

# Representative Bob Herron

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House District 38  
Kuskokwim & Johnson Rivers  
Kuskokwim Bay & Nelson Island

Akiachak  
Akiak  
Atmautluak  
Bethel  
Chefornak  
Eek  
Goodnews Bay  
Kasigluk  
Kipnuk  
Kongiganak  
Kwethluk  
Kwigillingok  
Lower Kalskag  
Mekoryuk  
Mertarvik  
Napakiak  
Napaskiak  
Newtok  
Nightmute  
Nunapitchuk  
Oscarville  
Platinum  
Quinhagak  
Toksook Bay  
Tuluksak  
Tununak  
Tuntutuliak  
Upper Kalskag

## Sponsor Statement

### House Bill 227: Holitna River Basin Hunting, Fishing & Trapping Reserve

This bill addresses several major areas of identified needs in protecting or furthering the management concepts embodied within the state's intensive management policies.

First, HB 227 establishes a burden of proof for legal challenges by animal welfare groups – legal challenges that may suspend or pre-empt active management programs designed to manage fish or game populations for human harvest benefit. It seeks to define legal avenues for process challenges in these designated areas by animal welfare entities that often emphasize political science over biological science within our state's management structure.

Second, although some limited active management programs have been implemented with the support of past gubernatorial administrations, this bill is intended to strengthen statutory, constitutional-related active management principles.

Third, the bill is specifically written to be compatible with other "Breadbasket" areas within the state's Intensive Management Areas which exemplify high quality habitat and productivity contributions to entire GMU sub-regions.

Finally, it intends to clearly establish the priority and primary management use of the area to protect the hunting, fishing & trapping activities for future generations. Frustration has been expressed throughout the state where it was thought these values were being protected through the creation of Refuges or Public Use Management Areas only to see these areas experience increasing restrictions, closures, or other actions such as banning of firearms.

This proposed reserve concept was initiated by the Sleetmute Traditional and Orutsarmiut Native Councils; has records of support from the Lower Kuskokwim, Central Kuskokwim, Stony/Holitna and Anchorage Fish & Game Advisory Committees, Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group, Association of Village Council Presidents and Calista Corporation; and has undergone legal review through the State Board of Game process, twice receiving their endorsement.