

I'm testifying today, not as Mayor of Sitka, but as a past member of the GMU 4 Brown Bear Management Team. I am in opposition to 5 brown bear proposals numbers 32 through 36.

The Brown Bear Management Team, of which I was a part, serving as a representative of the Port Alexander Fish and Game Advisory Committee, worked hard to build consensus, to find common ground, to work on solutions we could all live with in order to present a strategy that would work long into the future.

This strategy that was developed by the Team and adopted by the Board is a good, solid, conservative strategy. It deserves to be followed by all the user groups and the user groups need to be held accountable in order to make it work. Don't fix something that isn't broken, especially when the problem isn't the infrastructure.

User groups need to:

- control the number of guides,
- limit the number of nonresident hunts to the totals agreed upon by each Guide Use Area;
- be careful about increasing the mortality of female bears,
- The Dept of Fish and Game and the Forest Service need to fund and conduct bear research on south Admiralty Is. and also work together to manage hunts and mortality, and
- User groups need to continue education and action to reduce DLPs and access to residential and/or municipal garbage

Speaking of garbage, Sitka has a collaborative Bear Task Force that has been working on our local brown bear issues, coming up with a strategic plan and taking action on its goals and objectives. One of those goals is public education concerning bears and garbage. The subject is so much a part of public dialogue now that Sitka has a grassroots initiated Facebook page called **Sitka Bear Report**. One might see a comment like one posted Monday this week: "Bear encounter on muskeg portion of Starrigaven Loop yesterday afternoon."

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The Task Force has helped the Sitka Assembly pass laws to help our police force enforce proper garbage behavior by humans. The Assembly recently passed a stricter ordinance that allows an officer to fine a resident on the first garbage offense.

It is these types of activities that need to be encouraged to help make the Southeast Alaska Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Strategy a success, not the 5 brown bear proposals.

Thank you for your time and careful consideration of these issues.

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