



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

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### Proposed DNR Guide Concession Program

The Board of Game (BOG) is currently considering sending in another letter to the legislature in support of the proposed DNR Guide Concession Program (GCP) that would give certain guides exclusive rights to guide on state land. This proposed program was before the 28<sup>th</sup> Legislature five years ago but for many reasons – not the least of which was opposition from guides – failed to get the votes for passage.

Since repeal of exclusive guide use areas under the Owsichuk decision, right up through the present day, the Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB) has had the authority and mandate to regulate (limit) guides in the interest of the state's wildlife resources and the guide industry. The BOG has never written a letter to the BGCSB requesting their cooperation in addressing overcrowding of guides and the corresponding impact on the state's wildlife resources and resident hunters.

Instead, the BOG has joined the board that regulates guides (BGCSB) in seeking regulation (limitation) of guides that only the legislature can approve via a new exclusive guide use area program.

It should go without saying that the recognized problems have never been about "too many guides," rather it is about too many nonresident hunters who are required to hire a guide for the must-be-guided species. The BOG has the authority and mandate to regulate and limit nonresident hunters when they impact our wildlife resources and/or resident hunter ability to have a reasonable opportunity of success and a quality hunting experience.

Yet the BOG has for the past decade refused to limit nonresident hunters, continuing to state that the proposed GCP is the preferred solution to the problem of too many nonresident hunters.

The proposed GCP is effectively dead on arrival in the legislature, but now via covert means the guide industry has secured federal receipt authority to fund startup of the program without legislative approval. This funding is directed to "wildfire suppression efforts" under control of the Division of Mining, Land and Water (DNR) with the understanding it will be diverted to the GCP. In the real world, that means funding to fight the Sockeye wildfire of 2015 that impacted so many Alaskans will instead go toward funding an exclusive guide use area program.

This is what the BOG will be supporting with another letter to the legislature. They will be supporting going around the public process, taking money away from wildfire suppression efforts in the state, and disenfranchising the many guides and members of the public who have already said they don't want to see a guide concession program on state lands.

We urge the Board of Game to reconsider their support of the GCP without it going through a full public process and legislative approval.

Sincerely,

Mark Richards – Executive Director Resident Hunters of Alaska