

Please find this fax for concerning the current issue to the Alaska Board of Game Proposal 92-5 AAC 92 037

Johnny M. Graham Jr.
1768 FM 309
Hillsboro, Texas 76645
(254)205-0087
Email is txduckhawker@yahoo.com

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My name is John Graham, master class falconer who resides in Texas practicing falconry since 1998. I have been a past officer in various capacities of the Texas Hawking Association for a number of years during my time as a falconer.

When it comes to the Alaska Board of Game Proposal 92-5 AAC 92 037 **I am in favor for this issue.**

USFWS has studied falconers taking raptors across the nations and found there is zero impact to the populations. Falconers only take passage birds (birds hatched in that given year) due to the fact of the survival rate for young raptors are not very good. Up to 70% of all young raptors will not live to be a year old for various reasons such as sickness, starvation, hit by car, electrocution, and etc.

When it comes to this issue, it should be treated as any other issue Alaska looks at when it comes to wildlife... the **science** of numbers and *not* **POLITICS**. There will not be a huge influx of falconers wanting to come to Alaska to take young falcons out of Alaska for various reasons; such as the cost of travel, time it would take to obtain one, and finding a viable location within reason. Basically a falconer could purchase one from a breeder probably cheaper than compared to the cost of obtaining one from the wild. However, it is the experience of doing falconry in a traditional way which will drive some falconers to do this. Since the numbers clearly support a take with zero impact, then non-residents should be able to obtain a young bird in the guidelines the State of Alaska would allow when this proposal passes as it allows its resident falconers to do.

The majority of states allow for non-resident take of raptors such as the state I live in. When it comes to the passage peregrine falcon finally being opened up once again by USFWS, the Texas Hawking Association along with the Falconry and Raptor Council which I was and still a part of myself worked delingently with Texas Parks and Wildlife in support to allow passage peregrines to be taken by non-residents as any other raptor within the guidelines of the USFWS. In fact, Texas has allowed 40% of the limited USFWS take allowed in our state to be taken by non-residents. Furthermore, Texas allows non-resident falconers to take any other legal raptor the same as its residents upon obtaining a non-resident take permit as it should be for your state and any other state.

Texas Parks and Wildlife allows and promotes non-residents to partake in all aspects of hunting and fishing by non-residents. It is the right thing to do, but also an economic benefit to Texas just as it would be for your state of Alaska if these same rights are given to non-residents to your state. Furthermore, Alaska does allow non-residents to come to fish and hunt in Alaska which I have personally done once. The Alaska Board of Game knows in their hearts that this particular issue should be treated as the same when compared to deer, fish, elk, ducks, and etc. and not to be a political issue as some may want it to be construed to being.

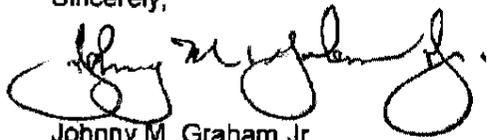
Below are a couple more examples of what USFWS has concluded the past few years:

- Alaska peregrines had more nesting pairs then the entire contiguous western U.S. according to the USFWS EA in 2003. These numbers have increase dramatically since this time.

- Alaska is the only place for an American falconer to obtain an eyas Gyrfalcon according to USFWS as your state has the only U.S. population of nesting Gyrfalcons.

I appreciate the opportunity which the Alaska Board of Game has allowed for public comments to be received for this particular issue. Falconers are hunters, but more so conservationists first and foremost with wildlife.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Johnny M. Graham Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Johnny M. Graham Jr.