



# Bristol Bay Native Corporation

*Enriching Our Native Way of Life*

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March 7, 2011

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
1255 West 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Chairman Judkins and members of the Board:

Bristol Bay Native Corporation submits these comments to encourage the Board of Game to address the predator control issues in Game Management Units 9 and 17.

Wolves and bears are effective and efficient predators of caribou, moose, deer, and other wildlife. In most of Alaska, humans also rely on the same species for food. In Alaska's Interior, for example, predators kill more than 80 percent of the moose and caribou that die during an average year, while humans take less than 10 percent. In most of the state, predation holds prey populations at levels far below what could be supported by the habitat in the area. Predation is an important part of the ecosystem, and all management programs, including control programs, should be designed to sustain predator populations in the future. The balance in Bristol Bay, however, seems to have tipped heavily in favor of the predators as the moose population is dwindling and caribou are almost completely gone. In fact, in many parts of Bristol Bay, people have not seen a caribou in years. Bristol Bay Native Association has submitted comments describing this aspect of the problem and we support those comments.

In Bristol Bay, the issue of predator control is urgent because our communities are now experiencing the devastating effects of the failure to effectively manage the predator populations. The people of the Bristol Bay region, as well as residents throughout the state were frightened and shocked when it was discovered that wolves had attacked and killed a teacher near Chignik Lake. This was the worst of numerous instances of the increasing encroachment of the expanding predator population. Village dogs disappear or are killed in the yards of their own homes, and residents now frequently see wolf tracks right through their villages. The Lake Iliamna, Nushagak and Togiak Advisory Councils all considered this issue and also stressed the importance of taking immediate action to address the predator control issues in Bristol Bay. BBNC supports their efforts.

BBNC recognizes the potential challenges of implementing a predator control program, and therefore respectfully requests that the Board of Game immediately undertake any necessary field studies, if required, to support the implementation of such a



program. We further recommend that any studies undertaken include not only biological studies but also include consultations with the communities in our region. The local residents have valuable first hand information and experiences that should be factored into any conclusion regarding the predator population.

BBNC supports the comments submitted by BBNA, the Iliamna, Nushagak and Togiak Advisory Councils, and the villages in our region. To the extent that the Board of Game believes this issue needs further study, and we express no view on whether or not that is necessary, BBNC strongly encourages the Board to begin that work now and to do so with the input of the Bristol Bay villages.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Metrokin".

Jason Metrokin, President & CEO  
Bristol Bay Native Corporation