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Shelby Baker

I OPPOSE all parts of PROPOSAL 199

5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping.

Prohibit trapping within 50 yards of multi-use trails and trailheads in Units 13, 14, and 16

Eliminating trapping close to the trails identified in the 17 page list will have a chilling effect on the subsistence lifestyle in our region of Alaska. And it will not stop here.

The proposal makes trapping even more difficult than it is - limiting future trapping in the areas to only the strongest of us. The participation of our older generations, the weak, and the young will be much more limited-as most who travel the snows in winter know-stepping off the trail in 3' of powder and entangled alders is all but impossible.

We've traveled many of these trails - many breaking powder to put in the trail. I've also seen the tracks of bikes, boots, and snowshoes who use my trail both on and off the ones listed. All these tracks weave in an out of whatever hard packed surface is available and until now has been a shared, multipurpose, and symbiotic relationship.

It's a poverty to think that the trails made by those who hunted and trapped before us will close so that a dog owner can let their pets run off leash and out of control.

If anything in America is clear - culture of a people doesn't die overnight. It is stripped from us one thing at a time - and it will continue if we let it. There is no doubt - subsistence life in Alaska is at risk with these types of proposals.

Make and approve some common sense proposals such as adopting a 150' setback around a few parking lots and trail heads so pet owners who loose control can recover them quickly and safely. Or maybe even a few hiking trails close to town where people frequent.

And let my Alaska Native girls trap on their ancestral lands unimpeded by those who dismiss where they come from, how their people have lived, and hate our choice to continue traditional ways.