

**Nate Turner – Personal testimony to board on Proposal 62.**

Mr. Chairman - Board Members,

March 8, 2020

For the record my Name is Nate Turner and I'm from the Nowitna and Kantishna River drainages, although I do have a place in Fairbanks as well and have spent a good part of the winter in town this year. I am here to address proposals 62 and 114 and have submitted RC 29 with some additional comments and suggestions regarding these proposals.

I am happy to be here today, but not in the capacity that I am, where I am essentially here to defend my way of life. Proposal 62 presents itself as being a resident advocacy against non-resident harvests, where from my perspective it is resident advocacy against other resident uses, values, and benefits derived from the harvest of wildlife.

I came to Alaska as a result of my father's dream and life-long desire to be a trapper in the North country. He was 47 and I was 17 when we came into the country and I spent the next 10 years re-clearing or cutting over 200 miles of trapping trails with my brother and father, and learning both what it means to live close to the land and how to do it. I went nearly 10 years without seeing a street with snow on it, and from 17 to 27 never dated, had a check book, rented or owned a place in town. I chose to skip college to continue the life I shared with my family in the woods, having faith that somehow I would find a way to make a living from the land that would perhaps allow me to support a family one day. I typically made a \$1000 a year from a few weeks of working as a carpenter's helper in Fairbanks each summer.

In my mid 20's a neighboring trapper asked me if I would help him guide moose hunters in my trapping area on the Nowitna, first as a packer and then as an assistant guide. I had mixed feelings about it, primarily due to a few stories I had heard that were negative about guides and guiding, but I thought to be fair I had to at least try it before coming to a conclusion. The man I worked with shared with me that in his view guiding was one of the last predictable ways to make a living in the woods : trapping was up and down depending on the markets, the Tanana and Yukon fisheries were struggling, and mining was risky at best and hard to make work at \$400 / ounce.

I fell in love with guiding since it allowed me to stay in the woods, share my knowledge and love of the land with others in the world who had dreamed to see it one day, allowed me to essentially get paid to let someone else shoot the moose I was going to eat that winter, and to earn enough money for the first time in my life where I could envision a way to provide for a family who could share this life with me, and have opportunity in the so-called real world too if that day ever came.

Moving forward through time – I inherited the guiding area from my friend and also was able to competitively win the Nowitna federal guiding concession which was also in my trapping area. I did my best to replicate my own experience and relationship with guiding by hiring other Alaskans who lived in my part of the bush to work with me (both young and older). And we have been doing this together for many years now. My desire to have my own family to share this life in the woods came true, and over the years other young families have returned to the upper Nowitna drainage. We all benefit from having these guided nonresident hunters in the country, and the loss of these permits would be primarily a loss to resident hunters in our state for these reasons. Any non-resident that isn't provided a chance to hunt in this area won't know what he has missed, but those of us who live on the land and benefit directly from their visit to our state will feel it deeply.