

HB

395

# HOUSE COMMITTEE REPORT

Date referred: 1/25/88

FURTHER REFERRALS: Finance

DATE: 4-25-88

The Resources Committee has considered HB 395

"An Act relating to collection permits."

**RECOMMENDS:**

- replace with \_\_\_\_\_  the same title
- attached amendment(s)  a new title
- do pass
- do not pass
- no recommendation
- individual recommendations
- additional referral to the \_\_\_\_\_ Committee

**ADOPTS:**  \_\_\_\_\_ letter of intent

**ATTACHES NEW FISCAL NOTE(S):**

- fiscal impact  same as previous fiscal note published \_\_\_\_\_
- zero fiscal note  same as previous zero fiscal note published \_\_\_\_\_
- zero with analysis 2 ea.

**SIGNING DO PASS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Tom Pearce*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Dick Shell*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Heinrich Springer*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNING OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Adelheid Herrman Do Not Pass*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*John R. ...*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Jay Hoff No Rec*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
*Jim ...*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Jim G. T.*  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Chairman's signature

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: 1/25/88  
Title: An Act relating to collec-  
tion permits.  
Sponsor: Miller  
Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Affected: Health & Social Services  
BRU: State Health Services  
Components: Lab Services

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
CAPITAL						
REVENUE						

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The enactment of HB 395 would have no direct fiscal impact on the Department of Health and Social Services.

Prepared by: Elizabeth Ward, Director *Elizabeth Ward* Phone: 465-3090  
Division: Public Health Date: March 25, 1988

Approved by Commissioner: Mike M. Meenan *Mike M. Meenan* Date: March 29, 1988  
Agency: Department of Health & Social Services

Distribution (by preparer):  
Legislative Finance  
Legislative Sponsor  
Requestor  
Office of Management and Budget  
Impacted Agency(ies)

FISCAL NOTE

REQUEST:

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency Affected: Fish and Game  
 Title: An Act Relating to Collection Permits BRU: Game  
 Sponsor: Representative Miller Components: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

EXPENDITURES/REVENUES: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 88	FY 89	FY 90	FY 91	FY 92	FY 93
PERSONAL SERVICES		0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL		0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL		0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES		0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT		0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES		0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS		0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS		0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING		0	0	0	0	0

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE						
---------	--	--	--	--	--	--

FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

GENERAL FUND						
FEDERAL FUNDS						
OTHER						
TOTAL		0	0	0	0	0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME						
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

ANALYSIS : (Attach a separate page if necessary)

Issuance of the additional permits necessary if this bill is passed will not significantly affect costs to the Division. Because there is a small fee for this service, some limited revenues to the state may result.

Prepared by: Donald E. McKnight Phone: 465-4190  
 Division: Game Date: 3/24/88  
 Approved by Commissioner: *Donald E. Miller* Date: 3/25/88  
 Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Distribution (by preparer) :  
 Legislative Finance  
 Legislative Sponsor  
 Requestor  
 Office of Management and Budget  
 Impacted Agency(ies)

POSITION PAPER  
HOUSE BILL NO. 395

For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to collection permits."

This bill repeals and reenacts AS 16.05.340(b). It appears to broaden the purposes for which the Department of Fish and Game can issue permits for the taking of wild fur animals for breeding purposes. Existing language permits collecting wild fur bearing animals for the purpose of "improving the genetic stock of fur farm animals". The proposed substitute would allow permits to be issued for taking wild fur animals in order to "establish [and] diversify through cross breeding" the genetic stock of fur farm animals.

The Department of Health and Social Services has reservations about the existing legislation and about any possible expansion of the circumstances under which wild mammals can be taken and kept for breeding purposes. Rabies is commonly found in commercially valuable wild fur animals in certain areas of Alaska. Wild stock can spread disease into the relatively domesticated captive stock and greatly increase the potential for human exposure of handlers of both live animals and animal carcasses. In addition, the possibility of escape adds to the likelihood of introduction of rabies into geographic areas not now affected.

To the extent the proposed language would increase the numbers of wild fur animals taken for breeding purpose or expand the geographic areas into which wild fur animals might be introduced, the department is opposed to this legislation unless stringent and enforceable regulations are adopted to limit the potential problems outlined above.

Proposed by: Elizabeth Ward  
Elizabeth Ward  
Director  
Division of Public Health

Date: March 25, 1968

Approved: Myra M. Munson  
Myra M. Munson  
Commissioner  
Department of Health  
Social Services

Date: March 28, 1968

02/15/88

Rep. Sam Cotten  
House Of Representatives  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Rep. Cotten,

Rep. Cotten, Allow me to introduce myself. My Name is Richard J. Cards and I am President of the Alaskan Fur Ranchers Assn. (AFRA).

In 1981 there were only four fur farms in the state of Alaska and the industry was at a standstill. The fur ranchers knew the potential for a complete fur industry was enormous. We also knew it would be difficult and we needed to be organized to move into the world as a worthy competitor. AFRA was formed in 1982 to promote fur farming in the state. We grew slowly over the years that followed, but grow we did. from four farms sitting around a kitchen table to thirty-three farms spread over the entire state from Eagle to Kenai to Bethel to Kotzebue to Fairbanks and all points in between. Growth has been slow and steady. The slow pace has been due to the fact that this is a hard and expensive business to get started. The cost to get started is a total commitment of time and energy and every dollar you ever saved. We are committed to rebuild the fur industry in Alaska. The economic value will reach far into the future long after the oil money is gone.

I'm enclosing a pamphlet printed by the Interior Economic Development Assn. Please take time from your busy schedule to read the material. The conference pointed out many important facts. Among them were...

The Alaskan Fur Ranchers are not alone in the development of the fur industry in Alaska. We have been working for the industry a little longer...

Alaska is years behind the rest of the world in the development of the fur industry even though we are in the best geographic area possible.

We need your help! We need you to stand with us in our time of need. The individuals involved in the fur industry and the state needs to unite.

There are several other interesting facts I'm sure you will find as you read the pamphlet, i.e., the enormous amount of money involved.

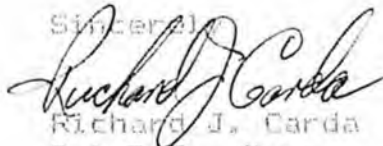
Sam, Coming up before you soon are two house bills. One bill is for protection. This bill would make it a felony for anyone to enter a fur farm and harass, steal or set free any of the live stock. Hopefully this will make those people think twice before entering the farm. The second is a bill that would allow us (farmers) to go into the wild and collect wild stock to develop completely Alaskan fur, to increase our knowledge of other fur bearing animals and in so doing help us to compete today and tomorrow in the world market place.

At the moment there are an estimated 20,000 trappers in the state of Alaska. Each trapper buys a \$5.00 trapping license and is allowed to KILL as many animals as he can catch within the generous limits set down by Fish & Game. I could do the same with a license but I am a farmer not a trapper. Our bill would allow us to hire an Alaskan trapper to bring them back alive and by doing so the trapper would benefit with a better price, the fur farmer would benefit with new animals to work with and the fur industry would benefit with growth. To make it even better there is no added pressure put on the wild stock. Regardless of the number of wild animals requested by the farmer would be limited by the legal limit of the trappers that are hired.

We are interested in developing an "all-Alaskan Ranch Mink from wild stock," "Alaskan Brown" by Alaskan farmers. We are also interested in studying the Alaskan Sable (marten) Very little is known about these animals. We need your help to begin.

Sam, I speak for everyone involved when I say, "PLEASE Sam" vote yes on HB393 and HB395, we need your help to move Alaska forward.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Carda  
R & D Fur Farm  
Box 4553  
Eielson, Alaska 99702

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
MIKE W. MILLER  
P.O. Box 55094  
North Pole, Alaska 99705  
(907) 488-2687

While in Juneau  
P.O. Box V  
Juneau, Alaska 99811  
(907) 465-4976

District 18  
North Pole  
Badger Road  
Eielson  
Moose Creek  
Salcha

## House of Representatives

November 24, 1987

Mr. Ed Hein  
Legislative Affairs Agency  
Division of Legal Services  
P.O. Box Y  
Juneau, AK. 99811

Dear Ed:

I would like to request a legal opinion on the wording of AS 16.05.340(b) and its derivative administrative code, 5 AAC 92.043. In particular, I am interested in the amount of statutory discretion granted to the Commissioner of Fish and Game with regard to the issuance of permits allowing the collection of fur bearers for fur farming purposes.

The two sentences contained in AS 16.05.340(b) that lead to confusion are:

"The commissioner of fish and game may issue without cost a permit to collect fish and game, including fur animals, subject to limitations and provisions that are appropriate, for a scientific, propagative, or educational purpose."  
and,

"In addition, the commissioner shall issue a permit for the collecting of wild fur animals for improving the genetic stock of fur farm animals."

Use of the words "shall" and "may", within the same subsection, regarding the collection of fur animals, has clouded exactly what level of discretion the commissioner actually has with regards to the issuance of permits to capture fur bearers for fur farming.

The above mentioned statute is cited as authority for 5 AAC 92.043 which reads as follows:

"The department may issue a permit for the capture, but not export, of an indigenous fur bearer for fur farming. The department may limit the number, sex, and species of the animal to be taken, and the area from which the animal may be taken."

The Department of Fish and Game has apparently interpreted AS 16.05.340(b) as granting the Commissioner total discretion as to whether permits will or will not be issued. In my opinion, 5 AAC 92.043. is in conflict with the rather ambiguous wording of this statute.

Ed Hein  
Page 2  
11/24/87

Ed, I do intend to introduce legislation amending AS 16.05.340(b) to implement the intent of work draft 5-1415A, dated 11/4/87. However, I am beginning to think this subsection may warrant additional changes to address the question outlined in this letter.

If you have any question regarding this request, please contact my office at 488-0862.

Sincerely,

Mike Miller  
Representative  
District 18

STATE OF ALASKA  
THE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY

HB 315  
3/21  
POUCH Y STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
907 465 3800

M E M O R A N D U M

December 21, 1987

SUBJECT: Collection permits for fur animals  
(W.O. #15-1467)

TO: Representative Mike W. Miller

FROM: Edward H. Hein *EHS*  
Legislative Counsel

You have asked for an opinion concerning how much discretion the Commissioner of Fish and Game has under AS 16.05.340(b) to issue or refuse to issue a permit for collecting fur animals for fur farming purposes. You also ask whether the provisions of 5AAC 92.043 conflict with the language of the statute.

AS 16.05.340(b) reads as follows:

(b) The commissioner of fish and game may issue without cost a permit to collect fish and game, including fur animals, subject to limitations and provisions that are appropriate, for a scientific, propagative, or educational purpose. The commissioner also may issue a permit for the collection of bivalve spat for use in connection with an aquatic farm. In addition, the commissioner shall issue a permit for the collecting of wild fur animals for improving the genetic stock of fur farm animals. Permits issued under this subsection shall be in accordance with current sustained yield management practices for the species of wild game for which the permit is requested. The annual permit fee for an Alaska resident to collect wild fur animals for fur farming purposes is the same as the fee for resident trappers.

The first sentence of this subsection gives the commissioner discretion to issue free permits for collecting fur animals for a scientific, propagative, or educational purpose. This discretion is broad because of the "may" language and the

phrase "subject to limitations and provisions that are appropriate."

By contrast, the third sentence says that the commissioner "shall issue permits for collecting "wild" fur animals for the limited purpose of "improving the genetic stock of fur farm animals." This permit has an annual fee of \$10.00 ("the same as the fee for resident trappers"). Although issuance of this permit seemingly is mandatory because "shall" is used, the mandate is qualified by the fourth sentence, which requires that any permit under this subsection must be issued in accordance with sustained yield management practices. This is not only a statutory requirement; it is also required under Art. VIII, sec. 4, of the Alaska Constitution. Presumably, a permit must be issued to anyone who pays the \$10.00 fee, unless issuance would conflict with sustained yield management practices.

The provisions of 5 AAC 92.043 do not appear to conflict with the statute. The regulation reads as follows:

5 AAC 92.043. PERMIT FOR CAPTURING WILD FUR BEARERS FOR FUR FARMING. The department may issue a permit for the capture, but not export, of an indigenous fur bearer for fur farming. The department may limit the number, sex, and species of the animal to be taken, and the area from which the animal may be taken.

Use of "may" in the first sentence of the regulation is appropriate, given that sustained yield management practices may require not issuing a particular permit at all. The limitations allowed under the second sentence are legitimate resource management tools needed in order to ensure sustained yield management.

Admittedly, the intent of AS 16.05.340(b) is not clear. The provisions relating to fur animal permits in this subsection have been amended several times over the years, most recently in 1983. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, the language is badly drafted. It is apparent to me, however, that the legislature intended to have two different types of permits relating to collecting fur animals.

The first type of permit is free and, insofar as it relates to fur farming, is limited to "propagative" purposes. It is not clear what "propagative" includes, but in the context of the first sentence, it is reasonable to conclude the

Representative Mike W. Miller  
Page 3  
December 21, 1987

propagation must be for research, education, science, or other probably nonprofic or noncommercial purpose. This interpretation is supported by the fact that no mention is made of fur farming, but "fur farm" is used in the third sentence. Furthermore, it could be argued that fur animals collected under this permit must be animals that are already in captivity, as opposed to "wild" fur animals that are mentioned in the third sentence. But this could just as easily be an example of poor drafting.

The second type of fur animal permit costs the same as the resident trapper permit and is to be issued for collecting "wild" fur animals for the limited purpose of "improving the genetic stock of fur farm animals." Given that this sentence used to say that the permit was to be issued "for collecting wild fur animals for fur farming," it is reasonable to conclude that the legislature intended to narrow the scope of the permit. I am not certain what "improving the genetic stock" means, unless it means cross-breeding or mating wild fur animals with fur farm animals that are already in captivity. This suggests that this second type of permit is to be issued to persons who already have an existing fur farm operation or, perhaps, a sort of stud farm for such animals. And, in fact, it is my understanding that the department construes the statute this way and does not issue collection permits for persons who want to start a fur farm.

In light of your concern over the may/shall question, I recommend that you consider redrafting the third and fourth sentences of this subsection. The new language should make clear, if this is your intent, that the commissioner must issue a collection permit to anyone who pays the fee, unless to do so would conflict with sustained yield management practices. You may also wish to further clarify the purposes for which wild fur animals can be collected under this permit. If you want people to be able to use this permit to take wild fur animals in order to start up a fur farm, we should say so plainly and clearly. I will be happy to work with you or your staff to effect the necessary changes.

EHH:gc

WKG1:008

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
MIKE W MILLER  
PO Box 55094  
North Pole Alaska 99705  
(907) 488 2687

District 18  
North Pole  
Badger Road  
Eelson  
Moose Creek  
Saigha

Address Bureau  
PO Box 12  
Juneau Alaska 99811  
(907) 465 4976

## House of Representatives

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Representative Sam Cotten  
Co-Chair, House Resources Committee

FROM: Representative Mike Miller *Mike Miller*

RE: Hearing request for HB 393, an act relating to  
unauthorized release of livestock or farm animals and,  
HB 395, an act relating to collection permits

DATE: 3/21/88

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These two bills were introduced as a package at the request of the Alaska Fur Ranchers Association.

HB 393 would add the unauthorized release of livestock or farm animals, including fur farm animals, to the list of actions that constitute the crime of criminal mischief in the third degree. Individuals who own farm stock have generally made a considerable investment which can be lost if the animals are set free. A fine of up to \$5000 could be imposed against individuals convicted under the new wording of HB 393.

HB 395 restructures and adds to the existing statutory language governing the issuance of permits to collect animals from the wild. The two major additions specify that fur animals may be taken from the wild to diversify existing farm stock through cross breeding, and to establish the initial breeding stock of a new farm. I have attached a highlighted copy of this bill for your reference.

I have also attached a packet of information outlining some of the gains that other countries have made in the commercial fur industry. This information was forwarded to me by Mr. Richard Carda, President of the Alaska Fur Ranchers Association.

I would like to request that these two bills be considered for scheduling before the House Resources Committee. I would also like to request that Mr. Carda be allowed to testify via teleconference when this hearing takes place.

Attachments

- MAJOR WORDING ADDITIONS TO THE EXISTING  
STATUTES.

LANGUAGE IDENTICAL OR SUBSTANTIALLY  
THE SAME AS EXISTING STATUTES

1 IN THE HOUSE

BY MILLER

2

HOUSE BILL NO. 395

3

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

5

A BILL

6 For an Act entitled: "An Act relating to collection permits."

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

8 \* Section 1. AS 16.05.340(b) is repealed and reenacted to read:

9 (b) The commissioner of fish and game may issue without cost a  
10 permit to collect fish and game, including fur animals, subject to  
11 limitations and provisions that are appropriate, for a scientific or  
12 educational purpose. The commissioner also may issue a permit for the  
13 collection of bivalve spat for use in connection with an aquatic farm.  
14 In addition, the commissioner shall issue to a person who pays the fee  
15 a permit for collecting wild fur animals to establish, diversify  
16 through cross-breeding, or improve the genetic stock of fur farm  
17 animals. The annual permit fee for an Alaska resident to collect wild  
18 fur animals for fur farming purposes is the same as the fee for resi-  
19 dent trappers. Permits issued under this subsection shall be issued,  
20 denied, or restricted in accordance with current sustained yield  
21 management practices for the species of wild game for which the permit  
22 is requested.

03/10/88

Rep. Mike Miller  
House Of Representatives  
P.O. Box 2  
Juneau, Alaska 99511

MAR 07 1988

Dear Rep. Miller,

Rep. Miller, Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Richard J. Garcia and I am President of the Alaskan Fur Ranchers Assn. (AFRA).

In 1951 there were only four fur farms in the state of Alaska and the industry was at a standstill. The fur ranchers knew the potential for a complete fur industry was enormous. We also knew it would be difficult and we needed to be organized to move into the world as a worthy competitor. AFRA was formed in 1982 to promote fur farming in the state. We grew slowly over the years that followed, but grow we did, from four farms sitting around a kitchen table to thirty-three farms spread over the entire state from Eagle to Kenai to Bethel to Kotzebue Fairbanks and all points in between. Growth has been slow but steady. The slow pace has been due to the fact that this is a hard and expensive business to get started. The cost to get started is a total commitment of time and energy and every dollar you ever saved. We are committed to rebuild the fur industry in Alaska. The economic value will reach far into the future long after the oil money is gone.

I'm enclosing a pamphlet printed by the Interior Economic Development Assn. Please take time from your busy schedule to read the material. The conference pointed out many important facts. Among them were...

The Alaskan Fur Ranchers are not alone in the development of the fur industry in Alaska. We have been working for the industry a little longer...

Alaska is years behind the rest of the world in the development of the fur industry even though we are in the best geographic area possible.

We need your help! We need you to stand with us in our time of need. The individuals involved in the fur industry and the state needs to unite.

There are several other interesting facts. If you will find as you read the pamphlet, i.e., the economic impact of many animals.

# Development of a Competitive Alaskan Fur Industry

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*A workshop brief  
prepared by:*

*Gerald Victor  
Certified Master Furrier*

*and*

*Thomas Gaylord, Ph.D.*

**Interior Economic Development Conference**

August 1-2, 1987  
Fairbanks, Alaska  
Alaskaland Civic Auditorium

# Fairbanksans seek to develop fur institute



The glistening fur coats that are created by Alaska pelts are sold the world over, but few of the purchasers of this ultimate in luxury know from whence their coat came. This warm wrap is natural Alaska sable, which retails on the market for \$26,000 to \$145,000. PHOTO COURTESY GERALD VICTOR OF FURS, FAIRBANKS

By Sally J. Suddock

**M**ention the word "Fairbanks" to most folks and more often than not, the association "cold" will spring (winter?) to mind. Mention the word "cold," and the gentler sex might immediately think of a warm, flowing fur coat as an antidote to the long, dark winter.

It should come as no surprise, then, that Fairbanks is perfectly suited—geographically and by image—to make its mark in boutiques and salons the world over as a supplier of the raw materials for this luxury-item market.

It might come as a surprise, however, that currently this is not the case.

A group of Fairbanks fur-industry leaders are out to change that. Despite a traditional abundance of fur-bearing animals statewide, Alaska is caught in a trap of no identity and no aggressive marketing, says Gerald Victor, a certified master furrier whose family is among the oldest in the Alaska industry. As an outgrowth of the Interior Economic Development Conference in August, Victor is working with the state, the borough, and the Department of Community and Regional Affairs to develop a fur institute. Its goal is to increase the level of awareness for Alaska's superior skins.

"Alaska has traditionally been a major natural fur resource region in the world," said Victor and Dr. Thomas Gaylord in a paper delivered to the conference in August. "But current marketing trends recognize origin as either USA or Canada, the net result being lessened consumer awareness of the quality furs coming from Alaska and therefore lesser consumer demand for specifically Alaska origin fur."

The state's furs compete with Canada, Scandinavia, Russia and Lower 48 in the world market. And increasingly, say Gaylord and Victor, "ranch

raised fur, foreign trade, technology and government subsidies have provided a competitive advantage that is overwhelming Alaska's fur industry in quantity, variety and even quality of fur." Canadian finished fur garment exports, alone, increased 602 percent from 1980 to year-end 1986 (\$22.8 million to \$160 million).

Ironically, said Victor, a significant portion of the finished fur product "exported" from Canada (and the U.S.) are Alaskan in origin. But the label the consumer sees seldom says so.

Last year's dollar value of raw fur exports from Alaska stood at just \$7 million, said Victor. With 30,000 trapping licenses held statewide in Alaska (many of which are recreational, however), that figure is less than impressive.

"We have a tremendous potential for fur farming," said Victor, "and we're working with trappers to be able to develop that." Already, he said, wild stocks in Alaska have been exported to other countries as breeding stock for successful ranching industries. Kuskokwim mink (named for the obvious Alaska region from which they come), for example, is renowned in the industry for its quality. Ranching allows manufacturers the choice of a more uniform finished garment, since animals are harvested in their prime under controlled conditions. And ranching operations can offer a higher volume of raw pelts to manufacturers.

"Canada has more than 700 mink farms and 550 fox farms that together produced half of the \$91.1 million worth of raw pelts in 1985," said Victor and Gaylord. Less than 8,000 ranchers (versus 80,000 Canadian trappers) produced half the pelts that year.

Potential is there, too, said Victor, for Alaska to move more competi-

See FUR, Page 8

tively into the garment manufacturing industry, but mechanization trends in the industry mean that Alaska's looking at tough competition. "Manufacturing will come over time," said Victor, "and our biggest need right now is better marketing through coordination."

The institute that's in its fledgling stages is patterned after the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute model of cooperative industry-government product awareness through media, labeling, trade shows and seminars, and public relations.

Victor and Gaylord think the time is right to turn around the industry. Job losses from oil revenue declines have increased government and Native corporation sympathies for diversification; the Interior's well-audited to raise furbearers year-round; and there is opportunity to develop more exotic breeds such as sable and lynx for an exclusive market niche.

Employment opportunities also are good for tanneries, design houses, and manufacturers, the two believe. "Finished fur garments enjoy a large edge over skins in profit and lower costs," they said.

"After decades of neglect, the Alaska fur industry is turning into a subsistence activity, whereas around the world has become one of the most highly profitable fashion enterprises," said Victor and Gaylord. In the paper delivered in August, they proposed a series of steps Alaska should take to put more furs on more backs of consumers:

- With the University of Alaska, implement a research program for genetics, disease control, feed and nutrition, as part of the university's plan to develop linkages with developing industries.

- Education and training in ranching techniques, management skills, and marketing strategy. University students would also benefit from cooperative educational programs in the field; and a ranched and natural fur industry association would advance the cause of the industry.

- Development of modern automation capabilities also is seen as a need to allow Alaskans to compete with other countries.

- Foreign trade marketing, favorable export laws, and trade agreements with auction houses in Hong Kong and Frankfurt would help the industry get a toehold in the market.

# I. Introduction and Business Plan Outline

## A. Environment

1. Alaska has traditionally been a major natural (trapped) fur resource region in the world. Alaskan fur is considered some of the finest in the world, but current marketing trends recognize origin as either USA or Canada; the net result being lessened consumer awareness of the quality furs coming from Alaska and therefore lessened consumer demand for specifically Alaska origin fur. Alaska fur has lost its major marketing and sales advantage, that being the Alaskan label.
2. Alaskan fur must compete with Canadian, Scandinavian, Russian, Chinese, and Lower 48 fur in the world market. Increasingly, ranch raised fur, foreign trade, technology and government subsidies (see Exhibit A) have provided a competitive advantage that is subsequently overwhelming Alaska's natural fur industry in quantity, variety and even quality of fur. The chart below depicts the dramatic increase (602%) in finished Canadian garment exports to the USA alone, driven primarily by the rise of the Canadian fur ranching industry and an advantageous labor situation, over the last six years:

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### Finished Garments Exported to the United States from Canada

<u>Year</u>	<u>Canadian Dollars</u>
1980	\$22.8 million
1981	\$34.2 million
1982	\$45.6 million
1983	\$58.8 million
1984	\$107.1 million
1985	\$133.0 million
1986 (projected)	\$160.0 million

### Exchange Rate (US \$)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Canadian Dollars</u>
1980	1.1731
1981	1.2009
1982	1.2339
1983	1.2288
1984	1.2943
1985	1.3757
1986	1.3753
1987 (January)	1.3603

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Source: Wallach, V. *Canadian Manufacturers Discuss Price, Delivery and Their Expectations for 1987*. The Business of Fur, 4(8), 1987, p. 32

3. Canada has over 700 mink farms and 550 fox farms which together produced half of the \$91.1 million worth of the raw fur pelts in 1985. This being done by less than 8,000 ranchers compared to 80,000 Canadian trappers. In other words, half the pelts were produced by one tenth the manpower (The Silver Fox Review, 4(1), 1987, p.5).
4. Alaskan wild fur bearing animals have and continue to be boxed trapped to serve as breeding stock for non-Alaskan fur ranches. The genetic traits of Alaska's wild stock and the

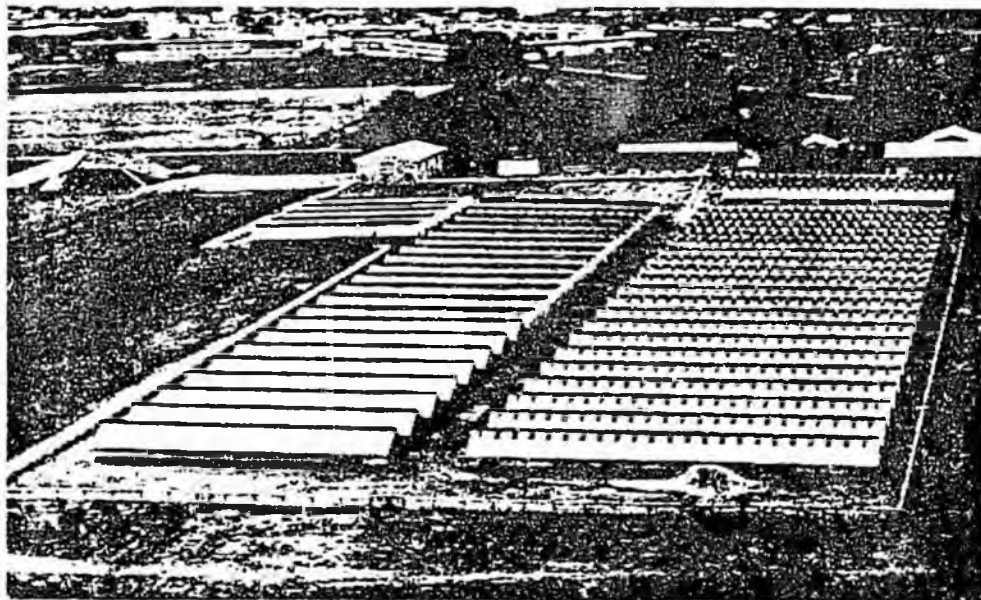
qualities that have made Alaska's furs a sought after and valued product are being exported, and Alaska's long term fur assets are being exploited.

5. Collapse of the oil based economy in Alaska and the sharp reduction in state revenue that resulted has created a vacuum in employment and business opportunities. Depressed rural and urban communities are more eager to explore alternative economic activities.
6. State and local governments and Native corporations appear more committed to stem the flow of investment capital out of Alaska and to use that capital to help diversify Alaska's economy.

## B. Raw Fur

1. Interior Alaska is ideally suited for fur ranching, particularly areas that have access to existing roads or major waterways. The picture below shows the extent of a typical layout for a fur ranch.
2. Providing year round reliable employment, fur ranching cost effectiveness could be enhanced by readily available feed supplements such as fish and feed developed from interior farming projects in Delta and Nenana.
3. The predominant ranched raised furs used in the industry are mink and fox. Alaska has the opportunity to develop the more exotic breeds such as sable and lynx which would give Alaska an exclusive niche in the market from the start.

Moyle Mink Farms  
Heyburn, Idaho



## C. Processing, Design and Manufacturing

1. Fur tanneries, design houses and manufacturing shops would add significantly to the employment level of the fur industry in the state. Finished fur garments enjoy a large edge over skins in profit, lower export costs, etc.

2. The table below on trends in the West German fur industry, is some indication of the increased level of economic activity generated outside the raw fur aspects of the industry that behooves Alaska to move toward fur processing:

---

	Total Imports in Million DM				
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Raw Furs	673,3	611,8	681,8	727,8	551,1
Dressed Skins & Semi Finished Garments	364,8	334,8	300,7	304,1	321,9
Finished Fur Garments & Hats	819,4	812,2	673,7	486,6	608,5
	1.857,5	1.758,8	1.656,2	1.518,5	1.481,9

	Total Exports in Million DM				
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986
Raw Furs	46,9	44,0	36,1	41,3	45,9
Dressed Skins & Semi Finished Garments	650,9	613,5	638,2	733,7	603,7
Finished Fur Garments & Hats	285,6	300,8	334,8	355,4	378,8
	983,4	958,3	1.009,1	1.130,4	1.028,4

---

Source: *International Fur Fair Frankfurt*. International Fur Fashion Review, 6(5), 1987.

#### D. Sales and Marketing

1. The future of the the Alaskan fur industry lies with aggressively pursuing international markets.
2. Marketing alliances and hand shaking efforts with government similar to what the Toronto Fur Export Group has devised (see Exhibit B) are essential if Alaska is to break into the market in a meaningful way.

## II. Financing the Fur Industry Outline

### A. Private Sources

1. Venture Capital
2. Native Corporations (Regional and Village)
3. Stock offering

## B. Public Sources

1. State Assistance Grants or Loans (Agricultural?)
2. State Permanent Fund Investments or Loans
3. Local Government Grants or Loans

## III. Technology and Trade Assistance Outline

### A. Animal Research

1. Genetic research for the purposes of improving the fur color variety, strength and longevity as well as the animal growth rate of Alaskan stock is needed to gain a competitive edge. Research would be oriented toward developing and regulating the raising of pure bred and other ranch raised foxes in Alaska and such new types of foxes as may from time to time become eligible for registration. This could be accomplished by an industry tax earmarked for research programs at the University of Alaska. The University has made it clear through its Six-Year Plan (Goal 2.3) that it intends to develop linkages to assist developing state industries.
2. Disease control research is needed to protect ranch stock in close proximity from devastating consequences. These include primarily tularemia, hydatid disease, mange, giardiasis, distemper, and rabies.
3. Feed and nutritional research is needed to enable the use of available, local food sources such as fish and interior farming products from the Delta and Nenana regions.

### B. Education and Training

1. Development of fur ranching techniques, management skills, and marketing strategy educational programs by the University of Alaska in accordance with its Six-Year Plan (Goal 2.3).
2. Student assistance or cooperative educational programs, such as with the New York Fashion Institute of Technology's Fur Design and Marketing Department offerings.
3. Development of a rancher and natural fur industry association similar in scope and function to the Canadian Fox Breeders Association (CFBA). The CFBA finances its operations through a commission of 1.5% on all rancher fox pelts sold through auction houses who have marketing agreements with CFBA. For the benefit of the membership these funds are used for the marketing and promotion of the "Canada Select Fox" label, rancher education, education grants to affiliated provincial fox/fur breeder associations, support research projects, publish the CFBA newsletter, compile statistics, maintain National head office and other related activities (Role and Function, Canada Fox Breeders Assoc., 1986, pp. 1-2).

### C. Mechanization and Computerization

1. Development of systems and equipment that permit the automation of various stages of fur production is essential if efficient, cost effective ranching and manufacturing is to provide a cost competitive product on the world market. Taran, Canada's largest fur manufacturer, has already operational several systems in various steps in the fur processing procedure in its 100,000 square foot Montreal plant. As Taran's owner stated:

We've been working with one of the universities for 18 months on this project. Skin matching and grading is a critical operation and there's always a shortage of competent help. The system we've developed will not only do the job as accurately, but will also eliminate human error that often comes from fatigue. The computer never gets tired. *Taran Nearing Push-Button Operation. Fur World, June 3, 1985.*

#### D. Trade

1. State of Alaska marketing institute trade assistance and foreign trade agreements particularly with fur auction houses and processing centers such as Hong Kong and Frankfurt.
2. Arrangement of favorable federal export laws and tax structures that facilitate development of a new industry and streamlined shipping and sales channels.

### IV. Summary Outline

- Alaska could become a major center for the North American fur industry within a decade provided steps are taken to build reliable supplies and large numbers of quality furs.
- Being competitive on the world market today and even more in the future will have as a prerequisite, genetic engineering for controlled stock improvement efforts, mechanization for reduced processing costs, and computerization to a degree that allows instantaneous responses to world market conditions. Fur ranching, as a supplement to trapping, is essential to prevent a further erosion of Alaska's position in the fur industry. Gaming out scenarios without a viable fur ranching factor in the state has Alaska virtually losing all its market share within a generation.
- Even with an infusion of substantial effort on the part of private entrepreneurs, state government, the University, and Native Corporations it will be difficult for the Alaskan fur industry to attain the market position it once held. After decades of neglect, the Alaskan fur industry is turning into a subsistence activity whereas around the world has become one of the most highly profitable fashion enterprises.

Let's turn it around.

**EXHIBIT A**  
**Government Support**

# CANADA... THE FUR SOURCE

Adding modern techniques and advanced technology, the wholesale fur market in Canada has steadily increased its production capacity to now take its place as a *world-ranking fur manufacturing industry.*

The Canadian fur manufacturing industry is a *major exporter*, with more than half of its total production going to the fur fashion capitals of the world.

Over 120 Canadian manufacturers will show their newest fashion collections at the Canadian International Fur Fair Montreal, from May 4 to 7, 1988, in Place Bonaventure.

Two gala fur fashion shows on the evening of Wednesday, May 4, in Hotel Bonaventure will highlight the fine fashion furs for which the Canadian fur manufacturing industry is known.

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Telex 055-62171 Code 488



For information on the  
Canadian Fashion Show, contact  
Mr. André Daoust  
Canadian Fur Trade Development  
Institute Inc.  
1435 St-Alexandre, Suite 1265  
Montreal, Canada H3A 2G4  
(514) 288-6609



**V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA**

**USSR**

**MOSCOW-LENINGRAD**



## THE HISTORY

When V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was born in 1931, no one could have known how much the organization would have grown just fifty years later.

In the early days V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was mainly concerned with fur exports, working with some six hundred companies in nineteen countries.

Today the organization is involved with both importing and exporting, in natural and synthetic leather and many other animal products as well as their original responsibility, furs. As the activities have grown so has the number of customers, now more than two thousand companies in sixty countries.

V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA is now not only one of the oldest Soviet foreign trade organizations but one of the most international with business contacts from Japan to the Argentine.

The Soviet Union has the largest production of furs in the world, and certainly the most breathta-

king selection. These are gathered in from all over the USSR, with goods from over 6.5 thousand Soviet enterprises.

Fur auctions are held three times a year in Leningrad as well as in London and Leipzig and there are warehouses in the USSR, London, Stockholm and West Berlin.

The major part of the fur production is sold at auctions, with 70-80% offered at the International Fur Auctions in Leningrad.

The original auctions concentrated on wild furs since there were at that time no fur farms in the USSR. Today the situation is quite different.

Wild furs are, of course, still available, with a selection that includes red and white fox, sable, squirrel, volverene, wolf marten, fitch, charsa, raccoon

and marmot. It is in the ranches and fur farms that there has been enormous growth, with a million mink and thousands of blue and silver fox offered in January from the Soviet fur farms, the same assortment though in smaller quantity put up for sale in July. There are also in the dressed skin section, hair-seal, white-coat and fur seal, squirrel plates and saes. Considerable quantities of karakul and broadtail, including a selection of dressed skins, are presented at every auction.

Production of ranches skins generally has reached a total of 16 million (including only mink, foxes, nutria and sable). Nevertheless the growing demand of the domestic market means that only about twelve per cent of the total Soviet fur production including karakul, will be available to the

export trade.

The most valuable furs, sable and lynx, are sold at the Palace of Furs in Leningrad, with extraordinarily high prices offered for these most beautiful of furs. The export of sable is restricted to not more than 100-120 thousand pelts a year.

All sable comes from the Soviet Union and is sold only through V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA, under the trademark SOBOL, a label that can only be given to genuine Russian sable.

An addition to the catalogue in recent years has been a group of furs from ten countries outside the USSR. Sold on commission, these include wild furs from Mongolia and North Korea, nutria from Poland, mink and blue fox from Finland, Afghan karakul and Norwegian seal.

V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA, are

justifiably proud part in the trade. They are the largest fur supplier and they strive also to be the most responsible in the International Fur Trade. In the world of the fur organization, particularly in the area of conservation and the creation of a fur industry free of anti-fur propaganda. Over the years, V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA has managed to receive many awards for Soviet furs regularizes at the International Fur Show held every year. In 1980 V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was awarded a special prize, the Gold Medal, for their part in developing and economic development of an international fur trade in the next fifty years. V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA, this international organization, is their constant goal.

**EXHIBIT B**  
**Industry Alliances**

**SUPPLY SIDE**

# Taran Nearing Push-Button Operation

**M**ONTREAL - For years, as textile-apparel production has joined other industries moving into the age of computerization, fur manufacturers have watched longingly but were stymied because of the characteristics of their basic material. While most appear resolved the world's oldest handcraft is likely to remain just that, at least one producer believes it is well on its way toward the "push-button shop" of the future.

Taran Furs, the largest manufacturer in North America, also is one of the most innovative. The company has come up with a dozen or more devices and systems that represent major breakthroughs in the automation of key stages of production. Several of these are on stream now; others are in the final stages of development and are expected to be in use within two years.

Among them:

- A computerized pelt grading and matching system that will even sort as to color, height of hair and density of underfur, at the same time coding the leather side as to where the skin falls in the garment pattern.

- A conveyor belt operation that wets the leather side of skins and requires 75% less time and labor than the conventional brush-and-pail method.

- A pneumatic-hydraulic device that stretches and delivers to the cutting machine in seven minutes skins that have been dried using a wind-tunnel technique.

- An automated drying system that handles entire boards fed by monorail.

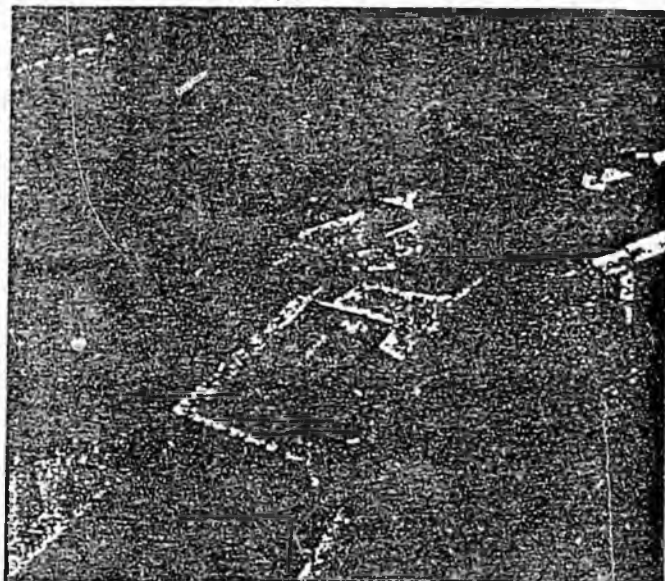
- A computerized grading and marking machine that also indicates kyles.

Most, explains Robert Taran, "are machines or systems that never existed. We developed the ideas and called in the technical people to work them out." At 23, he is the youngest of three generations of Tarans active in the family-owned company, now over half a century old. He is also general manager in charge of production.

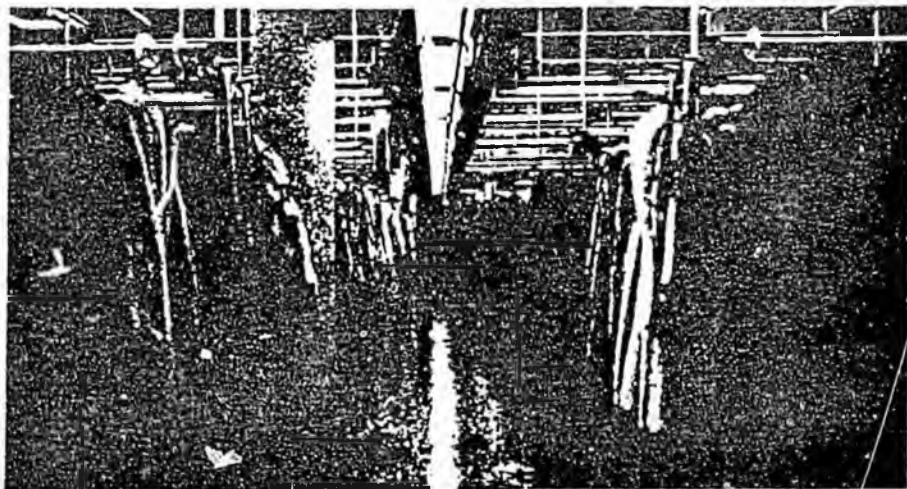
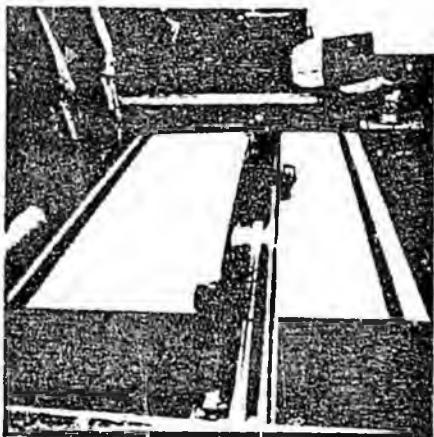
If he sounds a bit young to head production for a company the size of Taran, it should also be pointed out he's older than many of his workers. The average age of the operators is around 23, but the floorworkers range from 16 to 19. "Outside of some veteran cutters, trimmers and closers, the bulk of our production force averages under 25," he notes.

Some of the innovations have been relatively inexpensive, requiring simple mechanization of manual procedures. Others, like the pelt grading and matching scanner may take years between concep-

tion and execution. "We've been working with one of the universities for 18 months on this project. Skin matching and grading is a critical operation and there's always a shortage of competent help," notes the young executive. "The system we've developed will not only do the job as accurately, but will also eliminate human error



*Operator programming the computerized pattern grading and marking system.*



that often comes from fatigue. The computer never gets tired," he comments.

The system is expected to be on stream within two years at a cost of \$1.5 million (Canadian). But the company also expects to recoup the investment in 21 months in terms of savings through greater efficiency, "not to mention what it will mean in terms of quality control," he adds. One such unit, he points out, will be capable of matching out from 2,800 to 3,000 skins in seven hours, or about 10% more than is now done by seven workers in that period. Furthermore, the matched skins will be placed on wire hangers by robotic arms, which also will hang them on racks.

### Subsidies to Train Workers

Taran declines to identify the educational institutions or equipment manufacturers with which the firm is working. He does acknowledge, however, cooperation from various governmental agencies in the form of either outright grants for systems development or wage subsidies for training new workers.

The company employs over 300 workers in its 100,000-square-foot plant. It also contracts out some work locally and operates a factory in Korea, which produces some more labor-intensive items like fur-leather combinations. Overall, it turns out

about 2,000 garments a week and does an annual volume in the neighborhood of \$100 million (Canadian).

"What we're aiming for," comments Taran, "is the elimination of all contract labor. We want to do all the work inside with a smaller, elite group. That's how we're going to stay alive in view of what's coming out of the Orient. We're looking to increase production and efficiency and eliminate as much human error as possible. We believe we can produce a better garment at a lower price by modernizing."

#### Multimillion Dollar Grant

The investment is substantial, but the company is working with the Canadian Industrial Renewal Board, which makes grants to help industries grow. Says Taran, "We have received the largest such grant of any industry in Canada." He wouldn't say how much, but conceded it is a multimillion-dollar figure.

However, he adds, "we won't touch any new machine or system unless it offers a maximum two-year payback on investment." One system he's proud of, because it was developed largely in-house, is the skin-wetting device that will interface with the stretching and drying oper-



The average age of the production force is under 25.

machines can be supervised by one person. They are priced around \$90,000 each.

In addition, the company is looking into laser trimming of garments, utilizing equipment now available for cloth apparel, but with modifications for fur. Says Taran, "we're working with a major company on this and have it working on some

jute interfacings. Also, those that will sew in linings—all around—with a hand-finished effect.

Although the push-button factory is not quite at hand, it is much less inconceivable to the Taran family, including patriarch Benjamin, the founder. His sons, vice-presidents Charles and Albert, are even more sanguine. Their sister, Esther Brody, also is involved as chief skin buyer, assisted by her son, George. Robert is Albert's son. Charles' son, David, is director of finance and promotion.

"As we see it," explains Albert Taran, "we're no longer competing with the Far East. Now they'll be competing with us."



Taran's 100,000-square-foot plant turns out 2,000 garments a week.

ation now being developed. The entire procedure chopping substantial time off the conventional methods and performed under automatically-controlled temperature-humidity conditions.

#### Big Time-Saver

Pointing to the automated drying system through which the nailed-out garment sections on boards travel via monorail in only two hours he notes, "that saves a full day." The next step, removing the staples, is still done manually, but not for long. "We're perfecting a staple-removing machine, on a conveyor system, which will require two people instead of 14 at present and will be much faster—two to three minutes per board instead of 10. This will be in place by next year."

The company also has plans for the computerized skin slicing-sewing machine developed by Pfaff and demonstrated at recent fairs in Frankfurt and Montreal. "We have an option on 18 of these machines," notes the production manager. They are capable of letting out about five skins an hour and four such

furs, but not all. We're also working on closing by a robotic sewing machine, as is already done on textile-apparel. It's just a matter of adaptation."

Another process under development is blocking with a hydraulic-pneumatic system. Almost ready are machines that will prepare collars, as well as flannel and



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Monzievaired, Ltd., is the name of the Mundells' new venture. Offices are at Ochertyre, by Crieff, Perthshire P117 4JR.

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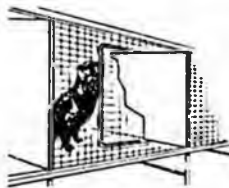


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★ 1986 Show Record ★

Canada Fox Show - Nov. 1986

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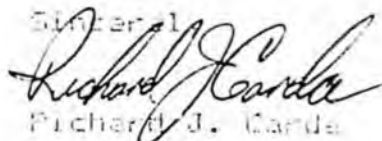
Mike, I'm going up before you soon and two house bills. One bill is for protection. This bill would make it a felony for anyone to enter a fur farm and harass, steal or get free any of the live stock. Hopefully this will make those people think twice before entering the farm. The second is a bill that would allow us farmers to go into the wild and collect wild stock to develop completely Alaskan fur, to increase our knowledge of other fur bearing animals and in so doing help us to compete today and tomorrow in the world market place.

At the moment there are an estimated 20,000 trappers in the state of Alaska. Each trapper buys a \$5.00 trapping license and is allowed to KILL as many animals as he can catch within the generous limits set down by Fish & Game. I could do the same with a license but I am a farmer not a trapper. Our bill would allow us to hire an Alaskan trapper to bring them back alive and by doing so the trapper would benefit with a better price, the fur farmer would benefit with new animals to work with and the fur industry would benefit with growth. To make it even better there is no added pressure put on the wild stock. Regardless of the number of wild animals requested by the farmer would be limited by the legal limit of the trappers that are hired.

We are interested in developing an "all-Alaskan Ranch Mink (from wild stock), " Alaskan Crown " by Alaskan farmers. We are also interested in studying the Alaskan Sable (martens). Very little is known about these animals. We need your help to begin.

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Senator



Richard J. Ganda  
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**V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA**

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# CANADA... THE FUR SOURCE

Adding modern techniques and advanced technology, the wholesale fur market in Canada has steadily increased its production capacity to now take its place as a world-ranking fur manufacturing industry.

The Canadian fur manufacturing industry is a major exporter, with more than half of its total production going to the fur fashion capitals of the world.

Over 120 Canadian manufacturers will show their newest fashion collections at the Canadian International Fur Fair Montréal, from May 4 to 7, 1988, in Place Bonaventure.

Two gala fur fashion shows on the evening of Wednesday, May 4, in Hotel Bonaventure will highlight the fine fashion furs for which the Canadian fur manufacturing industry is known.

1988 CANADIAN  
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For information on the Fair:  
Le Groupe EKSPQ  
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Tel. (514) 871-9214  
Telex 055-62171 Code 488



For information on the  
Canadian Fashion Show, contact  
Mr. André Daoust  
Canadian Fur Trade Development  
Institute Inc.  
1435 St-Alexandre, Suite 1265  
Montréal, Canada H3A 2G4  
(514) 288-6609

**EXHIBIT B**  
**Industry Alliances**



## THE HISTORY

When V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was born in 1931, no one could have known how much the organization would have grown just fifty years later.

In the early days V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was mainly concerned with fur exports, working with some six hundred companies in nineteen countries.

Today the organization is involved with both importing and exporting, in natural and synthetic leather and many other allied products as well as their original responsibility, furs. As the activities have grown so has the number of customers, now more than two thousand companies in sixty countries.

V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA is now not only one of the oldest Soviet foreign trade organizations but one of the most international with business contacts from Japan to the Argentine.

The Soviet Union has the largest production of furs in the world, and certainly the most breathta-

king selection. These are gathered in from all over the USSR, with goods from over 6.5 thousand Soviet enterprises.

Fur auctions are held three times a year in Leningrad as well as in London and Leipzig and there are warehouses in the USSR, London, Stockholm and West Berlin.

The major part of the fur production is sold at auctions, with 70-80% offered at the International Fur Auctions in Leningrad.

The original auctions concentrated on wild furs since there were at that time no fur farms in the USSR. Today the situation is quite different.

Wild furs are, of course, still available, with a selection that includes red and white fox, sable, squirrel, wolverene, wolf marten, fitch, charsa, raccoon

and marmot. It is in the ranches that there has been enormous growth, with a million mink and thousands of blue and silver fox offered in January from the Soviet fur farms, the same assortment though in smaller quantity put up for sale in July. There are also in the dressed skin section, hair-seal, white-coat and fur seal, squirrel plates and saes. Considerable quantities of karakul and broadtail, including a selection of dressed skins, are presented at every auction.

Production of ranches skins generally has reached a total of 16 million (including only mink, foxes, nutria and sable). Nevertheless the growing demand of the domestic market means that only about twelve per cent of the total Soviet fur production including karakul, will be available to the

export trade.

The most valuable furs, sable and lynx, are sold at the Palace of Furs in Leningrad, with extraordinarily high prices offered for these most beautiful of furs. The export of sable is restricted to not more than 100-120 thousand pelts a year.

All sable comes from the Soviet Union and is sold only through V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA, under the trademark SOBOL, a label that can only be given to genuine Russian sable.

An addition to the catalogue in recent years has been a group of furs from ten countries outside the USSR. Sold on commission, these include wild furs from Mongolia and North Korea, nutria from Poland, mink and blue fox from Finland, Afghan karakul and Norwegian seal.

V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA, are

justifiably proud part in the trade. They are the best fur suppliers they strive also

most responsible for the International Fur Auctions, they have a part in the world of fur organization, part of the area of conservation and creation of a combat anti-fur program.

Over the years V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA has managed to receive many Soviet furs regulates at the International Fur Show held every year.

In 1980 V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA was awarded a national prize, the G. Their part in economic and social progress is an international fur trade. In the next fifty years V/O SOJUZPUSHNINA will continue their international fur trade as their constant goal.

about 2,000 garments a week and does an annual volume in the neighborhood of \$100 million (Canadian).

"What we're aiming for," comments Taran, "is the elimination of all contract labor. We want to do all the work inside with a smaller, elite group. That's how we're going to stay alive in view of what's coming out of the Orient. We're looking to increase production and efficiency and eliminate as much human error as possible. We believe we can produce a better garment at a lower price by modernizing."

#### Multimillion Dollar Grant

The investment is substantial, but the company is working with the Canadian Industrial Renewal Board, which makes grants to help industries grow. Says Taran, "We have received the largest such grant of any industry in Canada." He wouldn't say how much, but conceded it is a multimillion-dollar figure.

However, he adds, "we won't touch any new machine or system unless it offers a maximum two-year payback on investment." One system he's proud of, because it was developed largely in-house, is the skin-wetting device that will interface with the stretching and drying oper-



The average age of the production force is under 25.

machines can be supervised by one person. They are priced around \$90,000 each.

In addition, the company is looking into laser trimming of garments, utilizing equipment now available for cloth apparel, but with modifications for fur. Says Taran, "we're working with a major company on this and have it working on some

jute interfacings. Also, those that will sew in linings—all around—with a hand-finished effect.

Although the push-button factory is not quite at hand, it is much less inconceivable to the Taran family, including patriarch Benjamin, the founder. His sons, vice-presidents Charles and Albert, are even more sanguine. Their sister, Esther Brody, also is involved as chief skin buyer, assisted by her son, George. Robert is Albert's son. Charles' son, David, is director of finance and promotion.

"As we see it," explains Albert Taran, "we're no longer competing with the Far East. Now they'll be competing with us."



Taran's 100,000-square-foot plant turns out 2,000 garments a week.

ation now being developed, the entire procedure chopping substantial time off the conventional methods and performed under automatically-controlled temperature-humidity conditions.

#### Big Time-Saver

Pointing to the automated drying system through which the nailed-out garment sections on boards travel via monorail in only two hours he notes, "that saves a full day." The next step, removing the staples, is still done manually, but not for long. "We're perfecting a staple-removing machine, on a conveyor system, which will require two people instead of 14 at present and will be much faster—two to three minutes per board instead of 10. This will be in place by next year."

The company also has plans for the computerized skin slicing-sewing machine developed by Platt and demonstrated at recent fairs in Frankfurt and Montreal. "We have an option on 18 of these machines," notes the production manager. They are capable of letting out about five skins an hour and four such

furs, but not all. We're also working on closing by a robotic sewing machine, as is already done on textile-apparel. It's just a matter of adaptation."

Another process under development is blocking with a hydraulic-pneumatic system. Almost ready are machines that will prepare collars, as well as flannel and



# taran

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**SUPPLY SIDE**

# Taran Nearing Push-Button Operation

**M**ONTREAL - For years, as textile-apparel production has joined other industries moving into the age of computerization, fur manufacturers have watched longingly but were stymied because of the characteristics of their basic material. While most appear resolved the world's oldest handcraft is likely to remain just that, at least one producer believes it is well on its way toward the "push-button shop" of the future.

Taran Furs, the largest manufacturer in North America, also is one of the most innovative. The company has come up with a dozen or more devices and systems that represent major breakthroughs in the automation of key stages of production. Several of these are on stream now; others are in the final stages of development and are expected to be in use within two years.

Among them:

- A computerized pelt grading and matching system that will even sort as to color, height of hair and density of underfur, at the same time coding the leather side as to where the skin falls in the garment pattern.

- A conveyor belt operation that wets the leather side of skins and requires 75% less time and labor than the conventional brush-and-pull method.

- A pneumatic-hydraulic device that stretches and delivers to the cutting machine in seven minutes skins that have been dried using a wind-tunnel technique.

- An automated drying system that handles entire boards fed by monorail.

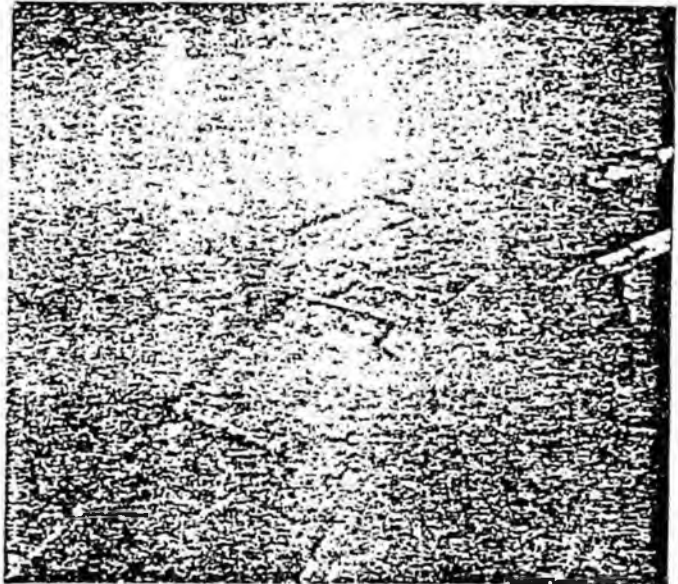
- A computerized grading and marking machine that also indicates kyles.

Most, explains Robert Taran, "are machines or systems that never existed. We developed the ideas and called in the technical people to work them out." At 23, he is the youngest of three generations of Tarans active in the family-owned company, now over half a century old. He is also general manager in charge of production.

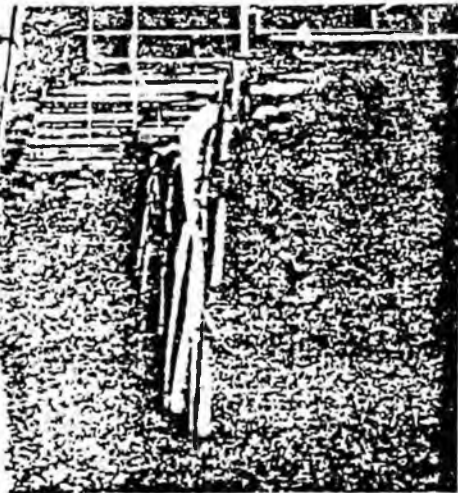
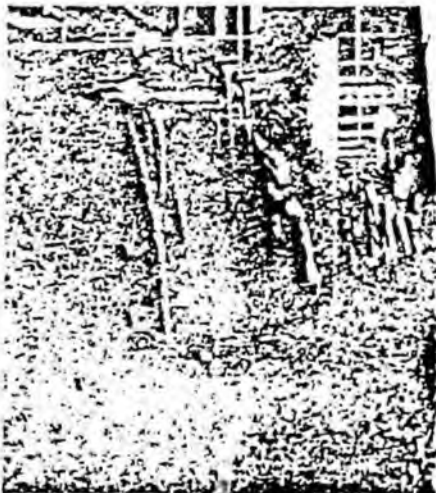
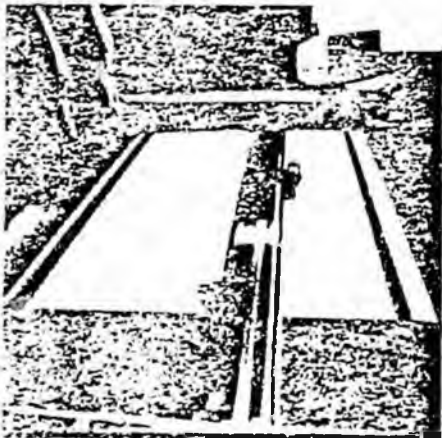
If he sounds a bit young to head production for a company the size of Taran, it should also be pointed out he's older than many of his workers. The average age of the operators is around 23, but the floorworkers range from 16 to 19. "Outside of some veteran cutters, trimmers and closers, the bulk of our production force averages under 25," he notes.

Some of the innovations have been relatively inexpensive, requiring simple mechanization of manual procedures. Others, like the pelt grading and matching scanner may take years between concep-

tion and execution. "We've been working with one of the universities for 18 months on this project. Skin matching and grading is a critical operation and there's always a shortage of competent help," notes the young executive. "The system we've developed will not only do the job as accurately, but will also eliminate human error



Operator programming the computerized pattern grading and marking system.



that often comes from fatigue. The computer never gets tired," he comments.

The system is expected to be on stream within two years at a cost of \$1.5 million (Canadian). But the company also expects to recoup the investment in 21 months in terms of savings through greater efficiency, "not to mention what it will mean in terms of quality control," he adds. One such unit, he points out, will be capable of matching out from 2,800 to 3,000 skins in seven hours, or about 10% more than is now done by seven workers in that period. Furthermore, the matched skins will be placed on wire hangers by robotic arms, which also will hang them on racks.

### Subsidies to Train Workers

Taran declines to identify the educational institutions or equipment manufacturers with which the firm is working. He does acknowledge, however, cooperation from various governmental agencies in the form of either outright grants for systems development or wage subsidies for training new workers.

The company employs over 300 workers in its 100,000-square-foot plant. It also contracts out some work locally and operates a factory in Korea, which produces some more labor-intensive items like fur-leather combinations. Overall, it turns out

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE BOYER

NAME: AL JONES  
TITLE:  
ADDRESS: PO BOX 693  
CITY: FAIRBANKS ZIP: 99707  
PHONE: 479-5458  
BILL NO: HB 395  
SUBJECT: FUR ANIMAL COLLECTION PERMITS  
MESSAGE: I AM ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO THE PASSAGE OF THIS BILL AS I FEEL THAT  
OVER THE LONG RUN IT WILL DO NOTHING BUT SEVERELY DEPRESS PRICES FOR ALL  
FURBEARERS AS WE HAVE SEEN HAPPEN IN THE FOX INDUSTRY. PLEASE DO EVERYTHING  
IN YOUR POWER TO ASSURE THIS BILL DOES NOT PASS.

POMID: 07152930  
DATE: 02/01/88  
TIME: 15:29:30  
LIONAME: FAIRBANKS LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES SENATORS

DAVIS	COGHILL
FRANK	FAHRENKAMP
KOPONEN	FANLING
MILLER	

EF

## PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE BOYER

NAME: MIKE CHAPIN

TITLE:

ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 84049

CITY: FAIRBANKS

ZIP: 99708

PHONE: 455-6520

BILL NO: HB 395

SUBJECT: FUR ANIMAL COLLECTION PERMITS

MESSAGE: HB 395 WILL EVENTUALLY, SERIOUSLY, HURT THE TRAPPING COMMUNITY. RANCHE  
 RANCHED FOX AND MINK HAS RUINED THE MARKET FOR WILD SPECIES. FARMING MINK AND  
 MARTIN WILL RUIN THOSE MARKETS. PLEASE OPPOSE HB 395.

EOM-FZ

POMID: 07101735

DATE: 03/24/88

TIME: 10:17:35

LIONAME: FAIRBANKS LIO

COPIES: REPRESENTATIVES SENATORS

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 MILLER

COGILL  
 FAHRENKAMP  
 FANNING

EF

## PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE BOYER

NAME: HELEN HICKOX

TITLE: FAMILY CLINICIAN

ADDRESS: POB 15000-52

CITY: WASILLA

ZIP: 99687

PHONE: 376-4262

BILL NO: HB 4

SUBJECT: EXTENDING ALASKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION

MESSAGE: PLEASE SUPPORT THE ALASKA WOMEN'S COMMISSION, THEIR HOMES,  
 POSTERS, BOOKLETS. WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT THEM.  
 THEY MUST HAVE FULL ALLOTMENT FOR THEIR OWN PROGRAMS,  
 NOT AS AN ADJUNCT OF SOMETHING ELSE.

POMID: 14115431

DATE: 03/24/88

TIME: 11:54:31

LIONAME: MAT-SU LIO

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LARSON  
 MENARD  
 ADAMS  
 BROWN  
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 HANLEY  
 HUDSON  
 KOPONEN  
 PHILLIPS

KERTTULA  
 SZYMANSKI  
 BINKLEY  
 DUNCAN  
 FISCHER  
 RALFORD  
 HENSLEY  
 UENLING  
 ZHAROFF  
 FANNING  
 JONES  
 JOSEPHSON

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
MARK BOYER

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE



House of Representatives

FAIRBANKS

1098 LAKEVIEW TERRACE  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701  
(907) 456-6473

JUNEAU

P.O. BOX V  
STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
(907) 465-3466

April 1, 1988

Mike Chapin  
P. O. Box 84049  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

Dear Mike,

Thank you for contacting me regarding HB 395, relating to animal collection permits. I have checked with Representative Cotten, co-chair of the House Resources Committee to find out what transpired at the hearing on the bill last week. There was little support for the bill from either the public or state agencies, and it is not known at this time if it will receive another hearing or die in the Resources committee. In any case, HB 395 does not appear likely to pass this year. I have forwarded a copy of your public opinion message to the House Resources Committee, and it will be placed into the record on the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Boyer".

Mark Boyer  
Representative

MB/ef  
cc: Representative Sam Cotten

## PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE BOYER

NAME: CHARLENE HUTTON

TITLE:

ADDRESS: BOX 103233

CITY: ANCHORAGE

PHONE: 563-3048

ZIP: 99510

BILL NO:

SUBJECT: STATE SHORTFALL

MESSAGE: I STAND ADAMANTLY OPPOSED TO USING RAILBELT ENERGY FUNDS OR SUSPENDING THE OIL INDUSTRY TAX CUT. THE SHORTFALLS MUST BE TAKEN OUT OF THE OPERATING BUDGET BY REDUCING THIS HORRENDOUS STATE SPENDING.

POMID: 03155942

DATE: 03/25/88

TIME: 15:59:42

LIONAME: ANCHORAGE LIO

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ADAMS	BARNES	ABOOD
BOUCHER	BROWN	BINKLEY
CATO	COLLINS	COGHILL
COTTEN	DAVIDSON	DUNCAN
DAVIS	DONLEY	ELIASON
ELLIS	FRANK	FAHRENKAMP
FURNACE	GOLL	FAIKS
GRUENBERG	GRUSSENDORF	FANNING
HANLEY	HERRMANN	FISCHER
HOFFMAN	HUDSON	MALFORD
KOPONEN	LARSON	HENSLEY
MARTIN	MENARD	JONES
MILLER	NAVARRE	JOSEPHSON
PEARCE	PETTYJOHN	KELLY
PHILLIPS	POURCHOT	KERTTULA
RIEGER	SHULTZ	RODEY
SPRINGER	SUND	STURGULEWSKI
SWACKHAMMER	TAYLOR	SZYMANSKI
ULMER	WALLIS	UEHLING
ZAWACKI		ZHAROFF

## PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE

DEAR: REPRESENTATIVE BOYER

NAME: JOHN SELLE

TITLE:

ADDRESS: 751 LANCASTER

CITY: FAIRBANKS

PHONE: 457-7345

ZIP: 99712

BILL NO: HB 395

SUBJECT: FUR ANIMAL COLLECTION PERMITS

MESSAGE: ADAMANTLY OPPOSE HB 395. I'M A TRAPPER AND FEEL WE MUST PROTECT OUR MARKETS ON WILD SPECIES.

POMID: 07152655

DATE: 03/25/88

TIME: 15:26:55

LIONAME: FAIRBANKS LIO

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# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
MARK BOYER

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE



House of Representatives

April 1, 1988

FAIRBANKS

1098 LAKEVIEW TERRACE  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701  
(907) 456-6473

JUNEAU

P.O. BOX V  
STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
(907) 465-3466

John Selle  
751 Lancaster  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

Dear John,

Thank you for contacting me regarding HB 395, relating to animal collection permits. I have checked with Representative Cotten, co-chair of the House Resources Committee to find out what transpired at the hearing on the bill last week. There was little support for the bill from either the public or state agencies, and it is not known at this time if it will receive another hearing or die in the Resources committee. In any case, HB 395 does not appear likely to pass this year. I have forwarded a copy of your public opinion message to the House Resources Committee, and it will be placed into the record on the bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Boyer".

Mark Boyer  
Representative

MB/ef  
cc: Representative Sam Cotten

Alaska Trappers Association  
P.O. Box 82177  
Fairbanks, AK 99708

10 EF

Dear Legislator:

RE: HB 395 An Act relating to collection permits.

The Alaska Trappers Association wishes to comment on lines 14-17 of this bill.

First, the bill reads "the Commissioner shall issue..." Deleting shall and inserting "may" will give the Department of Fish and Game the discretion to examine any application on its merits.

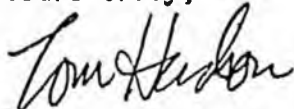
Second, and more importantly, we feel that granting permission to domesticate most of Alaska's furbearing species would eventually have a disastrous affect on wild fur prices and, in turn, on the winter economy of rural Alaska.

Earlier this century, a silver fox (color phase of the red fox species) would net a lucky trapper the equivalent of 6 years wages. A cross fox would bring 3 to 4 months wages. The proliferation of ranched fox has been the single most important factor in the drop of these prices of what once was a rare fur.

We would not like to see the price of Alaska's furbearers such as lynx, marten and others lose their rightful place in the world fur market due to ranching.

Perhaps the bill could be amended to allow the taking of live fox or mink, since these species are already commonly ranched. We are however, adamantly opposed to the domestication of other species.

Yours truly,



Tom Hudson, Acting President  
Alaska Trappers Association

# Alaska State Legislature

REPRESENTATIVE  
MARK BOYER

HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE



House of Representatives

FAIRBANKS

1098 LAKEVIEW TERRACE  
FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99701  
(907) 456-6473

JUNEAU

P.O. BOX V  
STATE CAPITOL  
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811  
(907) 465-3466

April 1, 1988

Tom Hudson, Acting President  
Alaska Trappers Association  
P. O. Box 82177  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

Dear Tom,

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Boyer".

Mark Boyer  
Representative

MB/ef

cc: Representative Sam Cotten

3/28

HB 395/393

Mike Miller

Phx - RJ Caska - fur farmers.

Dean Wilson - Trappers.

Keith Miller - a trapper.

→ does ADF+G reg on live trapping contradict statute?

S AAC 92 043 (may)

vs.

16 OS 340 (b) (shall)

Mark Landman - wants to raise animals

→ ADF+G permits to import spp./animals fr. out of state?

ADF+G has an application pending

to start new farms for unfarmed spp (marten/lynx)

ADF+G has authy, w/ det. on interest of the gen'l public in trapping  
+ fur farming -

Don Ritter - mgr. Ark Div'n Pub Health Nix'n Health Lab -

Tom Drew - pro-~~trapping~~ farming

Rice - pro-~~trapping~~ farming

Gerald Victor - pro-farming -

→ do we know if people w. valid law + tried to export Ark animals for outside breeding stock? how many viol's?