

**From:** Patricia O'Brien [<mailto:patriciaobrien@gci.net>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 9:16 AM

**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>

**Subject:** HB 105 (establishing a wolf protection area on the northeast boundary of Denali National Park)

Dear Representative Josephson,

Thank you for introducing HB 105. I sent the below information to each member of the Resources Committee.

From February *National Geographic* one year ago:

*In 1999 Wallace shot a collared alpha female in the Grant Creek pack, which had been highly visible to visitors on the Park Road. In 2005 he caught the East Fork pack's alpha female in a trap set just outside the park boundary. In 2012 he dragged a horse carcass to a site where wolves were active and set traps and snares around it. When he returned a few days later, he'd trapped a pregnant female belonging to the East Fork pack. The kill, documented by a neighbor and later confirmed by Wallace, landed him in the Los Angeles Times and generated both death threats and a boost for his guiding business. That same year Wallace caught the only remaining breeding female in the Grant Creek pack, which often roamed just outside the park boundary. The pack consequently produced no pups and fell from 15 members to 3.*

*"That was the third time I ruined millions of people's Denali National Park viewing experience," Wallace quips.*

Please take action to protect wolves near the Park Road where both Alaskan's and out of state visitors may see and photograph them.

Thank you for considering this request.

Patricia OBrien

(907) 789-9405

**From:** akwildlifeimages [<mailto:akwildlifeimages@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 9:56 AM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HI 105

Dear Rep. Josephson

Please note my support for creating a permanent buffer zone around Denali National Park. Wolf numbers have dropped greatly since the Board Game dropped it in 2010. Less than 1 handful of trappers work that corridor yet are allowed to completely go against what 100s of thousands of tourists and residents come to see....wildlife....specifically wolves. I do not believe the Board has the where with all to do the right thing.

Thank you

Didier Lindsey  
Alaskan

Sent from my Samsung Galaxy smartphone.

February 9, 2017  
Alaska State Legislature  
Re: HB 105

Members of the Alaska House Resource Committee:

Please support HB 105, to establish the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area. I am a resident of Healy and cabin/land owner in the Wolf Townships. Having lived in this area for the last thirty years, I assure you that such a designation will be welcomed by many in our community. This includes those who rely on tourism for their livelihood and those who are put off by the incessant arrogance of a few guides to deprive millions of visitors the opportunity to see wolves. Many of us enjoy living in a place where there are wild wolves, sadly it is rare to see a wolf in the area anymore.

I have worked in Denali for many years, and for the last six years, I have worked in one of the front country visitor centers. I see the sense of disappointment amongst visitors when they have not seen wolves on their trip into the park, especially when they expected to. The disappointment expressed is especially profound when folks learn why viewing has declined. Most folks except the fact that natural factors can limit a population but are disparaged to realize that the decline is caused by hunting and trapping right on the boundary, only a few miles away. To hear a local guide boast about killing wolves directly on the park boundary flies in the face of sensibility and ethics.

This past season, I heard many tourists complain that they wished they had gone to Yellowstone instead of Denali. As lawmakers, you can protect Denali's reputation as a place to watch wolves interact and know their history. This is valuable to watch and the importance to the ecosystem.

There is no dispute that killing wolves along the park boundary has caused a dramatic decline in the park wolf population. This is well backed up by the science that clearly shows a connection between park wolf decline and the loss of certain members of their groups. The complicated dynamics have been studied for a long time. We know that wolves require large territories to survive in this rugged environment. Congress, Alaska Railroad and land managers have long known that wolves need be protected in the Wolf Townships. One just needs to look at the map.

Finally, it is fitting to honor Dr. Gordon Haber in naming this important area. His work and data have continued to be a vital resource to many studying wolf behavior and prey relationships. Like his predecessor, Adolph Murie, he endured similar trials. Like Murie, his legacy has had a profound impact on the way we look at wolves and their importance, not just to healthy prey populations, but the entire web of life. (#Trophic Cascades)

Please support HB 105. It makes sense.

Thank you,

Barbara Brease

PO Box 549, Healy Alaska 99743

To the House Resources Committee

:

HB 105 will help Alaska's economy and one of the best ways we can go about that is enhancing the wildlife tourism industry. We should be doing everything we can to support the Alaska economy.

which is

a \$2.7 billion/year industry, and visitor spending at Denali over \$567 million/year, much driven by wildlife viewing in the park.

HB 105 also supports the State Constitution. The principle of equity, fairness and common ownership of all resources (including wildlife) by all Alaskans, is embodied in: Article 8, Sections 2 and 3 All of us guaranteed equal access to, and use of, the wildlife of Denali, including all 70,000 Alaskans who visit the park each year wanting to see them alive -- not just the 2 or 3 individuals who hunt and trap them along the NE boundary. HB 105 is the fix.

I have attached a photo that illustrates the immeasurable value of live wolves in Denali National Park.

And one trapper/shooter on the park boundary can ruin that experience for so many:



Please support HB 105

. Thank you..

Barbara Brease

PO Box 549

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim Lescher [<mailto:timlescher@hotmail.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 2:23 PM

To: House Resources <[lhsres@akleg.gov](mailto:lhsres@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>

Subject: HB 105 and HB 40

Dear Representative Josephson,

I waited today in the Anchorage LIO for the opportunity to give testimony in support of HB 105 for over an hour. I understand you needed to move on to HB 40, which I also support. I will instead submit via email, I hope this reaches the rest of your committee as well.

I work with gray wolves at the Alaska Zoo. I probably spend more time around wolves than 99% of the Alaskan population. This doesn't mean I think I know more about wolves, because the more you learn about these animals, the more questions you have. I also care for the caribou, and moose calves (so I like to think I am unbiased). There were several great points made during the testimonies I heard, but what I think sometimes gets lost is that wolves are very intelligent, social animals, and they are affectionate too. I have seen the effects a wolf dying has on our pack at the zoo. They mourn. This may sound anthropomorphic, but it is not. You need to see it.

I would like to invite you and the rest of your committee members to visit the Alaska Zoo and meet out gray wolves up close in person. I am happy to give you and any legislators who will be voting on HB 105 a personally guided behind the scenes tour with the wolves free of charge. I think seeing them and meeting them will give you and the committee insight into this important issue, and you will come away from the experience with additional knowledge of wolves to make a more informed decision on this important bill.

Thank you for your service, and please take me up in this offer. My contact information is below.

Sincerely,

Tim Lescher  
Lead Wolf Keeper  
The Alaska Zoo  
907 230-3661  
[timlescher@hotmail.com](mailto:timlescher@hotmail.com)

Sent from my iPhone

*[HB 105 - Testimony on behalf of AWA]*

Thank you to co-chairs Representative Josephson and Representative Tarr, and members of the Resources Committee for this opportunity to testify.

My name is Connie Brandel. I am a staff member and the secretary/treasurer of the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, and I am speaking on behalf of the organization. Briefly, the Alaska Wildlife Alliance is a non-profit organization based in Anchorage and founded more than 35 years ago. We advocate for healthy ecosystems, scientifically managed to protect our wildlife for present and future generations.

The Alaska Wildlife Alliance asks you to support HB 105.

For years AWA and other groups have tried asking, pleading, demanding, all but begging the Alaska Board of Game to re-establish a no hunting/trapping buffer for the Wolf Townships, the area addressed in this bill. To date the Board of Game has steadfastly and single-mindedly maintained its priority of representing only the interests of consumptive users of wildlife.

To briefly summarize the situation: hunters/trappers use the Wolf Townships area to target wolves as they cross the park boundary; radio-collar telemetry shows wolves frequent this area in winter and spring in search of prey. As Dr. Steiner noted in his testimony during the Feb. 10 public hearing, research confirms the loss of a single breeder wolf can - and has - caused the entire pack to disburse. This compounds the effects of hunting and trapping far beyond the killing of individual wolves. The Denali wolf population, according to the park's own count, remains low.

The Wolf Townships area is situated just north of the park road, meaning the wolves targeted for killing are the same animals that are – or would be – the most easily viewed by the more than half a million people who visit Denali annually. Let me emphasize: when these wolves were protected by a buffer, 45 percent of visitors were lucky enough to spot a wolf along the park road. Since the last buffer was removed in 2010, only about 5 percent of visitors have been able to spot a wolf.

Let me compare another set of numbers:

Only 2 or 3 individuals trap within the Wolf Townships. That's all. If this area is closed, they are of course free to utilize the next-closest lands, the hundreds of thousands of acres to the north, east and south of the park boundaries. Let's compare 2 or 3 to, conservatively, 500,000 visitors per year who come to Denali, virtually every one of whom hopes to see the park's iconic grizzly bears and wolves. Why does this handful of trappers have more of a "right" to these wolves than others?

Dr. Steiner has offered a very detailed and compelling presentation of the link between Denali wildlife, tourism, and revenue to the state. I won't attempt to repeat or re-analyze the data. AWA wholeheartedly concurs with the conclusions he presented.

I would like to thank Representative Josephson for offering a simple, logical, and easily workable solution to this situation. I hope that this committee, and the House and Senate will listen to the majority of residents who for years have wanted this area set aside to protect these wolves protected. I hope you will agree with us that this management area will create many, many important benefits for the state for years to come.

I will conclude on the topic of money, which we seem to be talking about a lot in Alaska these days. Variations of this have been said many, many times, but I believe it goes to the heart of the Denali wolf issue:

A wolf can be killed and cash – at most a few hundred dollars - collected for its pelt only once. That same wolf alive can be photographed, recorded, sketched, tracked and just simply watched and enjoyed perhaps thousands of times during its lifetime. I wouldn't attempt to calculate how much one live wolf might "earn" for the state in visitor dollars per year – that's too hypothetical for me. But I sincerely believe that a living, wild wolf able to be seen by hundreds of thousands of people has to be worth its weight in gold for Alaska.

I ask that you please vote in favor of HB 105, the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area. Thank you very much.



Written testimony in support of HB105

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in support of HB105. My name is Yasuhiro Ozuru, an Anchorage resident. I am in strong support of this Bill that provide protection to wolves in Denali national park, whose population has been declining rapidly. I am in support of this bill for two reasons: one moral and the other economic. First, providing a necessary protection to wolves in Denali national park is our moral responsibility to both citizen of Alaska and the world beyond. Denali is one of the very few places in the world where visitor has some chance of observing wild wolves. But, recently the chance has declined significantly. We, Alaskan, are proud of having such a beautiful national park that embraces true wilderness in our own backyard, and we publicly express such a pride. Then, we should act responsibly to protect the intrinsic value (not just economic value) of such a wonderful place. Providing necessary protection to maintain the quality of Denali national park is also consistent with us Alaskan's special regards of the Denali, which is often considered to be scared mountain and space among Native Alaskan. Protection is also important for economic reason, I have heard that the chance of seeing wolves is larger in Yellowstone National park in Wyoming these days than in Denali. The spread of such information may change potential tourists mind such that they would rather go to Yellowstone than Denali. This would mean that we lose some significant revenue to the state economy, which is already suffering from low oil price. In this sense, it is extremely important to maintain the attractiveness of Denali National Park to potential tourists who contribute to Alaskan economy in very significant ways. This bill is a significant step to provide necessary protection to Denali wolves that are important for both moral and economic reasons for our beautiful state.

**From:** Philip Marshall [<mailto:pmarshall@acetekk.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2017 9:43 AM  
**To:** LIO Fairbanks <[Lio.Fairbanks@akleg.gov](mailto:Lio.Fairbanks@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support HB 105

Dear Staff,

Please forward to Rep. Josephson:

We support HB 105 to recreate a Denali wild animal, and especially wolf, buffer zone on the northeast side of Denali National Park. It would reestablish a more effective balance of the ecosystem and address the public clamor for more wildlife in this critical area. Thank you for attempting this alternative route to policy change since we are stymied by the Alaska Board of Game and the Governor. Having written letters, petitioned and testified, we know.

All the best,

Sincerely,

Philip Marshall and Janet Lokken Marshall

1300 Skyline Drive

Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

Tel: (907) 457-3895

E-mail: [pmarshall@acetekk.com](mailto:pmarshall@acetekk.com)

Web: [www.polhavnwoodfabrik.com](http://www.polhavnwoodfabrik.com)

Dear Mr. Josephson,

Thanks so much for your common-sense-based promotion and support of these issues, which benefit all Alaskans--even those who don't know it. I am out of state currently but will try to call in to testify. Meanwhile, just in case I don't make it, here is a written statement in support of HB 105 specifically. As a longtime subsistence user (I lived in Inupiaq villages in the upper Kobuk 20 years and was an active hunter) and wolf advocate (I was co-sponsor of Ballot Measure 2 in 2008 on predator control) and a full-time professional wildlife photographer and writer who has photographed and written about wolves in Denali NP) and a regular presenter on Princess Cruises who encounters Alaska visitors constantly who hope to see wolves in Denali, or are deeply disappointed because they tried and did not) I do have strong feelings on this matter.

Nick Jans  
Alaska writer-photographer  
HC 60 Box 2628  
Haines AK 99827

-----Original Message-----

From: Mei Mei Evans [<mailto:m2evans@alaskapacific.edu>]

Sent: Friday, February 10, 2017 8:33 AM

To: Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Geran Tarr  
<[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>

Subject: save Denali's wolves

Dear Andy Josephson and Geran Tarr:

I write in support of Denali's wolves. We now have an opportunity with HB 105 to protect them from the hunting and trapping that has so endangered their numbers. I hope you will both champion its cause among your legislative colleagues.

Thank you.

Mei Mei Evans, Ph.D.

**From:** Nina Faust [<mailto:aknina51@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 6:53 AM

**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>

**Cc:** Paul Seaton <[Representative\\_Paul\\_Seaton@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative_Paul_Seaton@akleg.gov)>; Gary Stevens <[Senator\\_Gary\\_Stevens@akleg.gov](mailto:Senator_Gary_Stevens@akleg.gov)>

**Subject:** HB 105 "An Act establishing the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area."

P.O. Box 2994  
Homer AK 99603

House Resources Committee  
Alaska State House  
Juneau AK

Dear Committee Members:

Denali National Park is one of the crown jewels of Alaska's National Parks, one that is on most visitors' list of "must see" places to watch wildlife, especially wolves. However, due to a lack of buffer around Denali National Park, a few local trappers have been allowed to trap in areas that were once protected, decimating Denali's highly visible wolf packs during the winter when they wander into these areas just outside the Park boundaries.

Wildlife viewing is a huge economic engine for Alaska. These wolves are far more valuable to Alaskans alive so that they can roam areas near the Park roads where visitors in buses can easily see and photograph them. Viewing opportunities have dropped significantly since the packs were trapped so heavily recently in the area designated in HB 105 as the "Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area." Protecting this area from trapping and hunting of wolves will bring more visitor revenue to Alaska as the wolf packs rebuild and are once again available for viewing.

Establishing this special area will not greatly change hunting opportunities for many hunters, but it will have a huge impact on the health of wolf packs and the eventual improvement of wolf viewing within the park. This is a good idea that has already proven its worth when the area was protected in the past. It makes good economic sense to reinstate a protective buffer for wolves on the park boundary. I urge the Resources Committee to vote in favor of this bill.

Sincerely,

Nina Faust

**From:** [millimom@xyz.net](mailto:millimom@xyz.net) [<mailto:millimom@xyz.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:33 AM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 105

Dear Representative Josephson,

Thank you, Thank you for introducing HB 105, to permanently protect that part outside Denali Park that needs protection for the wolves of the park. I had not been to the Park in many years, but visited last year. Our summer visitors come to see wolves and other wildlife, including my guests. The other wildlife was there, but not the wolves. I still recall taking my grandson about 12 years ago, and we saw wolves and he was so thrilled.

I strongly support this bill and hope it will pass the Committee.

Again, thank you.

Sincerely,

Milli Martin  
PO Box 2652  
Homer, AK 99603  
907-235-6652

**From:** Elizabeth Cuadra` [<mailto:cuadra@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 10:42 AM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Geran Tarr  
<[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Please Support HB 105

Denali wolves need the protection of HB 105. Alaska needs the tourism income, too. With a Board of Game that is so anti-wolves, it takes an act of the Legislature to get the right thing done.

Dorothy E. Cuadra, [cuadra@gci.net](mailto:cuadra@gci.net)

Resident at 9151 Skywood Lane, Juneau, AK (Alaskan since 1977)

**From:** Sean Cahoon [<mailto:sean.cahoon@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 12:11 PM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Geran Tarr  
<[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** Support for HB 105

Dear Reps. Josephson and Tarr,

I am writing to express my support for HB 105 to establish a no-harvest buffer zone adjacent to Denali National Park and Preserve (DNPP). Under the current policy, wolves are under major threat of extirpation which could lead to cascading effects on ecosystem and landscape dynamics. Removal of wolves in other locations (Yellowstone NP) has rippled through the ecosystem and should be a warning of the harmful effects a declining population of keystone predators can have on landscape processes and ecosystem services. In addition to the ecological consequences, the chances of wolf sightings in DNPP has plummeted since the buffer zone was removed, reducing the quality of visitor experiences which could eventually lead to declining attendance and tourism-generated revenue. Wolves should be preserved for the benefit of all, not just a handful of hunters and trappers.

I look forward the advancement of this bill and hope you will prioritize this valuable and sustainable resource.

Sean Cahoon



**From:** Daniel Bissinger [<mailto:dan.bissinger@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 10, 2017 5:54 AM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 105 - comment

Thank you for considering my comment on this important subject.

I would like to extend on my comment to the Board of Game I submitted on 2/2/17 apropos the comment period on the same topic:

Studies conducted by eminent biologists (Murie, Haber, Mech, Ripple and countless others, I'm sure) have shown that wolves have inhabited Denali National Park and interior Alaska for at least a thousand years. The work of a handful of hunters, trappers and wolf control programs have dismantled the right of wolves to live, and park visitors to view them in their natural habitat, in a matter of decades. In doing so, we as a people have demonstrated our inability to live in wilderness without destroying it.

HB 105 will likely configure the values of hiking, photography, camping, and enjoyment of wolf sightings to the preservation of wolf habitat. Perhaps even the wolf as a genetic reserve will be assessed, "a scientific yardstick by which we may measure the world in its natural balance against the world and its manmade imbalance" as Wallace Stegner once described in his "Wilderness Letter" regarding the role of our natural world.

Not only have we surrendered our synergy with wilderness, but we have also surrendered the "Wilderness Idea" as Stegner put it; 'a resource in itself... spiritual and mystical but perhaps incomprehensible to the practical minded who may regard anything that can't be moved with a bulldozer to be mystical'. Untampered wilderness, though, is every bit as spiritual and mystical as church; a place where we may recharge, find sanity, and feel insignificant, competent, vertical in the world, and look a long way. This is the same idea that human beings can live with other creatures without destroying them -- that we can assign value to wilderness beyond their economic uses and that we as people benefit from wilderness 'even if for ten years we never set foot in it, simply because it is there' and the knowledge that there is still perhaps something left untamed on Earth. We need wilderness as much as wilderness needs us, and we cannot have wilderness in parts. It exists only in whole with minimal human disturbance. When one species is eradicated, the entire ecosystem is imbalanced.

Trophic cascade is highly pertinent to ecosystems inhabited by wolves; the studies conducted in Yellowstone over the past 20 years have demonstrated this. They show us that animals are best managed by themselves, devoid of human involvement and most especially devoid of archaic predator control programs which were invalidated as effective management strategies several decades ago. There is absolutely no scientific basis for contemporary command-and-control programs. Studies have shown, for example, ("The Case Against Wolf and Bear Control In Alaska" Haber, 2006) that wolves have negligible effects on moose, caribou, and sheep

populations in Alaska and most often prey on the weakest animals -- half of the time not hunting but scavenging on carcasses from animals aged, diseased, or weakened by harsh winters. The predator-prey relationship keeps respective populations in check -- what Haber called "systems management". There are high biological, scientific, and ethical costs of killing wolves (Ibid.). By establishing a no hunting/trapping buffer adjacent to Denali National Park where wolves often travel and den, wolves can better serve the ecosystems they are entitled to inhabit, park visitors can enjoy them, and the 'Wilderness Idea' may be upheld.

Alaskans can do better.

We can live with wolves, enjoy them, and respect ourselves and appreciate life more fully. We can do this simply because of the knowledge that wolves exist and that we had a choice to exterminate them, again, but didn't.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comment and for your work spearheading the Haber Buffer.

--

(302) 383-5876  
[danbissinger@gmail.com](mailto:danbissinger@gmail.com)

**From:** selowe [<mailto:selowe@gci.net>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 1:08 PM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** I support HB 105 to protect wolves.

Hello Rep. Josephson:

I enthusiastically support HB 105 that would establish a no hunting/trapping area on state land adjacent to the northeastern boundary of Denali Park where wolves are targeted. It is shameful that Alaskans have allowed wolves to be persecuted for so long. We humans are not the only valid residents of our state that deserve respect. Our wild animals are a national and international treasure that draw millions of people throughout the world just to view them. I wish you every success in seeing this bill into action. Sharon Lowe

-----Original Message-----

From: Josh Klauder [<mailto:ravensong@mtaonline.net>]

Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 3:41 PM

To: Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Andy Josephson  
<[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>

Subject: Support for HB 105

Dear Representatives Josephson and Tarr,

Because I live remote, I will be unable to attend the hearing on this bill in person, at an LIO, or by phone.

Thus I am emailing to express my very strong support of this bill.

I live near Talkeetna. Our economy here is heavily dependent on tourism, and is intertwined with visitation to Denali by road, train, and air.

There are many good reasons for the establishment of this buffer, but the economics alone would appear to make it a simple and obvious choice.

Do we allow a small handful of trappers - who have lots of other options for places to trap- to continue to undermine the wildlife viewing opportunities for hundreds of thousands of visitors to our area who support our economy? The current situation is foolish and shortsighted in the extreme.

Please continue to do everything possible to create this conservation area.

Thank you,  
Josh Klauder  
Talkeetna

Dear House Resources Committee:

I am writing to urge you to vote in support of House Bill 105 which would establish a no hunting/trapping area on state land adjacent to the northeastern park boundary where wolves are targeted.

This area roughly overlaps the Wolf Townships/Stampede Corridor.

Since the Board eliminated a buffer in 2010, wolf mortality in this area has been linked to a sharp decline in the Denali Park wolf population. The number of visitors lucky enough to see a wolf also plummeted, to a miniscule 4 percent. If passed into law this bill would supersede the Board's inaction and end its single-minded pro-hunting decisions that have been so detrimental to the park's wolf population.

The protected area would be designated the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area, in honor of the world-renowned wolf biologist and zealous advocate who died in a 2009 plane crash while tracking wolves in Denali.

Safeguards for these wolves are critical, and long overdue.

Please support this bill!

Most Alaskan's support this buffer zone. Please listen to your constituents and act appropriately. Vote for this buffer zone.

Sincerely,

Janie Taylor

Anchorage, Alaska resident for 34 years

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to voice my support on HB 105, the “Denali Wolf Buffer.” This should be an easy, unanimous pass, a bill that all of you should support, as it has many benefits for the majority of Alaskans; very few hunters and trappers will be affected negatively.

You are all facing difficult decisions this session in a time of huge budget shortfalls, but this bill overwhelmingly helps the Alaskan economy in a positive way. Wildlife tourism is a \$2.7 billion dollar per year industry; most of the visitors to the park say that seeing wolves and bears are at the top of their list of animals to see. As things stand now, with wolves and bears being trapped and shot right over the park boundary, those wolves and bears that would be the most visible to park visitors have almost been eliminated, along with it the incentive for many visitor to come visit Denali. Word gets around, and many wildlife viewing visitors know it is more likely that they will see wolves in Yellowstone than in Denali. We have literally shot ourselves in the foot by allowing the Alaska Board of Game’s denial of the Wolf Buffer to continue. We need to pass this bill in order to allow the wolves to regenerate their numbers in this area.

This bill supports the State Constitution and the principles of equity, fairness and common ownership of *all* resources embodied in:

**Article 8, Sections 2 and 3** of the Alaska Constitution, as shown in:

**Section 2:** *The Legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the State, including land and waters, **for the maximum benefit of its people.***

**Section 3:** Common Use: *Wherever occurring in their natural state, fish, wildlife, and waters are reserve **to the people for common use.***

HB 105 will correct an egregious situation in which a very few hunters and trappers (2 or 3) along the North East boundary of the Park, are killing off wolves and bears that wander out of the park in pursuit of their prey. If the State Constitution works, and I *hope* it does, why should these very few people have more rights and access to wildlife than the more than 70,000 Alaskan citizens who would like to see their wildlife alive in Denali?

For over a decade, an overwhelming majority of citizens have testified and written to the Alaska Board of Game, with these very same statistics, only to be ignored and shut out with years-long denials of hearing on this issue by the Board of Game. Your approving of this bill will right this wrong. It should be a clear choice constitutionally, economically and in the majority of public interest.

Thank you,

John Breiby  
5280 E McDowell Rd.,  
Wasilla, AK 99654

Dear Sirs:

Please vote yes on HB 105 allowing a no kill border around the northeast section of Denali National Park.

Tourism is a very large revenue generator for Alaska, bringing in 2.9 Billion dollars per 2011 state study. Tourism in Denali Park brings in \$567 million and thousands of jobs. The state of Alaska needs these jobs and revenue in light of the down turn in the oil industry.

Alaska also needs to preserve its natural resources for future generations to maintain tourism and the way of life in ALASKA as we know it. Eco-tourism is growing rapidly while sport hunting is decreasing and does not bring in the money we think it does. There are more Alaska residents 70,000 coming to Denali and over 600,000 out of state visitors that contribute significantly to the local income.

We need the border around the northeast side of Denali to prevent pregnant alpha females and alpha males from getting shot at bait stations like in 2012 and 2015 and 2016. The visitor viewing rate of wolves have decreased along the Denali road from 49% to 5% due to these "sport" kills by a handful of hunters. Data from NPS. We as a state need to think about how natural resources are used appropriately and where.

Please vote for HB 105.

Thank you,  
Roy Catalano

Roy Catalano  
P.O.Box 3536  
Denali, Alaska 99755  
[roycatalano@gmx.com](mailto:roycatalano@gmx.com)

Please send the following message to the members of the House Resource Committee:

I AM A 56-YEAR RESIDENT OF ALASKA, AND OWN LAND IN THE PROPOSED BUFFER ZONE AREA. I URGE YOU TO VOTE YES ON THIS BILL, WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH THE DENALI WOLF SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREA. THANKS.

Frank Keim

2220 Penrose Lane

Fairbanks, AK 99709

***"When the world seems to be falling apart, stick to your own trajectory; hang on to your own ideals and find kindred spirits."***

Joseph Campbell: An Open Life



Dear Sirs,

I am writing to express my support for HB 105 that would provide a Denali NP wolf protection buffer. Wolves and other predators in this area are important for tourism, and also important to the wildness and ecological integrity of the Park. Please support this bill.

Sincerely,

Roger Kaye

**From:** Wayne Hall [<mailto:shadow@matnet.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:41 PM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB105

Dear Representative Josephson,

I have lived in Alaska since 1978 and have always supported a more balanced wildlife management in Alaska. I support HB105 to establish an area closed to the hunting and trapping of wolves in the area northeast of Denali National Park. The hunting and trapping of wolves in that area is by only a few people. Yet the excessive killing of wolves there impacts not only the Denali National Park ecosystem but also the non-consumptive use by thousands of Alaska residents and visitors. Even if it is only viewed from an economic perspective, which has certainly become more an issue to the State of Alaska, the far more beneficial use of wolves in that area is through the revenue generated by visitation rather than the comparatively tiny income derived by one or two individuals eliminating wolves from the area. The sheer national and international bad will created by the treatment afforded wild predators by the State of Alaska statewide will only increase over time. To allow wolves of such importance to be eliminated from the Denali ecosystem only accelerates and adds to the negative impact on an important source of revenue. Far better for the State to act to protect wolves in the area. The Alaska Board of Game, as it has been contrived for decades on behalf of hunting and trapping special interests, will never reinstate the buffer zone. I am glad to see you have initiated this positive action to do it through legislation instead.

I would like to request my comments here to be entered as part of the record of the hearing before the Resources Committee.

Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Wayne Hall

Anchorage

**From:** Scott Chesney [<mailto:musher@talespinmedia.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 11:39 AM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Cc:** Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>; Rep. David Guttenberg <[Rep.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Scott Kawasaki <[Rep.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Scott.Kawasaki@akleg.gov)>; Rep. David Talerico <[Rep.David.Talerico@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.David.Talerico@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: HB 105

Representative Josephson:

I am writing to voice my support for HB 105, which would establish the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area.

For too long, the Board of Game has decreed that arbitrary man-made boundaries are the boundaries which the wolves in the area must observe or die. The impact of this war on predators has been devastating for the packs whose territories are near the BOG's arbitrary boundary, and indeed, has affected wolf populations throughout Denali National Park. Passing HB105 would help to insure that the charismatic apex predators which tourists expect to see when they visit Alaska have a fighting chance to recover their population. I shouldn't need to point out that given Alaska's budget woes, passing this bill would boost the Denali borough and state's economies, with little impact to anyone save less than a handful of trappers.

In short, if passed, this bill would be a win for wolves, a win for tourism and the Denali borough and the State with a minimal downside. It deserves to pass.

Respectfully,

Scott Chesney

P.O. Box 84396

Fairbanks, AK, 99708

Patricia Cue  
35360 Robinwood Dr.  
Soldotna, AK 99669

State of Alaska House Resources Committee  
RE: HB 105

February 15, 2017

I am writing to urge you to vote in support of HB 105. There are several reasons why I support this legislation. As a 28 year resident of Alaska, I value the role predators in maintaining a healthy ecosystem. As a resident who owns a tourist related business, I am impacted directly by tourists and the revenue they bring to the state.

The buffer zone is an important way to protect the Denali wolf population. Please support HB 105.

Patricia Cue

**From:** [scherrgirl@aol.com](mailto:scherrgirl@aol.com) [<mailto:scherrgirl@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 1:02 PM

**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>

**Subject:** HB 105 & HB 40

To Who It May Concern,

As an Alaskan, Education Director and Mother, I am desperately asking for two things.

Please establish the Gordon Haber Denali Wolf Special Management Area (HB 105) as it protects not just wolves, but the future of wildlife of Denali, something of true value that we owe to future generations. Please make sure to represent the majority of Alaskans (and tourists that are highly economically important in Alaska), and not just the game guides, hunters and trappers.

I am in support of HB 105, and I ask that you are too.

Please also do not allow traps near trails (HB 40) as this is simply dangerous for those that use the trails, campsites, beaches, scenic sites, etc. Public safety should be priority, not traps. This is common sense. I am in support of HB 40 and I ask that you are too.

Thank you for allowing my input and taking the time to serve Alaskans equally.

Stephanie Hartman  
Anchorage, AK 99504  
509-951-8123

**From:** Chelsea Lindquist [<mailto:chelserin@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 15, 2017 1:31 PM  
**To:** Rep. Geran Tarr <[Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Geran.Tarr@akleg.gov)>; Rep. Andy Josephson  
<[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 105

Rep. Josephson and Rep. Geran,

I am writing in support of Denali's wolves. We now have an opportunity with HB 105 to protect them from the hunting and trapping that has so endangered their numbers. Alaska is known for it's natural beauty and wildlife and our wolves are an iconic symbol of our state. I urge you both to be champions of Denali's wolf population and show your support for HB 105.

Thank you,  
Chelsea Vukovich  
99516

**From:** Francis Mauer [<mailto:fmauer@mosquitonet.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2017 2:04 PM  
**To:** Rep. Andy Josephson <[Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov](mailto:Rep.Andy.Josephson@akleg.gov)>  
**Subject:** HB 105 testimony

Dear Andy,

Thanks for the opportunity to testify as an invited participant at yesterday's hearing on HB 105. I sincerely appreciate all of your efforts and work to address several wildlife conservation issues that have been largely neglected until now. Your chairmanship of the Resources Committee represents a fresh new hope for those of us who want to see better and balanced stewardship of our wonderful wildlife.

For your reference, please see my comments below.

Fran Mauer

791 Redpoll Ln

Fairbanks, AK 99701

907-455-6829

**Testimony by Fran Mauer Before the  
Alaska House Resources Committee  
Regarding HB 105 February 15, 2017**

I am a 46 year resident of Alaska having worked as a wildlife biologist here for nearly 30 years.

I support HB 105 which would establish a special management area to protect wolves from hunting and trapping on State lands adjacent to the northeast corner of Denali National Park. This area is sometimes referred to as the "Wolf Townships."

Dr. Steiner and Dr. Van Ballenberghe have already explained to the Committee about how this area is important for Denali Park wildlife, especially wolves. They have also described how hunters and trappers have used extreme methods such as bait stations with animal carcasses to lure Denali wolves to their death. These actions have decimated Denali wolf families, especially those that are frequently viewed by Park visitors.

Ecologists refer to situations such as this as "population sinks," in that annual mortality of these Denali wolf families exceeds their annual reproduction. This is exactly what is occurring in the proposed Special Management Area. I can tell you with high certainty that the population sink effect will continue to decimate Denali wolves as long as these extreme killing practices are allowed. This problem will not go away unless the taking of these wolves is stopped.

I would like to respond to the testimony that you just heard from the Director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Mr. Bruce Dale. What you heard was that the wolf population is not in jeopardy, that wolves quickly repopulate areas where they have been exploited and mix frequently with other packs to avoid in-breeding, suggesting that this is not a serious problem. By speaking at a broad regional population level, he avoided addressing the specific acute nature of continued exploitation of the same wolf territories year after year. The population sink concept is valid and is occurring in the case of these Denali wolves. Mr. Dale avoided the actual circumstances at work here and gave you only the "party line."

The Board of Game seems incapable of solving this problem because it only looks out for the interests of hunters and trappers. You have already been told how this situation in the Stampede area gives Alaska a "black eye" and this too will only get worse over time.

We need to foster a responsible wildlife viewing program that is a renewable economic benefit for all Alaskans. HB 105 would assure this and I urge you to pass the bill soon.

Thank You.



### **Thanks to House for wolf buffer bill, a decision based on science**

Kudos to Rep. Josephson and the state House for trying to reinstate the Denali Park wolf buffer (which would prohibit trapping in the Stampede Road "inholding" of the park).

The buffer existed until 2010. The Alaska Board of Game rejected it again in 2016, claiming science doesn't support it, which is wrong. Wolf populations overall seem healthy (good), but that isn't the only fact. The National Park Service is required to manage both wildlife and visitor experience. And everyone agrees that trapping will reduce local wolf populations. Wolf sightings from the park road are already down 90 percent.

The Game Board only listened to trappers. But the Alaska Constitution gives all Alaskans the right to enjoy wildlife, and visitors are included on federal lands. Trappers too, but let's get some balance here.

Now the Game Board says it's their business — the Legislature should not be involved. Oh, come on! The Game Board is not doing its job. And the Legislature can, and does, pass laws on wildlife management.

— *Vivian Mendenhall, Ph.D., certified wildlife biologist*  
*Anchorage 4600 Rabbit Creek Road 345-7124*

Printed in the Alaska Dispatch News May 22, 2017



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.<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> *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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> The majority of sightings occur along the park road, which is located near the 2000-2010 buffer area.<sup>4</sup> The presence of the buffer may have protected pack members that lived close to the park road when they left the park boundaries.<sup>5</sup>

Denali receives hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, both Alaskans and non-Alaskans, most of whom come to view the park and its wildlife.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, the Stampede Corridor has only 1-3 active trappers in any given year.<sup>7</sup> 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  
dlankard@biologicaldiversity.org

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<sup>2</sup> 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>.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> 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>.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> National Park Service Proposal, *supra* note 4.

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