

DATE: 12/19/08
TO: Alaska State Senators
RE: Bear Problems
FROM: Sandra Kranich, 9780 Carlson Road, Anchorage (1 block past Elmore off Abbott Road; wooded area). Phone: 346-1901

We, and many of my immediate neighbors, are concerned about the steady increase in bear wandering thru our residential areas – with a possible serious threat to humans, pets and property. We have lived at the same address for 40 years – and last summer we had a dramatic increase with bear encounters. A black bear sow and 3 cubs **during the afternoon** were next to our home entrance where grandkids, family and employees are constantly coming in and out. It was a wonder someone didn't get between the sow and cubs. Then they went to our neighbors that have 7 kids playing outside on a regular basis. They stayed in the neighborhood off and on for about 5 weeks. (We and our neighbors keep our garbage in special bear-proof dumpsters and take out smelly garbage the day of pickup – trying our best not to attract bear in any way!) Later in the summer, a male black bear was constantly in our backyard **during the day and evening**, in our driveway and at neighbor's places off and on for about 4 weeks. It is my opinion that bears continuing to multiply in this part of town poses a potential threat that should be dealt with **now!** However, Fish and Game tell us we are attracting the bear and won't do anything about the threat. In talking to many others, I find the following points are significant:

- The bear population is causing people to have to keep their kids inside more because of bear in their personal yards; people are using the trails for running, biking and hiking **LESS** because of bear; people are not letting their kids walk to school as much because of bear, people are not out walking on their own streets because of bear, etc. Quality of life is **LESS** for many people!
- If someone in your family was attacked by a bear in your own yard, how fast would you be able to get a gun, load it and shoot before the person was dead or possibly disfigured for life? Does this mean people are going to need to carry a loaded gun when they and their children/grandchildren go outside in their own yard or walk on their own street?
- Fish and Game are attracting bear to our city with stocking salmon in city streams. If there is a **LOW** salmon and berry year – then we will have extra hungry bears in our neighborhoods! When people have vent fans on while cooking dinner, surely bear will smell that – with break-in's if really hungry. It's bad enough to have a 300 lb black bear break in – but what about a 1,200 lb. grizzly (like those multiplying at Campbell Creek)?
- I believe the City and State are open to major lawsuits if someone is injured on their own property and Fish and Game refuses to remove the bear after having been called. Someone could be hospitalized for many months with lifetime disfigurement from a bear attack, if they live through it! Many people don't have insurance – and a lawsuit would be needed to cover the possible huge medical expenses. We have laws to keep dogs leashed so they don't hurt other animals and people – **why can't we control the bear?**
- Bears are being born in neighborhoods and are multiplying fast. (That sow and 3 cubs for example). People that say "we must learn to live with the bears or move -- that they were here first" are unrealistic. People should be able to clear out a safe area for Anchorage citizens. Most of Alaska is uninhabited and there is plenty of room for Alaskan citizens **AND** bears – just in the proper places for each.