

DRAFT

March 17, 2016

Senator Cathy Giessel, Chair
Senate Resources Committee
State Capitol Room 427
Juneau, AK 99801

Subject: Support for House Bill 137 concerning hunting, trapping, and sport fish fees

Dear Senator Giessel:

As Chairman of the Board of Game (Board), I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you the concerns often expressed by the Board on issues related to the ability of the Department of Fish and Game to carry the increasing resource management demands being placed on the agency. Particularly, the Board is concerned about the Division of Wildlife Conservation's (division) funding and the need for additional funds should the existing general funds in the division be significantly reduced. By all accounts, those funds will decline which brings us to the only practical solution which is the need for license increases.

I am concerned that the division stands to lose federal aid dollars if they are unable to match the Pittman-Robertson funds available to the state. Presently the state's obligation of federal matching dollars is way short of the funds available for matching at a 3:1 federal to state matching ratio. Obviously, additional fish and game fund dollars are necessary to take advantage of the existing Pittman-Robertson funds available.

Unfortunately a portion of federal matching funds may not be used for certain aspects of the intensive management programs already on the books, as well other division programs not eligible for federal matching dollars. Thus, the only rational solution is to support license increases and the surcharge to fill in the financial gap. Since hunting and trapping license fees have not been raised since 1993, the timing seems appropriate and justified to seek increases this year.

I support House Bill 137 concerning hunting, trapping and sport fish fees to increase support for Department management programs. I believe the support among the State's user public for the inclusion of an intensive management surcharge to ensure important management programs for hunting continue is vital to the acceptance of this legislation. It is an innovative method for directing management efforts, and with a sunset provision allows for evaluation in the future to ascertain if the surcharge should continue.

If I can assist, in any way, the legislative process, I stand ready and willing to participate.

Sincerely,

Ted Spraker, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

cc: Representative Dave Talerico, State House District 6
Commissioner Sam Cotten, Department of Fish and Game
Bruce Dale, Director, Division of Wildlife Conservation

DRAFT

March 14, 2016

The Honorable U.S. Senator Dan Sullivan
United States Senate
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Sullivan:

On behalf of Alaska Board of Game, I would like to express our sincere appreciation for your efforts to halt the new restrictions proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to intervene and diminish the state's authority to manage our wildlife resources. The announcement of the Proposed Rules by the FWS on January 8, 2016 is yet another example of the incessant energies by the FWS to direct their agenda in wildlife management away from conservation and multiple uses, towards preservation. You were correct in your testimonial; the new regulations will subject the State of Alaska into a role of subservience and bypass the will of Congress, rescinding federal law.

As you are aware, ANILCA was written to protect the ability of the State of Alaska to manage wildlife on all lands, whether they are private, state or federally managed. Section 1314 of the Act further states, "Nothing in this Act is intended to enlarge or diminish the responsibility and authority of the State of Alaska for management of fish or wildlife on the public lands except as may be provided in title VIII of this Act, or to amend the Alaska constitution." Your amendment to prevent the FWS from finalizing its Proposed Rule, approved in the Environmental and Public Works Committee on January 20, 2016 to be included in the Bipartisan Sportsmen's Act, was a powerful achievement and message on behalf of Alaskans believing the state should manage our own wildlife resources as granted to us in our statehood compact, under the equal footing doctrine.

We deeply appreciate your ongoing support to protect the Alaska way of life and applaud your efforts to continue to hold federal agencies accountable when they overreach their authority.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

March 14, 2016

The Honorable Congressman Don Young
United States House of Representatives
2314 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Young,

On behalf of Alaska Board of Game, I would like to first express our sincere appreciation for your long dedication to preserving the Alaska way of life through your now 22nd term in the House of Representatives. Many great changes have occurred during your watch, and it has not gone unnoticed by Alaskans. I would also applaud your efforts to halt the new restrictions proposed by the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to intervene and diminish the state's authority to manage our wildlife resources. The announcement of the Proposed Rules by the FWS on January 8, 2016 is yet another example of the incessant energies by the FWS to direct their agenda in wildlife management away from conservation and multiple uses, towards preservation.

As you are aware, ANILCA was written to protect the ability of the State of Alaska to manage wildlife on all lands, whether they are private, state or federally managed. Section 1314 of the Act further states, "Nothing in this Act is intended to enlarge or diminish the responsibility and authority of the State of Alaska for management of fish or wildlife on the public lands except as may be provided in title VIII of this Act, or to amend the Alaska constitution." Your amendment approved during House consideration of H.R. 2406, the Sportsmen's Heritage and Recreational and Enhancement (SHARE) Act to strike down recent rule makings by the Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Park Service upon federal lands in Alaska, was a powerful achievement and message on behalf of Alaskans believing the state should manage our own wildlife resources as granted to us in our statehood compact, under the equal footing doctrine.

We deeply appreciate your ongoing support, protecting the Alaska way of life and applaud your efforts to continue to hold federal agencies accountable when they overreach their authority.

Sincerely,