



SCI Alaska Chapter
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April 1, 2022

Rep. Josiah Patkotak, Chair, House Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

Re: SCI-AK Support for Ruth Cusack appointment to the Board of Game

Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee,

The Safari Club International Alaska Chapter (SCI-AK) fully supports the appointment of Ruth Cusack to the Board of Game.

Ruth is an avid outdoor woman with a special passion for hunting and fishing. Her autumns are normally busy with a variety of hunts which, in the past, have included: moose, caribou, goat, brown bear, and, several years ago, a muskox. She is active in supporting outdoor organizations and is currently vice president of SCI-AK. She is also the lead board member on SCI-AK's annual banquet. Thanks to her hard work and skill these banquets have been successful, attracting over 900 hunters each year. The funds raised—thanks to Ruth's efforts—pay for hunter education programs, hunter advocacy, wounded warrior hunts, youth programs, and other good causes. Ruth holds an assistant guide license and goes on commercial trips more for the love of hunting rather than any financial gain. She is a thoughtful and dedicated person who will take time to study the many proposals submitted to the board and will listen carefully to all public testimony. The board will be well-served by her broad experience and in-depth knowledge of Alaska's wonderful game resources.

Founded in 1971, Safari Club International is the country's leading hunter rights advocate and additionally promotes worldwide wildlife conservation. SCI-AK, founded in 1977, is nationally and internationally recognized for its contributions in support of SCI's four major mission areas: Advocacy, Conservation, Education, and Humanitarian Services. SCI's motto is "First for Hunters".

We are confident Ruth will serve the best interests of the Board of Game should her appointment be accepted. In fact, it would be difficult to find a person more qualified than Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game!

Thank you for your consideration.

John Sturgeon
SCI Alaska Chapter President
E-mail: president@aksafariclub.org
Cell: (907) 230-0072

Safari Club International Alaska Chapter
First for Hunters - First for Wildlife



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February 8, 2022

Rep. Josiah Patkotak, Chair, House Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

Re: SCI-AK Support for James Cooney appointment to the Board of Game

Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee,

The Safari Club International Alaska Chapter (SCI-AK) fully supports the appointment of James Cooney to the Board of Game.

James is a former member of the Safari Club Alaska Chapter (SCI-AK) board of directors. He is also a lifelong hunter and has pursued game in Alaska and the lower '48. James has shown himself to be a hard worker and always conducts himself in the highest ethical manner. He will be an excellent advocate for the average Alaskan sportsman. Being active in several outdoor organizations has given him a broad insight into the many and complex issues facing game management in Alaska. We believe James would be an outstanding addition to the Alaska Board of Game and SCI-AK fully supports his nomination.

Founded in 1971, Safari Club International is the country's leading hunter rights advocate and additionally promotes worldwide wildlife conservation. SCI-AK, founded in 1977, is nationally and internationally recognized for its contributions in support of SCI's four major mission areas: Advocacy, Conservation, Education, and Humanitarian Services. SCI's motto is "First for Hunters".

James did an exemplary job serving our core mission while he was on the SCI-AK board. We are confident he will serve the best interests of the Board of Game should his appointment be accepted.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Sturgeon

SCI Alaska Chapter President

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Safari Club International Alaska Chapter
First for Hunters - First for Wildlife

ALASKA

PROFESSIONAL HUNTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

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March 14, 2022

Representatives Josiah Patkotak
House Resources Committee
State Capitol Room 124
Juneau AK, 99801

RE: Board of Game Appointments

Good Afternoon, Chairman Patkotak and House Resources Committee Members,

My name is Sam Rohrer, and I am the President of The Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA).

I am writing this letter on behalf of the APHA to express our support for the appointment of Mr. James Cooney to the Alaska Board of Game.

Last week we witnessed Mr. Cooney's participation in the statewide Game meeting in Fairbanks. During this meeting we watched him and the rest of the board work through challenging, complicated, and sometimes contentious issues.

We were impressed that Mr. Cooney seemed to approach each issue with an open mind. During breaks he let himself be accessible to the public and he was willing to listen to all sides of an issue. Mr. Cooney appeared to be committed to making the best decisions on wildlife issues that he possibly could.

The APHA appreciates Mr. Cooney's willingness to serve, and we respectfully asks that you support is appointment to the Alaska Board of Game.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sam Rohrer
President, APHA

April 10, 2022

To: Senator Josh Revak
Chair, Senate Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Ms. Ruth Cusack

Dear Honorable Chairman Revak,

We are writing a letter of support for Ruth Cusack to the Alaska Board of Game. Ruth has demonstrated her commitment to wildlife conservation through her advocacy as a volunteer with hunting organizations. She is an avid hunter who understands the importance of hunting as a vital wildlife management tool, maintaining nature at a healthy balance. Ruth also understands, hunting is part of our rich heritage and essential to the Alaska way of life. We know Ruth to be dedicated, hardworking and has the ability to listen to other people's views. Women are the fastest growing demographic in hunting today, Ruth will bring a much-needed perspective to the board as well as the hunting community. In addition to her leadership roles, Ruth's military background offers the discipline needed to be an effective public servant. For these reasons, we highly encourage you to support her nomination to the Alaska Board of Game.

Sincerely,

Ted Spraker,
Former Chairman of the Alaska Board of Game, served 2003-2021

Elaina Spraker,
Congressional staffer
Director of NRA Kenai Peninsula Women on Target program

Cc: House Resources Chairman, Josiah Patkotak

Dear Representative Patkotak and Senator Revak,

Ruth Cusack has requested a letter of recommendation from me for her consideration for a position on the Alaska Board of Game. I am delighted to do this. I know Ruth Cusack primarily through her work with The Alaskan Chapter of SCI over the last ten years. I also have been a regular participant with the Board of Game in several capacities and have attended many of their meetings over the last 35 or so years. The point being that I understand the qualities necessary to be a good member of that important Board. Ruth certainly meets and exceeds all of those qualities. Please see my letter of recommendation

attached below.

Respectfully Submitted,

John D Frost MD

To: Josiah Patkotak – Chair, House Resources Committee -32nd Alaska Legislature

Senator Joshua Revak

From: John D Frost MD

Date: April 8, 2022

Ref: In Favor of Ruth Cusack consideration for appointment to AK Board of Game.

Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee

I would like to personally strongly support Ruth Cusack for a seat on the Alaska Board of Game.

I have known Ruth primarily through her work with the Alaska Chapter of Safari Club International. She is remarkably hard working, ethical and dedicated to conservation of our precious wildlife resources. She is a hard working women, who always seems to be willing to help with the numerous details of making a big conservation fundraising event actually happen successfully.

She is personally an avid hunter, primarily for meat as well as the adventure.

She moved to Alaska about 15 years ago primarily because of her love of hunting and Alaska's wild country. She has been active hunting for herself and doing the work to become an assistant guide. She has hunted and traveled in most of the major areas of the State. As a result she is familiar with many of the controversies and allocation issues that exist within a State as diverse and large as Alaska. She would bring an open analytical perspective to discussions on the Board of Game regarding those issues.

I have been very familiar with the functioning of the Alaska Board of Game and have personally attended, testified at and written proposals for many of their meetings. I have done this both personally

as far back as the mid 80s and in the capacity of the Legislative Vice-president of The Alaskan Bowhunters Association for over 20 years.

I say this only because it shows that I am more than casually familiar with the Board of Game Process and the amount of work and dedication that is required of Board of Game Members. It is my strong belief that Ms. Ruth Cusack has the intellect, deep interest and strong work ethic to be an excellent member of the Board of Game.

Please do not hesitate to contact me personally if you wish any more information regarding my support for Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game.

Sincerely,

John D Frost MD

907-360-1301 jdfrostmd@gci.net

It is my pleasure to highly recommend Ruth Cusack to the Alaska Board of Game.

I first incorporate the letters of recommendation already received by you from John Sturgeon, President of the Safari Club International Alaska Chapter, and Mike Odin's Alaska Adventures. I confirm their very positive, truthful compliments toward Ms. Cusack. I will not repeat what they have so correctly said.

Here's what I can add. I have been a member of the SCI Alaska Chapter Board of Directors for four years. As such, I have worked very closely with Ms. Cusack. In her position as a Board member and very engaged VP for the organization, she has shown initiative, energy and very professional practicality in the interest of Alaska's wildlife populations, together with supporting ADF&G wildlife conservation initiatives and hunter education (especially among our youth). I have seen that Ms. Cusack, although an avid hunter, more importantly understands

and respects the concept of supporting sustainable wildlife populations first, regardless of pressures from hunting, or other, influences.

So, what's my background behind these representations supporting Ms. Cusack's membership to the Alaska Board of Game? Beyond being a member of the SCI Alaska Chapter Board of Directors, observing Ms. Cusack's accomplishments and professionalism daily, I served as an Assistant Attorney General for the Alaska Department of Law for almost 15 years, mostly representing and advising the Alaska Departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources in game and fish management matters, subsistence issues, public access, ANILCA, and navigability. I ran the gamut -- administrative and trial and appellate levels, including the U.S. Supreme Court. I like to think I understand good management candidates for the Board of Game. Ruth Cusack is that.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Mike Sewright

April 6, 2022

Rep. Josiah Patkotak, Chair, House Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

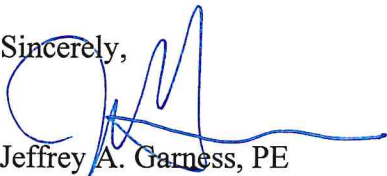
Subject: Endorsement of Ruth Cusack for appointment to the Board of Game

Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee,

I am submitting this letter to support the appointment of Ruth Cusack to the State of Alaska Board of Game. I have had the opportunity to work with Ruth for a number of years as co-members of the SCI Alaska Board of Directors. She is an assistant hunting guide and has a proven track record of donating her time and talents in support of numerous efforts to raise funds and advocate for outdoor education, hunter's rights, and wildlife conservation efforts. Ruth hunts for both sport and subsistence and understands the economic value that hunting brings to the State of Alaska. She also understands the critical role that hunting plays in effective wildlife conservation and sustainment of the subsistence lifestyle. I believe her diverse experience and perspective would be a significant asset to the Board of Game and endorse her appointment without hesitation.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jeffrey A. Garness, PE
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Anchorage, Alaska 99504
jeff@garnessengineering.com
907-244-9612



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April 9, 2022

Rep. Josiah Patkotak, Chair, House Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

Re: Community Support for Ruth Cusack appointment to the Board of Game

Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee;

My name is Stacee Frost Kleinsmith and I fully support Ruth Cusack's appointment to the Board of Game.

As a Past President of The Safari Club International Alaska Chapter (SCI-AK), I have served alongside of Ruth as we addressed issues, chaired events, and supported our Department of Fish & Game. I have observed her humanity in volunteering at Youth Days and in service those who have served – supporting Veterans through SCI-AKs many programs.

As a volunteer Instructor for Becoming an Outdoors Woman over many years, we have taught together and I have seen her enthusiasm for outreach and for helping to ensure inclusivity.

As her friend, I have seen the passion for conservation that she brings to the table. Over all these years, her eagerness to become involved and to add value to the conversation has always been present. I believe this comes in large part to the fact that she actually gets out into the field every year and understand impacts in a very literal boots-on-the-ground sort of way.

You would be hard pressed to find anyone more dedicated and loyal, passionate and hardworking. In short, I believe the Board would be gaining a tremendous asset in her membership.

I carry every confidence that she will serve the best interests of the Board of Game should Ruth Cusack's appointment be accepted for the Board of Game.

Kindly,

Stacee

Stacee Frost Kleinsmith
Stacee.frost@homeinstead.com
907.242.3800 cell



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April 4, 2022

Rep. Josiah Patkotak,
Chair, House Resources Committee
32nd Alaska Legislature

Re: Letter of Recommendation for Mrs. Ruth Cusack appointment to the Alaska Board of Game

TO: Chair Patkotak and Honorable Members of the House Resources Committee

Mike Odin's Alaska Adventure's LLC (MOAA) highly recommends Mrs. Ruth Cusack for the appointment to the Alaska Board of Game.

Mrs. Ruth Cusack is a long-time Alaskan with a strong commitment, love and passion for hunting, fishing and the great outdoors.

1. As an Assistant Guide for Mike Odin's Alaska Adventures, LLC, Ruth has been invaluable to our team for the past two years. Ruth has guided our clients on several Alaska Brown Bear and Moose hunts with high success. Our clients highly commended Ruth for her hunting skills, experience, and outdoor knowledge. She has shown up the best of Alaska before, during and after the hunt.
2. As a former colleague of Safari Club International Alaska Chapter (SCI-AK), I'm aware of Ruth's strong support and leadership to (SCI-AK), Ruth has been a fighter and warrior for Alaska wildlife conservation. SCI-AK has four major mission areas: Advocacy, Conservation, Education and Humanitarian Services. SCI-AK has been recognized nationally and internationally for its contributions in support of all four of these mission areas. Winning SCI's highest-level award: "The Top Gun Award" for multiple years. Ruth has been a major contributor for Alaska winning theses awards.
3. Ruth has a wide-range of hunting and fishing experience through-out Alaska. Ruth has harvested most of the big game species in Alaska, and she is an avid angler for freshwater and saltwater fishing. Ruth's hunting expertise would be invaluable to the Alaska Board of Game.

We are proud to recommend Mrs. Ruth Cusack to the Alaska Board of Game.

Sincerely yours,

Michael K. Odin

Owner, Mike Odin's Alaska Adventures, LLC

JENNIFER YUHAS

JSYUHAS@GMAIL.COM
Phone: 907.388.7951

► **TO: ALASKA LEGISLATORS**

12-April-2022

SUPPORT BOG APPOINTMENT: BEATRICE RUTH CUSACK

I am writing today to urge your confirmation of Beatrice Ruth Cusack to the Alaska Board of Game. Ruth is a tireless advocate for sustainability of our wildlife resources and has conveyed to me personally her commitment to representing all users in deciding the allocative issues before the board.

I met Ruth through volunteering. As I have come to know her, she has demonstrated a dedication to volunteer service and a willingness to learn from others. Through her service, a multi organizational project was completed in 2020 for a mobile educational classroom which includes a “sensory safari” component serving to educate visually impaired individuals who can feel the hides and mounts of the animals while we discuss their habitats and lifecycles. Funds that she has helped raise through her service has also directly supported wildlife research and management conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, offsetting pressure to the state budget.

Ruth also understands the responsibility of the state of Alaska to manage our wildlife resources for sustainability and access to all Alaskans under the Alaska Constitution and statutes delegating allocation of these resources to the Board of Game. She is also familiar with the intricacies of our game management overlay under the federal provisions of ANILCA and other obligations.

Ruth practices constitutionally authorized state subsistence hunting and traditional uses including resource sharing. She will carefully consider all affected users before deciding the issues before the board, and will strive to represent all Alaskan interests.

Please confirm Beatrice Ruth Cusack to the Alaska Board of Game for the future of our wildlife resources.

JENNIFER YUHAS

Wildlife Sustainability & Access Advocate
Fairbanks, AK
4/12/2022



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

April 18, 2022

To: All Legislators

Re: Board of Game appointments/reappointment

Dear Senators and Representatives,

The current 3 appointments/reappointment to the Board of Game (James Cooney, Ruth Cusack, and Al Barrette) are all licensed hunting guides. If confirmed, there would then be 5 guides on the seven-member board, and one retired guide, overtly unbalancing the board in favor of commercial hunting interests.

AS 16.05.221, the statute that governs Boards of Fisheries and Game appointments, speaks to the need to provide a balanced membership: "The governor shall appoint each member on the basis of interest in public affairs, good judgment, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the board, **and with a view to providing diversity of interest and points of view in the membership.**" [our emphasis]

While we certainly believe that all of the individuals appointed or reappointed to the Board of Game are qualified to serve, we must **oppose** any more guides on the Board of Game, regardless of class of their guide license, as it clearly does not provide a diversity of interest and points of view and unbalances the board, real or perceived, in favor of commercial hunting interests.

We have communicated to all of the appointees our position, and in no way is our position meant to question their integrity or character or qualifications. This is purely about adhering to the statute governing diversity of interests and points of view on the Board of Game.

There are some 100,000 Alaskan residents who purchase a hunting license and contribute more than a billion dollars to the economy annually. Less than 1 percent of those resident hunters are licensed guides, who overwhelmingly cater to and guide nonresident hunters in the commercial hunting industry.

Certainly, it makes sense to have a licensed guide on the Board of Game to represent commercial hunting interests. Currently, two confirmed hunting guides serve on the board. It doesn't make sense though, unless we want to give the impression the Board of Game caters to commercial hunting interests moreso than the interests of resident hunters, to have guides make up a majority of the board membership.

RHAK has an overview and history of the Board of Game and process available on our website that I highly recommend reading; it provides more context to our position and information on

why we believe the statutory structure of the Board of Game should be revisited. You can find it at this link: <https://www.residenthuntersofalaska.org/boardofgame>

Respectfully,

Mark Richards

Executive Director Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK)

Representative Josiah,

I would like to voice my support for Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game. Ruth is a passionate remote wilderness hunter, and she would be a great representative of the largest growing demographic in our hunting community, the Outdoorswoman. She will bring insight and perspective to the BOG that has not been present for some time and she will set an example that will encourage other women to participate in the outdoors.

Ruth and I have hunted almost every species of wildlife in Alaska. Like most Alaskan subsistence families, we hunt, gather, and use our wildlife resources to fill our freezer and share Alaska's wild organic game meat and fish, with others that are less fortunate. Ruth understands what the hunting tradition means to all hunters and why they are so passionate about it.

She has been active working with hunting organizations and currently serves as vice-president of Safari Club Internationals Alaska Chapter. She actively volunteers for numerous charitable programs such as Alaska Healing Hearts, Becoming An Outdoors Woman, Youth Day At The Range and most recently a new program Raise'em Outdoors. These programs and numerous others, have all benefited from Ruth's willingness to volunteer and support, focusing a lot of her efforts on programs that encourage women and children to get out and enjoy the outdoors, placing emphasis on the benefits of hunting and enjoying wild organic food.

Ruth is a thoughtful and considerate person that will take the time to listen to all sides of the many issues that come before the Board of Game. She will decide what is in the best interest of Alaska's wildlife resources. It takes a special person to sit and listen to hours of testimony from the public and support staff and then make an informed decision. Ruth is without doubt that kind of person. She will be a great asset to the Board of Game.

Ruth will represent the fastest growing segment of our hunting community. Her attention to details and eye for the small nuances that make a big difference, will bring new insight and perspective to the BOG. She will proudly represent and encourage all women hunters to get outdoors and get involved. The Board of Game will be well served by having Ruth's perspective.

As the person that has hunted, worked, volunteered, and lived with Ruth Cusack for many years, I can assure you that no one will out work her. As a member of the Board Of Game, she will work tirelessly to do the research, listen to all of the testimony and make a fair decision that is in the best interest of the resource and on behalf of all user groups.

I once again encourage you to support Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game.

Louis A. Cusack

P.O. Box 770511 Eagle River, Ak 99577

Email: louis.cusack@outlook.com

Office: (907) 980-9018 Cell: (907) 903-8329

Rep. Patkotak

Safari Club International - Alaska Chapter would like to voice our support for Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game. She is an avid outdoor person and is a dedicated hunter. She has been active in many outdoor organizations and has spent hundred of hours in support of those organization. She is a thoughtful and considerate person that will listen to all sides of an issue and decide based first of all what is in the best interest of the resource.

The largest growth sector in the hunting community are women. I think the Board will be well served to have Ruth as one of its members.

Thank you for your consideration of Ruth Cusack for the Board of Game.

Best regards,

John Sturgeon

John Sturgeon

President, Alaska SCI

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