

Senator MacKinnon, members of the committee. My name is Doug Vincent-Lang. Thank you for hearing my testimony on HB 137.

Let me begin by saying I support an adequately Department and overall I believe this bill does this on the hunting side. One recommendation I have is for you on the hunting side is to reduce the general resident and non-resident hunting license fee increases in this bill and keep the Intensive Management surcharge at \$10 and \$30 for residents and non-residents, respectively. I also urge you to keep the current language that ensures that surcharge fees are only used intensive management via the establishment of a subaccount within the Fish and Game Fund (modelled after sport fish hatchery surcharge) that specifies that deposited surcharge fees be only used to fund intensive management of game populations as set out under AS 16.05.255(e). These projects have a proven track record in benefiting hunters. They are also at risk to to reduced general fund allocations.

I also suggest that you recommend to future finance sub-committees for ADF&G that they use CIP budgets to direct spending of increased revenues generated from these fees rather than increasing operational budgets where the agency has too much discretion and flexibility to adjust priorities and expenditures within broad missions and goals, some of which are not programs supported by the hunting community.

Finally, I support the removal of the hatchery surcharge language that was done by Senate Resources. I was closely involved in the establishment of the sport fish hatchery surcharge. I, the Department, and the bill sponsor, Senator Seekins, all made a commitment to anglers and user groups that this surcharge would go away when the bonds were paid off. To keep this surcharge and remove the language dedicating the collected fees to hatchery bond repayment breaks a promise and commitment made to anglers. If the legislature wishes to turn the surcharge into general license fee increase they should make it clear that this is their intention and rename the surcharge. Otherwise future bond surcharges will be viewed with skepticism, rightly so.

Thank you again for allowing me to comment.