

February 14th, 2021

Senator Josh Revak,
Chair Senate Resources Committee
Sen.Josh.Revak@akleg.gov

SCI Alaska Chapter
PO Box 770511
Eagle River, AK 99577
Cell: (907) 903-8329
Tel: (907) 980-9018
Fax: (907) 745-6175
www.aksafariclub.org



Senator Revak:

The Alaska Safari Club International supports SB-22. We believe the Intensive Management Surcharge (SB-22) should not be allowed to sunset. Our members believe it has been huge contributor in assisting the ADF&G to properly manage Alaska's wildlife resources.

Harvesting wild game is a practice steeped in tradition and is extremely important to many Alaskan families. In fact, in some places, it is a necessity. By the Department of Fish and Game's best estimate, 39.1% of rural Alaska's wild food harvest is composed of land mammals, marine mammals, and birds/eggs. It is estimated that about 34.0 million pounds (usable weight) of wild foods are harvested annually by rural residents and 11.4 million pounds by urban residents (this includes all wild foods). On a per person basis, the harvest is roughly 276 pounds per person per year for residents in rural areas and 19 pounds per person for residents in urban areas (Subsistence in Alaska, 2018). In addition to providing healthy and wholesome food, it also helps bond families, friends, and communities. The older generations teaching the younger, the shared activities of butchering and processing, the sharing of the bounty with friends, relatives, and neighbors.

The Alaska Legislature recognized this importance and in 1994 passed the Intensive Management (IM) Law consistent with Article 8, section 4 of the Alaska Constitution. This law requires the Alaska Board of Game to identify moose, caribou, and deer populations that are important food sources for Alaskans and ensures that these populations remain large enough to allow for adequate and sustained yield.

An intensive management surcharge was added to hunting licenses in 2016 and has been collected since January 1, 2017. Because these programs have proven successful in increasing some ungulate (principally caribou and moose) populations, hunters requested the surcharge to ensure that funds were dedicated and available to assess and conduct intensive management activities. The license revenue allows the department to carry out the projects free of interference or

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hinderance from the federal government. This also frees up other funds that can be used to leverage federal Pittman-Robertson (PR) funds (3:1 match) for research and other critical activities, thereby helping to mitigate reversion of federal dollars and fills the gaps where PR funds cannot be used.

The hunters that pay this surcharge do so without hesitation or regret. Hunters realize the value of proper management of our fish and game resources. With the huge budget crisis facing the State of Alaska we must find new and innovative ways to fund our essential programs. The Alaskan hunters are willing to do our share and step up and help with that funding. So once again we want to express our strong and unequivocal support for the continuation of the Intensive Management program and its funding by a surcharge of hunting licenses.

Best regards

Jeff Garness

SCI Alaska Chapter President

E-mail: president@aksafariclub.org

Cell: (907) 244-9612

Website: www.aksafariclub.org

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