

Representative Josephson,

I fully support and applaud your efforts in House Bill 105. Alaskans have long needed a more common sense, balanced approach to managing it's wildlife in a manner congruent with it's Constitution, rather than catering to a specific interest.

Regards,

David Plant
Palmer, AK 99645

Representative Josephson,

I support HB 105 establishing a boundary protecting Denali Wolves from hunting. I have lived in Alaska almost 30 years and have never seen a wolf. I would like to see one in the wild before I die and will appreciate everything you can do to protect them. Thank you.

Patricia Cue

Rep. Josephson,

I am in support of HB105 that establishes a wolf buffer around Denali National Park. Thank you for helping to get the bill through.

Sherry Dugan

Girdwood

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I have been an Alaskan just short of 40 years and deeply care about this state, including our reputation. With state dollars dwindling, it is only sensible to support tourism as well as sound wildlife management. In recent years the Alaska Board of Game has significantly contributed to the depletion of predators along the Denali park boundary. They approved proposals to allow baiting and snaring of bears. Of course, not only bears, but wolves and other predators are drawn to those bait sites and then killed. One nearby trapper bragged to a National Geographic reporter last year about how he ruined viewing of wolves for thousands of tourists. The article showed him bragging and displaying dead wolves. Alaska can do without that black eye.

The Alaska Board of Game does not represent a reasonable balanced view. They discussed this issue last year and voted down two proposals that would have addressed this issue. Continuing to allow trapping and killing right along the Denali park boundary, where these sought after sightings are most feasible is unconscionable and economically foolish. The House of Representatives can go a long way to rectify this stain on the state by passing HB 105. It is the right thing to do. If the Senate fails to also pass the bill, in spite of House passage, Governor Walker will have more incentive to take corrective action. You can bet I will be among those urging him to act, if our representatives fail us. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Patricia OBrien

Thank you for this, & I hope enough reasonable people can be found to make it happen. I know people who say they would love to visit Alaska, but that the primitive "predator control" policies are one thing that keeps them from doing so. If we're going to have a growing tourist economy, we should evolve to the point that potential tourists don't despise Alaska. Once again, thank you.

Jef Harvey

"House Bill 105 aims to create the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area which would be a buffer zone near the border of Denali National Park where wolves may not be hunted. [...] The opportunity to view wolves is a big incentive to visit the park. Unfortunately wolf viewing success has declined dramatically. A buffer zone previously established in 2000 on the park's eastern boundary to protect the wolves was removed by the Board of Game in 2010. In 2014, less than 6% of park visitors were able to see wolves, down from 45 percent back in 2010. Wolf population has declined from 116 in spring 2006 to 50 in spring 2014. House Bill 105 helps to correct these trends."

Dear Andy

I am in total support of establishing a trapping buffer around part of Denali Park and applaud your sponsoring the bill. While this doesn't look like a total fix, any improvement for protection is a good move considering the disastrous decisions made by the Board of Game. I find it hard to believe that trapping a few animals in that iconic landscape is more important than the benefit that they bring to the thousands of visitors to Alaska.

I will never forget the photo of the dead alpha female from the Toklat pack that was being hauled off by a trapper in 2005. There are just some things that have to be respected. Trapping is not selective (nor is killing bears and wolves in their dens).

Thank you,
Cherie

--

Cherie Northon, Ph.D.

Dear Representative Seaton,

I write to urge you to give your full hearted support to HB 105. If adopted, it would establish a controlled use area in the Stampede road area on the north side of the old Denali National Park boundaries. As drafted, the taking of wolves in the controlled use area would be prohibited except for purposes of protecting public health and safety. The proposed controlled use area is often referred to as a "Denali Buffer".

This is a "people" bill, and not a "wildlife" bill. I say that because more than 200,000 people ride the Park buses every summer, looking for wildlife and scenery. The people trapping for wolves in the affected area number less than five. To me, it seems a simple choice: the greatest benefit for a large number of people; or the donation of a public resource to a tiny minority.

A Denali buffer has been a contentious issue for at least 17 years. I speak from experience, since I was a member of a Board of Game subcommittee which was directed to attempt to reach consensus on this issue. That was in 2000-2001, as best I recall.

A buffer was approved by the BOG at about that time, and in the following years, sightings of wolves was common from the Park buses. I believe the National Park Service determined that about 44% of these people saw wolves during the years the buffer was in effect.

In 2010 the Board of Game eliminated the buffer. Wolf sightings declined dramatically as a handful of people trapped and shot the same wolves viewed by people on the buses. In the last year for which data is available only 4% of the people riding the Park buses saw wolves.

For 17 years I have listened to, read, and considered most of the arguments given as to why a handful of individuals should take from hundreds of thousands of people of the opportunity to view wolves. Those arguments are excuses. No person can honestly say that the value of trapping wolves by 1 - 5 individuals outweighs the value of viewing opportunity for more than 200,000 people, every year.

I listened to the recent deliberations of the members of the Board of Game as they once again rejected all proposals for a buffer. That was in March, 2017. The discussion by BOG members was about trappers, exaggerations by advocates for a buffer, whether the number of tourists was increasing or decreasing, and whether the wolf population would recover. NOT ONCE did I hear mention of the enjoyment that people get from seeing a wolf.

Let me state loudly and clearly: I find it thrilling and wonderful to see a wolf, or several wolves. I visit Denali National Park, often. When an individual takes a Park wolf in the Stampede Road area, something of value is taken from me. I am a citizen of this state. I have lived and worked here for 42 years. The same is true of many of the people on those buses.

The buffer area will consist of less than one tenth of 1% of the State's public lands. HB 105 is about wildlife viewing; and that means it's about people: including Alaskans like me.

I urge you to enthusiastically support and push for the passage of HB 105.

Very truly yours,
Kneeland Taylor

Greetings -

I'm looking at the recent report on tourist spending. Some of it is by tourists visiting Denali National Park. Besides the mountain, those tourists want to see healthy populations of large animals, not just caribou and moose but bears and wolves. A photo by Gordon Haber shows a bus on the park road full of fascinated tourists watching a female wolf and her pups. That scene will stay with these lucky visitors for the rest of their lives.

That scene is now rare. The park wolves stray out of the park in search of caribou and are attracted by smelly bear baiting stations where they are trapped and killed. HB105 would prohibit the taking of wolves in these areas just outside the park and stop this huge loss of an iconic park attraction.

I have been an Alaskan for 40 years and I support HB105 with all my heart.

Sincerely,

Douglas McIntosh

Please pass HB 105. Wildlife viewing is important to many Alaskans and the many tourists who visit Alaska and add nearly 3 billion to our economy each year. Now, more than ever, we must find new ways of generating income for our state. This one can be self sustaining if we protect this precious resource. Please have enough vision to see what this can do for our future.

Bill Jaso

Dear Representative Josephson:

I'm writing to support House Bill 105, Creating the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Management Area. From reading summaries of wolf management on Isle Royale and Yellow Stone national parks, I believe this management area is needed for a healthy wolf population, which in turn will foster a healthy, balanced ecosystem, valuable tourist attraction also.

Thank you,

Mark Miller

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee

I am writing to support HB 105. This bill addresses the area where the habitat and prey for wolves extends beyond the border within which they are protected. Without a buffer to protect wolves, they have been killed one by one when outside of the park to the extent that a pack no longer exists on the east side of the park. If a buffer is established, there would be a possibility that a pack could form again in the future. Even in a state as large as Alaska, it is unusual to have a wolf pack that is able to live naturally in the wild without mortality from being trapped. Wolf packs are emblematic of wilderness, and it would be wonderful to have an area where one could exist.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Pauline N. Strong

Representative Josephson,

I strongly support HB 105, and thank you for it.

I support the wolf buffer area around Denali Park because:

1. it supports Alaska tourism . Thousands of people spend an enormous amount of tourist dollars to come to Alaska, and they expect to see wolves in Denali National Park.

The buffer zone is crucial to wolf pack survival.

The buffer zone is crucial to stop the alarming decline in the wolf population there.

Tourist dollars are so important during our state's fiscal difficulties.

2. it does not harm trappers

Comparatively a few trappers are not really significantly hurt in any way by this buffer zone.

The zone will help keep wolf populations going—it is good science.

Thus tourists and trappers are both winners.

thank you,

Ellen Vande Visse, Palmer

Dear House Finance Committee members:

I'm writing in full support of HB105, a bill to create the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area which would be a buffer zone near the border of Denali National Park where wolves may not be hunted.

I am a 30+ year Alaska resident; I have followed the issue of Denali NP wolf protection for decades, and have experienced first-hand the drop in viewability of wild wolves in the park with hunting/trapping along its boundaries. I am also co-author, with Gordon Haber, of *Among Wolves*, which describes in detail the effects of hunting and trapping along park boundaries on wolves, on the ecosystems of the park, and on the experiences of the 500K+ annual visitors to the park.

Protecting Denali's wolves is clearly a win-win for the State of Alaska, and never more so than in these times of declining oil revenues.

Please vote for HB105.

Sincerely,

Marybeth Holleman

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee and Rep. Andy Josephson, I write in support of HB 105, the proposed Gordon Haber Special Management Area.

My support for closure to this area to protect Denali National Park wolves in particular is decades old and reflects an outpouring of support from Alaskans.

Most recently my support reflects a formal request to Gov. Walker made by formal resolution August 2016 by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly to close this area in the interests of especially the tourist industry as it impacts the broader Fairbanks area.

I must emphasize that the Alaska Board of Game, after an on-again-off-again-and another on-again off again-closure has again twice in recent deliberations refused to recognize requested re-closure, ignoring a very substantial public support for closure to protect park wildlife wandering beyond park bounds attracted by bait stations and are killed by a few trappers and hunters.

I emphasize the Alaska Board of Game in its failure to deal appropriately with repeated formal proposed closures refuses to recognize that maintenance Alaska's wildlife, especially park wildlife, with strays otherwise killed and wolves in this instance of HB 105, is essential to Alaska's prosperity as it grows an enormously growing visitor industry economy.

Maintenance of Denali Park wolves is but one important element of the our state's building blocks to a future sustainable visitor economy.

I also fear our Legislature, please take note, is very slow to recognize this future; But, I pray that you members of House Finance will break this archaic mold and move for an enlightened, sustainable economic future and culture that takes in account Alaska's unique wildlife.

Our Alaska Board of Game cannot and will not respond appropriately in its continued stubborn failure to recognize that support this greater wildlife experience is a central building block to an economic future, unique among states and even nations.

To continue without support and recognition for among Alaska's greatest assets for which I plead here with passage of HB105 will ultimately cripple Alaska, confining to an old and very outdated model.

Continued failures of the Alaska Legislature to move on and take an enlightened posture toward Alaskan wildlife will eventually cripple a prosperity for Alaska's future.

Please give your unqualified support for HB 105 as a needed start.

Thank you.

Jim Kowalsky

45 year Fairbanksan

Dear Representative Josephson,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 105, as it is now before the House Finance Committee. This legislation which will prohibit the taking of wolves on State lands in the vicinity of the Stampede trail is long overdue. Unfortunately, the Alaska Board of Game has repeatedly refused to re-establish a closure to wolf hunting and trapping. They have allowed extreme baiting tactics including the use of hog carcasses and other refuse by a few rogue hunters and trappers to decimate wolf families associated with northeastern Denali National Park. Before these practices were allowed, visitors were able to see wolves at a 45% success rate, but now the success rate is only about 5%.

This has not gone unnoticed, and Alaska is getting an increasingly black eye in the eyes of the world. The situation was even highlighted in a major article in National Geographic magazine (Feb 2016) which exposed the failure of Alaska to carefully administer the non-consumptive interests of our wildlife. Realizing the potential impact to our tourism industry, and economy, the Fairbanks North Star Borough passed Resolution 2016-39 urging Governor Walker to use his authority to close the Stampede area to the taking of wolves. Unfortunately the Governor has not done so. Thus passage of HB 105 is essential to rectify a gross and inappropriate activity that threatens our reputation as responsible stewards as well as our tourism economy.

Thank you for your efforts to advance HB 105, and I urge all members of the House Finance Committee to pass this important bill.

Sincerely,
Fran Mauer

To House Finance Committee,

There are many reasons why this bill deserves support, but since you are the finance committee, I will address the fiscal issue:

Damaging a multi-million dollar tourism economy in favor of a multi-hundred dollar trapping season in one small area of our vast state seems to me to be the height of foolishness.

There is no question that this small handful of wolves plays a very large role in the tourist draw to Denali. Visitors (including thousands who are Alaska residents) consistently cite wildlife viewing as one of their primary reasons for coming to Denali. And leaving behind a LOT of money. The value of the same few wolves, as fur, is by comparison so small that it might as well be zero.

The BOG does not like the feds, yeah, I get that loud and clear. The phrase “Cutting off your nose to spite your face” comes to mind.

And no, it does not make sense to argue that there will only be further “expansion” of the park. Not unless there is a plan to relocate the park road, which is where all this wildlife viewing takes place.

Sincerely,
Josh Klauder
Talkeetna

PS I hunt, fish, and wear fur.

Greetings ~

I am writing in support of establishing the 'no-take' Wolf Buffer Zone adjacent to Denali Park. The wolves of the Park need protection when they venture outside the man-made boundaries! Wolf packs exist as families and suffer greatly when broken up by having family members missing abnormally. The breakdown of the pack can easily mean its demise. Scientists & biologists have proven this.

Please protect the wolves which the tourists come to see. These wolves are valuable as viable, living beings to Alaskans & tourists alike.

Please do what you know is right.

Robin Song

Talkeetna

Please support HB 105 Denali wolf buffer.

The Board of Game does not own Alaska's wolves. Alaska's wildlife belongs to all Alaskans and visitors alike. The Board of Game is comprised of hunters/trappers, and it is managing this resource strictly for the benefit of those consumptive user groups. This tiny piece of land set aside from hunting would acknowledge the vast majority of Alaskans and visitors who are non-consumptive users of wildlife.

Please support HB 105 Denali wolf buffer

Thank you,
Dan Bissinger

I believe it's difficult to make a rational argument for keeping this critical little scrap of land open to trapping and hunting. There are only a handful of trappers and hunters who benefit, and mortality of wolves that spend most of their time in the NP is well documented. The Board of Game seems to be so biased towards consumption, they sound like early 20th century westerners. Please put the buff back in buffer!

Alan Seegert

In strongly support HB 105 and ask the Finance Committee to also support it.. I had not visited Denali National Park in many years, until last year, and was surprised at the lack of wolves in the area of the park road, as in years past. I have followed the story of the history, and do believe it is in the State's best interest to protect this area outside the park, so these wonderful beautiful animals can recover and come back. It is such a small area of the state, but can mean so much.

Thank you,

Milli Martin

I am writing to let you know that I STRONGLY support a Denali wolf buffer. And I always have. It is a crime what has happened to the Denali wolf packs. I have never been lucky enough to see a wolf in Denali National Park. If the current trend of allowing trappers and hunters to wantonly kill Denali wolves to continue, I will never see a wolf in Denali. To be honest, I hate trapping anywhere. Allowing the trapping of Denali wolves is even worse. Many tourists visit Denali and hope to see a live wolf. The "legally" trapped and killed stuffed wolf in the visitors center is a travesty. Give the wolves a fighting chance! PLEASE create a buffer zone to protect the Denali wolves. Please...

Becky Breeding
Chugiak, Alaska

I support HB 105. Denali wolves are to be celebrated and enjoyed by park visitors, not killed when they cross the park boundary. The chance to see them attracts millions of people; killing them accomplishes nothing.

Pat Lavin

Dear Representative Josephson:

I support HB 105, the establishment of a wolf buffer zone around Denali National Park and Preserve.

The impact of removing the buffer zone is well documented.

The chance to see a wolf is part of what drives the massive economic driver that is the Denali Park -- an economic driver with very little environmental impact, one that is sustainable for centuries. How often do we have that chance?

And why in the name of all that is holy would be jeopardize that for a few hunters and trappers?

Hunters and trappers have an entire state within which to operate; let's keep this small slice protected.

Thank you,

Kendra

Zamzow

Chickaloon, AK 99674

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I urge you to support HB 105 to protect the wolves of Denali. I have been an Alaska resident for 37 years and I'm concerned about our economy, our resources, and our wildlife. Oil is not what it was in 1980 but tourists want to keep coming. Wildlife viewing is a key tourism draw. HB 105 is a step in the right direction.

Thank you,
Carol Hult

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee and Rep. Andy Josephson, I write in support of HB 105, the proposed Gordon Haber Special Management Area.

My support for closure to this area to protect Denali National Park wolves in particular is decades old and reflects an outpouring of support from Alaskans.

Most recently my support reflects a formal request to Gov. Walker made by formal resolution August 2016 by the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly to close this area in the interests of especially the tourist industry as it impacts the broader Fairbanks area.

I must emphasize that the Alaska Board of Game, after an on-again-off-again-and another on-again off again- closure has again twice in recent deliberations refused to recognize requested re-closure, ignoring a very substantial public support for closure to protect park wildlife wandering beyond park bounds attracted by bait stations and are killed by a few trappers and hunters.

I emphasize the Alaska Board of Game in its failure to deal appropriately with repeated formal proposed closures refuses to recognize that maintenance Alaska's wildlife, especially park wildlife, with strays otherwise killed and wolves in this instance of HB 105, is essential to Alaska's prosperity as it grows an enormously growing visitor industry economy.

Maintenance of Denali Park wolves is but one important element of the our state's building blocks to a future sustainable visitor economy.

I also fear our Legislature, please take note, is very slow to recognize this future; But, I pray that you members of House Finance will break this archaic mold and move for an enlightened, sustainable economic future and culture that takes in account Alaska's unique wildlife.

Our Alaska Board of Game cannot and will not respond appropriately in its continued stubborn failure to recognize that support this greater wildlife experience is a central building block to an economic future, unique among states and even nations.

To continue without support and recognition for among Alaska's greatest assets for which I plead here with passage of HB105 will ultimately cripple Alaska, confining to an old and very outdated model.

Continued failures of the Alaska Legislature to move on and take an enlightened posture toward Alaskan wildlife will eventually cripple a prosperity for Alaska's future.

Please give your unqualified support for HB 105 as a needed start.

Thank you.

Jim Kowalsky

45 year Fairbanksan

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

House Bill 105 aims to create the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area which would be a buffer zone near the border of Denali National Park where wolves may not be hunted. [...]

Please pass this bill.

At this time, Alaska is in a budget CRISIS due to many factors. One factor being focusing on only one revenue source – oil.

Tourism is a HUGE industry for our state too and can be grown with you taking your eyes off oil for a minute and passing HB105.

Many tourists as well as Alaskans (Alaskans being EXCELLENT word-of-mouth marketers) enjoy our wild lands and animals to include the elusive wolves in Denali National Park – one of the few places I've been blessed to see them in my many years of enjoying the back country. We, and our visitors, would like to continue seeing the wolves and other animals in the areas this buffer zone would protect. As well as keeping the habitat in balance which their presence ensures.

With poor Board of Game decisions, the number of wolves in the area has declined by alarming numbers. The buffer zone will assist in bringing these numbers back to correct levels. Correct levels will not only be healthy for the Park, it will be healthy for our economy.

It's painful having discussions with friends, family and conservation community members about NOT having a buffer zone in one of the top "attractions" of our state, Denali National Park, because not having the buffer makes no sense! People pay a LOT of money to come to our state to see wolves and other animals in their natural habitat. The animals and land is our main draw for tourists. We should support this cash cow and support HB105!!

With the bad news circulating about "predator control" on wildlife refuges, "predator control" for trophy hunting (we all know this to be true), and this matter of the BOG fighting against buffer zones for the cash cow of DNP, folks are starting to view Alaska's game management in a poor light. Even ME! I've read about it on many news sites so, it's "out there" for all to form an opinion on.

As far as the economy is concerned, the BOG has allowed a few hunters to have their take in an area that is a huge financial resource for the state. Meanwhile, the MASSES stand by asking how this makes ANY sense. The BOG's fight against the buffer to preserve the resource of viewing animals in the Park as well as other actions continues to be a growing stain on Alaska's reputation worldwide.

Please do the right thing by establishing this buffer zone. It makes sense financially on several levels which is the goal of your committee. Make it right and I'm positive the FEW hunters and trappers in that zone will find their way to other haunts in this VAST state while preserving what we have in the shadow of The Great One. Good all around!

Respectfully,

Rebekah Riley

Wasilla

Dear Representative Josephson,

I urge you and the House Finance Committee to support HB 105 that aims to create the Gordon Haber Denali Wold Special Management Area. I feel deeply about this issue and feel a large faction of the Alaskan population is not well represented on the Board of Game (BOG) and certainly does not reflect the BOG's ongoing aim in intensive predator control practices. The BOG's decision to remove the established buffer zone on the Denali National Park's eastern boundary to protect wolves from intensive predator control practices has ill served Alaskans both economically through tourism income, but also on an ethical and scientific basis.

With the decline of Denali National Park's wolf population and especially the East Toklat wolf population, a very special and very long studied group of wolves have been eliminated by a very specific and extremely narrow interest group. The BOG should represent a broader representation and should answer to a broader mission.

HB 105 will help to correct a much needed correction. Please, I urge you to support this bill. The time has come.

Alaska cannot afford the black eye it has in this regard.

Thank you and sincerely,

Rika Mouw

Homer, Alaska

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

I support HB 105 and urge the House to pass it. Though controversial, wolves can be a major attraction for tourists and residents. Adding a reasonable buffer on state land, as this bill would, to prevent hunting and trapping of wolves that are a popular attraction in the Denali area makes tremendous sense. It sends a signal, regardless of what the Senate does, to the Governor and Board of Game that protecting the Denali wolves is important.

Paul Twardock
Anchorage

Those wolves need that buffer zone. They travel so far each day. I hike in Juneau and several times we have seen wolves, it is the best experience. And on all the ridges here in Juneau we see wolf scat. Please they our protection. I have been to Denali several times and have never seen a wolf there. Think of the future people that travel to Denali. If they see one they will remember this great state forever. Sandy R. Williams

I strongly support HB 105 (the Denali buffer bill to protect the park's wolves). If enacted, this bill will increase the opportunity for Denali National Park visitors to see wolves. Research has shown this is a high priority for most visitors. It can lead to more money flowing into our economy. Denali visitors spend millions in Alaska—money that is now reduced in the absence of adequate protection of wolves.

Please ensure that Finance Committee members see my comments and are aware of my support prior to Friday's hearing on this bill.

Vic Van Ballenberghe
Anchorage

Please record my strong support for HB105.

Denali wolves have been targeted for years just outside of the park boundaries. Wolve numbers have dropped greatly. The BOG refuses to let any non consumptive voices be heard on this issue. Wolves are an important part of Denali's ecosystem and its economy. More visitors want to see a wolf in Denali than any other animal. Help Alaska's economy and pass HB105.

Thank you

Didier J Lindsey

I am writing in support of your bill. It is important for tourism, the ecosystem and the wolves!

Thanks,
Annemieke Powers
Palmer, AK 99645

Hello Rep. Josephson,

I am writing to urge you to support the bill before the house to reestablish the wolf buffer north of Denali National Park.

I live in the Wolf townships, off Stampede Road, which borders the closure. Based on the low numbers of Denali's historic Wolf packs and the recent human-caused deaths, I am requesting that the wolf buffer be reinstated. It worked well for many, many years. When I first moved to the area, I saw wolves in the park every year for 5 or 6 years. The ideal map for such a closure would be what was included in the Emergency Petition for a Wolf Buffer before the Board of Game in spring 2016. This pack has special significance in that it has been studied for over 50 years and is a symbol of stellar wildlife research. Please protect this distinctly Alaskan resource.

Thanks for your consideration.

Best,

Christine Byl

Healy, AK

I'm writing to urge the finance committees support for HB105 which establishes a no take buffer zone along the northeast border of Denali NP. This is necessary to protect Denali wolves who often wander outside the Parks protective boundary. These wolves are the most studied and viewed wolves in the world and deserve protection. It bodes well for the state, it's many visitors and our reputation and image as a wilderness destination. Please support this bill!

Thank you,

Juliette Boselli

30 year Alaskan resident

I strongly support HB 105, which would reestablish the important buffer for wolves around Denali.

This would not cost the state anything (per the Department of Public Safety), and would help boost tourism, a highly valuable state industry.

This bill take this important decision with state-wide ramifications out of the hands of the somewhat skewed (since the members are mostly hunters and trappers) Board of Game, and be a vehicle for the Legislature to set a wise policy.

Thank you.

Larri

Larri Irene Spengler

We strongly support HB 105! We are long overdue in offering the wolf packs of Denali Ntl Park protection from the few hunters and trappers that continue on the path of extermination of wolves in the park. As you may know, a 70 year study of one pack was ended due to the abuse of subsistence (so called hunting) by one greedy trapper and guide. This is not only the ethical thing to do, but also makes sense from a scientific and financial standpoint. There are several highly respected biologists who support this view.

Thank you!

Sylvia & Marius Panzarella

I strongly support the bill to support a wolf buffer around Denali National Park. This park and its inhabitants are extremely important to Alaska, Alaska's residents, and those who come to visit.

Thank you.

Connie Bennett
Anchorage/99503

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

This is my 22 year as an Alaskan resident and I'm shocked by the wolf population decline in Denali area in just the short time I've been here. I recently read about the billions the state brings in from visitors to Denali National Park. Most of these visitors have hopes and dreams to see a wolf in a wilderness setting, one of the only places on earth they can do that. These tourists come from around the world.

I care about making sure our state closes the budget gap and I think sensible wildlife, fish and habitat protection are key to our longterm economic viability. We can't afford to have a few trappers destroy the wildlife in Denali National Park, which is why I am asking you to help ensure the passing of HB 105.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

Michelle Wilson Nordhoff

Ms. Pierson:

Please distribute the following message to the House Finance Committee members. Thank You.

I would like to state my support for HB 105 for the following reasons:

It is well known that tourists bring many benefits to Alaska's economy. One of the greatest attractions to our state is Denali National Park, and one of the greatest attractions to that area is the opportunity to see a wolf in its natural habitat. Because wolves that inhabit the Park don't recognize artificial boundaries, over the years many of them have been trapped by Alaskans who operate traplines just outside the Park's boundaries. The relatively small area just outside the National Park's boundary that would be protected by HB 105 would benefit wolves resident in the Park, and create an opportunity for visitors to the Park, Alaskans and outsiders alike, to see them. For this reason, it would be an economic benefit to Alaska, and the only cost might be the relatively small cost of a few wolf pelts to a very few trappers. Please vote for the passage of HB 105. Thank you Sincerely, Gerald R. Brookman

Dear Members of House Finance Committee:

Please pass and send forward bill HB105 which is the bill to establish a no-take wolf zone next to Denali National Park.

For the past some 60 years, the State of Alaska has grossly mismanaged its wildlife resources often bowing to pressure to those seeking to make a profit from said mismanagement. Please, let us turn the tables and begin by protecting wolves.

Thank you.

John Stone Porter
Talkeetna, AK

I am writing in support of bill HB 105 - An Act establishing the Denali Wolf Special Management Area Buffer Zone. Lately it appears the Federal government is bent on destroying much of America's natural wildlife. The reasons are very suspect for doing so. Here in Alaska, our state is embarrassing the great majority of its people by supporting a process which is termed "Intensive Wildlife Management". This seems to translate into: killing as much as possible of Alaska's natural predators in ways that are quite inhumane (gassing pups and cubs in dens, baiting and killing pregnant bear and wolf females, etc.) but only favour game hunters and trapping interests.

While purporting to increase ungulate populations of moose, for instance, this system of mass predator extermination fails to provide proof of its effectiveness over the decade or so it has been implemented. Alaska's Board of Game is made up solely of hunter-trappers and the governor and legislature continues to appoint only these consumptive-use people to the Board against the wishes of most Alaskans and what most Alaskans recognize as scientifically reliable programs.

The Board votes unanimously to block any improvements in trapping regulations and other efforts to balance consumptive wildlife use with non-consumptive uses like wildlife viewing, scientific study, natural ebbs and flows of wildlife numbers and photography tourism. The block unanimity voting of the Board suggests that no board member is necessarily "free" to voice his or her opinion, but may be pressured to retain strict obedience to the hunting-trapping dominated point of view.

It would be nice if legislators would consider what "Intensive Wildlife Management" implies and question why the standard operating procedures of the BOG and wildlife authorities is not simply "Wildlife Management" as it should be. In particular, the Denali Buffer Zone should be instated to protect the economically viable wildlife viewing opportunities that brings tourists and tourist dollars to Alaska.

Thank you.

Ken Green Cooper Landing Alaska 99572

Please please support the wolf protection buffer around Denali Natl. Park. . We should not be having to beg for their protection anywhere in Alaska but here they are valuable economically also as a tourist attraction. Thank you.

Diane Raynor

Greetings,

The Casey family of Eagle River Alaska respectfully request support for House Bill 105.

Alaska should put more support in Preserving wildlife, not decimating it.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Larry Casey and Family

Dear Committee members:

HB105 needs to be passed out of your committee with a “pass” recommendation. In addition to not having an impact on the budget, and making the probability of improving the tourist experience in and around Denali National Park, it will rectify the inequity caused by the Board of Game’s refusal to create a buffer zone and the manifestation of the imbalance of the Board of Game being made up of only consumptive users.

Respectfully,

Scott Chesney

Tourism is big in Alaska.

Folks who travel to Denali appreciate wildlife, and seeing a wolf, or wolves, is a highlight for many people to share with friends and family when they return home.

More importantly, wolves help keep wildlife and natural systems in balance wherever they reside.

And most important, we need diversity in the wildlife kingdom.

If we keep killing off wildlife and forests and polluting water, air, and earth, what will the world you leave to your children and grandchildren and great grandchildren, etc. look like????

Support Denali's Wolf Buffer!

Carol Biggs

Juneau resident

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee.

I am writing to ask that you support House Bill 105 that seeks to create the buffer zone near the eastern border of Denali National Park called the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area. I have been an Alaskan for over thirty five years and in that time have been privileged to view much wildlife. In my last visit to Denali Park as a local tourist several years ago, trapping and killing of wolves in this buffer area was restricted and I experienced an incredible viewing of wolves. Some of the viewing of the alpha male and female wolves were fairly close to our vehicle. The year after that visit, wildlife management restricting trapping and killing in what was previously the buffer area were removed. During that time the pregnant alpha female wolf was killed in the buffer area. This is one incident of many that helped cause a sharp decline of wolf sightings in Denali National Park by Alaskans and tourists. Tourism has increasingly become an important industry in Alaska. Wildlife viewing is part of that experience. Please support HB 105 to recreate the buffer zone and support rich wildlife viewing including wolves in Alaska.

Thank you for your time and consideration for this request.

Frances Inoue

Dear Members of the House Finance Committee,

As a 36 year Alaskan I have family and many friends who have visited Alaska. The highlight of their Alaskan visit is our iconic wildlife. Wolves are always on the top of their list when visiting Denali.

Please protect the Denali wolves by reinstating some kind of buffer zone.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Jos Bakker

The 2010 removal of the DNP buffer zone, by the Board of Game, has caused a dramatic decrease in wolf populations in the Park. I strongly support Rep. Josephson's HB 105, creating the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area. This no hunting buffer will provide our tourists with the ability to see wolves, once again, in Denali National Park and be witness to a balanced and healthy environment.

Lorraine Krueger

Dear House Finance Committee Members -

I urge you to support House Bill 105. Being able to view wolves in Denali National Park is treasured by Alaskans and tourists alike, and is a big incentive to visit the park. Unfortunately wolf sightings have declined dramatically in recent years. A buffer zone previously established in 2000 on the park's eastern boundary to protect the wolves was removed by the Board of Game in 2010. In 2014, less than 6% of park visitors were able to see wolves, down from 45 percent back in 2010. Continuing to allow trapping and killing right along the Denali park boundary, where these sought after sightings are most feasible is unconscionable and economically foolish. The House of Representatives can go a long way to rectify this problem by passing HB 105.

Sincerely,
Deborah Ward

Dear Rep. Josephson:

I am writing to express my very strong support for H.B. 105, a reasonable and long overdue measure to protect the wolf packs in Denali National Park and Preserve. Wolves are a big draw for visitors to the park and declines in the wolf population in recent years -- and the reason for those declines -- hurt the tourist economy at a time when our state can ill afford it.

This winter, I had the privilege of seeing a wolf while hiking in the Chugach. I count it as one of a handful of my most precious wildlife encounters. This is why I live in Alaska, and I hope we can continue to share this privilege with people who visit our beautiful state. Sadly, this same wolf was recently killed by a car, a testament to our inevitable impact on the wild creatures who live among us. There are accidents that we perhaps cannot control, but when we can take positive action to be stewards of the earth, we should seize the opportunity.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this issue.

Alyson Pytte



April 27, 2017

Sent Via First-Class Mail and E-mail

Representative Andy Josephson
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol Room 102
Juneau AK, 99801
rep.andy.josephson@akleg.gov

Comments in Response to H.B. 105: “An Act establishing the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area.”

Representative Andy Josephson,

Thank you for inviting discussion on H.B. 105: “An Act establishing the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area.” These comments are submitted on behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and our members and activists throughout the United States, including Alaska. We support the adoption of H.B. 105, which aims to create a buffer zone on the northeastern side of Denali National Park Preserve (Denali) where wolves could not be hunted. As you note in your Sponsor Statement, the opportunity to view wolves in Denali is a major attraction that draws tourism to Alaska.

A 2014 study conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) demonstrates that the economic benefits of wildlife viewing significantly outweigh those of hunting.¹ According to the study, the economic benefits of wildlife viewing — in terms of government revenue, labor income, job creation, and overall economic output — are over double those of hunting. These numbers can compound astronomically over the lifetime of a wolf, making wolves much more valuable alive than dead. But beginning with the Board of Game’s decision to remove the buffer in 2010, there has been an ongoing pattern of State action that serves only those minor interests in favor trapping and hunting.

As you are aware, large carnivores have wide home ranges that often exceed the boundaries of Denali. Once outside of the protected park boundaries, wolves are subject to human-caused mortality. The trapping and hunting of wolves near park boundaries has the potential to decrease wolf numbers, alter wolf behavior, and decrease opportunities for wolf

¹ *The Economic Importance of Alaska’s Wildlife in 2011*, March 2014, available at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/news/ongoingissues/pdfs/the-economic-importance-of-alaskas-wildlife-in-2011-summary-report.pdf>.

viewing by park visitors.² The 2000-2010 trapping and hunting buffer was associated with increased wolf sightings in Denali, compared to 2011-2013 and 1997-2000 when no buffer was in place.³ The majority of sightings occur along the park road, which is located near the 2000-2010 buffer area.⁴ The presence of the buffer may have protected pack members that lived close to the park road when they left the park boundaries.⁵

Denali receives hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, both Alaskans and non-Alaskans, most of whom come to view the park and its wildlife.⁶ On the other hand, the Stampede Corridor has only 1-3 active trappers in any given year.⁷ The obvious conclusion is that wolves are of far greater value as a living, viewable natural resource. Thank you for sponsoring H.B. 105 and working to ensure that Alaskan's constitutionally protected common ownership of all natural resources including wildlife, embraces the right to view these majestic animals in their natural habitat.

Sincerely,



Dune Lankard
Senior Alaska Representative
The Center for Biological Diversity
(907) 952-5265
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² Borg et. al., *Implications of Harvest on the Boundaries of Protected Areas for Large Carnivore Viewing Opportunities*, April 28, 2016, available at <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0153808>.

³ *Id.*

⁴ National Park Service, PROPOSAL: 5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting; and 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping, available at <https://www.nps.gov/dena/learn/nature/upload/Wolf-Buffer-Proposal-2017.pdf>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Fix, P. J., Andrew Ackerman and Ginny Fay, 2013, 2011 Denali National Park and Preserve Visit Characteristics. Natural Resource Technical Report NPS/AKR/NRTR—2013/669. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado.

⁷ National Park Service Proposal, *supra* note 4.