

Alaska Chapter SCI
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February 12, 2011

The Honorable Lesil McGuire
Alaska State Senate
120 4th St. State Capitol, Rm. 125
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator McGuire:

SCI Alaska Chapter wishes to thank you for taking the necessary steps to bring SB 24 forward for consideration and action by the Alaska State Legislature. We thoroughly endorse this action and believe the record will show that it is a necessary step to preserve important conservation principles where commercial interests are involved.

In formulating a conservation ethic, President Teddy Roosevelt and his contemporaries recognized early on that commercial use of fish and wildlife resources were one of the most serious obstacles to the establishment of conservation initiatives following what has become known as the North American Model for Wildlife Conservation. Those same concerns remain valid today.

No matter what you may hear, commercial uses of our fish and wildlife are primarily about making money and not conservation. Furthermore, commercial guides increase pressure on the resource through targeted marketing campaigns used to direct potential clients to a specific location. Although some would like you to believe they are just providing a transportation service I can tell you as a former guide of many years that is just not true. Marketing and other similar activities by commercial interests act to increase pressure on our finite wild renewable resources and must be regulated.

The growth of Alaska's sportfishing industry over the past two decades leads us to the unavoidable conclusion that conservation and professional standards necessitate action such as SB 24. Although you will hear many voices claiming they aren't doing anything more than providing a service to put licensed anglers on a lake, stream or salt water, the truth is that at least in some instances they are placing increased pressure on the resource. On top of that, there really isn't any mechanism to adjudicate unethical behavior.

Many professions in Alaska are regulated by a professional standards board and that is as it should be. It is time for the sportfishing industry to accept this concept and move forward. Most of our members are avid outdoorsmen and women and we strongly support the idea that conservation must be the linchpin upon which all fish and wildlife uses rest. Enacting SB 24 will ensure that happens.

Thank you for your efforts on the behalf of Alaska's anglers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Eddie Grasser'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Eddie Grasser
Governmental Affairs
(907) 841-0358

SCI's Top Gun Chapter