PC150

Submitted by: Ina Jones

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer

Comment:

I do not support proposal 146 and 147. This is targeting and favoring one type of user over another. Dogs should be on leash at all times on all trails. On public lands. Unleashed dogs put all wildlife at risk, especially in the winter months. The trails are not surveyed and there is no one trail that is used in the so called public access. People bob around on and off trails all of the time and their dogs do the same. If the dogs are on leash at all times this entire problem is a moot point. On trails across the bay, unleashed dogs can chase bears in summer , which puts the owner at risk of being charged and harmed by bears. This results often in the death of the bear. (or moose as the case may be). For the safety of all animals and owners. Just enforce the laws already on the books and keep all dogs on leash. At all times on public land.

Why should 8 incidences have more weight then the hundreds of users that have no incidences.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 55: Support Proposal 56: Support Proposal 57: Support Proposal 59: Oppose Proposal 60: Support Proposal 61: Support Proposal 62: Oppose Proposal 63: Support Proposal 64: Oppose Proposal 117: Oppose Proposal 118: Support Proposal 119: Oppose Proposal 120: Oppose Proposal 121: Oppose Proposal 122: Oppose Proposal 123: Oppose Proposal 124: Oppose Proposal 125: Oppose Proposal 126: Oppose Proposal 127: Oppose Proposal 128: Oppose Proposal 129: Oppose Proposal 130: Oppose Proposal 131: Oppose Proposal 132: Support Proposal 133: Support Proposal 134: Oppose Proposal 135: Oppose Proposal 136: Oppose Proposal 137: Oppose Proposal 138: Oppose Proposal 139: Oppose Proposal 140: Oppose Proposal 141: Oppose Proposal 142: Oppose Proposal 143: Oppose Proposal 144: Oppose Proposal 145: Oppose Proposal 146: Oppose Proposal 147: Oppose Proposal 148: Oppose Proposal 149: Oppose Proposal 150: Oppose Proposal 151: Oppose Proposal 152: Oppose Proposal 153: Oppose Proposal 154: Oppose Proposal 155: Support Proposal 156: Support Proposal 157: Support Proposal 162: Oppose

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PC151

Submitted by: Kenneth Jones

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cordova

Comment:

Please see attached

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 59: Oppose Proposal 60: Oppose Proposal 61: Oppose Proposal 62: Oppose Proposal 63: Support

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Esteemed Board of Game members,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide written comment on the proposals in front of you. I am a life long alaskan and community member of Cordova, located in unit 6. I am also a licensed big game transporter, and a waterfowl and sport fish guide.

I am commenting today on the unit 6 proposals. I oppose proposal 59, 60, 61, and 62. I support proposal 63.

Bow hunting is not common in unit 6, the proposal 60 seeking exclusive access during peak rut would have a detrimental impact on my business as a transporter. The population is not crashing and this drastic change is not warranted for any conservation measure. This proposal is simply seeking a reallocation to a very small fraction of the hunter population which choose to use bows. There is nothing stopping them from bow hunting currently. I fail to see why they would need to shut down rifle season to be successful with a bow. Likewise opening a bow only hunt for goats does not make sense, most of the goat units never shut down, the proposal 59 is simply seeking opportunities for a minority of hunters in a choice area.

Likewise I oppose changing the limits to deer harvest as outlined in proposal 61 Currently there are more deer killed every winter by natural causes than by hunt pressure. While the proposer suggests that sport hunters do not require 5 deer, here in Cordova many families could use 5 deer to feed themselves through winter if they do not get a moose draw. Reducing the bag limit would not drastically improve the deer population and one winter die off would negate any impact that this change would have.

I also oppose the departments cow moose hunt proposal 62. They may try to claim this is house keeping but there should not be a state managed cow moose hunt in 6C. Wolves have been sighted more frequently in the entirety of unit 6 as the glaciers recede and trapping becomes less popular. We are having issues in 6a with calf recruitment and I do not feel that any cow harvest in 6C is warranted. The area can support much more than the 6-800 moose the department manages for.

I support proposal 63, expansion of the brown bear season. This makes total sense to align brown bear hunting with the start of “any deer” season. Currently if you are out deer hunting you cannot legally take a charging bear without utilizing the burdensome DLP process. Aligning these two season start dates would benefit outdoorsmen who want the ability to protect themselves but also get to keep the trophy from doing all the work associated with skinning out and packing out a bear hide and skull. Brown bear populations in unit 6D can support this change. Currently in units 6a-c the season is sept 1, only in 6D where the deer are do you have to wait all the way till oct 15th to harvest a brown bear. I would almost say that this proposal doesn’t go far enough and the board should consider a sept 1 date to align with the rest of unit 6.

Again, Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

PC152

Submitted by: Tyler Jones

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Anchorage, AK

Comment:

I am writing in support of proposals 148-154. I love to recreate outdoors with my dogs. I have no problem with folks trapping out there. I do however have a problem with irresponsible trapping close to trails where people run, bike, hike etc with their animal companions. Let's keep people and their pets safe, shall we?

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC153

Submitted by: Rob Jones Jr.

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Chugiak, AK

Comment:

This comment is for Proposal number 204. This board generated proposal is to close GMU 19C to all Dall Sheep hunting for 5 years, 2023-2027. I am opposed to the proposal because I believe closing an area that has a bag limit of one legal Ram for both residents and non residents will not help the declining population of Dall Sheep in the area. This decline of the population in my opinion is not an overhunting issue. It is in my opinion an environmental issue. I believe the past few winters of large temperature variations, heavy snowfall in late winter and early spring, and the increase of predators in the area is the main factors of the decline. From a reliable source the hunter harvest of legal Rams taken in 2022 in game management unit 19C was 29 Rams. 26 Rams were taken by Non residents and 3 were taken by residents. This historically is a very low number for both residents and non residents. Residents are allowed to hunt any where in the state that is open to hunting. Guides are restricted to Guide Use Areas. These by comparison to the state of Alaska is very small. Some Guides in GMU 19C and not all are very committed to this area because of investment in the area, better knowledge in that area, other non hunting commitments to the area. As for the big difference of the non resident harvest compared to the resident harvest i believe that and saw for myself last hunting season 2022 a noticeable decline in hunting activity in the area during the August part of the season which would be one factor for the reduced success rate in general. One thing that could be done by the Board of Game in the area to help slow the decline of sheep would be to extend seasons and bag limits on predators including Wolverine.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 204: Oppose

From: Kachemak Bay Birders
https://kachemakbaybirders.org

To: Alaska Board of Game
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
https://www.adfg.alaska.gov

February 15, 2023

To Board of Game:

Kachemak Bay Birders (KBB), established in 2008, is an informal, all-volunteer organization of approximately 320 members who are interested in birds, birding, and the conservation of birds. Our mission is "*To promote the enjoyment and protection of Kachemak Bay native birds and their habitat through citizen science, field trips, education and stewardship.*" KBB is sponsored by US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Birds are a significant part of the Alaska ecosystem. While some species are a human food source, many enrich our lives through their beauty and song. Birders provide an often-overlooked boost to the economy as well, and an incentive for conserving habitat. According to research by the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Audubon Alaska, nearly 300,000 birders traveled to Alaska and spent about $378 million statewide in 2022. Birdwatching supported roughly 4,300 jobs in the state that year. Providing pest control, public health, seed dispersal, ecotourism, environmental monitoring—these are a few of the many other ways birds benefit humans. Birds are an important local resource in the Kachemak Bay area that we need to protect. Our positions on the proposals cited below advocate for healthy populations of specific bird populations.

The Board of Game is about to vote on a series of proposals that might adversely affect the populations of game birds and waterfowl that reside in and around Kachemak Bay. Proposals and our support or opposition are listed below;

1. Proposal 162: Lift hunting restrictions on ptarmigan on the Homer Bench **OPPOSED** The spring hunt for ptarmigan in the hills above Homer was closed due to the heavy harvest of birds mainly by hunters on snowmachines having easy access to small flocks in willow patches. Ptarmigan have slowly started to repopulate the area. However, recovery is far from justifying any harvest. Relaxing restrictions would allow the existing ptarmigan to be easily wiped out again because of the number of hunters and snow machines that are likely to access the area.

2. Proposal 163: Rescind bag limit restrictions for sea duck hunting in 15C **OPPOSED**

*Justification provided below

3. Proposals 164-170: proposals regarding reduction of bag limits for Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Harlequin & Long-tailed Duck: **SUPPORT**

KBB is in support of the Homer ADF&G Advisory Committee's positions for the following reasons:

* Reliable data on bird populations or harvest numbers do not exist, so we should act conservatively.

* Populations of sea ducks are slow to recover from overharvest because of high site-fidelity and small clutch sizes.

* ADF&G lacks the ability to limit the number of guides working in Kachemak Bay, and the addition of more guides to the bay could easily reduce populations.

* Limiting harvest is one of our only mechanisms for protecting these local populations.

* Long-time residents report a significant decline in sea duck populations in Kachemak Bay.

*Bag limits on these species will not impact the harvest of waterfowl desirable for food.

* Bag limits on these species will not hurt the businesses of waterfowl hunting guides operating on Kachemak Bay according to testimony given at Homer F&GAC meetings.

4. Proposal 171: Direct ADF&G to implement a method for accurate reporting of sea duck harvest for Units 6,7 & 15 **SUPPORT.**

*We understand the financial and personnel limits in the F&G Department, but advocate at least locally for harvest data that will be acceptable to the department to justify keeping or removing bag limits.

5. Proposal 172: Require mandatory harvest reporting for sea ducks in Kachemak Bay Unit 15C **SUPPORT**

* ADF&G has no idea how many ducks are harvested in the Kachemak Bay area. As a result, they don't have any idea as to whether current bag and possession limits are sustainable.
* ADF&G does not consider other factors that might have an impact on sea duck populations, like climate change.
* The bag and possession limits need to be based on local conditions, regardless of the cause of mortality.
* Current harvest regulations are based on past population estimates and not on current numbers and conditions.
*ADF&G has limited staff and resources to monitor waterfowl populations statewide and relies on USF&W estimates of overall statewide populations. This results in the assumption that local populations are healthy when local observations and citizen science indicate the contrary.

As an organization Kachemak Bay Birders urges the Board of Game to consider our support and opposition for the proposals cited above and its concurrence with the recommendations of the Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee. The birds do not have a voice at your meetings and we advocate for them.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Sisson
Chair, Kachemak Bay Birders

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit th[eir] comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

☑ **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass

☑ **#149 Campground[s]:** Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent C[r]eek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard t[r]apping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.

☑ **# 150 Roa[d]s and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.

☑ **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.

☑ **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.

☑ **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.

☑ **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

☑ **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.

☑ **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails

☑ **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

As a former trapper I feel that keeping traps away from trails and public use areas is responsible and respectfull.
Trapping is not something to be taken lightly. We should always consider the risk to life & property before setting a trap line.
These set backs only help novice or lazy trappers to understand how to operate safely.

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Edward Kahles

Organization (if any)

Signature*: Edward Kahles

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

PC156

Submitted by: Anne Kahn

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer & Lake Clark, AK

Comment:

Trapping setbacks of 100 yards should be the mandatory minimum for all public use trails in the state. I support Proposals 146 and 147.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 103: Support Proposal 104: Support Proposal 105: Support Proposal 106: Oppose Proposal 107: Oppose Proposal 108: Support Proposal 110: Support with Amendment Proposal 115: Oppose Proposal 117: Support Proposal 128: Support Proposal 129: Support Proposal 130: Oppose Proposal 131: Support Proposal 132: Support Proposal 133: Support Proposal 134: Oppose Proposal 135: Oppose Proposal 136: Oppose Proposal 137: Oppose Proposal 138: Oppose Proposal 139: Oppose Proposal 140: Oppose Proposal 141: Oppose Proposal 142: Oppose Proposal 143: Oppose Proposal 144: Oppose Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support Proposal 155: Support Proposal 156: Support Proposal 157: Support Proposal 158: Support Proposal 159: Oppose Proposal 160: Support Proposal 161: Support Proposal 162: Oppose Proposal 163: Oppose Proposal 164: Support Proposal 165: Support Proposal 166: Support Proposal 167: Support Proposal 168: Support Proposal 169: Support Proposal 170: Support Proposal 171: Support Proposal 172: Support

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

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There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area. ***Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).***
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

- ☑ **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass
- ☑ **#149 Campgrounds**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- ☑ **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- ☑ **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- ☑ **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- ☑ **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Robert Kamp

Organization (if any)

Signature*:

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

PC158

Submitted by: Elizabeth Kandror

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer

Comment:

I am against trapping beavers. They help store water and restore wetlands. In this day and age we do not need to use hides.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

PC159

Submitted by: Margaret Kao

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I support Proposal #146 and #147. Public trails used for recreational purposes should definitely have regulations around where traps can be. The 100 yard setback requested by these two proposals is a necessary safety precaution for people that use these public trails.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Oppose Proposal 147: Oppose

PC160

Submitted by: David Kaufmann

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I am writing in support of proposals 146 and 147. Both of these proposed rules seem like they should be common sense. 100 yard buffer for trapping on highly trafficked trails is a no brainer.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

PC161

Submitted by: Dianne MacLean

Organization Name: Kenai Peninsula Chapter of the Alaska Trapper's Association

Community of Residence: Soldotna, AK

Comment:

Honorable Board Members,

(Proposal 145 Oppose)

The Kenai Peninsula Trapper's Association opposes proposal 145 because it adds unnecessary regulation for a largely unheard of issue. Crossings on the Kenai Refuge already prohibit trapping within a mile of the road. Wildlife use of crossings during daylight hours has not been significant; hunters and trappers are not drawn to these installations to hunt or trap.

(Proposals 146-154 opposed)

The Kenai Peninsula Trapper's Association opposes these proposals because they add unnecessary regulation to solve the problem of loose-running dogs being caught in traps. Loose-running dogs are a serious menace to moose and other wildlife and are a nuisance to other trail users. The Alaska Trapper's Association is providing signage to notify both hikers and trappers of the need for sensible consideration of other user groups on shared trails and to notify the public and especially users of legitimately off-leash dogs (hunting dogs) that trapping activities are underway in the area. We feel this approach is already helping to avoid dog/trap conflicts and encourage giving more time before adding the burden of more regulation to either trappers or to families with dogs.

PC162

Submitted by: Mairiis Kilcher

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, Alaska

Comment:

As a lifetime resident of Homer (1944 until today), I have seen with my own eyes the literal disappearance of what once were rafts of thousands of sea ducks all up an down Kachemak Bay, specifically long tail ducks which numbered in the many thousands all winter long.. Now I scarcely can find one, and as a lifetime bird observer I find that very disturbing.

These birds WINTER here, and do not migrate as part of the Pacific Flyway. Their chances of getting decimated and not recovering their populations is far greater than for migrating ducks

FURTHER, to ensure future generations can enjoy our local wildlife, and its many benefits to the environment (many of which are unknown, until it is too late) I am imploring the BOG to consider considering more long term conversation measures for the preservation of our sea ducks which up to now have been used as free fishing bait, sport targets, and not valued in their own right. As with other species, the economic, short time gain of a few should not trump the long term viability of a species nor deprive future generations from the opportunity of enjoying them. As well, The very idea of having them under the purview of the board and GAME seems confusing, since they are not used for subsistence, but mainly slaughtered for non game uses.

I SUPPORT proposals, 164, 166, 169, 171 restricting bag limits for that reason.

I am OPPOSED to proposal 163, rescinding any bag limit restrictions, for that reason

Thank you for accepting my comments.

A long time Alaskan,

Mossy (Mairiis) Kilcher.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 163: Oppose Proposal 164: Support Proposal 166: Support Proposal 169: Support Proposal 171: Support Proposal 172: Support

PC163

Submitted by: H. Sharon Kim

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Seward, AK

Comment:

I SUPPORT the following proposals:

-Proposal #148 - I often recreate on trails in Seward and having a 100 yd setback will help prevent my dog getting trapped while we use the trails. I do not use a leash and he is good under voice command, but he would definitely be attracted by smells if they were too close to the trails.

-Proposal #145 - the 1/4 mile hunting and trapping buffers from wildlife crossings make a lot of sense and will ensure wildlife use the crossings without being deterred.

-Proposal #149 - setbacks from campgrounds will make it less likely that pet dogs aren't accidentally captured while people camp.

-Proposal #150 - a 100 yd setback helps to not catch people's dogs that are out from cars.

-Proposal #146,147, 151, 152, and 153,- a 100 yrd setback helps to prevent dogs from getting pulled of the trail to investigate strange smells and get trapped.

-Proposal #154 - I support signing where trapping is occurring, because that would let dog owners know to be extra careful with their dogs on specific trails, or even cause them to use other areas that are not being trapped. This would help to prevent dogs from inadvertently being trapped.

I believe that approving the proposals listed above will greatly assist the safety of our dogs, and will also help trappers and hikers/skiers with dogs to use similar areas without major conflict.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

PC164

Submitted by: Gabe King

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Seldovia ak

Comment:

I am a 32 year local water Fowler and water fowl guide for 16 years.

I would like to voice my concerns over the proposals to cut harlequin and old squaw limits in half for kachemak bay again.

- kachemak bay already has very conservative bag limits

-there's no biological reason for reducing bag limits again. Both species seem to be heathy and consistently in good numbers.

- a 1 A day bag limit is too close to 0, and that's what a small handful of folks want for no good reason.

-the claim that hunting pressure is becoming overwhelming is just not true. the sea ducks are hunted November - December 16 and I only see 2-4 other parties a year during that time.

-the surveys are showing that these birds are in healthy numbers.

- allot of misinformation is being used to push an agenda of a few.

I will be one of the first to spark up if things change and I have concerns for populations. I love duck hunting and being able to do what I love.

Thanks for reading.

I just wanted to leave my phone number attached to the previous comment on sea duck proposals in Kachemak Bay in case anybody ever wanted to discuss more. Thanks

Gabe king [redacted]

I am a full time resident and Waterfowler of kachemak bay for 28 years now and have genuine care and respect for the sea ducks in kachemak bay.

Proposals 164-170

I ask the board to review the supposed "facts" that are brought up to support these proposals before making a decision. The will or end game of this group is to shut duck hunting down completely in the bay. They have proven that in their attempts at an emergency closure in the bay. I haven't taken the time to look at their survey but I am skeptical it would be unbiased. And the fact that they don't survey most of the highest duck density areas like China poot bay, Halibut cove lagoon, head of kachemak bay, and the open waters makes there survey seem a bit odd. My livelihood counts on the heathy stocks of these birds and I believe they are healthy. Sea duck harvest only occurs for about a month and a half. Cutting limits to 1 is getting too close to zero, uncalled for in my opinion and would negatively impact my ability to make a living.

Thanks for reading.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 164: Oppose Proposal 165: Oppose Proposal 166: Oppose Proposal 167: Oppose Proposal 168: Oppose Proposal 169: Oppose Proposal 170: Oppose

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PC165

Submitted by: Tom Kirstein

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Fairbanks, Alaska

Comment:

Thank you.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 77: Support Proposal 78: Oppose

March 2023 Meeting

The Alaska Board of Game

Dear Chairman and Members

Written Comments:

My name is Tom Kirstein, I live in Fairbanks and I would like to address the following proposals that concern unit 8, Kodiak Island. Thank you for this opportunity and for your service to the board of game process!

I have professionally guided on Kodiak Island over 40 years within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

Proposal 77: Support this proposal

If the Department is wanting to protect the harvest of Female Bears in this area using the skull size minimums for Females being 9 inches wide by 15 inches long, total of 24 inches, or any legal Male Bear. There should be consideration for an age limit applied to the skull size for very old Female Bears that do not make the minimum score of 24 inches. The age should be something over 20 years, this can be established using the sealing data from Female bear harvest records. There shouldn't be a permit reduction loss for resident or non-resident hunters that harvested a very old Female bear that no longer are birthing cubs!

The efforts by the Kodiak Fish and Game Department to educate hunters with information about sexing bears and promote the harvest of Male bears should this proposal be adopted will be a factor for success!

Other considerations:

The Fall Bear Season starting earlier would offer more harvest of Male Bears. Starting the Fall Season earlier would have to apply to all of Kodiak Island Units. There are more bears available early, sow's with cubs are protected by regulations, more Male bears available, easier sexing bears in the Fall season because of shorter hair conditions. The current season being late October most years has unfavorable cold weather conditions which makes difficult hunting conditions and harvesting Female bears more likely.

Last year the Department reported that the Male Harvest of bears was up to 84 percent. Likely there are many more bears than estimated and harvesting more Male bears would help reduce the predation on Females and those Females with cubs.

Proposal 78 Oppose this proposal

The Kodiak Island drawing permit system started in 1976. With well over 40 years of a permit drawing allocation for bear permits which has been very successful. This proposal would have a detrimental effect on allocation of bear permits for Kodiak Island Guiding businesses should it pass. The allocation process of permits for Kodiak Island needs to remain as designed because it works well for the state of Alaska! The allocation of bear permits on Kodiak Island was designed to offer stewardship of bear hunting opportunities by professional guides who conduct those adventures. The unintended consequences to so many support businesses, non-resident hunters, land and game managers would likely create unnecessary hardship should this take place.

This proposal is more about disrupting the current allocation process for the guiding industry and non-resident hunters. Kodiak Island is unique, it is the shining example in Alaska and one of the oldest permit allocations for a big game species that works well for resident and non-resident hunters alike.

Other Considerations:

Address the fee structure for all permits issued by the Department of Fish and Game and require fees be paid whenever a permit of any type is issued to a resident or non-resident. Likely this will have to be approved by the Alaska Legislature however.

Board Members, thank you for serving on the Board of Game, it is very much appreciated!

Tom Kirstein

[redacted] Fairbanks, Alaska 99708, Phone: [redacted]

PC166

Submitted by: Doug Knock

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Anchorage, Alaska

Comment:

I support trap setbacks from multi-use areas in the Cooper Landing area. We are frequently on the Cooper Landing trails with our dogs. We own a place on Snug Harbor road.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC167

Submitted by: Erin Knotek

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cody Wyoming

Comment:

I am in support of proposal 145, 149-154 for set backs for trapping. Although my address is listed as Cody Wyoming , I lived in Moose Pass, Alaska for 31 years. I still own property at mile 36 of the Seward Highway. I cannot help but feel my dog Bella is one of many dogs who was a catalyst for this. In 2018, American Kennel Club PNAC MACH2 PACH Terns Isabella Tessa, "Bella" was trapped feet from me on a well traveled trail by Tern Lake. She was a highly trained dog. All those letters before her registered name indicate she was a champion and one at a national level. She was Alaska's first American Kennel Club agility champion. On a daily walk she was trapped feet from the trail out of trapping season in a. Illegally set trap. I am of the opinion there needs to be set backs so families can go on an outing without the fear of their family pet being trapped. My situation ended well and Bella was released. If it was a conibear trap, she would have been dead long before her 17 years she went into live. It is time for Alaska to update their regulations. It is time to hold trappers responsible and have them regulated more. It is time to realize that it is not responsible to allow trapping feet from a trail. We don't allow gun discharge within certain ranges of highways and such. Yet, trapping has no such regulations. Please make a change.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

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PC168

Submitted by: Laura Kobelnyk

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, Alaska

Comment:

I don't trap nor do I have a dog. I have 4 small kids who "like to run" and we have NEVER had any issues with traps. The only safety problems we have encountered have been with unleashed dogs on the trails and in our yard. Perhaps a more appropriate proposal would be leash laws. To me, this all sounds like dog owners want a green light to let their dogs run loose which is exactly the opposite of "safe trails". I oppose all trap setbacks; traps are not the problem.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 55: Oppose Proposal 56: Oppose Proposal 57: Oppose Proposal 58: Oppose Proposal 59: Oppose Proposal 60: Oppose Proposal 61: Oppose Proposal 62: Oppose Proposal 63: Oppose Proposal 64: Oppose Proposal 65: Oppose Proposal 66: Oppose Proposal 67: Oppose Proposal 68: Oppose Proposal 69: Oppose Proposal 70: Oppose Proposal 71: Oppose Proposal 72: Oppose Proposal 73: Oppose Proposal 74: Oppose Proposal 75: Oppose Proposal 76: Oppose Proposal 77: Oppose Proposal 78: Oppose Proposal 79: Oppose Proposal 80: Oppose Proposal 81: Oppose Proposal 82: Oppose Proposal 83: Oppose Proposal 84: Oppose Proposal 85: Oppose Proposal 86: Oppose Proposal 87: Oppose Proposal 88: Oppose Proposal 89: Oppose Proposal 90: Oppose Proposal 91: Oppose Proposal 92: Oppose Proposal 93: Oppose Proposal 94: Oppose Proposal 95: Oppose Proposal 96: Oppose Proposal 97: Oppose Proposal 98: Oppose Proposal 99: Oppose Proposal 100: Oppose Proposal 101: Oppose Proposal 102: Oppose Proposal 103: Oppose Proposal 104: Oppose Proposal 105: Oppose Proposal 106: Oppose Proposal 107: Oppose Proposal 108: Oppose Proposal 109: Oppose Proposal 110: Oppose Proposal 111: Oppose Proposal 112: Oppose Proposal 113: Oppose Proposal 114: Oppose Proposal 115: Oppose Proposal 116: Oppose Proposal 117: Oppose Proposal 118: Oppose Proposal 119: Oppose Proposal 120: Oppose Proposal 121: Oppose Proposal 122: Oppose Proposal 123: Oppose Proposal 124: Oppose Proposal 125: Oppose Proposal 126: Oppose Proposal 127: Oppose Proposal 128: Oppose Proposal 129: Oppose Proposal 130: Oppose Proposal 131: Oppose Proposal 132: Oppose Proposal 133: Oppose Proposal 134: Oppose Proposal 135: Oppose Proposal 136: Oppose Proposal 137: Oppose Proposal 138: Oppose Proposal 139: Oppose Proposal 140: Oppose Proposal 141: Oppose Proposal 142: Oppose Proposal 143: Oppose Proposal 144: Oppose Proposal 145: Oppose Proposal 146: Oppose Proposal 147: Oppose Proposal 148: Oppose Proposal 149: Oppose Proposal 150: Oppose Proposal 151: Oppose Proposal 152: Oppose Proposal 153: Oppose Proposal 154: Oppose Proposal 155: Oppose Proposal 156: Oppose Proposal 157: Oppose Proposal 158: Oppose Proposal 159: Oppose Proposal 160: Oppose Proposal 161: Oppose Proposal 162: Oppose Proposal 163: Oppose Proposal 164: Oppose Proposal 165: Oppose Proposal 166: Oppose Proposal 167: Oppose Proposal 168: Oppose Proposal 169: Oppose Proposal 170: Oppose Proposal 171: Oppose Proposal 172: Oppose Proposal 173: Oppose Proposal 174: Oppose Proposal 175: Oppose Proposal 176: Oppose Proposal 177: Oppose Proposal 178: Oppose Proposal 179: OpposeProposal 180: Oppose Proposal 181: Oppose Proposal 182: Oppose Proposal 183: Oppose Proposal 184: Oppose Proposal 185: Oppose Proposal 186: Oppose Proposal 187: Oppose Proposal 188: Oppose Proposal 200: Oppose Proposal 203: Oppose Proposal 204: Oppose Proposal 205: Oppose Proposal 207: Oppose Proposal 208: Oppose

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge
1390 Buskin River Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615-6825
(907) 487-2600

27 February 2023

ATTN: Board of Game Comments
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Game:

The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) appreciates the opportunity to comment on proposals to be considered by the Alaska Board of Game during its March 2023 meeting addressing Southcentral Region concerns. We reviewed the proposals pertaining to the Kodiak Area (GMU 8) and offer the following comments.

Proposal 65 (5 AAC 85.040) – **Oppose**
The Aliulik area is an important part of the current registration hunt area (RG480) for Mountain Goat. This proposal, if approved, would decrease the effectiveness of agency management of RG480 where the goal is to prevent the herd from exceeding habitat capacity by decreasing the size of the population via hunter harvest. Results of joint ADF&G-NWR surveys indicate that current regulations have decreased the rate of population increase but further decrease is needed. Because of the uneven distribution of access, some areas of RG480 are seldom hunted while others, such as parts of the Aliulik, receive intensive hunting—an expected and acceptable outcome. Moreover, goats from minimally hunted areas are expected to migrate to, and restock, areas with fewer goats.

Proposal 66 (5 AAC 85.040) – **Oppose**
Under current regulations there is no restriction on archery hunting opportunity in RG480. This proposal, if approved, would decrease the effectiveness of agency management of RG480 where the goal is to prevent the Mountain Goat herd from exceeding habitat capacity by decreasing the size of the population via hunter harvest. Because rifles are the primary hunting tool, current regulations have been successful at decreasing the rate of herd growth, as indicated by results of joint ADF&G-NWR surveys; however, the population is still well above objective level. Establishing a separate archery season would substantially decrease goat harvest and increase rate of herd growth.

Proposal 68 (5 AAC 85.025) – **Support**
The NWR supports the ADF&G's proposal to increase its management control of Feral Reindeer harvest via a registration hunt. However, the NWR does not support the upper limit for a population goal the ADF&G proposed (500 animals) as part of its reasoning for the proposal. Results of surveys conducted by the ADF&G and partnering agencies indicate that the population has not exceeded an estimated 400 animal since the 1990s. This result most likely suggests that habitat is the primary factor limiting herd productivity and size. We therefore recommend the ADF&G to base its goal upon the historic range in variation of herd size (e.g., 300-400 animals).

Proposal 69 (5 AAC 85.035) – **Oppose**
Kodiak Brown Bear is the top management and conservation priority of the NWR and the ADF&G in GMU 8. Establishment of huntable population of Roosevelt Elk on Kodiak Island would have two important adverse effects on bears and their habitat. First, there would be conflict incidents between elk hunters and bears. A fraction of these conflicts would result in bears killed under Defense of Life and Property (DLP) regulations. Such hunter related DLPs are the leading cause of documented non-sport mortality of bears in GMU 8, and the rate of conflict and DLP is substantially higher involving elk hunters (in the Afognak Island vicinity) compared to hunters of Sitka Black-tailed Deer. Second, elk introduced to Kodiak Island would selectively use the same berry-producing shrubs in winter that are selectively used by deer. This selective use consists of grazing elderberry stems to consume the inner live tissue, a process called 'barking', and browsing bud-bearing twigs of blueberry. With elderberry, winter barking kills the leaf and fruit bearing stems, which eliminates fruit production and fruit availability to bears. This specific effect is already a serious concern on Kodiak Island. Results of annual habitat surveys conducted there by the NWR since 2015 attributed winter barking by a robust deer population as the primary factor responsible for a landscape level decrease in the production and availability of elderberry fruit. In conclusion, the magnitude of these adverse effects would increase in correspondence with increases in the size and distribution of an elk population. "Train wreck" for bears and their habitat was how one biologist, an authority of Kodiak brown bear, characterized the potential effects of an elk population established on Kodiak Island.

Proposal 73 (5 AAC 85.030) – **Oppose**
The NWR disagrees with the proposal author's contention that the population of Sitka Black-tailed Deer has substantially decreased warranting reduced bag limits. To the contrary, results of NWR surveys indicated that intensive use of key winter browse (e.g., red elderberry) first documented in 2017 has been sustained through 2022, which suggests that the population has not decreased. Furthermore, it is the consensus view of agency biologists that the bulk of the deer population occurs in areas seldom accessed by hunters, is regulated primarily by severe winters, and is therefore not influenced by changes in hunter harvest rates. Finally, approval of this proposal would unnecessarily limit hunter harvest opportunity.

Proposal 74 (5 AAC 92.220) – **Oppose**
If approved, this proposal would have two unacceptable effects. First, it would curtail opportunity for hunters of Sitka Black-tailed Deer that routinely hunt backcountry, bone out their deer kill, and pack out the entire meat load in a single trip. Second, it would increase incidence of hunter-bear conflict because some hunters would require an additional trip to pack the rest of

their kill from the field. This would increase the odds of a bear claiming the carcass before the hunter arrived at the site, and it would increase the odds of a bear tracking the hunter packing out the second load.

Proposal 77 (5 AAC 92.061) **– Support**

The conservation of Kodiak Brown Bears is of primary importance to the refuge, to local people, and to the guides and sportsmen of this island. The ADF&G-led and community-created Kodiak Archipelago Bear Conservation and Management Plan ('Bear Management Plan'; ADF&G 2002) is a measure of that commitment. It has served as a valuable foundation for bear management across the archipelago since its inception, outlining management targets and demanding management action when bear densities fail to meet management targets. In the Southwest region of the island, the area for which this proposal was written, the management target established by the Bear Management Plan is 219 independent bears/1000 km^2[a]. The best available data—an aerial bear survey taking place each spring, jointly conducted by the NWR and the ADF&G—has found decreasing bear densities throughout the southwest region (comprised of Sturgeon, Karluk, Southwest survey areas, figure 1) and recent surveys that yield abundances below management targets. Among Southwest region survey areas, the Sturgeon River survey area contains the most complete and most striking data. Within the Sturgeon River area, estimated bear densities were 101 (84-222 90% CI) independent bears/1000 km2 in 2019– almost half of the 219 independent animals/1000km^2 required in the management target and 48% lower than the number of bears estimated in 2007 (209 [191-375 90% CI] independent animals/1000km^2; figure 2). The 2019 figure was also a corroboration of data previously collected in 2018 that produced the same findings, lending further credibility to the data. Based on our Bear Management Plan, the Sturgeon River area warrants management action. Data from the Karluk and Southwest survey areas are less clear but point estimates suggest management attention may be warranted there as well. Independent data from aerial stream surveys that monitor bears on salmon streams during July and August also suggest that the region has undergone change; the number of bears using many (seven of eight) SW and Karluk-area streams has decreased by over half from peak levels (figure 3) and the proportion of females with cubs (an indicator of population growth) remains low in the Sturgeon area (figure 4). Given these multiple forms of data suggesting changes in bear abundance and productivity within the southwest region, we support this proposal to reduce female harvest and commend the ADF&G on its commitment to conservatively manage Kodiak's bears to ensure a sustainable population within the bounds set by the Bear Management Plan.

[a] The Bear Management Plan states that "In an effort to maintain the population at its maximum sustainable yield, the CAC [Citizens Advisory Committee] proposes to manage most of the archipelago at or slightly below (10 percent) the current estimated density, as shown in table 5-2" (page 5-4). These management targets were later updated to reflect new data from Van Daele and Barnes 2010 (table 6), presented here as figure 5.

Figure 1. NWR/ADF&G spring aerial survey areas for bear density, SW region areas (Sturgeon, Karluk, Southwest) highlighted within yellow box.

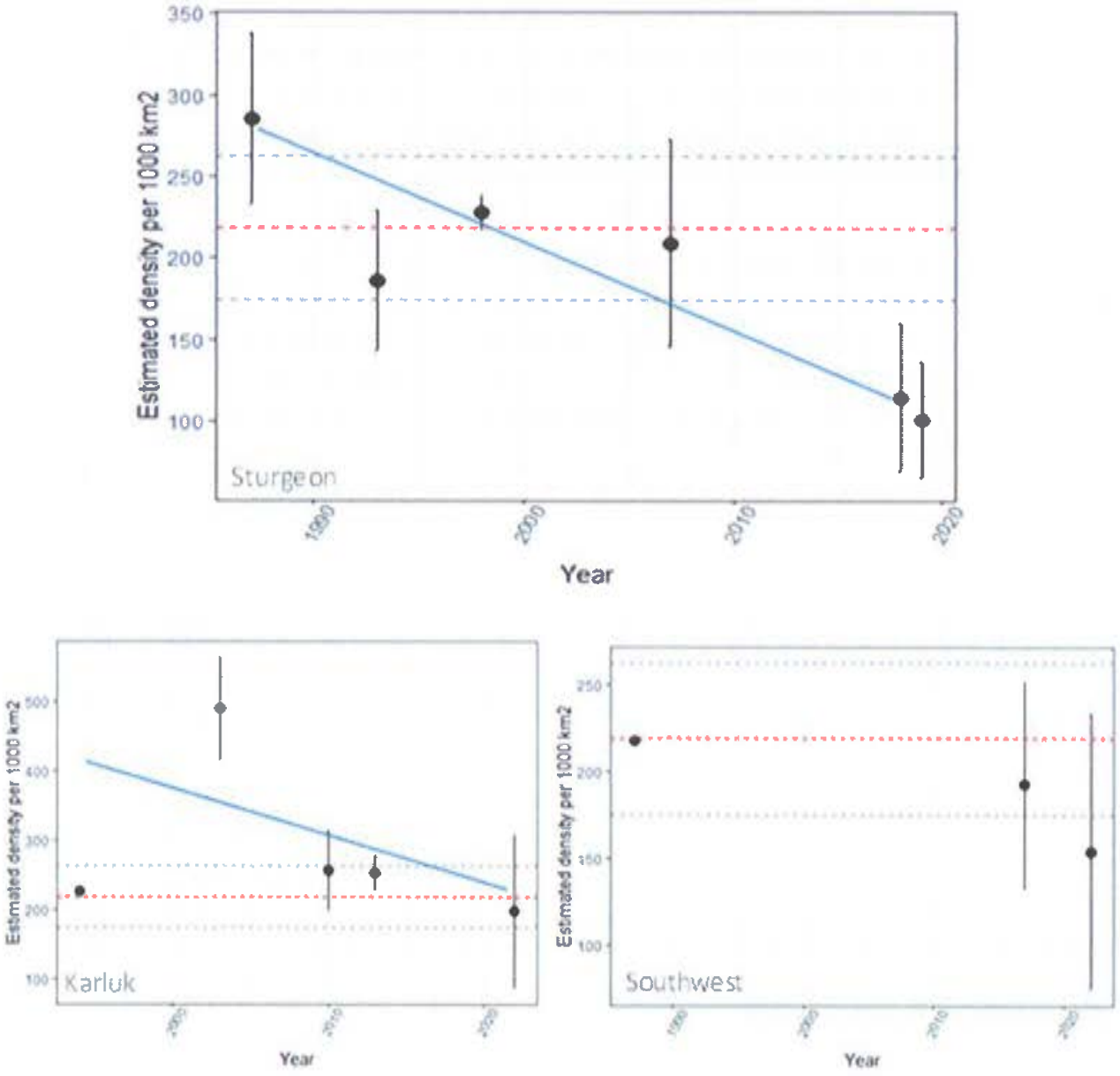

Figure 2. Estimated bear densities (independent bears/1000 km2; mean and 90% confidence intervals) for Sturgeon River (upper), Karluk (lower left), and Southwest (lower right) survey areas during spring bear surveys (NWR/ADF&G), 1987-2019, in relation to the management target (red dashed line; from the Bear Management Plan, ADF&G 2002, adapted to updated Van Daele and Barnes 2010). The trend for all areas appears to be decreasing, while the Sturgeon River data are significantly below the management target. More recent estimates for Karluk and Southwest survey areas show wider variation, but also show cause for concern as point estimates are below management targets as well.

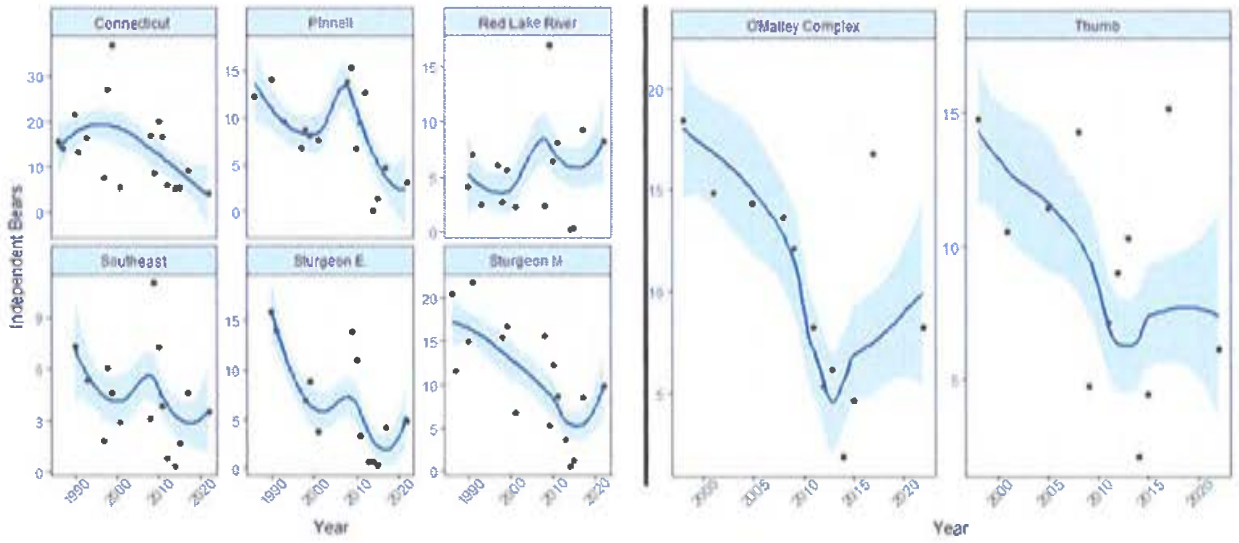

Figure 3. Counts from stream surveys (July/August), 1982-2022. SW area streams (n=6) left, Karluk area streams (n=2) right. Independent bears are all bears excluding cubs. Decreasing trends in bear abundance on most (7/8) salmon streams in the SW and Karluk areas are apparent, with recent numbers reaching less than 50% of historic maxima.

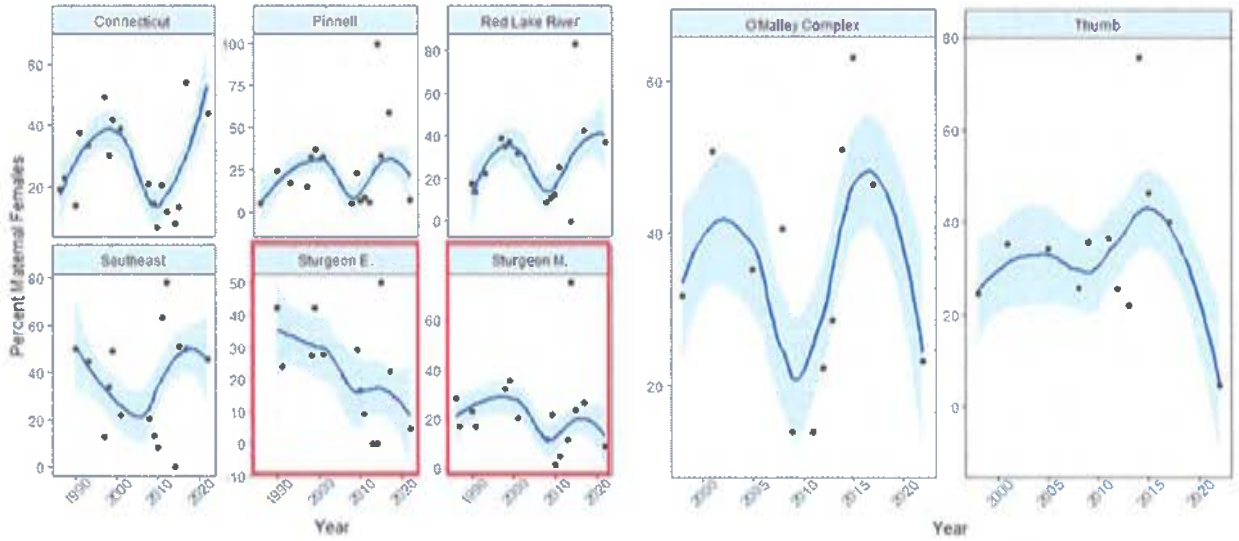

Figure 4. Counts from stream surveys (July/August), 1982-2022. SW area streams (n=6) left, Karluk area streams (n=2) right. Maternal bears are those observed with at least one cub. Sturgeon river area maternal females appear not to have rebounded from a low point around 2010.

Table 6. Estimates of brown bear numbers and density in each management subunit on the Kodiak Archipelago, Alaska, 1995 and 2005 (90% confidence intervals in parentheses).

Bear management subunit	Area (km²)	1995[a] Density[c]	1995[a] Independent bears[d]	1995[a] Total bears[e]	2005[b] Density[c]	2005[b] Independent bears[d]	2005[b] Total bears[e]
Northern Islands	2,281	101 (±25)	231 (±58)	330 (±83)	132 (±33)	300 (±175)	430 (±108)
Northwest Kodiak	2,983	200 (±50)	596 (±149)	808 (±202)	224 (±56)	668 (±167)	908 (±227)
Northeast Kodiak	1,005	63 (±16)	63 (±16)	90 (±23)	70 (±18)	71 (±18)	101 (±25)
East Kodiak	1,738	146 (±30)	253 (±51)	471 (±94)	230 (±46)	400 (±80)	744 (±149)
Southwest Kodiak	3,498	204 (±41)	712 (±142)	1,019 (±204)	219 (±44)	765 (±44)	1,094 (±219)
Afognak Peninsula	837	219 (±55)	183 (±46)	262 (±66)	208 (±52)	174 (±52)	249 (±62)
TOTAL	12,342	165 (±38)	2,038 (±462)	2,980 (±672)	193 (±42)	2,378 (±519)	3,526 (±790)

a = estimated bear density in 1995 (based on aerial surveys and extrapolation from 1987 – 1994; Barnes et al. 1988, Barnes and Smith 1998).
b = estimated bear density in 2005 (based on aerial surveys and extrapolation from 1987 – 2005).
c = estimated density of independent bears per 1,000 km².
d = estimated number of independent bears (excludes dependent cubs).
e = estimated number of bears in the harvest subunit (includes dependent cubs and independent bears).

Figure 5. Table 6 from Van Daele and Barnes 2010, which now acts as the updated bear management targets for Kodiak brown bears (2005 data).

Literature cited

Alaska Department of Fish and Game. 2002. Kodiak Archipelago Bear Conservation and Management Plan. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Anchorage, USA. https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=kodiakbearplan.summary

Van Daele L, Barnes VG. 2010. Management of Brown Bear Hunting in Kodiak Island, Alaska. Unpublished report. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Thank you for your time to review our comments on these proposals.

Sincerely,

Michael Brady
Refuge Manager

cc: George Pappas, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Della Trumble, Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Paul Chervanak, Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee
Nathan Svoboda, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

PC170

Submitted by: Mary Beth Koster

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Seward, Alaska

Comment:

I SUPPORT PROPOSALS #145-#154.

Please pass the proposals #145-#154 to require setbacks for trapping. I personally had my dog, Abby, killed in a 330 Conibear trap on January 9, 2022 at Snow River, just outside of Seward, AK.

This setback rule would not have saved her life, only I could have done that, but I can

promote set backs, as they will assist in preventing others from the experiencing the horrific death of their dog the way Abby died as I tried to free her. This is something I hope no one else will ever experience.

Thank you.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC171

Submitted by: Mike Carlson

Organization Name: Larsen Bay Lodge

Community of Residence: Larsen Bay, AK

Comment:

Proposal: #73

Position: Oppose

Name and Organization: V. Michael Carlson of Larsen Bay Lodge

Reasoning: I live in “Remainder” Unit 8 (in Larsen Bay, AK) and have hunted in the area for 47 years, since I was 10 years old, both subsistence and commercial. I have not noticed a reduction in deer population that would warrant a reduction in bag limit.

Proposal: #74

Position: Oppose

Name and Organization: V. Michael Carlson of Larsen Bay Lodge

Reasoning: I am a subsistence hunter, transporter and Master Guide on Kodiak Island. I do not think this requirement will reduce wanton waste.

Proposal: #77

Position: Oppose

Name and Organization: V. Michael Carlson of Larsen Bay Lodge

Reasoning: I oppose this proposal because "Southwest" is being defined too broadly. If there is a decline in bear population, it is NOT in areas 16 or 13.

I am a Master Guide and have lived in Guide Use Area 16 (North Karluk River) for over 40 years. In addition to living there, I spend over 160 days per year in the field: both spring and fall bear seasons, fall deer transporting, and summer fishing. I have seen an increase in the brown bear population in this Area over the last 3 years, not a decline. My layman's theory is that the increase in deer hunting in the Larsen Bay and Uyak Bay areas over the last 3 years has attracted more bears.

I also spend a significant amount of time in Guide Use Area 13 (Karluk Lake) for bear hunts in the fall and fishing in the summer. Additionally, my pilot flies over the area every day in the summer on his way to fish Dog Salmon Creek. This area has always had a very high population of bears, and if anything, we have noticed an increase in population in this area, not a decline. Fall 2022 I saw 60 individual bears in one day.

I am not familiar with the bear populations in other Guide Use Areas, but Guide Use Areas 13 and 16 have high and healthy bear populations such that a "male only" provision is not needed. It is a policy I generally follow with my clients anyway, but an official regulation, with such a severe penalty, is unwarranted. I have passed on many, many opportunities to harvest sows over the years, and will continue to do so aggressively, but this proposal should be denied or limited in geography.

Proposal: #78

Position: Oppose

Name and Organization: V. Michael Carlson of Larsen Bay Lodge

Reasoning: I am a Master Guide in Unit 8. If this proposal is implemented, I request the spring draw be reinstated for non-resident fall brown bear in Unit 8.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 73: Oppose Proposal 74: Oppose Proposal 77: Oppose Proposal 78: Oppose

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PC172

Submitted by: Michael Larson

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Eagle River, AK

Comment:

I would like to see more bear hunting opportunities in 14C, specifically brown bears on JBER and within Eagle River Drainages. I do not agree with creating more archery only tags for sheep, a proficient and capable archery hunter has the choice to hunt sheep with a bow and arrow if they choose, no need create special permits extending the season and/or not requiring compliance with the full curl conservation model.

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PC173

Submitted by: Philip Latteier

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Eagle River, AK

Comment:

I support more archery opportunities

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 67: Support Proposal 71: Support Proposal 72: Support Proposal 82: Oppose Proposal 87: Support Proposal 91: Support Proposal 92: Support Proposal 93: Support Proposal 99: Support Proposal 100: Support Proposal 101: Support Proposal 119: Support Proposal 120: Support Proposal 121: Support Proposal 122: Support Proposal 123: Support Proposal 124: Support Proposal 125: Support Proposal 126: Support

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PC174

Submitted by: John LeClair

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Indian, Alaska

Comment:

Proposal #98-Oppose

I am a member of the Rainbow Valley community and I oppose Proposal #98 which would establish a brown bear hunt in the Rainbow Creek valley. The approximately 160 acres of private property within the valley is owned by the Rainbow Valley Homeowner's Association and there are seventeen homes spread throughout the area. Establishing this hunt would be a hazard to the families living in the valley as well as encourage trespass on private property. Establishing this hunt would also be a hazard to the general public. The public lands within the Rainbow Creek drainage, all part of Chugach State Park, have been closed by state regulation to the use of weapons because they are accessed and well used by the public year-round for recreation. Chugach State Park was established by the legislature to "provide areas for the public display of local wildlife" (AS 41.21.121).

Proposal #103-Oppose

I am also opposed to Proposal #103 which seeks to establish a bear bait hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage for black and brown bear. Attracting bears to food not otherwise available to them naturally would result in bears altering their foraging behavior by seeking food from other human-provided sources, such as the community of Rainbow Valley, one valley to the south of McHugh. The Rainbow Valley community is no stranger to bears and we have peacefully coexisted with them for years in large part by preventing bears from associating us and our homes with food.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 98: Oppose Proposal 103: Oppose

PC175

Submitted by: Kathryn Lessard

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, AK

Comment:

These proposals are designed to severely restrict trapping and allow for unrestrained dogs to run free on our trail systems, roadways, in campgrounds, and developed recreation areas. They fail to demonstrate that trapping is a public safety hazard unlike unrestrained dogs.

Unrestrained dogs are a safety risk for our wildlife, other trail users, and other dogs. There are millions of dog bites and 30-50 human deaths yearly in the US. As a school urse for 20 years, I have treated quite a few serious dog bites and no trapping injuries. As a grandmother of 5 and a frequent trail user, I frequently encounter loose running dogs uncontrolled by their humans and am concerned for the safety of said children.

People who allow their dogs to run up to 100 yards off trail are not being responsible dog owners. There is no trap set back that will be very effective without a leash law.

I encourage the board to reject these proposals.

Kathryn Lessard

Cooper Landing

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Oppose Proposal 146: Oppose Proposal 147: Oppose Proposal 148: Oppose Proposal 149: Oppose Proposal 150: Oppose Proposal 151: Oppose Proposal 152: Oppose Proposal 153: Oppose

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PC176

Submitted by: Tom Lessard

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, Alaska

Comment:

Proposals 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154

I have followed the debate concerning Cooper Landing trapping for some years now.

What was originally presented as on attempt to find a home town compromise has grown like the Blob.

Recently Cooper Landing Safe Trails vowed (paraphrasing here) to 'keep pushing, keep the pressure, keep the presence to secure trapping closures in Units 7 and 15, all the way to Homer'; peninsula-wide.

So apparently these demands for closures will never end.

However, there are many Cooper Landing residents who are not so hard-driven against trapping. They just don't want their dogs caught.

To that end, an informal signage program has been in place for maybe 8 years running. The signs address both trappers and dog owners. The intent of the signs is to raise awareness and reduce conflict. The signs are posted in several key locations around Cooper Landing. To my knowledge, zero dogs have been caught in traps wherever the signage exists. Signage is the one thing that all parties seem to agree with. I think the signage has created a workable middle ground.

I also believe large baited/scented Conibears such as 'bucket sets' set low to the ground or on the ground, have no place in the residential areas. However I think large elevated, submerged or under ice Conibears are OK.

About 1 year ago I participated in a BOG committee that addressed trapping closure proposals in the Mat-Su. Both sides agreed that several dog-safe trapping methods should be allowed within 150 ft of certain trails and that all trapping should be allowed beyond 150 ft.

If the Board decides to form another committee to explore this idea further, I am open to participation.

Tom Lessard

Cooper Landing

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

PC177

Submitted by: Yvonne Leutwyler

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I am commenting on proposals 146 and 147 (100 yard setbacks for traps on public-use trails in the Homer area):

I am IN FAVOR of both proposals.

The trails listed in the proposal do have heave recreational multi-use. I am familiar with them and am using them frequently.

Requiring a 100 yard setback from these trails for traps is a reasonable compromise to prevent dogs from being accidentally caught in traps. It's a general "trail safety" measure to assure best practices for a variety of users. It does NOT limit trapping, but simply add an "easement" on where traps may legally be set along established areas.

Thank you for considering these proposals.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

PC178

Submitted by: Eugene Levine

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, Alaska

Comment:

I agree with the proposals 145 through 154 to limit trapping around trails and campgrounds in the Homer, Seward and Cooper Landing areas. These areas are heavily used by residents and tourists that contribute a great deal to the economy. I live on Diamond Ridge and have been on the trails that are less then a 1/4 mile from my house when my dog was standing literally less then 3 ft away from when he got caught in a trap. There is no reason for trapping in residential neighborhoods and it could have been my foot caught in the trap instead! And if my horse had been caught in the trap I am sure I would have been thrown from her and perhaps badly injured, less then a 1/4 mile from home.

I consider 100 yd setback from trails and campgrounds for traps to be a minimum and would like to see even more setback, but this would be a good start. There is plenty of room in Alaska for both hunters, trappers, skiers and tourists but we need some regulations.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC179

Submitted by: Anna Lewald

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, Alaska

Comment:

I support #146 and #147, establishing trapping setbacks for Homer area trails.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

PC 180

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

- [x] **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass
- [x] **#149 Campgrounds**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [ ] **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- [x] **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- [x] **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- [x] **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- [x] **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Jeremy Lewis

Organization (if any) Alaska River Adventures

Signature*: Jeremy Lewis

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

PC 181

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

- [x] **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass
- [x] **#149 Campgrounds**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- [x] **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- [x] **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- [x] **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- [x] **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

As a mom and dog owner, safety is my priority. Implementing these set backs for traping will give me peace of mind as my family enjoys the Alaskan Wilderness!

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Josi Lewis

Organization (if any)

Signature*: Josi Lewis

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

PC182

Submitted by: Jacob Liedman

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Eagle River, Alaska

Comment:

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Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 56: Oppose Proposal 57: Support Proposal 58: Support Proposal 90: Support Proposal 98: Support Proposal 104: Oppose Proposal 105: Support Proposal 106: Oppose Proposal 107: Oppose Proposal 108: Oppose Proposal 109: Oppose Proposal 116: Support Proposal 117: Support Proposal 145: Support Proposal 155: Oppose Proposal 156: Oppose Proposal 157: Oppose Proposal 158: Oppose Proposal 159: Support Proposal 161: Support Proposal 162: Support Proposal 163: Support Proposal 164: Oppose Proposal 165: Oppose Proposal 166: Oppose Proposal 167: Oppose Proposal 168: Oppose Proposal 169: Oppose Proposal 170: Oppose Proposal 172: Oppose

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PC183

Submitted by: David Lisi

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, AK

Comment:

Commenting on 145, 149-154

I support the setbacks and closures as outlined in these proposals

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

- [x] **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass
- [x] **#149 Campgrounds**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- [x] **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- [x] **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- [ ] **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- [ ] **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- [x] **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

OUR DOG DOESN'T RUN LOOSE, BUT WHEN WE TAKE A WALK, OR A HIKE, WE WANT TO KNOW THAT OUR DOG IS SAFE. THIS IS A REAL FOR FOR US, WINTER & SUMMER.

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: DAVID LITTLE

Organization (if any)

Signature*:

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: COOPER LANDING State*: AK Zip code:

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

PC185

Submitted by: Sydney Loomis

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, AK

Comment:

I support the buffer so my dogs can be safe.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 149: Support Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC186

Submitted by: Alexandra Lowber

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I support proposals 146 and 147.

As a dog owner, frequent nordic skier, and responsible hunter, I think the 100 yd boundaries would help keep unnecessary harm from dogs, still allow for trappers to have the access they want/need, and keep the general public safer.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

PC187

Submitted by: Carrie Lunardi

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Seward, Alaska

Comment:

I think traps should be a distance away from highly trafficked areas.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 55: Support Proposal 56: Support Proposal 57: Support
Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support
Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC188

Submitted by: Mark Luttrell

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Seward Alaska

Comment:

Board of Game members:

I fully support proposals 145-154 which seek to prevent user conflicts on popular multi use trails, beaches and campgrounds on the Eastern Kenai Peninsula.

Trappers comprise a tiny fraction of Alaskans yet enjoy a near absence of regulation. Dogs suffer horribly, as do their owners, by this laxity. Trappers have long tried to police themselves, teaching others to follow a code of ethics, but a code of ethics is a swell idea but it has no teeth and judging the many dog deaths and maimings, isn't working.

As a non-consumptive users of trails all year long, I want to know that my dog will be safe in popular areas.

Trap setbacks at specific locations are one solution. The Cooper Landing Safe Trails group and Seward and Homer residents have put in years of work defining exactly the locations of these setbacks. It's completely manageable by land management agencies.

These proposals would establish some safety, community cohesion and fairness.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support
Proposal 150: Support Proposal 151: Support Proposal 152: Support Proposal 153: Support Proposal 154: Support

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PC189

Submitted by: Rhonda Lynn

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Cooper Landing, AK

Comment:

Proposals 145, 147-148 and 154 I support.

Proposals 149-153 I support with amendment. Explanation below.

I support all trapping setbacks in areas where other user groups frequent. I do not believe that trappers should be the only user group to have rights in these areas. Many other user groups frequent these areas and their rights are being ignored. Every user groups rights need to be considered and all should be able to use these areas in alignment with the US Forest Service's Value Statement. It states that Forest Service land is to be managed for "safety in every way: physical, psychological and social".

I also support the amendment of proposals 149-153 by removing the language which says "a 50 yard setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leg hold Marten traps set in boxes". Our Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Commitee said that this wording is too confusing and is what prevented them from supporting these proposals.

My family had lived in Alaska since the 50's and we moved to Cooper Landing in 1978 when we bought Gwin's Lodge. Trapping along areas where other user groups frequent has been a problem since then, but it is only getting worse. Many more user groups now travel to Cooper Landing for winter recreation and are using the areas where traps pose a danger. Providing setbacks ensures that trappers rights are upheld and they can continue to trap with very little change to the location of their trap lines. It also ensures that the rights of all others user groups are also being recognized.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 145: Support Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 148: Support Proposal 149: Support with Amendment Proposal 150: Support with Amendment Proposal 151: Support with Amendment Proposal 152: Support with Amendment Proposal 153: Support with Amendment Proposal 154: Support

PC190

Submitted by: Gary Lyon

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer

Comment:

I am commenting in support of Proposals #146 and #147. I am a lifelong hunter and have run traps in the past. I have also had to rescue my dog from leg hold traps two times, not fun! I think the 100 yard setback is a reasonable regulation for trapping.

In the Homer area outdoor recreation is very important for physical and spiritual well-being. There are many popular groomed and maintained ski and snowshoe trails. That is what they are for. Trappers can trap almost anywhere else using snow machines and can easily avoid the public use trails.

This issue is not going away. Trapping setbacks have a LOT of public support and for good reason. People and families want to feel safe having their dogs along on these public use trails.

Anchorage Borough has successfully instituted similar setbacks. It works for them.

Respectfully,

Gary Lyon

Proposal 162: Lift hunting restrictions on ptarmigan on the Homer Bench.

I am writing in OPPOSITION to this proposal. The spring hunt for Ptarmigan in the hills above Homer was closed due to the over-harvest and consequent scarcity of these birds. The closure has been beneficial in allowing the population to begin to recover. Recovery is no means complete and relaxing these restrictions would hinder further recovery and be a big setback. Pursuing Ptarmigan on snow machines is not fair chase hunting and will likely wipe them out of this limited range.

I have lived in proximity to Ohlson Mountain and Beaver Creek drainage for 45 years. Ptarmigan were commonly seen here in the late 70's and early 80's. And before that I have been told they were even abundant around here. Now their tracks, much less actual birds are rarely seen.

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Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support Proposal 162: Oppose Proposal 163: Oppose Proposal 164: Support Proposal 165: Support Proposal 166: Support Proposal 167: Support Proposal 168: Support Proposal 169: Support Proposal 170: Support Proposal 171: Support Proposal 172: Support

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PC191

Submitted by: Dianne MacLean

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Soldotna, AK

Comment:

Honorable Members,

Proposal 157 (opposed)

I am opposed to shortening any season for beaver anywhere on the Kenai Peninsula. Lawful beaver trapping has been minimal for a number of years, due to unusually low prices for beaver pelts in national and international markets. There may be a variety of reasons for low beaver populations in any given area, including possibly brown bear predation on beaver lodges, but legal trapping activity is not one of them. If area biologists feel that beaver populations can sustain harvest at all, then allowing some portion of the season to take place outside of the seasonal dates for the heaviest ice conditions allows a parent to introduce their child to trapping, perhaps briefly after school. Or, allows persons with less mobility than an athlete, to access and do a little beaver trapping. If beaver populations cannot, in the opinion of State area biologists, sustain this low level of trapping activity, then perhaps the season should indeed be closed until populations improve.

Proposal 160 opposed

I am opposed to the application of Kenai Refuge regulations to beaver trapping on all of the Kenai Peninsula. The Refuge regulations have indeed been successful, mainly at making beaver trapping impractical for all but the unemployed. To walk a mile in, to set 1 trap for 1 beaver, then walk a mile back out, is utterly impractical. The Refuge restricts trapping in this way because Refuges do not want any sort of "for profit" activity on refuge lands. They want trappers to be able to harvest a pelt here, or a pelt there, to satisfy a hobby, but not be able to come out "ahead" in their endeavor. Trappers do not want to see these very counter-productive Refuge regulations applied to non-refuge lands.

Thank You.

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

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- ☑ **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- ☑ **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- ☐ **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- ☐ **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- ☐ **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

I think that the proposed setbacks are a reasonable compromise between trappers and other trail users. Trappers can still proceed, but the buffers offer at least some protection to trail users, including children and pets.

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Teri Mader

Organization (if any)

Signature*: Teri L. Mader

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

There are multiple proposals for trap setbacks or trap signage in the Cooper Landing area.
Please select the proposals that you are in support of (select all that apply).
If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

- ☑ **# 145 Wildlife Crossings:** ¼ mile hunting and trapping buffers from mouths of new highway wildlife crossings on the upcoming Cooper Landing bypass
- ☑ **#149 Campgrounds**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along the perimeter of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, and Cooper Creek (North and South) campgrounds, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **# 150 Roads and pullouts**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of roads and all sides of the the pullouts listed: Quartz Creek Road, East Quartz Creek and Williams Road, Old Sterling Highway, Snug Harbor Road, Bean Creek Road, Russian Gap Road, and all pullouts along the Sterling Highway. AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☐ **#151 Summit Recreation**: Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of all highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Japan Woods area, Tenderfoot Campground ski area, Park-N-Poke area, and Manitoba Mountain.
- ☑ **#152 Trails**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback along both sides of the trails and all sides of the following trailheads: Crescent Creek Trail, Lower Russian Lake Trail, Bean Creek Trail, Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail, Resurrection Trail (South End), West Juneau Bench Trail, Devil's Pass Ski Loops, and Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **#153 Beaches**: Establish 1) a 100-yard trapping setback from the mean high-water mark along the north and south side beaches of Kenai Lake, AND 2) a 50-yard trapping setback for traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less, that are set at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes.
- ☑ **# 154 Signage**: Establishing mandatory signs posted at all access points of active trapping in the Game Unit 7 area to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups.

Other areas setback proposals:

- ☐ **#146 Trails in Kachemak Bay State Park:** Establish 100 yard trapping setback from the Diamond Creek Trail, the Grewingk Saddle Trail.
- ☐ **#147 Ski Trails in Homer:** Establish 100 yard setback from the Snowmad Trails and the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club Trails
- ☐ **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

I think that trappers would have to agree that traps have the potential to do great harm largely to dogs or children. The problem is that kids wander the woods looking for fun and adventure. Dogs do the same but have the added incentive of finding food, largely through smell. So, with baited traps, the stage is set for an inadvertent run-in with a trap set to catch animals. Traps vary in size but most can cause great injury to an extremity to include fractures, severe lacerations, and extreme pain. Also, a child does not have the strength to remove the trap from the wound area. Therefore, he must wait for help in a very dangerous and extremely stressful situation. My point is that trap setbacks and signs indicating areas of active trapping are essential and reasonable methods of preventing injuries.

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: TOM NADER

Organization (if any)

Signature*: Thomas C Nader

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City* Cooper Landing State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

Cooper Landing Trap Setback Proposals, Comments & Ballot

I support the following proposal(s) that have been submitted by the Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee to the Alaska Board of Game to reduce conflicts with trappers and increase safety among the rising number of multi-use groups in Game Unit 7 (the Cooper Landing area). I believe the proposed are reasonable setbacks to maintain safe recreation for trail users and their pets.

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If there is more than one person in your household, please have each person submit their comments separately. You can copy this, or contact cooperlandingsafetrails@gmail.com for extra forms.

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- ☑ **# 148 Seward Trails:** Establish a 100 yard trapping setback from trails in Seward.

Comments:

I am generally against more regulations but this seems reasonable as many Alaskans travel and hike with their dogs. Dogs should stay with their owners and should not be wandering more than 100yd alone from the trail.

(feel free to add extra pages of comments)

Printed Name (First and last)*: Keith Manley

Organization (if any)

Signature*: [redacted]

Email*: [redacted]

Street Address: [redacted]

City*: Cooper Lndg State*: AK Zip code: 99572

*Indicates it must be filled in to be accepted.

Submitted by: Lindsay Martin

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I am in support of proposal 146 and 147, to regulate trapping 100 yards from these multiuse trails.

These changes are a great solution for everyone, and sets clear expectations and boundaries. As our population grows, our policies need to continue to evolve to meet changing needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

PC196

Submitted by: Mildred Martin

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, Alaska

Comment:

Re: Proposal 162, Board of Game South central Region Meeting, March 17 – 21, 2023

In 1980, when we returned to permanently live on our property in the hills above Homer, we frequently saw Ptarmigan, especially in the winter, when the snows on Lookout Mountain deepened, they would come to our lands to feed on the willow. I have not seen a Ptarmigan in over 25 years. It is sad.

In 1994, I researched the Mary Lane Trail,the homesteaders used to access these uplands for hunting, and they told me the sky turned white with Ptarmigan in the fall when they hiked up here to hunt, the Ptarmigan came to feed on the low bush blueberries, that still grow up here, but nary a Ptarmigan to be seen now. Except recently my neighbor saw a couple of them, and another got a photo of one.

I was honestly thrilled when I learned that hunting of Ptarmigan had been curtailed, maybe these birds had a chance. But Proposal 162 would reopen it in the spring, just during nesting season, and they would not have a prayer of survival. Today's snowmachines are so fast, Ptarmigan cannot out fly them, they are at best short distance flyers.

I beg of you , please vote no on Proposal 162, and help our Ptarmigan recover.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mildfred M. Martin

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 162: Oppose

PC197

Submitted by: Lisa Maserjian

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

I support Proposals 146 and 147. Trapping should not be allowed near public trails. It is not practical to expect all dogs to stay on leashes. Dogs need more exercise than I can give them on a leash. I use e-collars on my dogs to keep them under

control, but they go off trail up to 100 feet. They are not allowed to chase rabbits or moose. Dog owners should not have to worry about their dogs being killed on public trails. Trapping should not be allowed near public trails.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 146: Support Proposal 147: Support

PC198

Submitted by: David Mastolier

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, Alaska

Comment:

Archery seasons across the nation hover at around a 10% success rate, while rifle hunts sit right around 41%.

Competing with rifle hunters is a huge damper on not only the number of archery tags filled but also on the overall enjoyment of the hunt. All of us are seeking a good time out there. Bowhunting is tough enough on its own. For that reason, archery-only seasons give bowhunters an even playing field and give the archery hunters adequate opportunities.

There is also a level of danger that comes from archery hunting with rifle hunters. There are accounts of bowhunters getting hit with bullets during general seasons when rifles are allowed in the field as well as bows. If you're trying to get close with a bow and there is someone up above on a distant ridge with a high-powered rifle pursuing the same animal you are, that could be a potential problem and could lead to disaster.

Putting the two together can cause complications. Bowhunting is all about getting close. It's about putting yourself in the very world where your quarry lives. Staying hidden is key here to not being detected. This can be an issue if there are hunters walking around with rifles at the same time.

Archery-specific seasons or not, there will still be folks that take to the field with their bows during the general season. However, archery-specific seasons mitigate them crossing paths nearly as much, instead of what would happen if all seasons were general ones.

Low harvest rates, better overall experience, and safer. For these reasons, I support the proposals:

67	87	101	119	122	125
71	99	112	120	123	126
72	100	113	121	124	

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Proposal 67: Support Proposal 71: Support Proposal 72: Support Proposal 82: Oppose Proposal 87: Support Proposal 99: Support Proposal 100: Support Proposal 101: Support Proposal 112: Support Proposal 113: Support Proposal 119: Support Proposal 120: Support Proposal 121: Support Proposal 122: Support Proposal 123: Support Proposal 124: Support Proposal 125: Support Proposal 126: Support

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PC199

Submitted by: Crisi Matthews

Organization Name:

Community of Residence: Homer, AK

Comment:

Items #146 and 147

Being the trails in review are highly used by recreational users and their animals for protection and safety while out in nature I support moving the trapping to one hundred foot setback for both measures so that users may enjoy the trail freely without danger to domestic animals. This still leaves ample room for trapping for those, who use this area for that purpose.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

Dear BOG

I would like to submit this letter to the editor that I wrote regarding Proposal 162. I oppose this proposal for the reasons given below.

Homer News
Feb. 9, 2023

To the editor

The article in the Jan. 25 issue of the Homer News about the Kenai/Soldotna Fish and Game Advisory Committee meeting on Board of Game proposals was comprehensive but had a very misleading statement in its coverage of Proposal 162 — which seeks to extend the season on ptarmigan by two months in parts of 15C. The article says "the current length and limit for the birds in that area was implemented as a result of low breeding densities in 2014. The population has since rebounded." This implies that the season was reduced because of one bad year of breeding for 15C ptarmigan, but things have now recovered. That is absolutely not the case. The impetus for a shorter season came when the late [redacted] submitted a proposal to the BOG for their 2014-2015 meeting cycle (Proposal 175) to shorten the ptarmigan hunting season in a portion of 15C. He had been advocating for shorter ptarmigan seasons long before the spring of 2014 because he noticed a "significant decline in ptarmigan numbers has occurred in Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay" over previous years. The ADF&G ptarmigan breeding survey in 2014 validated that very low breeding densities in this area was a long-term trend, not just a one year event.

Furthermore, [redacted] said in his proposal, "This decline appears to be associated with ease of access, increased hunting pressure, and limited habitat. The majority of the access and increased hunting pressure is via snowmobile." It was anticipated that shortening the season to Jan. 31 would cut off the spring snowmobile hunt for ptarmigan when deep snow, warmer temperatures, and better light make it easy for more hunters to cover more miles of ptarmigan habitat. Also, hunting ptarmigan in the spring results in additive mortality (when harvest results is an immediate loss of population). A shorter season would still allow a fall/early winter hunt, result in compensatory mortality (when hunting results in a decline of other causes of mortality, such as winter weather) and better opportunity for ptarmigan populations to recover.

After several years of no spring ptarmigan hunt, it appears as if the ptarmigan in the hills above Homer are not only increasing in population, but actually expanding into other suitable habitat. Those who visit the backcountry above Homer are reporting ptarmigan sightings and tracks where they haven't been seen for years. The plan has worked. But getting to first base falls short of a score. More time is needed to reestablish resilient ptarmigan populations over a wider spread of suitable habitat. So, the message to the BOG should be don't fix what isn't broken. Keeping the status quo should result in greater abundance of ptarmigan in this area, to the benefit of both hunters and bird watchers. Going back to allowing a spring hunt could quickly revert to low populations of ptarmigan and limited opportunity for outdoors people to enjoy our state bird.

George Matz
Fritz Creek, AK

George Matz
[redacted]
Fritz Creek, AK 99603

Alaska Board of Game
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

February 28, 2023

Re: BOG Southcentral Region Meeting

Oppose Proposal 163 which seeks to "Rescind the bag limit restrictions for sea duck hunting in Unit 15C."

I oppose this proposal because it is based on an outdated understanding of sea duck populations in Kachemak Bay, and it is not a sustainable approach to local waterfowl management. To be sustainable harvest regulations need to be based on what wildlife populations are now, regardless of reasons for change, not how they use to be decades ago.

An example of misunderstanding is the statement in the proposal that says, "There is no documented biological problem indicating low population levels or substantial declines for eiders, harlequin ducks or long-tailed ducks (nor for buffleheads or goldeneyes that are the subject of current discussion by local supporters of restrictions)."

This statement clearly ignores many recent scientific studies that have warned of recent avian population declines in North America, including sea ducks. For example, national attention has been given to a massive study published in *Science* in 2019 entitled *Decline of North American Avifauna* by Rosenberg et al. The study concludes, "Cumulative loss of nearly three billion birds since 1970, across most North American biomes, signals a pervasive and ongoing avifaunal crisis."

A more recent study building on that is *State of the Birds 2022* which has information specific to sea ducks. Below is information copied from that report.

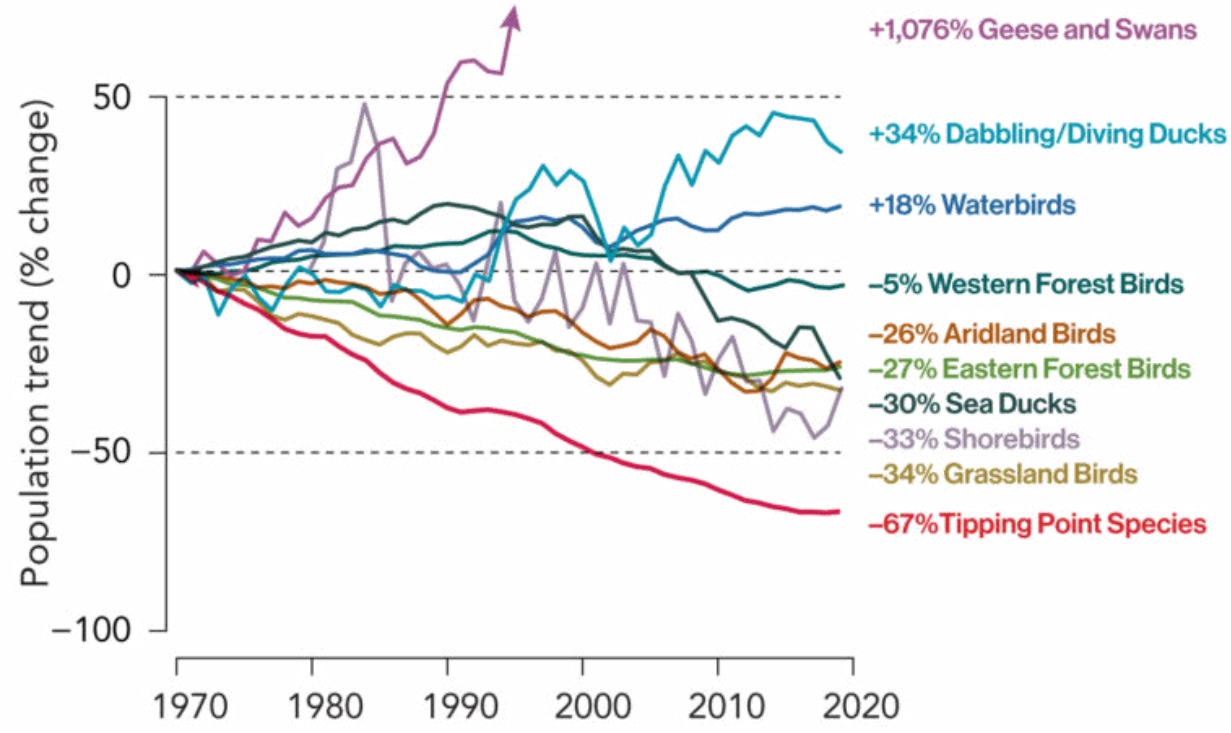
State of the Birds 2022
State of the Birds Report Reveals Widespread Losses of Birds in All Habitats– Except for One

Published by 33 leading science and conservation organizations [including Ducks Unlimited] and agencies.

The United States and Canada have lost 3 billion breeding birds since 1970—a loss of 1 in 4 birds, according to research published in Science in 2019.

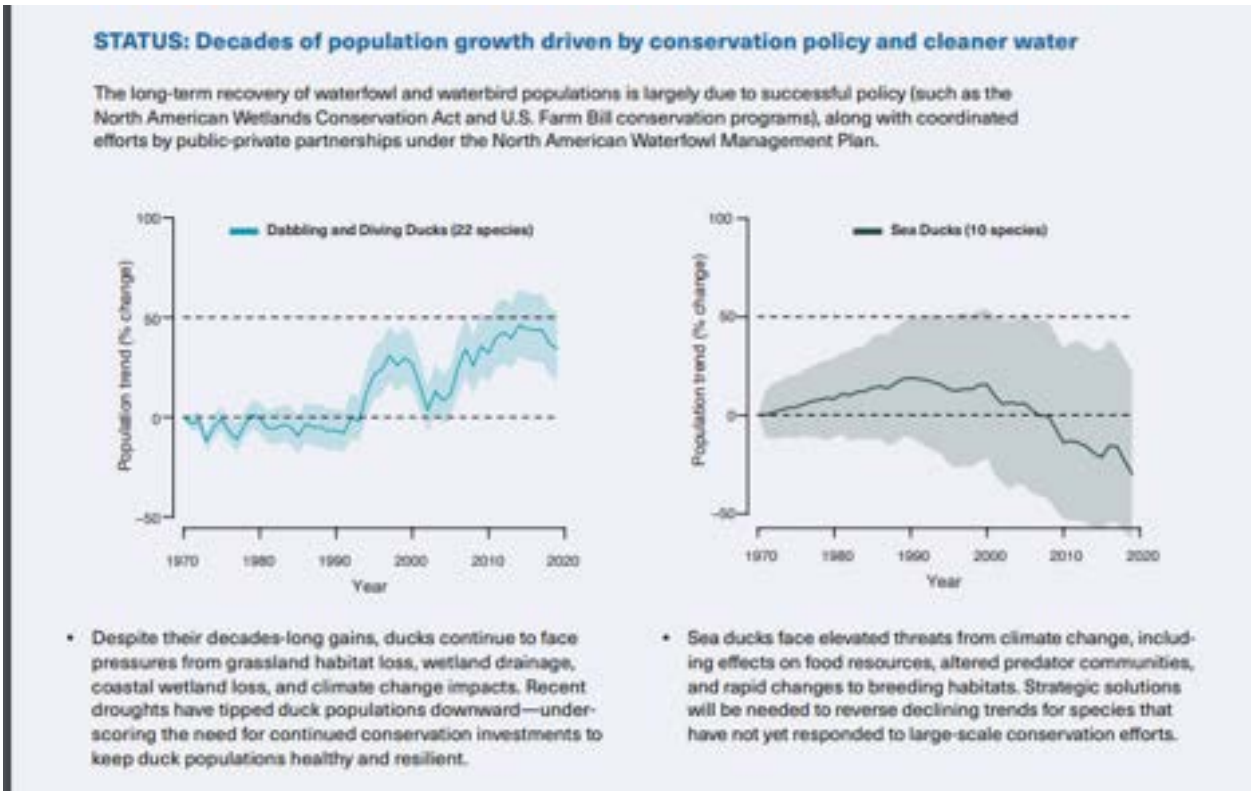
In 50 years, birds have increased overall in wetlands, a singular exception that shows the way forward for saving birds and benefiting people.

Trends for breeding bird species by group or by habitat during 1970–2019, except for the shorebirds trend, which begins in 1980.



Note that there has been a 30% drop in sea duck populations since 1970. Most of that has occurred since 2000.

As illustrated below, sea duck populations have been in decline since the late 1990's, for a variety of reasons. While hunting may be a contributing factor in some cases, other factors also need to be considered. On the other hand, dabbling and diving ducks have seen steady increases starting in the 1990's. The report gives hunters, through their conservation efforts such as protecting wetlands, some of the credit for recovery of dabbling and diving ducks.



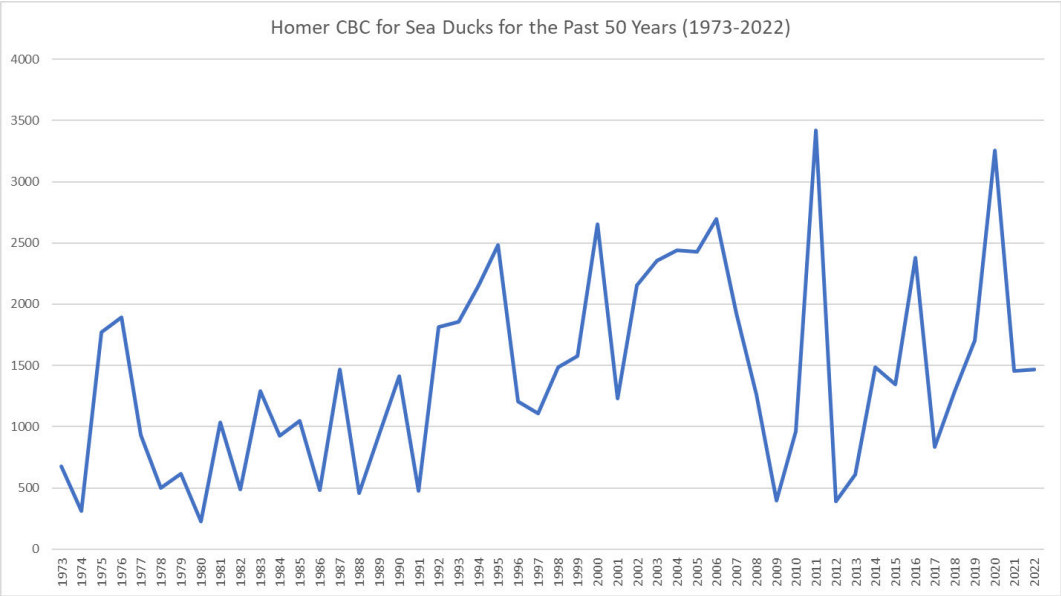
The sea duck species included in the chart above includes the following.

			1970 - 2019 Change (%/yr)			3 Generation Change (%/yr)				
Common Name	Survey	aou	Trend	2.5% Ci	97.5%CI	Trend	2.5% Ci	97.5%CI	Tipping Pc	Group
Barrow's Goldeneye	CBC	1520	1.378791	0.668384	2.146883	2.198171	0.115315	4.144726		Sea Ducks
Black Scoter	CBC	1630	-2.46548	-4.34899	-0.52183	-1.99666	-6.64932	3.421374	x	Sea Ducks
Bufflehead	CBC	1530	0.553625	-0.70017	1.817735	1.958054	1.054071	2.912006		Sea Ducks
Common Eider	CBC	1590	-6.3177	-19.287	8.326944	-0.2218	-34.699	51.19761		Sea Ducks
Common Goldeneye	CBC	1510	-0.3054	-1.15867	0.433434	0.352486	-1.38344	2.130719		Sea Ducks
Harlequin Duck	CBC	1550	0.555404	-0.7514	1.885391	0.709002	-3.28695	4.249297		Sea Ducks
King Eider	CBC	1620	-8.27663	-10.0931	-6.34576	-10.2039	-14.5972	-5.88514	x	Sea Ducks
Long-tailed Duck	CBC	1540	-3.63733	-5.47278	-1.74929	-3.71028	-7.32608	0.216084		Sea Ducks
Surf Scoter	CBC	1660	0.187609	-0.22364	0.598399	0.553777	-0.68216	1.756389		Sea Ducks
White-winged Scoter	CBC	1650	-1.25488	-2.83111	0.319645	-0.63442	-5.00216	3.889426		Sea Ducks

Of the ten species listed in the table, six have negative population trends from 1970-2019. All ten species occur in Kachemak Bay, although King Eider are considered rare.

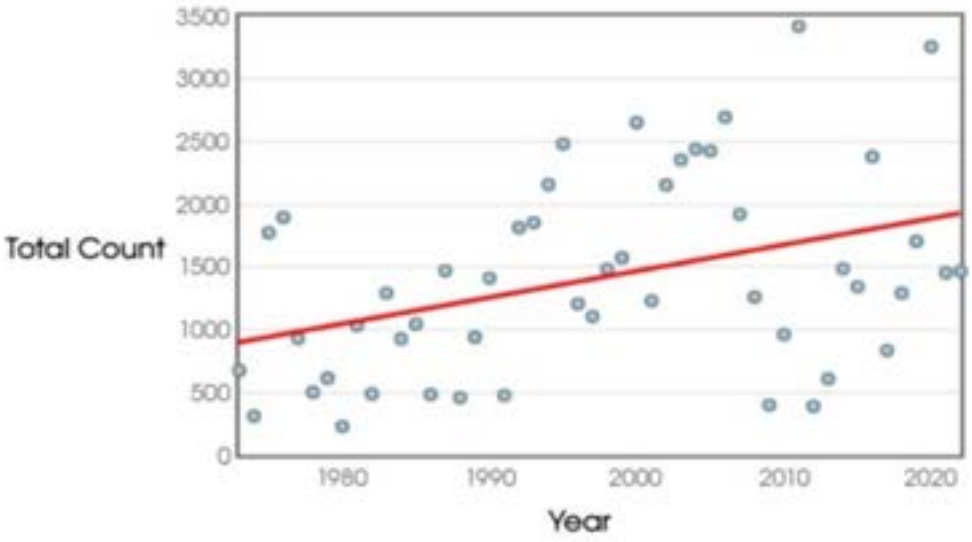
While it should be clear that sea duck populations are in decline in North America, that doesn't necessarily apply to Kachemak Bay. Some verification is needed. But finding datasets in Alaska that go back fifty years or more is rare. However, the Homer Christmas Bird Count (CBC) was started in 1960 and has been done every year since 1973- fifty consecutive years. And as one might expect, waterbirds (including sea ducks) have been prominent species on Homer CBC lists. It should also be noted that several other coastal cities in Alaska have overwintering sea ducks and annual CBC's. Cumulatively, this database could provide a broader statewide perspective of sea duck populations and should be part of ADF&G's analysis.

I recently did an analysis of the Homer CBC data to see what trends might be apparent. To get to the bottom-line, the scatter chart below illustrates the total sea duck count for the Homer CBC for the past 50 years. See Appendix A for the text of the full report, Appendix B for spreadsheets, and Appendix C and D for graphs.



As you can see there is a lot of variation from year-to-year, but it appears as if there might be an upward trend for Homer. Illustrated below is a Simple Linear Regression which gives a better sense of the direction.

Homer CBC Sea Duck Count for 55 Years (1973-2022)

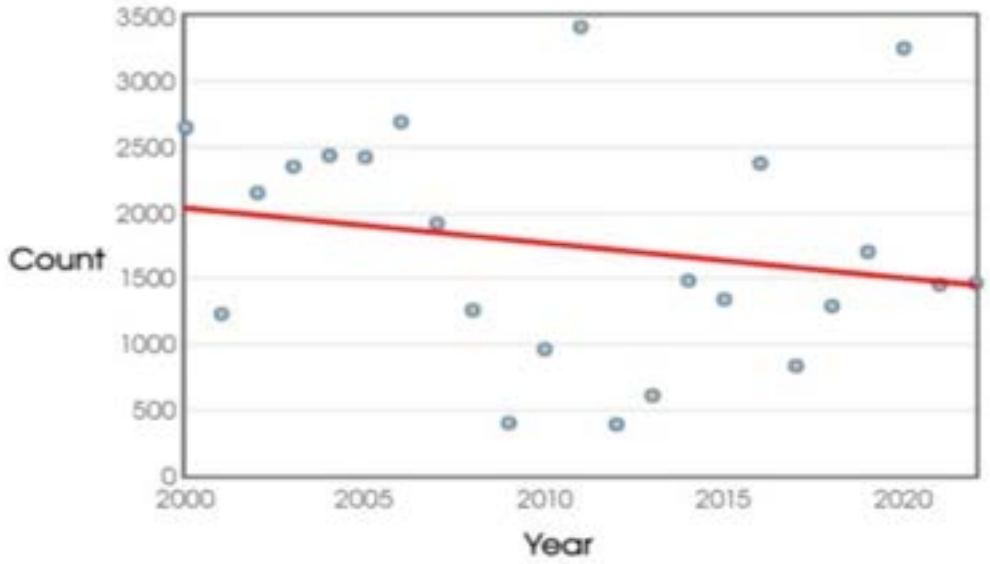


However, as shown in CBC details (https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count), in Homer there has also been a steady trend in Homer towards more volunteers. The

number of volunteers went from 1,3, and 4 volunteers the first three years to 34, 35, and 30 volunteers the last three years. Is the upward trend based to some degree on more volunteer participation?

Since 2005 when there were 14 volunteers, the number of volunteers has been in the 20's and 30's, averaging 27.6 for the past 16 years on record. This timeframe happens to roughly coincide with the national decline in sea ducks. So, to minimize the variables in order to test how well sea duck national trends fit the Homer CBC data, it might be better to just compare the two from 2000 on.

Homer CBC Sea Duck Count 23 Years (2000-2022)



When that is done, the Homer CBC data closely matches national trends. Going from a count of about 2,000 in the year 2000 to about 1,500 in 2022 is about a 25% decline, slightly less than the national trend for the past 50 years. But if this decline is due in part to breeding habitat loss as stated earlier, I would expect Alaska to be a bit less since what is the national trend because it probably has had less loss of breeding habitat.

Appendix C and D provide a more detailed, species/taxa look at the Homer CBC, both in terms of the last 50 years and since 2000. Contrary to what Proposal 163 claims, the Homer CBC does show declines for several species of sea ducks. During the last 22 years there have been declines with scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, mergansers, Harlequin Duck, and eiders. While the area covered by the Homer CBC includes the Homer Spit, which is a small fraction of Kachemak Bay, there is no reason to expect any substantial difference in sea duck presence between the Homer Spit and other parts of Kachemak Bay.

Proposal 163 disparages “anecdotal or biased claims” and it seems this is meant to apply to databases like the CBC. But CBC data is by no means anecdotal. It has been following essentially the same well tested protocol for the past 122 years. Observations are by established subsections of the counting circle and reviewed by skilled birders before being submitted and entered into the CBC database. This is an open access database that is used by many scientists and avid birders. Audubon, who maintains the database, says that “CBC data have been used in hundreds of analyses, peer-reviewed publications, and government reports over the decades.”

The bottom-line in this discussion is that despite the assertion by Proposal 163 that “The [previous] reductions in bag limits for eiders, harlequin ducks and long-tailed ducks were not based on best available scientific data,” there is solid evidence to the contrary. On national scale the prestigious journal *Science* says otherwise. And on a Kachemak Bay scale, the Homer CBC data for sea ducks seems to reasonably match national data for the past two decades. Also, it shows that there has been a decline with some sea duck species over the last two decades, which generally supports anecdotal observations by astute long-term residents who have been closely watching where they live for many decades and have voiced concern these declines.

To rescind previous sea duck restrictions, as advocated by Proposal 163, would most likely continue the population decline that sea ducks have experienced over the past two decades. That would be unacceptable to most of those who live in the Kachemak Bay area who want to see sea duck populations restored to what they use to be, or as close to that as possible, recognizing that climate change may also be a factor to contend with. This would be to the benefit of sea duck hunters and everyone else.

Sincerely,
George Matz
Fritz Creek, AK

Appendix A

Kachemak Bay Waterfowl and
Fifty Years of Homer Christmas Bird Counts
by
George Matz

The Christmas Bird Count (CBC), sponsored by the National Audubon Society, is "the longest-running citizen science survey in the world" according to Wikipedia.. The first CBC in 1900 was the inspiration of Frank Chapman who organized 27 volunteer birders to undertake CBCs at 25 sites ranging from cities in the northeastern United States to Toronto, Ontario, to California. The CBC now happens annually in over 20 countries in the western hemisphere. Last year, a pandemic recovery year, there were 2,646 counts with a total number of 76,880 observers comprised of 64,882 in the field and 11,998 at feeders. Birders saw 2,554 species, plus 483 identifiable forms and hybrids and 42,876,395 birds of all species tallied.

The protocol used at the first CBC is essentially the same as what we use now. Between December 14 and January 5, count volunteers follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile (24-km) diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear over a 24-hour period. These reports are given to a complier who reviews the data for accuracy and then submits the results to the National Audubon Society who compiles and archives all the results. The longevity of this effort and that a protocol has been consistently followed has created a valuable database for scientific study. Audubon says, "CBC data have been used in hundreds of analyses, peer-reviewed publications, and government reports over the decades."

The first Homer CBC was in 1960 which used a 15-mile diameter circle with its center in Mud Bay. This circle is still being used. It includes the entire Homer Spit which is all within Homer city limits. However, large portions of this circle include Kachemak Bay waters which are rich in waterbirds, even during the winter because the bay is mostly ice-free (Mud Bay being a frequent exception). Early attempts to bird the waters within the circle by boat were often stymied by winter weather. But rather than have this uncertainty embedded in our count records, use of a boat was discontinued. Now observations of Kachemak Bay waterbirds are mostly done onshore from various spit locations.

Following the inaugural year, Homer CBC's were done in 1962, 1963, 1965, 1971, and then 1973 – 2022, all using the same count circle. Fifty years continuous of data - a rare occurrence for Alaska. Recent years has seen almost an order of magnitude increase in the number of volunteers, thus providing more thorough coverage of the circle area, and perhaps, more sightings than would have been logged if participation were at the level of earlier years. The Homer CBC is now cosponsored by Kachemak Bay Birders and the Alaska Maritime NWR. Dave Erikson, the coordinator/compiler has been involved with the Homer CBC since 1976. Many volunteers have participated for decades. Stability in the coordinator and volunteers helps reduce observer bias. Also, I think long-term support by many citizen science volunteers is more reliable than agency funding.

Given the current concern in the Kachemak Bay area regarding the population status of overwintering sea ducks (including diving ducks), this 50-year Homer CBC dataset can provide valuable insight into long-term population trends. It can also provide a comparison and supplemental data to other sea duck databases, such as the more rigorous ADF&G's Kachemak Bay Wintering Waterfowl Survey. This survey has two components; 1) a near-shore boat-based survey taking several days to cover all the Kachemak Bay shoreline, and 2) is an airplane survey following transects in deeper waters. ADF&G's survey was initiated in 1999, but due to funding limitations is not done every year. There have been only 10 surveys in the last 22 years and scheduling has not been consistent, often with variable gaps.

The attached Excel tables and charts illustrate the trend lines for sea ducks (including diving ducks) that were observed in the Homer Spit area during CBCs over the past 50 years. These tables and charts were derived from an Audubon Christmas Bird Count download for the Homer CBC circle. https://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count

Sheet 1 for this file has two tables, one being all the waterfowl (geese, swans, and ducks) species included in the Audubon download. The second table has just those species that were observed in at least 50% of the CBC counts. This table doesn't have any geese or swans since these birds rarely occur in Kachemak Bay during midwinter. The ducks include dabblers, divers, and sea ducks. The only dabbler that meets the 50% criteria is the Mallard. But it was not included in further analysis since in winter it is mostly in the Mud Bay area unless that freezes over, in which case the ducks fly to the south side of the bay which is mostly outside the circle. The result is that in warm winters the Homer CBC sees lots of Mallards (one of the top species), but in cold winters there will be few if any. Although ADF&G waterfowl hunting regulations lump diving ducks (Bufflehead, Barrow's Goldeneye, and Common Goldeneye) in with dabblers using the term "general duck", they are considered sea ducks in this analysis.

To simplify matters, Sheet 2 uses the data from Sheet 1 to group these ducks into taxa. For instance, Scoters includes Black, Surf, and White-winged Scoters. This data was then used to generate scatter plots. The scatter plots do a good job of illustrating how variable things may be from year to year, but it is hard to discern whether the population for a taxon is increasing or decreasing. So, below each scatter plot are two charts for each taxon with a simple linear regression analysis. The first chart is for all 50 years and the second chart is from 2000-2022, which coincides with the years when ADF&G did their sea duck surveys. Having two charts illustrates in some cases that the 50-year population trend for a taxon may be increasing, but at a slower rate, or even decreasing, after 2000.

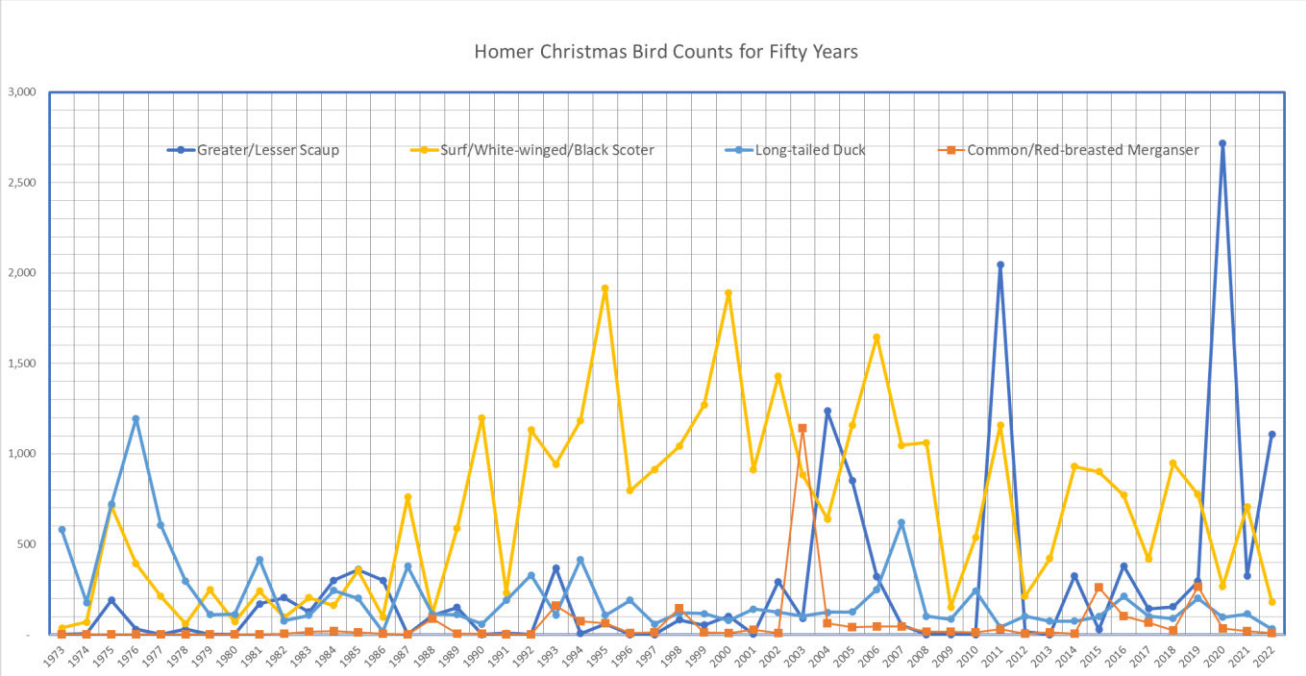
Sheet 3 is the entire Homer CBC download from Audubon which includes all species observed.

In summary, this analysis should provide a better basis for understanding population trends with sea ducks that overwinter on Kachemak Bay. It will also provide better justification for making any changes to the Alaska Waterfowl Hunting Regulations in order to sustain Kachemak Bay populations and opportunity to hunt and observe these beautiful birds.

Appendix B

Homer Christmas Bird Counts for Fifty Years (1973-2022)																												
CBC T end L nes																												
Summa zed by Taxon																												
Count Name	Home																											
Count Code	AKHO																											
	1973 [74]	1974 [75]	1975 [76]	1976 [77]	1977 [78]	1978 [79]	1979 [80]	1980 [81]	1981 [82]	1982 [83]	1983 [84]	1984 [85]	1985 [86]	1986 [87]	1987 [88]	1988 [89]	1989 [90]	1990 [91]	1991 [92]	1992 [93]	1993 [94]	1994 [95]	1995 [96]	1996 [97]	1997 [98]	1998 [99]	1999 [00]		
Malla d[Anas platy hynchos]			4	4		5			39	53	9	101	247	220	74	491	21		1		21	3	38	1			257	121	
G eate Scaup[Aythya ma la]		4	190	29			1	1	40	204	125	300		300	1	106	150		8		368	7	61			82	53	
G eate /Lesse Scaup[Aythya ma la/aff n s]						30			130				359															
G eate /Lesse Scaup	0	4	190	29	0	30	1	1	170	204	125	300	359	300	1	106	150	0	8	0	368	7	61	0	0	82	53	
Ste le 's E de [Polyst cta stelle]	8	4	41	29	49		33	8	80	8	745	111	39	19	154		26	103	23	180	199	229	204	47	66	20		
Common E de [Somate a moll ss ma]	10	5	3	15	10		159	12	27	37	44	1	5	16	24	4	36	23		124	38	220	73	95	7	35	17	
Ste le 's/Common E de	18	9	44	44	59	0	192	20	107	45	789	112	44	35	178	4	62	126	23	304	237	449	277	142	73	55	17	
Ha lequ n Duck[H st on cus h st on cus]	39	33	84	212	24	91	44	11	49	7	31	31	39	12	17	10	16	20	12	36	10	22	19	34	4	19	35	
Su f Scote [Melan tta pe sp c l ata]	5	34	47	33	18		131	17	27	2	82	31	39	8	73	12	60	121	39	121	70	94	54	171	193	336	406	
Wh te-w nged Scote [Melan tta fusca]	17	6	44	54	80	52	29	35	10	19	28	35	271	28	183	74	290	169	24	198	287	261	378	30	188	267	427	
Black Scote [Melan tta ame cana]	14	17	560	306	114	8	58	20	203	75	95	95	47	63	504	32	239	828	156	690	392	819	1485	562	447	97	324	
scote sp.[Melan tta sp.]		12	60				30											80	13	123	193	11		33	85	341	112	
Su f/Wh te-w nged/Black Scote	36	69	711	393	212	60	248	72	240	96	205	161	357	99	760	118	589	1198	232	1132	942	1185	1917	796	913	1041	1269	
Long-ta led Duck[Clangula hyemal s]	580	178	720	1196	606	294	110	112	415	77	107	245	201	16	377	113	110	59	191	329	109	415	107	191	58	120	117	
Buf lehead[Bucephala albeola]		1	8	2		1			26	17	1	3	4	4	8	2			5	1	3	1	6	14	8	11	27	
Common Goldeneye[Bucephala clangula]	3	14	14	20	29	26	16	11	20	37	15	55	28	13	127	17	7	3		10	24	5	14	15	39	9	34	
Ba ow's Goldeneye[Bucephala sland ca]		3	2				1	2	4	1	3												17	7		1	8	
goldeneye sp. [Bucephala sp.]																			3									
Common/Ba ow's Goldeneye	3	17	16	20	29	26	17	13	24	38	18	55	28	13	127	17	7	3	3	10	24	5	31	22	39	10	42	
Common Me ganse					1		2			2	13	5				89					20	52	23	7	6	143	14	
Red-b easted Me ganse [Me gus se ato]									2	2	3		13	4	2		6	5	2	2	141	1	40	1	5	3		
me ganse sp.[Me gellus/Lophodytes/Me gus sp.]												15										20						
Common/Red-b easted Me ganse	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	4	16	20	13	4	2	89	6	5	2	2	161	73	63	8	11	146	14	
Total	676	311	1777	1900	931	507	614	229	1072	541	1301	1028	1292	703	1544	950	961	1411	477	1814	1875	2160	2519	1208	1106	1741	1695	
Total less Malla ds	676	311	1773	1896	931	502	614	229	1033	488	1292	927	1045	483	1470	459	940	1411	476	1814	1854	2157	2481	1207	1106	1484	1574	
	2000 [01]	2001 [02]	2002 [03]	2003 [04]	2004 [05]	2005 [06]	2006 [07]	2007 [08]	2008 [09]	2009 [10]	2010 [11]	2011 [12]	2012 [13]	2013 [14]	2014 [15]	2015 [16]	2016 [17]	2017 [18]	2018 [19]	2019 [20]	2020 [21]	2021 [22]	2022 [23]	nnual Count					
Malla d[Anas platy hynchos]	442		111	2	3764	2601	1		1845	10		3151			1055	379	3422	2251	15	1937	673	160		470.58				
G eate Scaup[Aythya ma la]	101	3	293	90	1237	852	185	51		1		2046	15		319	28	380	143	155	294	2711	321	1108	247.26				
G eate /Lesse Scaup[Aythya ma la/aff n s]							136								7						7	3	1	13.46				
G eate /Lesse Scaup	101	3	293	90	1237	852	321	51	0	1	0	2046	15	0	326	28	380	143	155	294	2718	324	1109					
Ste le 's E de [Polyst cta stelle]	376	5	266	13	6	168	247	4		40	40					4			3			5		72.04				
Common E de [Somate a moll ss ma]	1	13		6		3				1									1		1	5		21.42				
Ste le 's/Common E de	377	18	266	19	6	171	247	4	0	41	40	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	1	10	0					
Ha lequ n Duck[H st on cus h st on cus]	52	3	13	40	30	17	44	37	46	90	32	42	15	28	39	7	23	18	17	17	25	27	10	32.66				
Su f Scote [Melan tta pe sp c l ata]	146	77	148	81	323	152	108	82	42	86	26	32	46	30	68	31	24	13	14	23	15	64	3	77.16				
Wh te-w nged Scote [Melan tta fusca]	483	95	81	139	33	107	80	74	17	2	111	92	21	32	14	25	16	13	19	21	17	16	26	100.36				
Black Scote [Melan tta ame cana]	964	740	1141	657	264	898	1360	694	1003	65	344	635	145	360	847	845	731	392	865	729	234	628	152	458.86				
scote sp.[Melan tta sp.]	299		59	8	20		98	197			55	400							50	1	1			45.62				
Su f/Wh te-w nged/Black Scote	1892	912	1429	885	640	1157	1646	1047	1062	153	536	1159	212	422	929	901	771	418	948	774	267	708	181					
Long-ta led Duck[Clangula hyemal s]	79	141	124	101	123	125	250	619	101	85	243	41	101	75	74	100	212	101	89	201	97	114	32	205 6				
Buf lehead[Bucephala albeola]	53	29	13	59	42	17	20	20	34	14	12	32	29	2	28		71	48	30	62	41	31	60	18				
Common Goldeneye[Bucephala clangula]	86	82	8	18	286	46	113	95			85	56	113	70	73	44	820	40	28	92	72	222	57	62.22				
Ba ow's Goldeneye[Bucephala sland ca]	3	16			11	1	8	2				12			8			1	1			10		2.44				
goldeneye sp. [Bucephala sp.]									2						2						4		8	0.38				
Common/Ba ow's Goldeneye	89	98	8	18	297	47	121	97	2	0	85	68	113	70	83	44	820	41	29	92	76	232	65					
Common Me ganse	7	15	8	1099	64	38	30	23	13		11	23	4	12	5	190	77	27	11	185	7	4	2	44.64				
Red-b easted Me ganse [Me gus se ato]	2	12		44		2	15	23	2	16	3	8	1		1	73	26	39	13	77	26	14	7	12.72				
me ganse sp.[Me gellus/Lophodytes/Me gus sp.]									1						1					3				0 8				
Common/Red-b easted Me ganse	9	27	8	1143	64	40	45	46	16	16	14	31	5	12	7	263	103	66	24	265	33	18	9					
Total	3094	1231	2265	2357	6203	5027	2695	1921	3106	410	962	6570	389	609	2541	1726	5802	3086	1311	3642	3931	1624	1466	1886.22				
Total less Malla ds	2652	1231	2154	2355	2439	2426	2694	1921	1261	400	962	3419	389	609	1486	1347	2380	835	1296	1705	3258	1464	1466	1415.64				
Database fo cha ts																												
Home Ch stmas B d Counts fo F fty Yea s (1973-2022)																												
	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	
G eate /Lesse Scaup	0	4	190	29	0	30	1	1	170	204	125	300	359	300	1	106	150	0	8	0	368	7	61	0	0	82	53	
Su f/Wh te-w nged/Black Scote	36	69	711	393	212	60	248	72	240	96	205	161	357	99	760	118	589	1198	232	1132	942	1185	1917	796	913	1041	1269	
Long-ta led Duck	580	178	720	1196	606	294	110	112	415	77	107	245	201	16	377	113	110	59	191	329	109	415	107	191	58	120	117	
Common/Red-b easted Me ganse	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	4	16	20	13	4	2	89	6	5	2	2	161	73	63	8	11	146	14	
Ste le 's/Common E de	18	9	44	44	59	0	192	20	107	45	789	112	44	35	178	4	62	126	23	304	237	449	277	142	73	55	17	
Ha lequ n Duck	39	33	84	212	24	91	44	11	49	7	31	31	39	12	17	10	16	20	12	36	10	22	19	34	4	19	35	
Bufflehead	0	1	8	2	0	1	0	0	26	17	1	3	4	4	8	2	0	0	5	1	3	1	6	14	8	11	27	
Common/Ba ow's Goldeneye	3	17	16	20	29	26	17	13	24	38	18	55	28	13	127	17	7	3	3	10	24	5	31	22	39	10	42	
Total CBC Sea Ducks	676	311	1773	1896	931	502	614	229	1033	488	1292	927	1045	483	1470	459	940	1411	476	1814	1854	2157	2481	1207	1106	1484	1574	
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total	Ann/Av			
G eate /Lesse Scaup	101	3	293	90	1237	852	321	51	0	1	0	2046	15	0	326	28	380	143	155	294	2718	324	1109	13036	260.72			
Su f/Wh te-w nged/Black Scote	1892	912	1429	885	640	1157	1646	1047	1062	153	536	1159	212	422	929	901	771	418	948	774	267	708	181	34100	682			
Long-ta led Duck	79	141	124	101	123	125	250	619	101	85	243	41	101	75	74	100	212	101	89	201	97	114	32	10381	207.62			
Common/Red-b easted Me ganse	9	27	8	1143	64	40	45	46	16	16	14	31	5	12	7	263	103	66	24	265	33	18	9	2908	58.16			
Ste le 's/Common E de	377	18	266	19	6	171	247	4	0	41	40		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4654	93.08			
Ha lequ n Duck	52	3	13	40	30	17	44	37	46	90	32	42	15	28	39	7	23	18	17	17	25	27	10	1633	32.66			
Bufflehead	53	29	13	59	42	17	20	20	34	14	12	32	29	2	28	0	71	48	30	62	41	31	60	900	18			
Common/Ba ow's Goldeneye	89	98	8	18	297	47	121	97	2	0	85	68	113	70	83	44	820	41	29	92	76	232	65	3252	65.04			
Total CBC Sea Ducks	2652	1231	2154	2355	2439	2426	2694	1921	1261	400	962	3419	389	609	1486	1343	2380	835	1292	1705	3257	1454	1466	70763	1415.26			

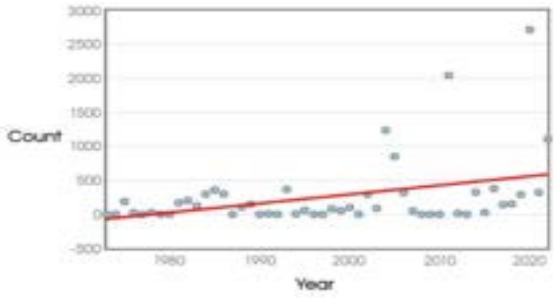
Appendix C

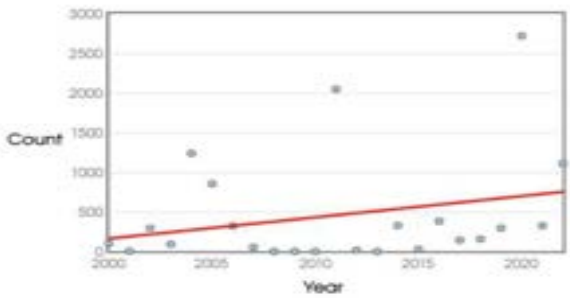

Homer Christmas Bird Counts for Fifty Years
Greater/Lesser Scaup
Surf/White-winged/Black Scoter
Long-tailed Duck
Common/Red-breasted Merganser
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
-
1973 1974 1975 1976 1977 1978 1979 1980 1981 1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022

Simple Linear Regression Charts by Species/Taxa

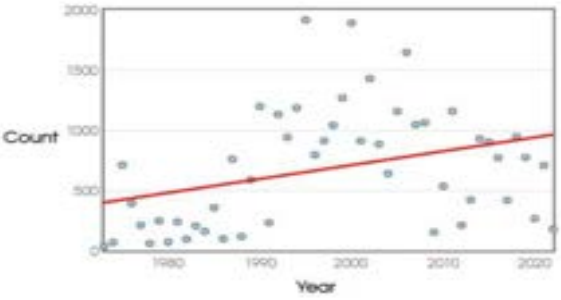
50 Years **22 Years**

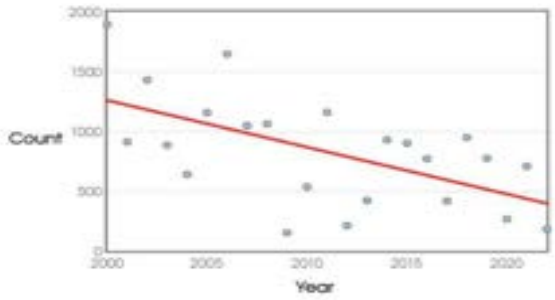
Scaup (Greater & Lesser)



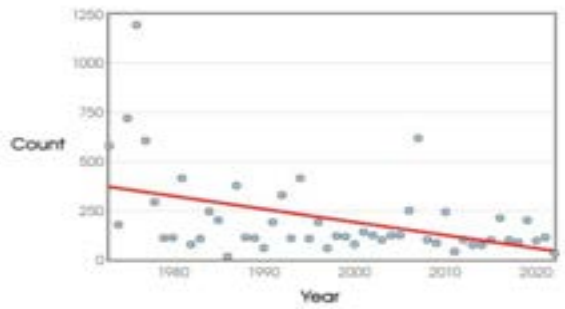


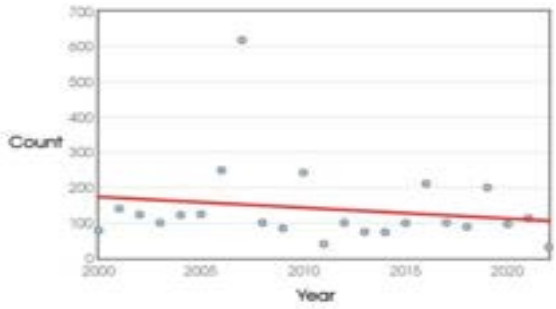
Scoter (Surf, White-winged, & Black)





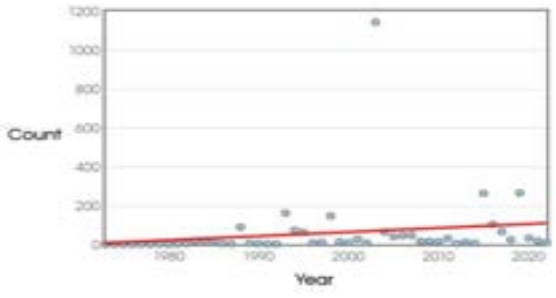
Long-tailed Duck

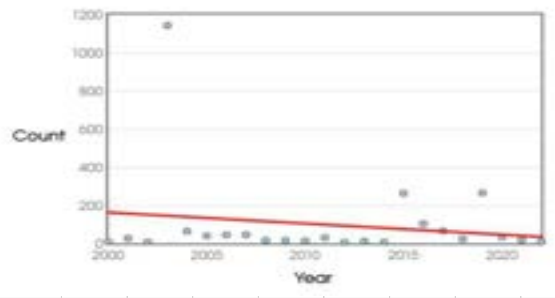




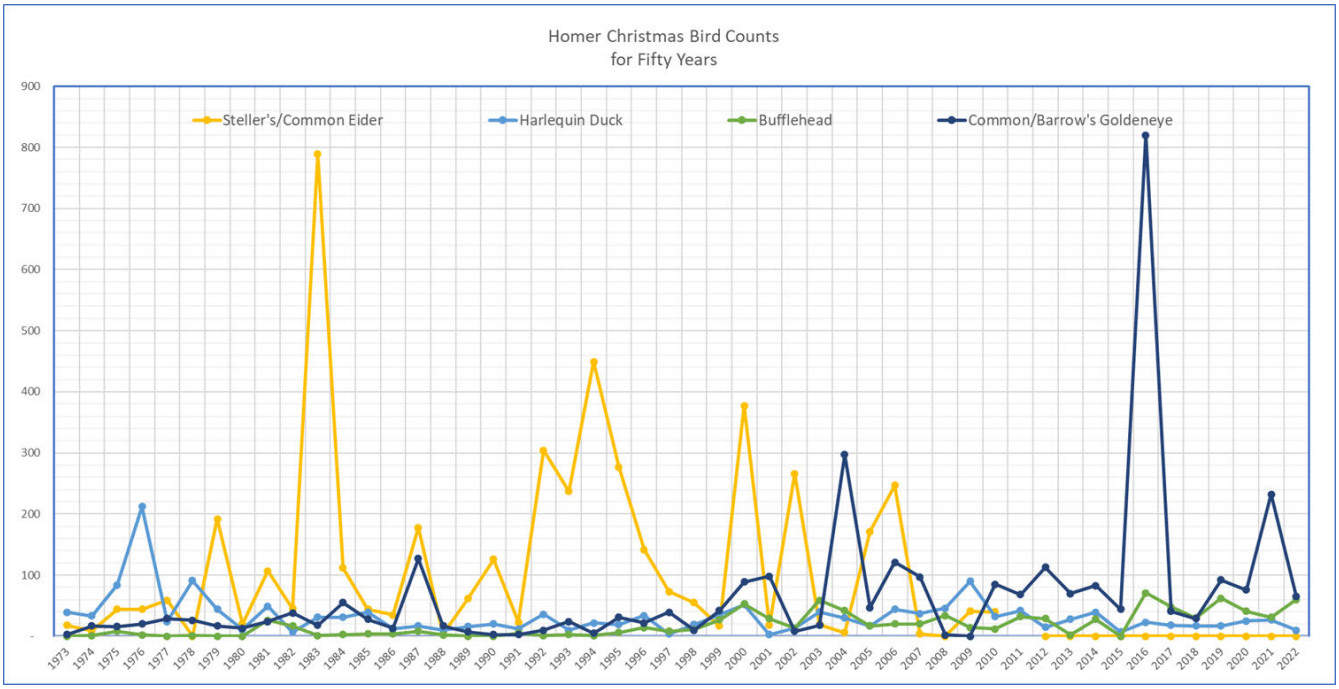
Note The loss of the fish processing plant from fire in the Homer Harbor in 1998 has probably had an affect on the Long-tailed Duck population that overwinter in Kachemak Bay. The fish waste in th outfall near the entrance to the harborattracted many ducks including Long-tail Ducks.

Merganser (Common & Red-breatsed)





Appendix D


Homer Christmas Bird Counts
for Fifty Years
Steller's/Common Eider
Harlequin Duck
Bufflehead
Common/Barrow's Goldeneye
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
-
1973
1974
1975
1976
1977
1978
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1982
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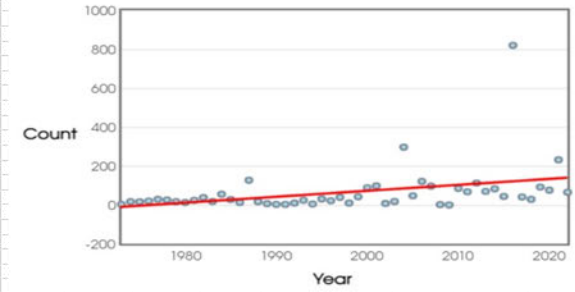
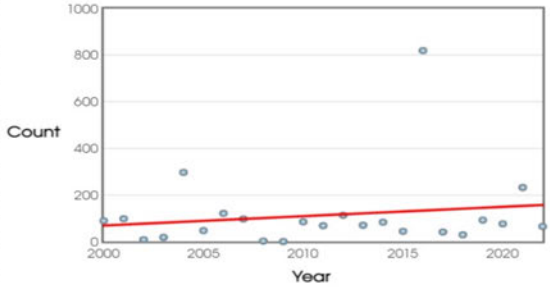
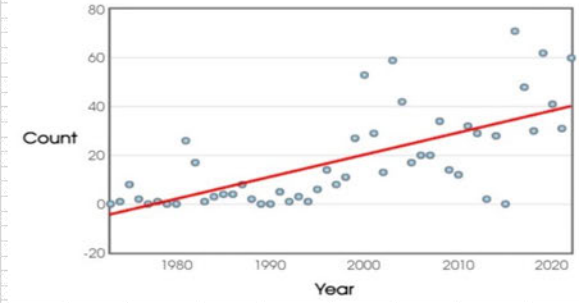
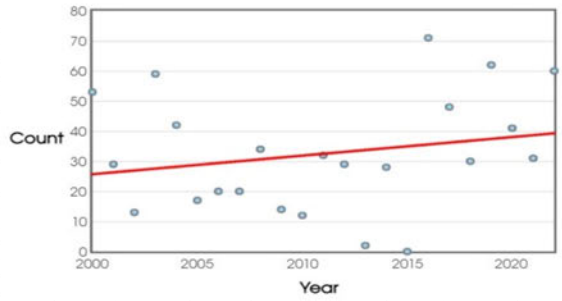
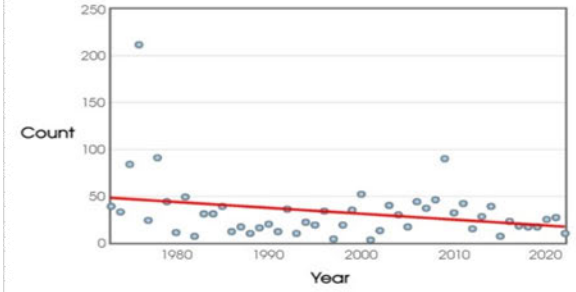
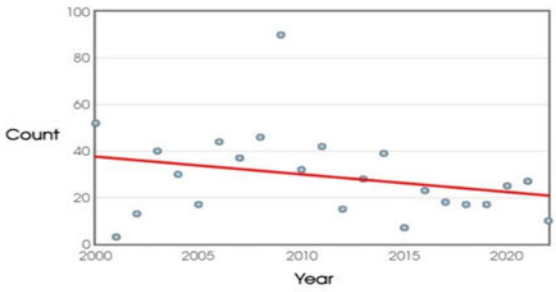
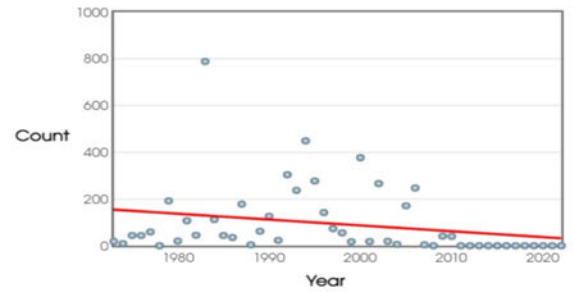
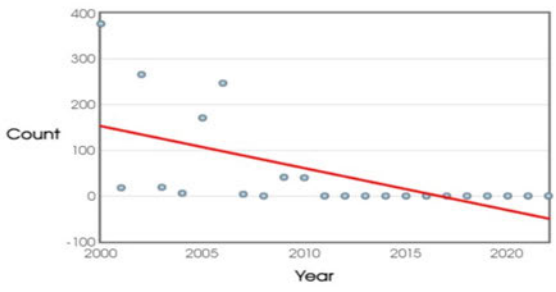
2020
2021
2022

Simple Linear Regression Charts by Species/Taxa

	50 Years	22 Years
Goldeneye (Common & Barrow's)		
Bufflehead		
Harlequen Duck		
Eider's (Steller's & Common)		

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Alaska Board of Game
PO Box 115526
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February 25, 2023

Re: BOG Southcentral Region Meeting

Proposals 164-170: proposals regarding reduction of bag limits for Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Harlequin & Long-tailed Duck: **SUPPORT**

Proposal 171: Direct ADF&G to implement a method for accurate reporting of sea duck harvest for Units 6,7 & 15 **SUPPORT.**

Proposal 172: Require mandatory harvest reporting for sea ducks in Kachemak Bay Unit 15C **SUPPORT**

In the interest of obtaining annual information regarding the number of sea ducks that overwinter in Kachemak Bay waters, the Kachemak Bay Birders and the Kachemak Bay Conservation Society jointly sponsored a citizen science project to do a Sea Duck Survey in the nearshore areas on the south side of Kachemak Bay. Our first event on March 3, 2021, followed by another on March 19, 2022, were a success with good participation and observations. Our plan this year was to have the survey earlier (February 25) so that we could submit a report to the BOG before the comment deadline. Unfortunately, despite having an armada of 10 boats and 44 volunteers for this snapshot survey, the weather didn't cooperate, and we had to postpone it until March 11. Not having any new data to submit before the comment deadline, we thought we should at least submit our report for our first two surveys. Attached is that report. Our intent is to use these surveys to support the BOG proposals listed above. Hopefully, we can provide updated information if the weather cooperates with our March 11 survey attempt.

Kachemak Bay Sea Duck Survey: 2022

Sponsored by
Kachemak Bay Birders
Kachemak Bay Conservation Society
April 2022
Organized by George Matz

The Kachemak Bay Sea Duck Survey is a DIY project. The need for this project grew out of apprehensions by a number of Kachemak Bay residents when there was new and perhaps excessive (i.e., unsustainable) hunting of sea ducks in the area, particularly on the south side of the Bay, during the 2020 duck hunting season (Sept. 1-Dec. 16). This added to long-held concerns by many seasoned residents that the number of sea ducks that now overwinter in the Kachemak Bay is not what it used to be, and additional hunting pressure will likely drive down local overwintering sea duck populations even further. Over the years, many locals feel that the pattern for Kachemak Bay fish and wildlife resources has been like following stairs down to the basement (sometimes without a light). There are a number of Kachemak Bay fish and wildlife species that now have limited or no harvest, the reasons vary by species.

The apparent consensus that evolved from the discussion that ensued (mostly emails) was that regulations for sea duck harvest in Kachemak Bay must be sustainable based on local overwintering populations, plus include a growth rate that allows populations to recover. While the past may not be replicable, the depleted status quo isn't acceptable. How much recovery is possible probably depends on an ecological assessment to determine, if possible, the current carrying capacity for Kachemak Bay sea ducks. What is also not acceptable to many residents is to manage this resource based just on compliance with Pacific Flyway guidelines. Managing waterfowl on such a large spatial scale can mask local or regional problems (e.g., excessive harvest), particularly for a place like Kachemak Bay that is more accessible than other coastal areas of Alaska.

To determine if current harvest regs are consistent with having a sustainable harvest of Kachemak Bay sea ducks plus a growth rate for population recovery, we need, in addition to trend lines, an approximation of the abundance for sea ducks that overwinter here. Without distinct boundaries, this kind of information can be difficult to discern. However, overwintering sea ducks tend to have strong site fidelity, returning to the same area each fall. Plus, they tend to stay in a limited area. This, plus Kachemak Bay's topography lends itself to a separation of sea duck populations. With good survey coverage, a probable range of abundance for Kachemak Bay sea ducks might be possible. It wouldn't be perfect, but it might be adequate. This, multiplied by accepted sustainable harvest rates, and compared to annual harvest data for Kachemak Bay, could provide a more definitive assessment of the adequacy of current harvest regulations than the status quo. It should also be noted that annual sea duck harvest data is also an issue; relevant, but not part of this specific project.

The investigation last year by an ad hoc committee of Kachemak Bay residents involved in this issue found (some knew) that ADF&G has a Kachemak Bay winter waterfowl survey that started in 1999 in response to questions back then about sea duck populations in Kachemak Bay. Unfortunately, it appears as if monitoring was initiated after the drop in sea duck populations had

already occurred. Trendlines from these surveys became the new norm, but absent any connection to the recent past, which, to be fair, is not well documented.

[redacted] Ph.D., ADF&G Waterfowl Biologist described the surveys in a presentation to the Kachemak Bay State Park Citizen Advisory Board on March 10, 2021. He said, "The survey really consists of two components. One is a near-shore boat-based survey, where we had two boats with a team of four to six biologists, who would go down and spend usually 7 to 10 days. They would survey the entire shoreline of Kachemak Bay… trying to get a good count of how many sea ducks are within 200 meters of the shoreline. The other component of this survey, was USFW would send an airplane down with a couple of biologists, and they would spend 1 to 2 days flying transects in the deeper waters across the bay."

ADF&G has done 10 surveys in March from 1999 to 2019; the years being 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Obviously, there hasn't been consistency regarding when the surveys were conducted, which may add another variable to contend with. Because there have been gaps in years covered, these surveys might have missed stochastic events that could have had an impact on Kachemak Bay waterfowl population data and trend lines. For instance, the infamous "blob" from 2014-2016 heated the average temperature of the surface layer of Pacific Ocean waters several degrees Centigrade, which had a devastating impact on marine life and sea duck food sources. For example, millions of birds (mostly pelagic) died of starvation. How the blob might have disrupted the Kachemak Bay sea duck populations and trendlines isn't at all evident in this survey data.

In explaining how ADF&G uses its survey data [redacted] said during his KBSP CAB presentation, "we have to think of these counts as an index of the population. It still tells us something. We can't convert that index to an actual abundance estimate, but because we have those 10 surveys, done over 21 years, we can look at a trend through time - to see if those populations, based on our index counts, are stable, increasing or decreasing."

Before that, in an email exchange I had with [redacted] he went into further detail about ADF&G surveys and expressed doubts about the value of citizen science projects to ADF&G waterfowl management. These email comments are used with [redacted]'s permission.

[redacted] said, "Surveying sea ducks is notoriously difficult and I am skeptical that a citizen science effort can produce rigorous data at a spatial scale that is meaningful for management. Your proposed survey design of having 2 boats with trained observers simultaneously but independently count waterfowl near the shoreline on 2-3 occasions in Sadie Cove does seem to be a reasonable low-cost means of getting some estimate of the number of ducks in that Cove. However, as we discussed, surveys of this sort typically suffer from unintended bias due to failure to detect all birds in the surveyed area (leading to a downward bias in the estimate) and/or an upward bias in the estimate due to birds flying in response to the approaching boat and consequently being counted multiple times. Data from these types of surveys are best viewed as an index of abundance (rather than a true estimate of abundance). Given that the presence and direction of bias in the counts is generally unknown (addressing these sources of bias requires far more complex and costly survey designs), data from these surveys is often only meaningful after the surveys have been repeated in the same

fashion for numerous years so that a trend in the index can be observed. Given that you will only be surveying one cove, and only the near-shore zone of that cove, very limited inference can be drawn from the data. It would absolutely be inappropriate to assume that numbers or trends observed in Sadie Cove are representative of sea duck abundance or trends throughout Kachemak Bay and therefore would have little to no direct value for informing waterfowl management in Kachemak Bay or at any larger scale."

It was pretty clear that if Kachemak Bay residents were to get any data about the population of sea ducks that overwinter in the Kachemak Bay, it would have to be a Do It Yourself (DIY) project. So, we preceded to organize our first Kachemak Bay Winter Sea Duck Survey as a citizen science project. Typically, citizen science projects are to a large degree capitalized by volunteer effort rather than grant or revenue funding, which is what agencies usually depend on. An advantage of citizen science projects is that they often have more long-term reliability than agency projects. The reason is that avid citizen science volunteers are more likely to show up year after year than funding/staff for an agency project. For example, with the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Monitoring Project we now have 13 continuous years of shorebird monitoring following the same protocol and using many of the same dedicated volunteers at the same sites. Having reliable volunteers lessens the possibility that observer bias might creep into the data.

The Kachemak Bay Winter Sea Duck Survey design was based on my experience in organizing the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Monitoring Project since 2009. But first, it's important to note a significant difference between shorebird monitoring and a sea duck survey. Kachemak Bay is a major spring stopover site for migrating shorebirds. That requires monitoring at least several times in order to capture data through most of the migration. On the other hand, sea ducks overwinter here and their populations after the duck hunting season (Dec. 16) are relatively stable. Consequently, fewer survey sessions are needed to provide meaningful data.

Protocol policies that apply to both the Kachemak Bay shorebird monitoring and sea duck surveys are described below.

1. Nearshore – For the Sea Duck Survey, we decided not to include the offshore parts of Kachemak Bay. The spatial distribution of sea ducks there would require surveying transects, which would be expensive, and we had no funding. Some of the sea ducks more popular with hunters (e.g., goldeneyes and harlequins) are usually found in the more accessible nearshore areas; the fiords and channels that make up much of the south side of the bay. In this nearshore area, transects wouldn't work. Like shorebirds, the spatial distribution of sea ducks here mostly follows the shoreline. Laying a transect grid over that would likely have few instances where a transect is crossed by an aggregation of ducks. On the other hand, following the shoreline in boats follows the same pattern as the ducks - and the duck hunters. Because of this overlap, the probability of seeing and counting more ducks should be better.

2. Tidal Cycle - As we learned with shorebird monitoring, the number of birds you see and count can depend on what part of the tide cycle is being observed, especially in Kachemak Bay with its extreme tidal range. With shorebirds we determined that the optimal time to view them is when the outgoing tide approaches 15.0 feet (The mean high tide is 17.3 feet). Consequently, all our monitoring sessions start when the outgoing tide is at 15.0 feet. With sea ducks, we surmised that

low tide would probably be optimal. For one, it would concentrate the ducks more and secondly, it would reduce the opportunity for ducks to hide in shoreline vegetation.

3. Simultaneous – Our protocol, for ducks as well as shorebirds, is based on getting a snapshot survey. On March 19 of this year, we had an armada of 9 boats and 37 birders on the water for a couple of hours, giving us intense coverage of most of the prime overwintering habitat for waterfowl on the south side of Kachemak Bay. Having observers simultaneously see most of the birds also reduces error because of double-counts or movement by birds. This kind of coverage is something a citizen science project can do with a lot of volunteers, but ADF&G couldn't afford using staff. As a result, I think we got a good snapshot of the ducks on the south side of Kachemak Bay after the hunting season but before spring migration.

4. Observer Bias - To get a handle on whether observer bias is an issue, we replicated observations in Tutka Bay, Sadie Cove, and Hesketh, Yukon and Cohen Islands by having two boats in tandem cover the same route, but from opposite sides. One boat would go up one side, meet the boat from the other side, and then crossover and each return on the others side to the starting point. This means that each boat would be looking at the same route, but at a different time.

5. Teams – With shorebird monitoring, we assign teams to specific sites, each site having its own habitat. Having small teams of observers increases the chance of spotting birds as well as proper ID and count. With sea ducks, each open boat had 3-5 passengers, allowing us to cover both sides of the boat.

6. Photos – With both shorebirds as well as sea duck observing, we put an emphasis on each team having at least one good camera (cell phones won't do) to photograph questionable birds. On the Sea Duck Survey, I found that my photos with a 600 mm lens and cropped, gave me an image that was much better than I had with binoculars. Plus, the image didn't fly away. This helped clarify some uncertainties, like the color of the bill for those female goldeneyes.

7. eBird – With shorebirds and sea ducks, checklists are kept on eBird. The cell phone app for eBird provides a running tally, reducing counting errors due to arithmetic. Also, eBird checklists can be easily shared with others and provide time of travel, distance, and a GPS track.

Below, is most of the email that went out to those who participated in the Sea Duck Survey, going over the plan once more. This email should be useful for the next survey.

To: Sea Duck Survey volunteers
From: George Matz
Re: March 19

It looks like this year's Sea Duck Survey is going to be a success. We are maxed out on boats and birders. We have 9 boats and 36 birders/photographers. We will have coverage of the nearshore areas of the south side of Kachemak Bay from Glacier Spit to Jakolof Bay. As mentioned before, we are not surveying the open water areas of the bay. However, if someone not on the survey with a scope would take a look at ducks from the spit on Saturday morning,

that could be useful data. Attached is the current and (possibly) last roster. There have been a couple last minute changes.

The Underground Weather forecast looks good. Right now, they are forecasting that on Saturday at 10:00 am the skies should be partly cloudy, the temperature should be 31 degrees, and winds out of the NNE at 3 mph. By afternoon, the temperature will warm up to the upper 30's with skies and wind about the same.

Here is the plan.

1. Birders and boats meet at the Homer Boat harbor at the Ramp #2 about 8:30 am. Here we will match up boats and birders We will meet up with [redacted]'s boat at Eldred Passage.

2. We should leave the harbor by 9:00 and arrive at the starting point for surveys. There will be a -1.7 low tide at 10:07. As mentioned before, a low tide should give us optimal exposure to waterfowl.

3. Routs and boat assignments. To optimize results, routes are aligned to match concentrations of ducks (diving as well as dabblers) in narrow waterways (fjords and channels). Route, captains, and boats are as follows.

Sadie Cove

1. [redacted] - Nancy Hillstrand's boat. Go up north shore.
2. [redacted] - Silver Wake. Go up south shore

Start at Eldered Passage and follow the shoreline. At the head of bay, cross-over and down the other side back to Eldred Passage. Start a new report for the other side so we can make comparisons. You may consider each boat having a report just for the head of the bay if there are a lot of ducks there.

Tutka Bay

1. [redacted] – Adelante. Go up north shore.
2. [redacted] – Orca. Go up south shore.

Start at Eldered Passage and follow the shoreline. At the head of bay, cross-over and down the other side back to Eldred Passage. Start a new report for the other side so we can make comparisons. You may consider each boat having a report just for the head of the bay if there are a lot of ducks there.

Little Tutka Bay

1. [redacted] – Skookum

Because Little Tutka Bay is not accessible by boat at negative tides, this team will walk the beach to survey ducks and then, about 2-3 pm, they will survey Little Tutka Bay again but by boat. This double survey will give us some information about movement of waterfowl with the tides.

Jakolof and Kasitsna Bays

1. [redacted] – Otter Woman.

Starting at Murphy Spit, follow the shoreline of Kasitsna Bay and then Jakolof Bay.

Islands (Cohen, Yukon, and Hesketh)

1. [redacted] - Hesketh Isle
2. [redacted] - x .

Starting at Cohen Island, [redacted]'s boat cruises along the inner shore of the islands and [redacted]'s boat cruises the outer shore. Switch over at the south end of Hesketh Island and return to starting point.

Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay entrance

1. [redacted] x .

Start at Glacier Spit at low tide (where ducks feed) and follow shoreline to Halibut Cove, but don't enter, and to the mouth of China Poot Bay.

4. Each boat has a team that includes the captain, at least one birder, and a photographer.

5. Observations. While the intent is to survey all waterfowl (diving and dabbling ducks) we should also take note of any other bird species we see.

6. Recording data. Decide at the start who will be the scribe who writes down the species seen and counts. My recommendation is to record data with a cell phone that has eBird and enough battery to be kept on the duration of the survey. Each of the routes has an existing eBird hotspot. The eBird app will not only list species most likely seen in the area but allows a running tally of the count by species. It will also give you a GPS track of where you have been that include time spent on the trip and distance. If there are ID questions, you can enter a photo on Merlin (a Cornell app). And it will either give the species or a short list. I used Merlin a lot on a recent birding trip to Costa Rica and was amazed at how accurate it was. If you record your data on eBird, please share your list with me. Use KachemakBay (capitals and no space) as my username, which is the name of the account I have for Kachemak Bay Birders data. You can also use my email address which is [redacted].

7. The photographer should try to get good ID shots of each species you see. Up to 10 MB of photos per species can be added to your eBird list. To do this you have to first submit the list and the reopen the list and hit the media button, which will give you your list and allow you to link to the file you want to add. Also, try to get shots of total flocks to verify your counting skills. Landscape photos would be useful to illustrate habitat and conditions, such as weather. A photo of the team and action shots of people birding would be useful, but no selfies. If we have some good photos, I intend to add them to the report that will be written up afterward.

Below is the list of participants.

Sea Duck Survey - 2

Boat	Name	Email	Captain	Birder	Photos
1.	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Sadie Cove	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	

	[redacted]	[redacted]			x
2. Silver Wake	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Sadie Cove	[redacted]	[redacted]			x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
3. Adelante	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Tutka Bay	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
4. Orca	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Tutka Bay	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
5. Skookum	[redacted]		x		
Little Tutka	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]			x
6. Otter Woman	[redacted]		x		
Jakolof, Kasitsna	[redacted]	[redacted]			x
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	Student				
	Student				
	Student				
7. Hesketh Isle	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Islands	[redacted]			x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]			x	
8.	[redacted]	[redacted]	x	x	
Islands	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]			x
9.	[redacted]	[redacted]	x		
Halibut Cove	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]		x	
	[redacted]	[redacted]			x

Survey Data

Attached is the 2022 survey data on Excel spreadsheets. The spreadsheets have the data that was entered in eBird checklists by each of the nine teams (boats) that participated in the survey. This includes the bird species and count for each team as well as trip details (time, distance, and with some reports a GPS track of the route).

The spreadsheets show a good match for the three routes where we had two boats in tandem. For instance, [redacted]'s boat, which did Sadie Cove, saw 1,100 ducks and a total of 1,381 individual

birds of all species. [redacted]'s boat, which did the same route, counted 1,075 ducks and 1,161 individual birds. [redacted]'s count would have been even closer if she had included counting crows. There doesn't appear to be much of an observers bias or movement by the ducks in this survey data.

A summary spreadsheet gives the total number of waterfowl seen by each team. With the exception of the Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay route (which was not done last year) the total count for all waterfowl this year was 3,496. The total waterfowl count for last year was 3,623.5 (a half duck is due to using the average between two boats doing the same route). The total waterfowl count for the Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay route was 765, increasing the overall total for this year to 4,261.

This spreadsheet also has total count by species. Barrow's Goldeneye had the highest count this year which was 1,984.5 including the Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay route. The observers there counted only 6 Barrow's Goldeneye, but 453 Common/Barrow's Goldeneye. Excluding the Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay route, to allow direct comparison with last year, the Barrow's Goldeneye count for this year was 1,978.5. Last year the count was 1,419. Here again, the uncertainty between Barrow's and Common Goldeneye muddles thing a bit. If all the goldeneye are lumped into one count, the goldeneye count for this year would be 2,028 and the count for last year was 1,729. Although it seems most likely that there would be an increase in this year over last, because of reduced hunting pressure, given the uncertainty between Barrow's and Common counts, there doesn't appear to be any certain change.

The duck with the second highest count, both this year and last year was the Harlequin Duck. Last year the count was 424.5. This year, excluding the Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay count, it was 470. As with goldeneyes, an increase from past year would seem likely given the reduced hunting pressure this year.

With all species, it is obvious that more data will better the understanding of the status of sea ducks in Kachemak Bay. Based on the volunteer enthusiasm we experienced this year, continuing the Kachemak Bay Sea Duck Survey seems very likely. Furthermore, the snapshot survey data we have seems to be more relevant to Kachemak Bay than Pacific Flyway data and could prove to be more than an index. It might be useful for getting at least a rough approximation of what amounts to a sustainable harvest of sea ducks that includes recovery based on what sea duck population Kachemak Bay is capable of. How this approximation might lineup with bag limits etc. would necessitate having local harvest data, which doesn't currently. But that is a separate issue, though relevant, from organizing sea duck surveys.

While ADF&G has stated its skepticism "that a citizen science effort can produce rigorous data at a spatial scale that is meaningful for management", it might want to reconsider. For one, is there a difference between what ADF&G and local residents consider as a definition of meaningful spatial scale? Are we talking the same language? Also, as has been demonstrated, an organized citizen science blitz can attract enough volunteers to undertake a snapshot survey for a significant portion of Kachemak Bay nearshore areas that have high overwintering concentrations of sea ducks. Since ADF&G probably couldn't commit enough staff to do a snapshot survey of this size, maybe it should think about collaborating with those who can. This

kind of effort could result in data that is more than an index and has the potential to manage overwintering sea duck populations based on what is sustainable for Kachemak Bay, not just the Pacific Flyway.

Kachemak Bay 2022 Sea Duck Survey
19-Mar-22

Total Count by Species
Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay observations not included since we didn't survey it last year.

Duck Species	Sadie Cove	Tutka	Little Tutka	Jakolof Kasits	Islands	Total	2021 Total
American Wigeon				3.0		3.0	-
Mallard	91.0		53.0			144.0	282.5
Greater Scaup						-	16.0
Greater/Lesser Scaup				152.0		152.0	-
Steller's Eider						-	3.0
Common Eider						-	2.0
Harlequin Duck	93.0	113.0	26.0	88.0	150.0	470.0	424.5
Surf Scoter	64.5	28.0		12.0	42.0	146.5	268.5
White-winged Scoter	2.5	0.5		81.0	24.0	108.0	336.0
Black Scoter				120.0	40.5	160.5	83.5
scoter sp.						-	33.0
Long-tailed Duck		0.5				0.5	3.0
Bufflehead	1.5	0.5	12.0	59.0		73.0	38.0
Common Goldeneye		24.0		19.0		43.0	58.5
Barrow's Goldeneye	761.0	858.5	26.0	333.0		1,978.5	1,419.0
Common/Barrow's Goldeneye		6.5				6.5	251.5
Common Merganser	55.0	35.5	17.0	4.0	5.5	117.0	281.5
Red-breasted Merganser	18.5	15.5		49.0	6.5	89.5	123.0
Common/Red-breasted Merganser	0.5	1.0			2.5	4.0	-
Total	1,087.5	1,083.5	134.0	920.0	271.0	3,496.0	3,623.5

Goldeneyes		
Year	2022	2021
	43.0	58.5
	1,978.5	1,419.0
	6.5	251.5
Totals	2,028.0	1,729.0

Kachemak Bay 2021 Sea Duck Survey
3-Mar-21

Count by Species	Sadie Cove			Tutka Bay			Little Tutka			Jakolof Kasits*	Islands			Total
Duck Species	Scott	Nancy	Average	Dave	Alan	Average	Dave	Alan	Average	Steve	Gary	Penelope	Average	Average
Mallard	-	-	-	202	221	212	100	-	50	21	-	-	-	283
Greater Scaup	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	4	12	-	-	-	16
Steller's Eider	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Common Eider	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Harlequin Duck	54	73	64	105	74	90	40	22	31	128	139	86	113	425
Surf Scoter	37	37	37	-	16	8	-	-	-	194	59	-	30	269
White-winged Scoter	-	-	-	11	5	8	26	-	13	131	276	92	184	336
Black Scoter	-	-	-	4	-	2	-	-	-	-	155	8	82	84
scoter sp.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66	33	33
Long-tailed Duck	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
Bufflehead	-	-	-	1	20	11	17	-	9	16	-	6	3	38
Common Goldeneye	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	53	11	-	6	59
Barrow's Goldeneye	357	400	379	756	738	747	111	34	73	221	-	-	-	1,419
Common/Barrow's Goldeneye	65	-	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	208	10	12	11	252
Common Merganser	73	48	61	42	375	209	1	-	1	1	-	22	11	282
Red-breasted Merganser	4	8	6	8	28	18	-	-	-	92	14	-	7	123
Total	590	566	578	1,129	1,477	1,303	303	56	180	1,085	664	292	478	3,624

* Included in total average

Kachemak Bay 2022 Sea Duck Survey

Sheet 1 Total Count
Sheet 2 Summary

Saturday 3/19/2022
Tides: Low tide of -1.7 ft. at 10:07 am.
Weather based on NOAA Homer Airport reports (http://w1.weather.gov/obhistory/PAHO.html)
9:00 am; Clear, winds E at 3 mph, temp. at 25° F
1:00 pm; Clear, winds E at 3 mph, temp. at 38° F

For more details (such as GPS tracknigs, photos, etc.) see eBird checklists which are given at the bottom of each report.

Sadie Cove	**Scott's Boat**				**Monica's Boat**				
	SW Side	NE Side			NE Side	SW Side			
Time - start	9:40	11:25			9:29	12:13			
Time observing	1h. 10 m.	1 h. 24 m.				2 h. 7 m.			
Distance - miles	6.8	6.8			7.0	7.0			
# of Observers	4	4			3	3			
Species			**Total**				**Total**		**Average**
Mallard	82		82			100	100		91.0
Harlequin Duck	43	82	125		39	22	61		93.0
Surf Scoter	52	7	59		13	57	70		64.5
White-winged Scoter	5		5				-		2.5
Bufflehead	3		3				-		1.5
Barrow's Goldeneye	572	182	754		306	462	768		761.0
Common Merganser	26	8	34		37	39	76		55.0
Red-breasted Merganser	25	12	37				-		18.5
Common/Red-breasted Merganser	1		1				-		0.5
Subtotal	809	291	1,100		395	680	1,075		1,087.5
Horned Grebe	2	4	6				-		
Common Murre	11	2	13				-		
Pigeon Guillemot	8	4	12			12	12		
Marbled Murrelet	3	1	4				-		
Black-legged Kittiwake	1	1	2				-		
Short-billed Gull	22	3	25				-		
Glaucous-winged Gull	13	9	22			33	33		
gull sp.					7		7		
Common Loon	17		17		3	5	8		
Pelagic Cormorant	13	13	26		9	11	20		
Bald Eagle	9	11	20		1	5	6		
Belted Kingfisher	1		1				-		
Black-billed Magpie	4	1	5				-		
American Crow	40	88	128				-		
Subtotal	144	137	281		20	66	86		
Total Birds	953	428	1,381		415	746	1,161		
eBird Checklists;	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105193060				https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105406101				
	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105235994				https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105388454				

Tutka Bay	**Dave's Boat**				**Curt's Boat**				
	NE Side	Head Bay	SW Side		SW Side	Head Bay	NE Side		
Time - start	9:30	11:31	12:27		9:18	12:10	12:19		
Time observing	2 h.	55 m.	1 h. 38 m.		2 h. 48 m.	18 m.	1 h. 30 m.		
Distance - miles	8.7	1.9	8.5		9.7	0.3	9.4		
# of Observers	4	4	4		4	4	4		
Species				**Total**				**Total**	**Average**
Harlequin Duck	78		83	161	34		31	65	113.0
Surf Scoter	3		20	23	29		4	33	28.0
White-winged Scoter							1	1	0.5
Long-tailed Duck			1	1					0.5
Bufflehead		1		1					0.5
Common Goldeneye	48			48					24.0
Barrow's Goldeneye	125	185	402	712	620	125	260	1005	858.5
Common/Barrow's Goldeneye		13		13					6.5
Common Merganser	38	4	13	55	12		4	16	35.5
Red-breasted Merganser	4	2	1	7	20		4	24	15.5
Common/Red-breasted Merganser	2			2					1.0
Subtotal	298	205	520	1,023	715	125	304	1144	1,083.5
Horned Grebe	2			2	6		5	11	
Red-necked Grebe	5			5					
Common Murre	1			1			1	1	
Pigeon Guillemot	4			4	13		7	20	
Marbled Murrelet	2		2	4			2	2	
Short-billed Gull			1	1			2	2	
Glaucous-winged Gull	3	6		9	5			5	
Common Loon	20		9	29	13		7	20	
Pelagic Cormorant	14	6	12	32	10		18	28	
Bald Eagle	7		6	13	14		10	24	
Belted Kingfisher			1	1					
Black-billed Magpie	2		7	9					
American Crow	84	75		159	26	95		121	
Subtotal	144	87	38	269	87	95	52	234	
Total Birds	442	292	558	1,292	802	220	356	1378	
eBird Checklists;	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105370437				https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105430728				
	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105370441				https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105430710				
	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105370443				https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105430659				

Little Tutka Bay	**On Foot**		**Jim's Boat**
Time - start	9:36		1:54
Time observing	2 h. 7 m.		1 h. 18 m.
Distance - miles	0.6		3.1
# of Observers	2		2
Species			**Average based on Jim's Boat**
Mallard			53
Harlequin Duck	7		26
Black Scoter	12		
Bufflehead	20		12
Barrow's Goldeneye	11		26
Common Merganser	3		17
Subtotal	53		134
Horned Grebe			5
Great Blue Heron			10
Glaucous-winged Gull	4		
Bald Eagle	4		1
Subtotal	8		16
Total Birds	61		150
eBird Checklists;	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105163471		https://ebird.org/checklist/S105179370

Jakolof, Kasitsna Bays	**Debbie's Boat**
Time - start	9:36
Time observing	1 h. 29 m.
Distance - miles	7.5
# of Observers	6
Species	**Total**
American Wigeon	3
Greater/Lesser Scaup	152
Harlequin Duck	88
Surf Scoter	12
White-winged Scoter	81
Black Scoter	120
Bufflehead	39
Common Goldeneye	19
Barrow's Goldeneye	333
Common Merganser	4
Red-breasted Merganser	49
Subtotal	920
Other species not recorded	
eBird Checklists:	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105718805

Cohen, Yukon & Hesketh Islands	**Penelope's Boat**	**Greg's Boat**	
Time - start	9:35	9:16	
Time observing	2 h. 50 m.	3 h. 32 m.	
Distance - miles	10.5	12.8	
# of Observers	3	4	
Species			**Average**
Harlequin Duck	169	131	150.0
Surf Scoter	29	55	42.0
White-winged Scoter	40	8	24.0
Black Scoter	70	11	40.5
Common Merganser	10	1	5.5
Red-breasted Merganser	2	11	6.5
Common/Red-breasted Merganser		5	2.5
Subtotal	320	222	271.0
Horned Grebe	11	3	
Red-necked Grebe		1	
Common Murre		2	
Pigeon Guillemot	20	7	
Kittlitz's Murrelet		1	
Marbled Murrelet	3		
murrelet sp.		3	
Short-billed Gull		4	
Glaucous-winged Gull		5	
gull sp.	20		
Common Loon	18	15	
Pacific Loon		1	
loons sp.		3	
Pelagic Cormorant	19	34	
Double-crested Cormorant	5	1	
cormorant sp.		6	
Bald Eagle	18	28	
Black-billed Magpie	1	1	
American Crow	35	27	
Subtotal	150	142	
Total Birds	470	364	
eBird Checklists:	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105324	https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105175236	

Glacier Spit to China Poot Bay	**Louie's Boat**
Time - start	9:48
Time observing	2 h. 53 m.
Distance - miles	12.5
# of Observers	4
Species	
Mallard	31
Harlequin Duck	83
Surf Scoter	94
scoter sp.	4
Long-tailed Duck	5
Bufflehead	53
Common Goldeneye	19
Barrow's Goldeneye	6
Common/Barrow's Goldeneye	453
Common Merganser	4
Red-breasted Merganser	13
Subtotal	765
Red-necked Grebe	11
Common Murre	1
Pigeon Guillemot	12
murrelet sp.	1
Common Loon	9
Pelagic Cormorant	6
Bald Eagle	19
Black-billed Magpie	1
American Crow	7
Subtotal	67
Total Birds	832
eBird Checklists:	https://ebird.org/checklist/S105345684

Kachemak Bay from Homer Spit	**Lani Raymond**
Time - start	1:00
Time observing	2 h.
Distance - miles	4
# of Observers	1
Species	
Mallard	4
Greater Scaup	7
Harlequin Duck	2
Surf Scoter	54
White-winged Scoter	7
Black Scoter	18
Long-tailed Duck	50
Common Goldeneye	6
Red-breasted Merganser	14
Red-necked Grebe	5
Rock Sandpiper	1,000
Common Murre	12
Black-legged Kittiwake	x
Short-billed Gull	x
Glaucous-winged Gull	x
Common Loon	3
Pelagic Cormorant	11
Bald Eagle	5
American Crow	x
Song Sparrow	1
eBird Checklists:	https://ebird.org/ak/checklist/S105180778