was 11 percent and commercial use was 7 percent. Respondents from the state's three major urban areas listed viewing most frequently within their region of residence, followed by recreational use and then food, whereas respondents from most rural areas listed use for food most frequently, followed generally by viewing and then recreational use.

Outside the region of residence the frequency of viewing use reported increased to 38 percent, that for food use decreased to 19 percent, and other values remained relatively unchanged (recreational 25%, study 13% and commercial use 5%). Viewing use was the use most frequently reported outside the region of residence by respondents from most response areas (all except Interior, Western, and Arctic), followed generally by recreational use and then by use for food.

#### Single Use Indications

About half (49%) of the 206 respondents who indicated a single use of wildlife in one or more regions listed viewing as that use, but only 13

percent of these listed viewing as a single use within their region of residence. Comparable figures for recreational use, use for food, commercial use, and use for study were 23 percent and 32 percent, 17 percent and 53 percent, 5 percent and 18 percent, and 5 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

#### Two-Use Combinations

A total of 277 respondents reported 2 uses in combination in one or more regions. Of 10 possible combinations of 2 uses, most respondents listed either recreational and viewing use (29%), recreational and food use (24%), or viewing and study (23%).

#### Three-Use Combinations

A total of 268 respondents reported 3 uses in combination in one or more regions. Of 10 possible combinations of 3 uses, a majority of respondents (68%) reported recreational, food, and viewing uses in combination. Additionally, 9 percent reported food, viewing and study in combination, 8 percent reported recreational, viewing, and study in combination, and 7 percent reported recreational, food and commercial uses in combination.

#### Four-Use Combinations

A total of 134 respondents reported 4 uses in combination (or 1 use omitted) in one or more regions. Commercial use was the use most frequently omitted (56%), followed by study (36%).

### All Uses

Thirty four respondents reported all 5 uses in one or more regions.

### IMPORTANCE OF WILDLIFE USES

In question #11 respondents were asked to rank wildlife values in relation to six other resource values or uses in their region of residence. A total of 609 respondents ranked some or all of the choices listed. For the state as a whole, wildlife was ranked most important, receiving an average rating of 6.3 on a scale of 1 to 7. Following wildlife in order of decreasing importance were forestry (4.6), agriculture (4.1), energy development (3.6), transportation (3.3), mining (3.2), and urban development (2.8).

In all response areas, respondents ranked wildlife as most important, but the relative importance indicated by respondents for other resource values or land uses listed varied from one response area to another. Forestry was listed as second in importance by respondents from Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau, Southeastern Alaska, the Kenai Peninsula, and Southwestern Alaska. It was considered least important by respondents from Arctic and Northwestern Alaska, areas largely without commercial forests.

Agriculture also rated relatively high in importance. It was ranked second by respondents from Interior and Southcentral Alaska, the state's

major agricultural areas, and by Western Alaska respondents, and it was rated third in importance by respondents from Anchorage, Fairbanks, the Kenai Peninsula, Southwestern and Northwestern Alaska. Agriculture was considered least important in Arctic Alaska, Juneau, and Southeastern Alaska.

Other uses (energy development, mining, transportation) generally received varied intermediate value rankings. Urban development was most often rated least important.

Question #12 asked respondents to rank the relative importance of five listed wildlife uses. A total of 640 respondents ranked some or all of the choices listed. Considering all response areas together, hunting for food was ranked first in importance, receiving an average rating of 3.9 on a scale of 1 to 5. Recreational hunting or trapping (3.4) was second in importance, followed by viewing and photographing (3.0) scientific or educational study (2.6), and commercial hunting or trapping (2.2).

There were some differences in the value rankings assigned to different uses by respondents from different response areas. Hunting for food was rated the single most important use in all response areas except Juneau and Anchorage. In Juneau it was considered equal in importance to viewing and photographing, and in Anchorage it was rated second in importance, behind recreational hunting or trapping. Recreational hunting or trapping and viewing and photographing were generally ranked second or third in importance except by those respondents from Northwestern and Western Alaska, who rated these uses least important.

Commercial hunting or trapping received the lowest rating in all areas except Northwestern Alaska where it was rated second in importance, in Western Alaska where it tied for second with scientific and educational study, and in Southwestern Alaska where it was rated fourth in importance.

## GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSAL

### GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE PLANS

Several questions in Section II solicited comments on the content of the proposal with regards to whether it was understandable and if it adequately considered those wildlife uses or wildlife management issues of interest to the respondent. Additional comments on the concept and adequacy of the proposal were contained in the response to other questions.

### PROPOSAL CONCEPT, APPEARANCE AND CONTENT

There was some apprehension on the part of the staff and the Board that the size, complexity and technical nature of the proposal might preclude obtaining a useful response from the public. Respondents were asked in question #8 to judge whether the individual plans were understandable, too complicated, used too much jargon, or were too general. Of 527 respondents, 93 percent said all or most of the plans were understandable. Only 18 percent of those responding said all or most plans were too complicated, 23 percent said they used too much jargon, and 24 percent thought the plans were too general.

Additionally, 185 comments relating to the concept, feasibility, appearance, content, and readability of the plans were received in response to several questions. Of these, 112 (61%) were favorable, 67 (36%) were critical and 6 (3%) were noncommittal.

Most (97) of the favorable comments were general in nature, saying the plans "look good" or were "well done," a "good idea," and "a good start, keep it up." More specific comments approved of the completeness, organization, flexibility, detail, or long term outlook of the plans.

Critical comments tended to be more specific in nature. The most common criticisms were that there were "too many plans" or "too much," or that the plans were too vague, redundant, inaccurate, speculative, incomplete, or complex. Fifteen respondents were clearly opposed to the plans, calling them unnecessary, infeasible, and a waste of money.

#### PROPOSAL INADEQUACIES

Many respondents pointed out deficiencies in the proposal's treatment of a variety of wildlife management subjects. Uses of wildlife mentioned by respondents as not having been adequately addressed are listed on pages 57, 58 and 59 as part of the response summary relating to wildlife uses (Nonconsumptive use, subsistence use, use without restrictions and existential appreciation of wildlife were the uses most often identified as not having been adequately considered). Other management topics said to have not been adequately treated were:

	Number of Respondents
Predator Control	26
Habitat Management	25
Enforcement	24

Number of Respondents

Research and Population Assessments	18
Funding of Wildlife Management	17
Mechanical Transport Restrictions	15
Public Information and Education	5
Access to Wildlife	5
Primitive Weapons	5
Interagency and Landowner Cooperation	5
Wildlife Transplants	2
Marine Mammal Management	2
d-2 Legislation and Native Lands	1
Competition Between Wildlife and Domestic Animals	1
Emergency Regulations	1
Soil and Vegetation Analyses	1
Effects of Weather on Wildlife	1
Wilderness Aesthetics	1

PUBLIC INPUT

Most respondents (96%) said they believed long-range wildlife management plans are necessary, and most (95%) were in favor of the Game Division requesting public input as part of the planning process.

Many of the accessory comments relating to public input were not limited in context to the proposal alone but rather addressed public involvement in management in general, of which the proposal was only a part. The



major public input issues so identified are summarized on pages 68 and 69, with other response to Department management programs and issues. The principal criticisms specifically directed to the procedure or results of the public's review of the proposal were that:

- a) the Department should have solicited public input earlier in the planning process, before the proposal was printed and circulated.
- b) the plans should have been made more widely available to the public, more public notice should have been provided, and winter distribution would have resulted in greater public participation.
- c) more effort to solicit public comment in villages should be expended; villagers are reticent, unlikely to read and comment on the plans, and therefore are not adequately represented in the overall response.
- d) the response to the plans is biased and must be recognized as such; participation in the written response is primarily by special interests, and public meetings are dominated by vocal minorities and extremists.

Public input will continue to be important as the plans are finalized and implemented. In regards to the frequency of review of individual plans by the Board of Game after the plans are implemented, 32 percent of 628 respondents thought plans should be reviewed every 2 years, 17 percent thought an annual review was best, 18 percent chose 3 years, and the remainder wanted reviews either every 4 or 5 years, or "as necessary".

## COMMENTS ON MANAGEMENT GOALS

Comments relating to the proposed management goals were obtained in response to questions specifically addressing the goals and indirectly in responses to more general questions soliciting comments on uses of wildlife or on other aspects of wildlife management in Alaska.

Most (94%) of the 644 respondents said they understood the explanations of the management goals provided in the proposal, but many felt additional explanation was required for some goals. Of those suggesting additional explanation, 106 thought Harvest\* should be explained more, 106 indicated Aesthetics, 97 suggested Participation, 51 Viewing, 50 Trophy, and 46 Study.

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\* The Proposed Management Goals are here abbreviated as follows:

Harvest	(To Provide for an Optimum Harvest)
Aesthetics	(To Provide an Opportunity to Hunt Under Aesthetically Pleasing Conditions)
Participation	(To Provide the Greatest Opportunity to Participate in Hunting)
Viewing	(To Provide an Opportunity to View, Photograph and Enjoy Wildlife)
Trophy	(To Provide an Opportunity to Take Large Animals)
Study	(To Provide an Opportunity for Scientific and Educational Study)

If people did not agree with the proposed management goals, they were asked to suggest alternatives. Alternative goals or alterations to those goals proposed in the plans were suggested by 110 respondents. In order of frequency, alternative goals suggested were:

	Number of Respondents
Maintain Healthy Wildlife Populations	23
Manage for Maximum Sustained Yields	14
Manage for Subsistence Use	11
Provide Total Protection for Wildlife	7
Manage the Total System (Earth, Ecosystems)	3
Protect and Enhance Wildlife Habitat	2
Educate the Public to Needs and Benefits of Wildlife	2
Manage Cooperatively with Other Land Managers	1
Manage Nongame Wildlife Species	1
Provide for Use by Rural Residents and Others Who Utilize the Meat	1
Control Wolves	1
Provide Opportunity to Hunt with a Bow	1

Various combinations and/or eliminations of proposed goals were suggested by 37 people. These suggestions had the following changes in common:

Eliminate Trophy	20
Eliminate Participation	15
Eliminate Viewing.	13

	Number of Respondents
Eliminate Study	11
Eliminate Aesthetics	10
Eliminate Harvest	4
Combine Harvest and Participation	3
Combine Aesthetics and Trophy	3
Combine Viewing and Study	2
Combine Viewing and Aesthetics	1
Combine Viewing and Trophy	1
Combine Harvest and Aesthetics	1
Combine Participation and Aesthetics	1

To obtain some indication regarding the overall balance between goals (as they were applied to species/areas in the proposal), respondents were asked in question #5 to indicate whether they thought the recommended allocation of geographical areas to different goals was "about right" or whether they thought more or less area should have been provided for any of the goals. As presented, the question solicited response on an individual species basis. Although a majority of the respondents treated species individually, many others lumped all species together in their response. To facilitate examination of these responses, information received was compiled by species and goal on a statewide basis (Table 1).

The volume of response varied between the 17 species categories in the proposal, probably reflecting the degree of interest in or concern for different species by the respondents. Big game species, particularly

moose, caribou, brown bear, sheep and black bear elicited most response. Unclassified game, muskoxen, marine mammals, bison and furbearers received relatively little attention and the remaining species categories (wolf, goat, small game, waterfowl, deer and elk) were intermediate in response levels.

Response to goal allocations on an individual species category basis was different than the response treating all species lumped together, perhaps because people who disagreed with the proposals tended to be more specific than those who agreed. Of 96 proposed situations in which individual species were combined with different goals (Table 1), only 30 had more respondents in agreement with the proposed allocations than in disagreement. In contrast, where respondents treated all species lumped together for each of the six goals, each had more than 50 percent respondent agreement.

Respondents indicated desired changes in emphasis on different goals by suggesting that more or less area be allocated to particular goals. The direction and apparent strength of indicated changes varied between species and goals. Table 2 summarizes the data contained in Table 1 in terms of direction and strength of indicated changes. The response with respect to the goals in general can be summarized as follows:

For all goals and species where some change was indicated, respondents in most cases (84%) wanted more area allocated instead of less. The goals can be ranked in terms of decreasing relative strength of suggested change:

Table 1. Agreement with or suggested changes in proposed species goal allocations contained in response to question 5, Alaska Wildlife Management Plans Questionnaire.

GAMES:	View			Harvest			Participate			Aesthetics			Trophy			Study			Total # Respondents							
	More	Less	Agree	# Respondents	More	Less	Agree	# Respondents	More	Less	Agree	# Respondents	More	Less	Agree	# Respondents	More	Less		Agree	# Respondents					
Black Bear	36	6	58	81	18	21	62	73	17	25	58	72	43	10	47	60	33	22	46	46	63	-	38	48	380	
Brown Bear	37	12	51	92	17	24	59	75	23	30	49	73	37	15	48	81	38	18	43	90	61	2	38	61	472	
Wolf	66	2	32	61	26	36	38	58	24	36	39	33	48	10	48	21	18	36	45	11	74	5	21	43	207	
Caribou	37	17	46	83	30	36	34	123	41	23	36	107	44	19	37	81	43	29	28	86	59	3	38	58	538	
Elson	50	-	50	12	9	-	91	11	23	15	62	13	22	-	78	9	50	25	25	4	67	-	33	9	58	
Sheep	26	12	62	69	28	19	53	57	25	16	60	57	52	13	36	87	48	22	30	107	48	2	50	42	419	
Elk	50	-	50	14	20	33	47	15	36	29	36	14	33	-	67	18	22	33	44	9	62	-	38	13	83	
Goose	34	15	51	118	37	30	33	153	30	24	46	135	39	17	43	109	28	36	37	149	42	9	49	69	733	
Goat	44	25	31	36	28	14	59	29	36	12	52	25	44	13	46	39	57	26	13	23	65	-	35	17	169	
Buskox	100	-	-	4	100	-	-	4	67	-	33	3	17	17	67	6	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-	1	18
Deer	63	-	38	16	42	13	45	31	19	10	62	21	32	5	63	19	44	11	44	9	57	-	43	14	110	
Furbearers	73	-	27	15	21	21	58	19	33	-	67	9	-	-	100	5	50	-	50	2	60	-	40	15	65	
Small Game	14	17	69	29	37	7	57	30	30	26	43	23	13	13	75	8	-	43	57	7	47	32	42	17	114	
Waterfowl	82	-	18	28	61	18	41	22	13	46	38	24	57	14	36	14	-	60	40	5	81	5	14	21	114	
Barbary Huminals	33	56	11	9	61	22	17	18	70	20	10	10	67	-	33	3	-	75	25	4	70	10	-	10	54	
Unclassified Game	33	-	67	6	67	33	-	3	-	100	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	40	5	16	
All Species	20	12	68	157	14	16	72	110	20	15	64	149	18	12	70	148	11	35	56	149	33	11	58	171	812	

7. Effect size and "strength" of suggested change in proposed response for allocations contained in response to question 5, Alaska Wildlife Management Plan questionnaire.

	STRONG INDICATION MORE	LESS	INTERMEDIATE INDICATION MORE	LESS	WEAK INDICATION MORE	LESS	NO CHANGE INDICATED
Species	Study, Aesthetics, Trophy		View	Participation		Harvest	
Black Bear	Study, Aesthetics, Trophy		View	Participation		Harvest	
Brown Bear	Study, Aesthetics, Trophy						
Wolf	Study, Aesthetics, View	Trophy Participation		Harvest			
Caribou	Study, Aesthetics, View Participation, Trophy		Aesthetics, View Participation, Harvest	Harvest			
Elm	Study, Trophy						
Sheep	Aesthetics, Trophy		Study, View, Participation Harvest	Participation			
Elk	Study	Trophy Harvest	Aesthetics, View Participation				Aesthetics Trophy
Moose	Study, Aesthetics		View, Participation Harvest	Trophy			
Goat	Study, Aesthetics, View Trophy		Participation, Harvest				
Bunkar	Study, View Participation, Harvest						Aesthetics Harvest
Deer	Study, View, Harvest Trophy		Aesthetics, Participation				Aesthetics Harvest
Porcupine	Study, View		Participation, Trophy			View	Aesthetics
Small Game	Study		Participation, Harvest	Trophy			
Waterfowl	Study, Aesthetics, View Harvest	Trophy Participation					
Harbor Seal	Study, Aesthetics Participation, Harvest	Trophy, View					Aesthetics Trophy
Unhunted Game	Study, Harvest	Participation	View				
All Species			Study, Aesthetics, View	Trophy	Participation	Harvest	

<sup>A</sup> To generalize on changes suggested in the response, three arbitrary levels of strength of indication were defined and applied to the data in Table 9. These levels are explained symbolically as:

Strong indication of change:  $H \geq 1.5 L$  or  $L \geq 1.5 H$  when  $A < \frac{(H + L + A)}{2}$  H means respondents who desired more area for a goal.

Intermediate indication of change:  $H \geq 1.5 L$  or  $L \geq 1.5 H$  when  $A > \frac{(H + L + A)}{2}$  L means respondents who desired less area for a goal.

Weak indication of change:  $1.5 L > H > L$  or  $1.5 H > L > H$  when  $A < \frac{(H + L + A)}{2}$  or  $1.5 L > H > L$  or  $1.5 H > L > H$  when  $A > \frac{(H + L + A)}{2}$  A means respondents who agreed with the proposed allocation.

> means "greater than".

< means "less than".

$\geq$  means "equal to or greater than".

Study - By far the strongest, clearest indication of increased emphasis desired for any goal was expressed for Study. Increased emphasis on Study was strongly indicated for all species except one, which received an intermediate indication.

Aesthetics - Increased emphasis on Aesthetics was strongly indicated with regard to 9 species and moderately toward 3 species. For 4 species no change was indicated.

Viewing - Increased emphasis on Viewing was strongly indicated for 7 species and moderately for 7 additional species. Decreased emphasis was strongly indicated for 1 species and weakly indicated for 1 additional species.

Harvest - Increased emphasis on Harvest was strongly indicated for 5 species and moderately for 5 other species. Decreased emphasis was strongly indicated for 1 species, moderately for 2 species, and weakly indicated for 2 additional species. For 1 species no change in emphasis was indicated.

Participation - Increased emphasis on Participation was strongly indicated for 3 species and moderately for 8 species. Decreased emphasis was strongly indicated for 3 species (although one of these had no area proposed for the goal), and moderately for 2 species.



Trophy - Increased emphasis on Trophy was strongly indicated for 7 species and moderately for 1 species. Decreased emphasis was strongly indicated for 4 species, (although 2 of these had no area proposed for the goal) and moderately for 2 species. For 2 species no change was indicated.

For responses in terms of all species, there were intermediate indications for more emphasis of Study, Viewing and Aesthetics, a weak indication for more Participation, an intermediate indication for less emphasis on Trophy and a weak indication for less Harvest.

#### COMMENTS ON WILDLIFE USES

Alternative goals or alterations suggested by respondents give some indication of possible inadequacies in the proposal or changes in emphasis that might be considered by the staff and the Board. Much additional information in this regard was obtained from comments on use of wildlife in the response to several other questions in Section II, as reviewed below.

Question #7 asked if the plans adequately considered the uses of wildlife enjoyed by the respondent. Of 524 respondents, 397 (76 percent) said the plans adequately considered the uses they enjoyed. The uses listed as not having been adequately considered were:

	Number of Respondents
Nonconsumptive Use	32
Unconstrained Use (no restrictions)	15
Subsistence	14
Existential Appreciation of Wildlife	8
Trapping and Use of Furbearers	5
Trophy Hunting	4
Hunting for Meat	4
Scientific Study	3
Hunting with a Bow	2
Unmechanized Hunting for Food	2
Common Use	1
Hunting with Hounds	1

Question #9 asked if there were any aspects of wildlife management not adequately treated in the proposal. Those uses mentioned in the 58 responses having a use context were:

	Number of Respondents
Subsistence	20
Nonconsumptive Use	11
Guiding	9
Existential Appreciation of Wildlife	5
Maximum Sustained Yield	3
Optimum Harvests	2
Trophy Hunting	2

	Number of Respondents
Hunting	1
Consumptive Use Priority	1
Maximum Participation	1
Trapping	1
Increased Commercial Harvests	1
Commercial Seal Hunting	1

Question #10 asked respondents to list those aspects of the proposal that they liked or disliked. Although 68 responses were received, there was only one significant "like" or "dislike" consensus regarding uses; 22 people did not like the hunting/harvest/use orientation of the proposal.

Question #14 was a catch-all question that solicited comments on anything related to wildlife. As such, the comments were not necessarily directed at the proposal, but they were indicative of changes in management thought necessary by the respondents to improve upon the status quo. Most of the 584 comments received were recorded in the form of suggested management actions. A summary of the 176 comments addressing use of wildlife follows:

#### NONCONSUMPTIVE USE

25 respondents wanted more management emphasis on nonconsumptive use and increased opportunities to view, photograph and study wildlife.

- 15 wanted more areas closed to hunting, several suggesting specific areas such as the Arctic Wildlife Range or the Resurrection Trail System.
- 11 said don't close more areas to hunting, areas should not be set up exclusively for nonconsumptive use.
- 8 favored less management emphasis on nonconsumptive use.
- 8 felt that hunting and nonhunting uses are compatible and that hunters and nonhunters should find common ground.
- 3 suggested more management attention be directed to nongame species of wildlife.

#### SUBSISTENCE

- 15 respondents opposed subsistence use, urging that it be eliminated or minimized. These respondents felt that subsistence is no longer necessary, that abuses occur under protection of the subsistence concept, and that subsistence is becoming a welfare issue.
- 11 gave qualified approval to subsistence use, saying more control over subsistence users and more restrictions on subsistence take should be implemented, and that subsistence should be allowed only when the user is truly dependent on wildlife for food, when no sale is involved, and no welfare is received.

- 11 supported subsistence use, most saying that not enough emphasis is given to ensure such use for both natives and nonnatives. These respondents suggested preference be given to subsistence use over recreational use and that subsistence be the last use to be restricted.
- 2 thought that regulations have forced changes in subsistence lifestyles.
- 2 said subsistence should not be regulated by the Department, but by the subsistence users themselves.
- 1 suggested additional study of subsistence use be done.

#### TROPHY HUNTING

- 18 respondents were opposed to trophy hunting, suggesting it be eliminated or reduced.
- 13 advocated more trophy hunting areas, reduced fees for trophy hunting and improved regulations or permit systems to enable successful trophy management.
- 2 wanted a definition of trophy established.
- 2 urged the requirement that all meat from trophy animals be used.

## GUIDING

- 16 respondents urged more controls on guiding operations and more restrictions on guides, such as limiting the number of animals taken by guides, restricting guides to certain areas, and requiring revocation of licenses for violations of regulations by guides.
- 9 were opposed to any guiding because of its exploitive nature and the abuses associated with exploitation, or because guides compete with local users.
- 3 supported guiding, saying it was good for the state's economy, it provides a service to recreational hunters, and it could provide benefits for natives who become guides.

## HUNTING

- 14 thought there was too much emphasis on hunting and consumptive utilization of wildlife at a time when increasing pressure creates the potential for overharvest of wildlife.
- 3 said more emphasis on hunting is needed.
- 2 noted that animals that are taken by hunters are required to be utilized and that recreation is incomplete as a descriptive term for hunting.
- 2 did not want combination hunts eliminated.

1 said hunter behavior needs to be improved.

1 felt there was too great a focus on participation in hunting.

1 suggested that participation be maximized.

#### AESTHETICS

13 respondents supported the concept of having aesthetic use conditions as a management goal, several suggesting in addition that limits on access to and travel within aesthetic use areas and limits on hunter efficiency would be necessary for aesthetic conditions to exist.

7 either opposed the aesthetics concept or had reservations about it, saying that subjective interpretation of "aesthetics" by managers could affect the desirability of such use, that it would require too many regulations, that it would favor the rich who could afford access, or that it might affect economic development in some areas.

#### OPTIMUM HARVEST

7 respondents thought the optimum harvest concept needs less emphasis in management or should be deleted altogether. These people felt optimum harvest does not provide sufficient protection to wildlife.

and that it should be used only under true subsistence situations or where human impacts are inconsequential.

6 wanted more emphasis placed on optimum harvest management.

1 said that many areas proposed for optimum harvest management are inaccessible or have restrictions which preclude such management.

#### EXISTENTIAL APPRECIATION OF WILDLIFE

16 respondents felt that management should recognize the existential value of wildlife, that wildlife doesn't exist solely for use by man, and that protection and welfare of wildlife should be uppermost as a management goal.

9 said wildlife has no priority over man's needs - let animals adapt to development.

#### MAXIMUM SUSTAINED YIELD

9 respondents suggested that the State should manage to provide for maximum sustained yield wherever possible.

#### TRAPPING

8 respondents supported trapping as a use of wildlife and offered several suggestions for improving trapping, including increased



license fees, additional restrictions on methods, bag limits, use of registered traplines, trapper competency tests and educational efforts to counteract anti-trap sentiment.

#### COMMENTS ON WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND ISSUES

In addition to comments relating to uses of wildlife, many valuable comments were received on a variety of wildlife management subjects. These comments are summarized below according to whether they applied to the Department's relationship with other agencies, to Department management programs and issues, or to user management issues.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME WITH OTHER AGENCIES OR LAND USE INTERESTS

##### Land Ownership and Use

- 21 respondents were concerned with the potential loss of hunting and trapping opportunity resulting from changing land ownership and classification. They urged retention of hunting and trapping in State and National parks and Native lands.
- 11 urged constraints on resource development activities and suggested that such activities as are allowed be made compatible with wildlife.
- 7 wanted Alaska to be kept wild and urged that all further human encroachments be challenged and human habitations be planned.

- 4 expressed concern that Federal lands would be closed to all uses and that the State's wildlife proposals would also "lock up the State."
- 3 felt development and commercial use of land is necessary to generate economic health, that developmental activities are not detrimental to wildlife and in some cases make wildlife uses more available.
- 2 pointed out that changed land management status resulting from the d-2 legislation will necessitate redoing the wildlife plans.
- 2 felt the Department should encourage Federal acquisition of national interest lands.
- 2 wanted multiple land use concepts maintained.
- 1 thought innovative approaches to land classification are needed.
- 1 did not like insinuations made in the wildlife plans against clearcut logging.
- 1 suggested a public beach program be adopted.
- 1 felt the State should press for conveyance of lands due under the Statehood entitlement.

#### Management Authority

- 4 respondents wanted reduced or no Federal management of wildlife in Alaska.
- 3 favored retention of State management authority.
- 2 suggested that the Department file court actions against outsiders, agencies, or special interest groups who interfere with State management.
- 2 said return marine mammal management authority to the State.
- 1 felt the national interest is ignored by too much State control.
- 1 thought Federal management was needed after the failures of the Department of Fish and Game.
- 1 said decisions on research needs or management actions should not be made by partisan biologists.
- 1 favored eliminating the Department of Fish & Game and having management by the "public" instead.

#### Cooperative Management

- 10 respondents urged the Department to improve cooperation and coordination

with Federal and State agencies and private landowners in establishing management goals, management agreements, balance in uses of land, and protection of habitat, and in providing for public use of public and private lands.

### Legislation

- 1 respondent thought legislation will be required to implement the wildlife plans.
- 1 felt the Department should support legislation establishing wilderness.
- 1 said legislation is necessary to guarantee wildlife sanctuaries.
- 1 wanted legislation to guarantee protection of subsistence rights.

### DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AND ISSUES

#### Public Input to Management

- 46 respondents urged use of professional expertise in management when conflicts with public opinion develop. They felt the needs of the resource come before the wishes of the public and that politics should therefore be kept out of management.
- 37 suggested that the Department make greater efforts to seek public input and accommodate public desires when possible, particularly by

increasing use of local knowledge and using more personal contact in villages. Also, input should be sought from other wildlife agencies and from outside the state. Many of these people expressed skepticism of the Department's use of public input and referred to instances when recommendations by the public had been ignored in the past.

21 thought input from some people should not be considered. Among these, 10 said only those who buy licenses or "pay your way" should have a say in management and 10 said don't allow outsiders (primarily "lower '48") to influence management.

10 commented variously on the Board and advisory committee system as follows:

- \* the Board should be more responsive to the public.
- \* the Board should pay more attention to advisory committees.
- \* need transportation provided to advisory committee members.
- \* membership of local advisory committees should be free from the influence of the State Board or Native Regional Corporations.
- \* the Board's review of regulations should be streamlined.
- \* there should be separate boards for marine mammals, land mammals and birds.
- \* establish a nonpartisan conservation commission.

#### Public Information and Education

44 respondents suggested that the Department place more emphasis on public information and education programs, not only to improve

communication with the public, but to increase public awareness of the requirements of wildlife and the problems of management. Information and education efforts were said to be a necessary and integral part of an effective management program. The following variety of information or education subject areas were suggested as needing attention:

- \* public understanding of ecological principles.
- \* wildlife habitat needs, the effect of development on habitat, and the role of fire in habitat management.
- \* status of wildlife populations.
- \* Department research and management programs.
- \* expanded information programs on controversial issues such as wolf control or either-sex hunts.
- \* providing information and education to villagers.
- \* reducing confusion with the annual hunting and fishing regulations.
- \* expanded hunter safety program.

#### Department Staffing and Funding

18 respondents commented on the need to broaden the source of management funding so that all who benefit from wildlife share the costs of management. Several sources were suggested, including general fund money, special sales taxes, special user fees, or earmarked income tax revenues.

- 9 suggested that funding be increased to obtain better management. Increased tag fees, use of trapping license revenues, and sales of Department publications were suggested as ways to increase funding.
- 9 suggested the Department increase its staff. Most of these people felt there should be more field staff, including more field use of existing staff.
- 7 had various suggestions on staffing including using more careful "screening" of employees, hiring some nonconsumptive users, hiring biologists who can increase wildlife populations, changing the Department leadership to one which is less political, and "recycling" biologists.

#### Coordination Among Department Divisions and Programs

- 5 respondents suggested that the Department's management of wildlife be closely coordinated with management of fisheries and management of land to produce an integrated resource management program.
- 1 thought fisheries and game should be managed separately.

#### Ecosystem Management

- 18 Respondents identified the need for management on an ecosystem basis, an approach that deals with the natural regulating mechanisms and interspecific relationships of wildlife in concert with the other biotic and abiotic components of the environment.

## Research

37 respondents commented on the need for more research, on the order of both general wildlife status assessments and controlled studies. Many identified an inadequate data base as a major management problem. Several research topics were suggested, including:

- \* developing methods for improving habitat.
- \* determining the value of recreational hunting.
- \* studying furbearers and the effects of trapping.
- \* determining the extent and effect of nonresident use.
- \* determining the effect of hunting on wildlife gene pools.
- \* developing methods of facilitating adaptation of wildlife to development.

2 respondents thought there had been too many unnecessary studies and suggested cutting back on research and reducing the number of biologists on the staff.

## Habitat Management

23 respondents said more emphasis should be placed on acquiring, improving or protecting habitat to benefit wildlife; by maintaining natural habitats, management would be able to "optimize" wildlife populations.



3 suggested the Department expand its efforts to have critical habitats designated by statute.

2 thought more use of fire to manage habitat is needed.

#### Predator Management

Except for one person who commented on the problem of dogs chasing wildlife, all comments on predator management dealt with wolves. A range of attitudes were expressed:

14 supported control efforts, some saying that the Department should have a free hand at control where it is needed, others suggesting that control be by the public.

7 respondents were strongly in favor of wolf control, suggesting eliminating wolves and reinstituting bounties and/or poison.

7 were opposed to wolf control, saying such control is used as a remedy for poor management of ungulates. The Department was urged to consider the predators' requirements and account for those requirements before allowable human harvests are established.

6 said careful control of wolves is needed. Factual justification for killing wolves needs to be established before control is effected.

### Enforcement

35 respondents commented in general terms on the need for more enforcement of regulations and for more severe penalties for those convicted of violations. In addition,

9 suggested increasing the staff of enforcement officers.

7 urged that more enforcement be directed to preventing violations by Natives or guides.

7 identified wanton waste as a major enforcement problem.

Other individual concerns included the need for information on the extent and effects of illegal hunting, enforcement of the residency requirement, prevention of habitat degradation and the return of primary enforcement responsibility to the Department of Fish and Game.

### Either-Sex Harvests

6 respondents were opposed to either-sex harvests, particularly with regard to moose and deer.

3 favored either-sex harvests as a means of optimizing sustained yields.

### Transplants

10 respondents advocated transplants of wildlife to either establish new or accessible game populations, or to restore depleted populations. Transplants of elk to Southeastern Alaska and muskoxen to the Bristol Bay area were suggested.

### Miscellaneous Comments

Additional suggestions or criticisms relating generally to Department programs were offered by 27 people:

- \* Management has been inadequate or a "failure" as shown by present-day depleted game populations.
- \* use smaller management units to improve management.
- \* don't allow wildlife populations to fluctuate to extremes.
- \* be more conservative in management.
- \* stop encouraging harvests.
- \* keep closures to a minimum.
- \* establish winter refuges.
- \* provide protection against depredations by bears.
- \* potential crafts items such as teeth, horns and antlers should not be destroyed or wasted.
- \* establish a nongame program.
- \* the Department should be a service agency, not a legal organization.
- \* place limits on recreational hunting.
- \* inoculate wildlife to prevent disease.
- \* supply fish and beef to Natives to alleviate pressure on caribou.
- \* don't manipulate wildlife populations.
- \* give road kills and confiscated animals to charitable organizations.
- \* make laws far enough in advance so people can plan.

## USER MANAGEMENT ISSUES

### Preferential User Considerations

Question 13 specifically asked if any group of people should have preferential use of any wildlife species. Those who answered yes were asked to identify which user groups and for which species preferential use should be granted. Of the 639 people who responded to the question, 240 (38%) said yes, some people should have preferential use of wildlife. These respondents identified the following user groups as those which should receive preferential use (some respondents identified more than one such user group). Relatively few respondents identified wildlife species for which preferential use should be granted. Those species suggested are listed opposite the major user categories in the following tabulation.

	Number of Respondents		Number of Respondents
Subsistence users	89	who use: marine mammals, moose, caribou, waterfowl	12
Native subsistence users	9	or traditional food species	3
Poor subsistence users	2		
Nonnative subsistence users	<u>1</u>		
	101		
Residents	52	who use: food species	4
Local residents	13	or moose caribou, sheep, deer	2
Rural residents	10		
Bush residents	<u>6</u>		
	81		

	Number of Respondents		Number of Respondents
Natives	43	who use: traditional food species	10
Natives living primitive lifestyle on limited income	3	or marine mammals, caribou, fish	10
Natives without modern methods	2	or deer, caribou, moose goat, sheep	1
Natives in remote areas only	2	or fish only	1
Natives for religious purposes only	<u>1</u> 51		
Hunters (license holders)	23	who use: meat only	3
Nonmechanized hunters	2	or sheep, caribou, moose, bear	2
Nonguided hunters	<u>1</u> 26		
Nonconsumptive users	2	none	
Nonconsumptive users along roads or where animals concentrate	<u>5</u> 7		
Commercial users	2	none	
Trappers	2		
Guides	1		
Native commercial users	<u>1</u> 6		
Poor People	4	none	
Charities	1		
Any majority	1		

Additional comments on differential treatment of users were obtained from responses to other questions in Section II, principally question #14.

- 21 respondents urged the Department not to give any user group preferential treatment, but rather treat all Alaskans equally. Many of these respondents were concerned that Natives would receive special wildlife use privileges. Several cited inequities in the use allowed under the Marine Mammals Protection Act, while others felt that Natives receive enough special consideration through Federal and State assistance programs and under provisions of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act.
- 14 wanted additional restrictions placed on hunting by nonresidents. Suggested restrictions included limiting the number of permits available for nonresidents, increasing nonresident use fees, and imposing additional requirements for use of guides by nonresidents.
- 5 were opposed to any use of wildlife by nonresidents or foreigners.
- 4 thought that subsistence hunters should receive preference over recreational hunters.
- 3 said the State should guarantee hunting "rights" to bush and village residents.

## User Restriction or Facilitation

### Mechanized vehicles

- 26 respondents wanted greater restrictions on the use of motorized vehicles for hunting. Some respondents were concerned with habitat degradation and urged control or elimination of the more destructive kinds of vehicles. Others were concerned with abuses associated with the use of motorized vehicles and suggested regulations prohibiting hunting on the same day motorized vehicles are used. Several disliked the use of aircraft to spot game or to commercially haul hunters into an area.
- 13 wanted fewer or no restrictions on mechanized access. They felt that too many areas are restricted to use of motorized vehicles and that mechanized access is necessary to reach remote areas. Some older respondents said they can no longer get to hunting areas without the aid of motorized transport.

### Access development

- 7 respondents said they would like to see more access trails and routes developed for nonmotorized methods of transport.
- 5 commented on the need for development of additional access for various methods of transport, particularly for access to remote areas.

#### Primitive weapons

- 6 respondents suggested establishing separate bow hunting seasons, or at least providing some advantages in season timing or in class of animal allowed to be taken by bow hunters.
- 3 suggested use of primitive weapons in crowded areas, to reduce harvests, and to increase opportunities for use.
- 1 thought that users who claim aboriginal rights to hunt be restricted to use of aboriginal methods of taking.

#### Seasons and bag limits

- 6 respondents suggested rotating seasons in different areas so that alternate openings and closures would allow depleted game populations to replenish themselves.
- 2 wanted moose seasons timed so that cold weather would enable storage of meat without freezers.
- 1 suggested that hunting seasons be adjusted according to wildlife population cycles.
- 1 wanted fewer deer allowed per individual and consumption of meat required.



## Registration and report systems

- 6 commented on hunter registration and harvest systems, suggesting in general that greater compliance with reporting requirements be enforced, that additional species be required to be checked in (as with bears), and that subsistence take also be reported.

## Permits

- 12 respondents favored existing or increased use of permits to control numbers of hunters or size of harvests. These respondents generally said that permit systems are inevitable, are the only way to provide for uncrowded use, allow for longer hunting seasons, and provide better control over harvests.
- 10 wanted permits eliminated or at least reduced and kept to a minimum. Permits were viewed as unnecessary restrictions, difficult for local residents to obtain and "a lot of hassle". The price of permits was also criticized.

## Miscellaneous

- 10 respondents suggested that restrictions be minimized, especially on methods and means, and that controls on users be limited to season and bag limit adjustments.

- 3 said there should be no restrictions whatsoever because nature could care for itself.
- 3 were of the opinion that trophy hunters, guides and native subsistence hunters waste wildlife and should be more closely controlled.
- 3 urged more management of people because the major problems are people - too much pressure, poaching, habitat destruction, etc.
- 1 suggested that hunters who hunt near urban centers be required to take hunter safety training.
- 1 thought nonresidents should be required to turn meat over to needy residents.

### RESPONSE TO INDIVIDUAL SPECIES PLANS

Section III of the questionnaire solicited comments on individual species plans. Respondents could comment on up to five individual plans on the pages provided with the questionnaire, or on any number of additional plans by attaching additional paper.

Of the 663 questionnaires returned, 511 had comments on individual species plans. On the average each respondent commented on about 3 individual plans. Only 15 respondents commented on more than 5 plans. Some of the 79 respondents who commented on 5 plans would probably have commented on additional plans if more pages had been provided in the questionnaire.

Of the 238 individual plans contained in the proposal, comments were received on 160. Most of these (116) were commented on by 5 or less respondents. Only 11 plans received comment by more than 20 people. The number of respondents who commented on any single plan varied from a high of 125 respondents on the Alaska Wolf Management Plan to single respondents on 28 different individual plans. Some respondents chose to comment on a species without reference to any specific plan or else neglected to identify their comments with a particular plan.

The proposal contained individual plans for 17 species or species groups of Alaskan wildlife. Although all species categories received comment in the response, most comments were directed at moose (21%), caribou (12%), brown bear (11%), sheep (10%), black bear (10%) and wolf (10%).

In general, response to individual plans was from people living in or near the geographical area to which the plans applied. Also, for the majority of individual plans, more respondents agreed with the proposed management goals and management guidelines than disagreed. For the most part, reasons for disagreement with proposed guidelines or other comments offered on individual plans were similar in nature to the response received to more general questions in Section II of the questionnaire, as summarized in the preceding section of this report. Response to individual plans served to connect some of the general concerns with specific areas and species.

Because many of the comments were directed at species in certain areas, such comments should be reviewed with reference to the individual plan identified. All responses to individual species plans are contained in Appendix 7, in Volume II of the Summary report. Those plans receiving comment from more than 20 respondents are included here to give the reader a sample of the comments received. (In reviewing these examples, the reader should refer to the appropriate plans in the Alaska Wildlife Management Plans publication to place the comments in proper context. The residence area of respondents is identified on the response summary sheets according to the symbols used on page 40 of this report.)

PLAN TITLE 1. Interior-Western Alaska Black Bear Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 39 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW 5 W      SW 3 I 7 SC 1 KP      SE       
J      Fbk 18 Anch 3 Unk 2

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 27 No 12

Other primary goals chosen: View 1 Aesthetic 2  
Harvest 5 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study 1

Other goals suggested:  
Controlled spring and fall seasons with lower bag limits 1  
Healthy population 1  
Leave it as it is 1  
AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(S): Yes 26 No 10

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 2 Aesthetic 1  
Harvest      Trophy       
Participate 2 Study 5

Other Goals suggested: Leave as it is 1  
Subsistence 1

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 24 No 10

Guidelines Not Agreed With Number in Disagreement Reasons for Disagreement

- |     |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| # 1 | 9 | - Killing for recreation isn't valid.<br>- Don't encourage hunting; regulate resource depletion<br>- Inadequate money and manpower to monitor and enforce necessary to allow increased use.<br>- No black bears in area. How can it be classified hunting?<br>- Too many dummies in the woods.<br>- Could lead to overkill.<br>- Need more photographing of bears.<br>- Not enough information to justify increased hunting. |
| # 3 | 2 | - Don't permit ORV's where it's restricted for other species. It creates enforcement problem.<br>- People came to Alaska to get away from regulation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Keep harvests, if increased, within reasonable management levels.

Status of black bears should be improved; reduce bag limit, use harvest tickets to monitor kill, obtain better information on bear harvest.

Need fencing regulations around municipal dumps.

Increasing public awareness of bear behavior has been neglected.  
Need more study of bears to manage well.

Need everyone to abide by plan for it to work.

How can Fish and Game justify increased harvest when it admits to a lack of information on bears. This is typical Fish and Game response to hunter pressure or Department. This only maintains the status quo.

Should have nonconsumptive use licenses, so all share costs.

Fish & Game has few true black bear habitats proposed for scientific study.

Expand sealing requirement.

May be a conflict with other wildlife species goals (plans).

Poor philosophy to use i.e. no data available so let's increase the harvest.

In sections of GMU 21 and 24 black bears are important food source and are actively sought; in these areas should have appropriate harvest goal. It is different in GMU 25 where bears are used as dog food and skins.

Meat from bears killed along haul road should be given to Koyukuk River villagers to help alleviate caribou shortage.

Both hide and meat should be utilized. Otherwise is wanton waste.

PLAN TITLE 7. Kenai Black Bear Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 22 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I      SC 1 KP 6 SE       
J      Fbk 2 Anch 12 Unk 1

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 18 No 4

Other primary goals chosen: View 2 Aesthetic 1  
Harvest 1 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study     

Other goals suggested:

Optimum number of regard to interspecific relationships 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 17 No 4

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 1 Aesthetic       
Harvest 1 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study 1

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 15 No 5

<u>Guidelines Not</u>	<u>Number in</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
<u>Agreed With</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>	

#1	1	- Increase black bears.
#2	3	- Already a lot of people out there. - Don't encourage hunting, it will happen naturally
#4	1	- No special opportunities for nonhunting uses should be set aside.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Maintain a cautious (conservative) approach to optimum harvest.

Need a study on bear/moose relationships.

Proper garbage disposal should be mandatory.

Encouraging viewing turns into feeding, resulting in nuisance animals.

Require utilization of meat.

Reduce road hunting and mechanized hunts.

Let's allow hunting with hounds.

Three bears is too many for anyone--on principle.

Residents are ignorant and fearful of bears and are more wasteful than non-residents when they kill black bears.

With no restrictions on methods of transport, most areas will receive extensive vehicular pressure.

Statement that "opportunities for nonhunting uses of black bear will not be restricted" is ridiculous. This concept should be understood for all species being hunted in all areas.



PLAN TITLE 1. Alaska Wolf Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 125

# RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A 1 NW 8 W 2 SW 5 I 20 SC 10 KP 7 SE 21  
J 5 Fbk 28 Anch 15 Unk 2

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL

Yes 90

No 35

Other primary goals chosen:

View	<u>12</u>	Aesthetic	<u>3</u>
Harvest	<u>3</u>	Trophy	<u>12</u>
Participate	<u>5</u>	Study	<u>12</u>

Other goals suggested: Healthy population 2 Remove wolves 2

Maximum increase in wolf population 1 Leave wolves alone 1

Manage wolf for optimum harvest of game animals 2

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s):

Yes

87

No

34

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED

Agree

Don't agree

Other Secondary Goals chosen:

View	<u>12</u>	Aesthetic	<u>6</u>
Harvest	<u>3</u>	Trophy	<u>11</u>
Participate	<u>1</u>	Study	<u>11</u>

Other Goals suggested:

More control 2

Nonhunting 2

Commercial hunting & trapping 1

Preservation of habitat 1

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES:

Yes 55

No 43

Guidelines Not

Number in

Agreed With

Disagreement

Reasons for Disagreement

# 1

20

- Limit wolf population.
- Inconsistent with #4.
- Wolf trapping doesn't "pay its way".
- Trapping is objectionable.
- Need increased trapping.
- Wolf population levels are unknown.
- Don't like controlled access.
- Should be no bag limits.
- Limit to 15/year.
- 12-month unlimited season was inadequate. What do you expect to do with this?
- Don't have a wolf problem here.

# 2

14

- Hunt only when pelts are prime.
- This only means predator control.
- Reduce to one wolf/person/year and make shooting

<u>Guidelines Not Agreed With</u>	<u>Number in Disagreement</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
# 3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delete "efficient".</li> <li>- Wolf is not humane.</li> <li>- How can this be accomplished?</li> <li>- What is considered inhumane?</li> <li>- No such thing as humane trapping.</li> </ul>
# 4	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department doesn't know what ratio is best.</li> <li>- Not enough information to manage wolves.</li> <li>- Too much politics in ADF&amp;G's actions.</li> <li>- Wolf will get short end of stick.</li> <li>- Only if control hunter-moose ratio as well.</li> <li>- Control people as well.</li> <li>- People are more important than wolves.</li> </ul>
# 5	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ungulates will be gone by the time you get approval for control hunts.</li> </ul>
# 6	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you do that, there are too many wolves.</li> <li>- Realistic only in a zoo.</li> <li>- Not a part of ADF&amp;G's job.</li> </ul>
# 7	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased awareness of wolf behavior will turn people off on wolves.</li> <li>- Would just cause confusion.</li> </ul>

#### OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Bounty would encourage hunting and trapping in areas where difficult due to terrain or forest, etc.

Only use of strychnine has been effective in controlling wolf numbers.

Depressed ungulate populations have gotten that way by overhunting in the first place. Natural predators should take priority in the harvest of an ungulate population.

Wolves take old, sick, etc. Only reason to take wolves is for pelts.

Manage hunters, not wolves.

Agree wholeheartedly, but should protect wolves in low density areas as much as efforts to reduce wolves in high density areas.

No aerial wolf hunting should be allowed.

Give nonhunter use a chance.

Don't exterminate one group of animals in favor of another.

Management should be for wildlife first, not hunters.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN (Cont'd)

Should be more explicit on predator control programs.

Control wolves by any means possible.

Mismanagement of the prey necessitates mismanagement of the predator.

Initiate court actions against groups that hinder Department programs.

Don't blame the wolf for prey mismanagement.

A humane trap has never been developed.

Rarely can view wolves from the ground—too wary.

Fish and Game should not be allowed to kill wolves—let the public do this.

Stiff penalties needed for feeding wolves along pipeline.

Some control needed, but need to attack real problem--get tough on enforcement and let local bush residents benefit from wolf harvest.

Viewing second in Arctic National Wildlife Range.

Look ahead at wolf status 50 years from now--act now to protect habitat.

Wolf control should be backed by sufficient evidence about ungulate populations; if implemented it should be a last resort.

Management plan uses speculative information to rationalize a management policy for predator-prey relationships. Detracts from professional nature of plans.

Need to emphasize more information on behavior, effects of hunting on pack structure and reproduction, prey selectivity, etc.

Optimum harvest can't be applied when we don't know how many wolves there are.

Balance wolves and deer, but deer more important. When out of balance, wolves must be controlled. It's to wolf's benefit that it be maintained in balance with food resource.

To limit conflicts between wolf and man we should initiate greater wolf kill via "optimum harvest" goal.

Wolves should be managed according to wishes of people.

Aerial hunting should be allowed in Unit 6.

Department should encourage hunters and trappers to take more wolves and coyotes.

Control wolves by permit basis only.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN (Cont'd)

Reduce wolves to allow ungulates to come back.

Let local hunters do the hunting instead of flying outside hunters in.

Why optimum harvest of wolves on North Slope where they are vulnerable?  
Allow control only where they threaten a subsistence resource.

Take wolves only for their pelts.

This plan should include the Kenai Peninsula also.

Impossible to annihilate wolves in Alaska.

Remove wolf from big game list and place it back on bounty list.

Make use of airplane illegal to spot game or for use in hunting.

Coordinate wolf management in Arctic on a local basis with federal agencies.

Would like more individual wolf plans and more information on how population estimates were made.

Avoid "shot in the dark" biology.

Need more study and information to substantiate control programs to public.

Cut down on hunters; do more research on wolf/ungulate relationship.

More information to public needed on what a hungry wolf can and does do.

Wolves will eat a "healthy" deer; outsiders (Lower 48) don't know.

"Subsistence" or "Alaskan way of life" is a "rip off"--emphasis on hunting and trapping excludes other considerations.

Don't bow to federal guidelines or outside interests.

This plan was propaganda for Department policy.

Less emphasis on hunting & trapping of wolves.

Don't like April hunting season.

Yes to aircraft hunting with a permit.

OK as long as meat or skin is utilized.

Consider the prolonging effects of hares on adverse wolf/ungulate ratios.

Eliminate wolves--no good to anything or anybody.

Need to allow all-year trapping and night hunting (spotlighting) of wolves.

PLAN TITLE 5. Kenai Wolf Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 22 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I      SC 3 KP 11 SE       
J      Fbk      Anch 8

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 10 No 12

Other primary goals chosen: View 6 Aesthetic 1  
Harvest 5 Trophy       
Participata 1 Study 1

Other goals suggested:

Optimum number with regard to interspecific relationships 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 12 No 9

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 1 Aesthetic 1  
Harvest 3 Trophy       
Participata 1 Study 3

Other Goals suggested:

Reduce population markedly 1

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 7 No 11

Guidelines Not Agreed With Number in Disagreement Reasons for Disagreement

- |    |   |                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| #1 | 4 | - Less goals management to agree with guidelines.<br>- Limit wolf numbers on Kenai.<br>- Control wolves to minimum population.                                   |
| #3 | 2 | - Don't kill just to kill--a poor hunter attitude.<br>- Don't take wolves when pelt not prime.                                                                   |
| #4 | 2 | - More specifics wanted.<br>- Don't severely limit ways and means of hunter transport.                                                                           |
| #5 | 1 | - Need more effort here.                                                                                                                                         |
| #6 | 3 | - Moose/wolf ratios will <u>not</u> have to be maintained. They do so naturally, i.e. Isle Royale.<br>- Increase habitat for prey instead of controlling wolves. |

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Need more public information and education on wolves in Homer.

Trapping and sport hunting is not harmful to wolves.

Eliminate wolf from the Kenai.

Kenai is excellent place to study wolf/moose relationships—how about "hands off the wolf" on Kenai.

To avoid undesirable wolf/moose ratios, properly manage the moose population in the first place.

Viewing may soon become the predominant use on the Kenai Peninsula.

Viewing should become the predominant use on Kenai because it is accessible and a tourist area.

Reason moose are low is due to bear and wolf predation.

Moose winter ranges will be improved over the next 5-10 years. Wolf population should be managed such that moose will be able to expand to use improved habitat.

PLAN TITLE 23. Nelchina Caribou Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 28 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I 2 SC 5 KP 1 SE 1  
J      Fbk 2 Anch 16 UNKNOWN 1

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 24 No 4

Other primary goals chosen: View      Aesthetic 2  
Harvest 1 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study     

Other goals suggested:

Conservation and Reasonable Hunting 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 20 No 7

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 2 Aesthetic 3  
Harvest 1 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study     

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 19 No 5

<u>Guidelines Not</u> <u>Agreed With</u>	<u>Number in</u> <u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
# 1	3	- Consider wolf predation before hunting limits are set. - Restrict harvest until herd reaches 35,000. - Have a large number if environment will support them.
# 2	2	- ATV restrictions would cause all pressure along roads; not the same abuses as with snowmachines so allow ATV's. - Eliminate off-highway vehicles.
# 3	1	- Ratio doesn't match primary goal.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Need stronger predator controls.

Quality hunting areas are needed where they are accessible to population centers. Need good law enforcement and reasonable access.

Recovery of herd is major consideration.

Harvest should never again be 3/person, nor use of snowmachines.

Implement ORV restrictions, educate public on environmental impact of Susitna Dam.

Restrict ORV's.

Possibly predator hunting should be increased.

Caribou studies should be major goal - determine why declines (besides overhunting). Goals are unwise due to easy access.

When caribou are near road, need strong enforcement, 1/2 mile closure.

Don't close seasons.

Have a limited permit system and long season - more precise management and better aesthetics.

Don't restrict boat access by ANCSA.

Maintain areas for snowmachine access along with closed ATV areas.

Past mismanagement should not be repeated.



PLAN TITLE 1. Delta Bison Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 22

# RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I 7 SC      KP      SE       
J      Fbk 14 Anch      Unk 1

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 17 No 5

Other primary goals chosen: View 4 Aesthetic       
Harvest      Trophy       
Participate      Study 1

Other goals suggested: Use as tourist attraction 1  
Get rid of this extra 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 15 No 7

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 1 Aesthetic 1  
Harvest      Trophy       
Participate 2 Study 3

Other Goals suggested:  
Make it less of an "exacution" 1

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 15 No 3

<u>Guidelines Not</u> <u>Agreed With</u>	<u>Number in</u> <u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
#1	2	- Manipulate habitat to carry more than 250 bison.
#3	2	- Do you want a zoo? - Not unless you stop hunting (it will become too easy to kill bison).
#4	1	- Let bison run free.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

One of the better plans.

Good to see ADFG working with agriculture to produce a better management system.

Acquire State Bison Range as soon as possible.

Must maintain a free-roaming bison herd. Support Bison Range and habitat rehabilitation.

If less "hand-holding" by Fish and Game, more people could participate. How about bow hunting.

Prefer specificity of DNR plan for Delta bison.

Need more opportunity to study the bison.

State should create (clear) large winter grazing area for bison.

Develop new bison areas if possible.

Bison interfere with farming and with native wildlife. What's next, elephants?  
(there once were mastodons here)

Problem in Southcentral Alaska states "any transfer of bison range to private parties or National Park Service may markedly complicate or preclude management of herd size or habitat enhancement projects." This is insulting to NPS!

PLAN TITLE #20. West Chugach Sheep Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 21 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I      SC      KP      SE       
J      Fbk 2 Anch 19

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 14 No 7

Other primary goals chosen:	View	<u>5</u>	Aesthetic	<u>1</u>
	Harvest	<u>1</u>	Trophy	<u>    </u>
	Participate	<u>1</u>	Study	<u>    </u>

Other goals suggested:

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 15 No 6

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen:	View	<u>    </u>	Aesthetic	<u>3</u>
	Harvest	<u>    </u>	Trophy	<u>2</u>
	Participate	<u>    </u>	Study	<u>1</u>

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 13 No 6

<u>Guidelines Not</u> <u>Agreed With</u>	<u>Number in</u> <u>Disagreement</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
# 1	2	- Area doesn't produce large rams; allow more hunting with restricted access for more chance to take a legal sheep.  - No harvest.
# 2	1	- In area close to road, best to let hunters concentrate and have a "sociable hunt".
# 3	3	- Hunters and viewers won't get along peacefully.  - Need more closed areas in park.  - Need to close Eagle River to replace Eklutna Closes

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Open Eklutna to 4/4 curl only season.

Keep Eagle River open, but may need permits in future.

Permits is the way to go, don't close more areas in the Park.

Ban use of snowmachines in the Park.

Setting aside area for both viewers and hunters invites conflict.

Why not make this an aesthetic hunt area as well as trophy.

Different uses are compatible--early summer viewing, hunting later.

Need to educate nonconsumptive users to keep from scaring sheep out of area.

Because of human population, view goal should be first.

Inconsistency in narrative statements and dogmatic posture by Fish and Game.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game is against recognizing dominant nonconsumptive use in Park. This will continue to generate ill will and affect other Department programs.

Control use of horses in Park so to allow only pack-in hunts.

No sheep hunting in the Park.

PLAN TITLE 14. Yukon - Tanana Moose Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 22

# RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I 7 SC      KP      SE       
J      Fbk 13 Anch 2

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 16 No 6

Other primary goals chosen: View      Aesthetic       
Harvest 5 Trophy       
Participate      Study     

Other goals suggested:

Moderate harvest under a short season 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 17 No 4

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View      Aesthetic       
Harvest      Trophy       
Participate 3 Study 1

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 16 No 4

Guidelines Not Agreed With Number in Disagreement Reasons for Disagreement

#1 1 -Don't burn caribou range.  
#3 1 -Don't develop more access.  
#5 1 -Antlerless hunts have been detrimental in past.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Back country areas don't receive enough hunting pressure-establish a separate season for bush areas vs. accessible areas. Now, Fish and Game can't set correct quotas for these areas. Encourage an enlightened fire policy by Bureau of Land Management, propose a cooperative study for controlled burns in this area.

More actively seek less fire suppression - educate the Bureau of Land Management to the need for less fire control. Fish and Game must play a lead role.

This plan covers too large an area - extremes in geography, habitat, human use patterns.

Well thought out plan.

Study and count moose in this area.

Force harvest reporting by bush communities; stop "homesteader seasons".

Yes, discourage fire suppression to help moose; don't develop more aircraft access, airplane hunters already can hunt more places than I will ever get to. Lots of lakes and rivers for floatplanes already, use the money better for other things. Learn more about the animals before setting regulations.

Be consistent next to McKinley Park and manage moose for aesthetics there as Fish and Game has proposed for most other species. Restrict ATV's there. Around parks should have "buffer zone" - no ATV's, but do allow hunting.

Push habitat improvement and try to get ample funding for it.

PLAN TITLE 6. Southeastern Deer Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 34

# RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW      W      SW      I      SC      KP      SE 30  
J 4 Fbk      Anch     

-AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 20 No 14

Other primary goals chosen: View 1 Aesthetic 2  
Harvest 4 Trophy       
Participate 1 Study     

Other goals suggested:

Get deer to hunt 1 Continued opportunity to hunt 1

Broadest public enjoyment 1 MSY 1

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes      No     

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree 11 Don't agree 6

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 2 Aesthetic 3  
Harvest 2 Trophy       
Participate      Study 1

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 16 No 11

Guidelines Not Agreed With      Number in Disagreement      Reasons for Disagreement

- |     |   |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| # 1 | 6 | - Want bucks only harvest.<br>- No deer and no enforcement of bag limits in recent past.                                                                                    |
| # 2 | 4 | - Reserve either sex hunts for areas with high populations.<br>- Balance hunting with other public uses.<br>- Don't like "recreational" term.<br>- Don't encourage hunting. |
| # 3 | 1 | - Logging has been good for deer.<br><br>- Guidelines should stress <u>production</u> of wildlife resources.                                                                |

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Closures on some islands like Etolin would allow dispersal and restocking to hunted-out areas.

Limit harvest to one deer per hunter.

Expand specific areas to include:	Douglas Island	Upper 1/2 Tanakee Inla
	Seymour Canal	Hoonah Sound
	South 1/2 Admiralty	West Chickagoff
	Mansfield Peninsula	Narrows Sitka to Peril
	Port Frederick	Zarembo Island
	Mud Bay	

Clearcut deserves much more criticism.

When populations low, cut out either sex and late seasons when deer are on beaches

Permit logging to create new browsing areas.

Need more attention to Yakutat deer problem; need stronger enforcement. Also, deer are vulnerable on small islands.

Watch wolf-deer relationship.

Transplant deer to areas where eliminated or low.

Reduce bag limits--management and harvests in Alaska are an anachronism.

Need smaller area plans with different goals such as optimum harvest for Kupreanof and Mitkof Islands.

Need more enforcement of poaching.

Reduce female kill.

Seasons too liberal in years with harsh winters; allow only bucks.

Need more local emergency opening and closing authority; less management by public opinion, more on fact.

Need more study.

Don't need areas set aside for aesthetics.

Let's manage for meat in the freezer.



PLAN TITLE 1. Greater Alaska Furbearer Management Plan

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 40

# RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW 3 W 1 SW 4 I 3 SC 2 KP 1 SE 6  
J 1 Fok 13 Anch 5 Unk 1

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 34 No 6

Other primary goals chosen: View 3 Aesthetic       
Harvest      Trophy       
Participate 1 Study 4

Other goals suggested:

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 28 No 11

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen: View 5 Aesthetic 3  
Harvest 1 Trophy       
Participate      Study 5

Other Goals suggested:

Restore destroyed habitats 1

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 23 No 13

Guidelines Not Agreed With    Number in Disagreement    Reasons for Disagreement

- |     |   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| # 1 | 4 | - Leghold traps and snares are the most efficient and just as humane as other kinds of traps (conning)<br>- No to all consumptive uses.<br>- Fish and Game should not be involved in conflict over humane methods.                                               |
| # 3 | 3 | - Allow take only when <u>pelts prime</u> and only one each annually on hunting license.<br>- Game necessary for food, shelter and clothing should never be closed.<br>- Encourages waste of substandard animals.<br>- Seasons should coincide for each species. |
| #5  | 2 | - Eliminate recreational trapping.<br>- Stay out of financial affairs of trappers.                                                                                                                                                                               |

<u>Guidelines Not Agreed With</u>	<u>Number in Disagreement</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
#6	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Don't close areas for photographers (causes crowding of animals that results in diseases).</li> <li>- Why close off the best producing areas?</li> <li>- Furbearers can be photographed anywhere.</li> </ul>
#7	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unless land usage is beneficial to moose and caribou.</li> </ul>

#### OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Recreational trappers need areas close to town for trapping.

Do more scientific study--need more information to manage.

Marten are abundant on all islands in Southeast--they do well in burned off areas.

Resent title of "recreational trapper"--bad in public's eye.

Watch out for increasing pressure (higher prices, more trappers, snowmachine use).

Shorten wolverine season.

Need registered traplines.

Oppose banning steel leghold traps, educate trappers and do more furbearer management.

Trapping is still an operating profession in the state.

Start a trapper's training program (an apprenticeship program).

Don't ignore conflicts between trappers--try registered traplines; old respect for established lines is disappearing.

Allow only trapping for personal use (subsistence)--no sale.

Trapping is important as off-season work.

Neophytes can't trap well nor handle pelts properly.

Get trapping license moneys into Fish and Game fund.

Let's have some nonmotorized vehicle trapping areas near urban centers.

Trapping is important economically to the state, especially over the long term.

PLAN TITLE 1. Small Game

TOTAL RESPONDENTS 35 # RESPONDENTS BY RESPONSE AREAS:

A      NW 2 W 1 SW 5 I      SC 3 KP 1 SE 1  
J      Fbk 16 Anch 5 unknown 1

AGREE WITH PRIMARY GOAL Yes 30 No 5

Other primary goals chosen:	View	<u>2</u>	Aesthetic	<u>2</u>
	Harvest	<u>2</u>	Trophy	<u>    </u>
	Participate	<u>1</u>	Study	<u>2</u>

Other goals suggested:

AGREE WITH SECONDARY GOAL(s): Yes 30 No 2

NO SECONDARY GOAL LISTED Agree      Don't agree     

Other Secondary Goals chosen:	View	<u>1</u>	Aesthetic	<u>1</u>
	Harvest	<u>1</u>	Trophy	<u>    </u>
	Participate	<u>    </u>	Study	<u>1</u>

Other Goals suggested:

AGREEMENT WITH MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES: Yes 23 No 6

<u>Guidelines Not</u>	<u>Number in</u>	<u>Reasons for Disagreement</u>
<u>Agreed With</u>	<u>Disagreement</u>	
# 1	3	- Optimum harvest is preferable. - Let it be.
#3	2	- Permit open seasons, don't restrict for photography. - Hunter isn't limiting factor.
#4	3	- Unless land practices are beneficial to bigger food animals.  - Development is going to have to be accepted. migration where possible.  - Restoring habitat should be greatest goal.

OTHER COMMENTS ON THE PLAN:

Make it illegal to use edible portions of hares and game birds as trapping bait.

Need more scientific study of small game.

Restrict use of snowmachines (for aesthetics) in high use areas like Cantwell and Isabel.

Need more restrictive seasons and bags on heavily hunted areas during population lows.

Need to manage areas near urban centers differently than statewide including some hunting closures for nonconsumptive use.

Reduce bag limits in some areas where pressure is great.

Need a separate plan for West Chugach Park.

Encourage more small game hunting.

Maintain state control over wildlife and promote access to private lands.

How about roadside closures to eliminate many problems.

Furbearer trapping has brought about the cyclic populations of hares.

Generally good except improved access is only temporary.

Relief from over hunting needed.

## LETTER RESPONSE

The Department received in excess of 80 written "letter" responses to the proposed wildlife plans in addition to comments submitted on the questionnaires and responses to summaries of individual public meetings. Letters were the principal form of response used by agencies and organizations because the questionnaire design did not lend itself well to group responses. Some individuals also responded by letter because they felt the questionnaire was not adequate for expressing their feelings. In addition one prepared statement was presented at a public meeting, and we received telegrams and several newspaper editorials. All letters received in response to the plans have been included in Appendix 8 in Volume II of the Summary report. Letter comments directed at individual species plans were incorporated into the summaries of comments on individual species plans in Appendix 7.

As with other written responses, the content of letters varied widely, from simple, abbreviated statements to comprehensive evaluations of the proposal. The number of subjects addressed, their applicability to statewide, regional, or local area provisions, and the constructiveness of comments differed between letters. In this regard, a number of letters from agencies, resource management professionals, conservation organizations, and some individuals were of especial value to the Division because of the scope and depth of review provided as a result of their expertise or interest in, or their responsibility for, the resource.

These submissions can be broken down into four categories: review comments from governmental and university agencies; letters and statements (including editorials) prepared by conservation and sportsmen's organizations; letters from Native organizations; and statements from individuals.

Agency responses came from Federal government offices in Washington, D.C. (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) and Alaska (National Park Service; Fish and Wildlife Service; Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Soil Conservation Service; National Marine Fisheries Service), State agencies (Legislative Interim Committee on Subsistence; Division of Parks; Division of Minerals and Energy Management), the University of Alaska (Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center; Alaska Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit), and the Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society (here included with "agencies" because of the professional affiliation of its membership).

Comments from agencies had much in common, reflecting their professional familiarity with management systems and resource requirements; many identified the plans as merely use management plans and suggested stronger consideration of biological systems, habitat requirements of wildlife and population welfare to make the plans truly comprehensive. Yet there was a relationship between each agency's primary function and their suggestions for improving the plans. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Alaska Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, the Arctic Environmental Information and Data Center and the Wildlife Society all mentioned the need to consider habitat, ecological relationships, and land areas to a greater extent, and to take a more

positive approach to cooperative management. The Alaska Division of Parks and the National Park Service both felt more attention should be given to providing nonconsumptive uses of wildlife. The U.S. Forest Service stressed cooperative management programs with the State and, in southeastern Alaska, cautioned against a too-broad application of limitations for "aesthetic hunting conditions" in areas where timber harvesting is planned. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service wanted greater recognition of agricultural potential in the state, and more effort directed toward developing compatibility between wildlife and livestock. The National Marine Fisheries Service law enforcement branch suggested expansion of the role of enforcement as a management tool. The Alaska Division of Minerals and Energy Management made suggestions for data processing and improving clarity of the plans. The Legislative Interim Committee on Subsistence urged more Department contact with Bristol Bay residents and provisions for subsistence use of walrus in Bristol Bay. Numerous other specific comments ranging from renegotiation of the Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada and Mexico, to funding considerations and public relations, make this collection of thoughts a useful addition to the input received.

Much valuable input was also received from conservation organizations in Alaska. The Alaska Chapters of the Audubon Society and the Sierra Club responded, as did the Alaska Center for the Environment, the Fairbanks Environmental Center, the Denali Citizen's Council, and the Alaska Wildlife Council. Except for a letter from the Natural Resources Defense Council, no comment was received from national offices of the many groups to whom plans were sent.

Some of the environmentalists' criticisms paralleled the agency comment. There were recurrent calls for ecosystem or "area" management, broader consideration of inter- and intraspecific relationships, evaluation of habitat factors, and a more conservative harvest approach. The groups generally acknowledged the Department's financial limitations, but urged the Department to expand research and management activities into non-harvest programs, suggesting that such a philosophical reorientation would stimulate financial support from the general public. Some organizations questioned the methods used to involve the public and suggested that in the future formal hearing and/or National Environmental Policy Act procedures be used. Alternative goals were suggested to establish a more conservative consumptive use stance and to provide more consideration for non-consumers. There was also consistent urging to directly address subsistence, and the Fairbanks Environmental Center provided some starting points for establishing a subsistence management program.

Alaskan Natives said surprisingly little regarding the plans. Koniag requested plans in May and said they felt that the Department should have involved local or corporation people in the process from the beginning. The only in-depth statement received was from the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP). This provided an excellent review of the peoples' feelings about wildlife use and the adequacy of the plans for protecting their uses in Western Alaska. Some extrapolation to other regions may be valid.



The AVCP statement addressed specific plans as well as general concepts. General comments dealt with a variety of issues including the manner in which regulations are made, the lack of quantified biological information in Western Alaska, the impact of technological changes on traditional use patterns, the need to recognize the "subsistence" user, the need for more funding for research, and the need to educate rural people about sustained yield concepts and urban people about the "essential" nature of harvests for subsistence.

The 54 letters and 3 telegrams sent by individuals came from various parts of the state, with a preponderance from Fairbanks (20) and Anchorage (10). Seven letters were received from Nome, Kotzebue and other northwestern Alaska villages, three came from the Kenai Peninsula, and the remainder were distributed among communities in western, southwestern, interior and southeastern Alaska. (Five letters were of undetermined in-state origin, and two originated in other states).

All of the letters received from individuals closely paralleled the response obtained at public meetings in the respective areas. For example, a number of the letters from Anchorage, some from Fairbanks, and those from Southeastern Alaska voiced concerns similar to those of the conservation groups: less hunting emphasis, more consideration of the existential value of wildlife, ecosystem management, more nonconsumptive use areas, viewing and hunting are not compatible, control use of off-road vehicles, etc. On the other hand, the majority of letters from Fairbanks, as well as many from Anchorage and the more developed rural communities, expressed sentiments against limitations of access and

restrictions of more area for nonconsumptive use, and expressed the feeling that the Department had gone too far in restricting individuals freedoms and not allowing adequate harvest opportunities.

Letters from small rural towns and bush communities were primarily concerned with use by local residents. These people wanted reduced competition with urban users and guided hunters, management that would give priority use to Natives or local subsistence users, increased use of local knowledge in decision-making, and, in some places, assurances of the right to hunt on public lands in areas where such use may be foreclosed by legislation.