

HB

490

SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT

DATE: 4/21/92

FURTHER: Judiciary

DATE TURNED INTO OFFICE: May 6, 1992

Resources Committee considered

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 490 (RESOURCES)

"An Act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears and prohibiting the possession of more than one bear gall bladder."

and recommends:

[] replace with S CS CS HB 490 (RES)
or [] adopt previous CS ()
[] attaches amendment(s)

[] same title
[] new title
[] technical title change (HB only)

[] adopts Letter of Intent

[] further referral to the

[] do pass

[] do not pass

[] no recommendation

[X] individual recommendations

NEW FISCAL NOTES: Dept/Date

[] zero fiscal notes

[] fiscal notes

[] appropriation--no fiscal note

PREVIOUS FISCAL NOTES: Dept/Date

[X] zero fiscal notes ADF 4/16/92
Dept of Law 4/16/92

[] fiscal notes

DO PASS:

Handwritten signatures under DO PASS

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

Handwritten signature: Paul J. Shuff No Rec

Chair Signature and Recommendation
Handwritten signature: Lloyd Jones (Do Pass)

Heinrich Springer
Box 232114
Anchorage, Ak. 99523

30/April/92

To
Senate Resources Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Ak.

Subject: CS HB 490 (Resources)

"An Act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears and prohibiting the possession of more than one bear gall bladder."

It is my understanding that the referenced bill has been referred to this committee for further consideration. Please enter my following remarks in the record and please consider them for amendment/change of some of the provisions of this bill.

I support the concept and aim of this bill; I agree that any commercial exploitation of our game resources has to be stopped.

Section 1 (e) is ok

Section 1 (f): I have some problems with the provisions: it seems unreasonable to me not to allow usage of any part of a bear that has been legally taken in accordance with the State's game regulations. I personally use the meat and various parts besides the skin and skull which is required by State law.

I think it should be changed to allow possession of bladders or other parts from bears which have been legally taken in accordance with the bag limit as established by the ADFG. Reference should be the bag limits established and not a fixed number, because they get changed from year to year for various geographic areas in the State.

If tighter control is desirable, bladders could be sealed by ADFG, just as bear skulls and hides have to be sealed now. It would not be an additional burden to the State if it is done at the same time.

I have discussed this with the primary sponsor, Representative Ben Grussendorf, and I don't think there is any philosophical disagreement. I appreciate your favorable action.

Sincerely,

Heinrich Springer

CC Ben Grussendorf

Post-It™ brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages
To	Senator L. Jones	From Henry Springer
Co.	Senate Resources	Co.
Dept.		Phone # 346-2121
Fax #	465-3922	Fax #

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

FISCAL NOTE

No. 2

Version: CSHB 490 (RES)

(H) Publish Date: 4-10-92

Revision Date: 4/1/92 Department Affected: Fish and Game

Title: Prohibiting sale of bear parts and BRU: Wildlife Conservation

possession of more than one bear gall bladder Component: Wildlife Conservation

Sponsor: Representative Grussendorf

Requestor: House Resources COMPONENT SERIAL NO.

	4	7	3
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Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES	0	0	0	0	0	0
TRAVEL	0	0	0	0	0	0
CONTRACTUAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
SUPPLIES	0	0	0	0	0	0
EQUIPMENT	0	0	0	0	0	0
LAND & STRUCTURES	0	0	0	0	0	0
GRANTS, CLAIMS	0	0	0	0	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:	0	0	0	0	0	0
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars) *

GENERAL FUND	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEDERAL FUNDS	0	0	0	0	0	0
OTHER FUND SOURCE:	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY	0	0	0	0	0	0

Estimate of current year impact: None

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Prepared By: Geron Bruce G.B. Phone: 465-4100

Division: Commissioner's Office Date: 4/4/92

Approved by Commissioner: [Signature]

Agency: Department of Fish and Game Date: 4/6/92

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. Fin., Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, CMB/DBR, Gov. Legis. OSC., & Impacted Agency(ies).

CONTINUATION of FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

For Bill/Resolution No. CSHB 490 (ITT)

The Special Committee on International Trade and Tourism substitute for HB 490 amends AS 16.05.920 by adding a new section that would prohibit the sale or purchase of parts of bears. A person who violates this prohibition would be guilty of a class C felony. Although the current version of the bill abandons the concept of prohibiting the import or export of animal parts contained in the original bill, which we felt might have constitutional problems, we recommend that the committee substitute be further revised to clarify and strengthen some of the bill's provisions in accordance with state criminal law standards. Department of Law attorneys are already working with committee staff to draft the needed revisions. We do not believe that this bill will have a fiscal impact for our department, because it seeks to clarify the state's existing authority to exercise authority over the sale of game parts.

COMMITTEE COPY

FISCAL NOTE

No. 3

Bill Version: CSHB 490 (RES)

(H) Publish Date: 4-10-92

STATE OF ALASKA
1992 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Revision Date: _____
Title: "An Act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears."
Sponsor: Representative Grussendorf
Requestor: International Trade and Tourism

Department Affected: Department of Law
BRU: Prosecution, Legal Services
Component: Prosecution - All Legal Services - Operations
COMPONENT SERIAL

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Expenditures/Revenues: (Thousands of Dollars)

85 through 91, and 93

OPERATING	FY 93	FY 94	FY 95	FY 96	FY 97	FY 98
PERSONAL SERVICES						
TRAVEL						
CONTRACTUAL						
SUPPLIES						
EQUIPMENT						
LAND & STRUCTURES						
GRANTS, CLAIMS						
MISCELLANEOUS						
TOTAL OPERATING	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-

CAPITAL						
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REVENUE FUND SOURCE:						
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FUNDING: (Thousands of Dollars)

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

POSITIONS:

FULL-TIME	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-	-0-
PART-TIME						
TEMPORARY						

Estimate of current year impact: _____

ANALYSIS: (Attach a separate page if necessary.)

Please see the attached analysis.

Prepared by: Richard I. Peques, Director
Division: Administrative Services
Approved by Commissioner: Charles E. Cole, Attorney General
Agency: Department of Law

Phone: 465-3672
Date: March 16, 1992
Date: March 16, 1992

Distribution (by preparer): Leg. Fin., Legislative Sponsor, Requestor, OMB/DBR, Gov. Legis. Ofc., & Impacted Agency(ies).

CONTINUATION of FISCAL NOTE ANALYSIS

For Bill/Resolution No. CSHB 490 (ITT)

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COMMITTEE COPY

REPRESENTATIVE
BEN GRUSSENDORF
1221 HALIBUT POINT ROAD
SITKA, ALASKA 99838
(907) 747-8468

RULES COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

DISTRICT 3
ELFIN COVE
PELICAN
PORT ALEXANDER
SITKA
TENAKEE

Alaska State Legislature



WHILE IN JUNEAU
P.O. Box V
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99811
(907) 485-3824
(907) 485-3720

House of Representatives
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

MEMORANDUM

To: Sen. Lloyd Jones
Chairman
Senate Resources Committee

From: Rep. Ben Grussendorf

Date: April 22, 1992

Re: House Bill 490 (Resources)
"An Act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears and
prohibiting the possession of more than one bear gallbladder."

This is to request a Senate Resources Committee hearing of the above referenced bill, of which I am the prime sponsor. I introduced the bill in response to a growing problem: the illegal traffic in bear parts -- particularly bear paws and gallbladders. The traffic in these parts is big business: in some parts of Asia and the Far East, a good quality bear gallbladder can sell for as much as \$4600 per ounce, bear paw soup for \$100 or more per bowl. I have attached to this memo some recent articles that illustrate the lucrative nature of this activity and the problems it is causing.

Although it has been illegal to sell, purchase or barter bear parts in Alaska since 1985, the prohibition has been by Board of Game regulation, the violation of which is only a misdemeanor. Because the profit potential for this type of activity is so high, I believe that offenders are willing to take the risk of a misdemeanor charge as a "cost of doing business." House Bill 490 (Resources) makes it a class C felony to traffic in bear parts; the penalty is up to five years in jail and a fine of up to \$100,000. The bill also makes it a class A misdemeanor to knowingly possess more than one bear gallbladder.

The Resources Committee version of the bill was drafted after discussions with the Departments of Law, Public Safety, and Fish & Game, all of which support the legislation.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

BILL NO: CSHB 490(RES)

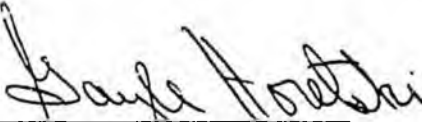
DATE: April 15, 1992

TITLE: An Act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears and prohibiting the possession of more than one bear gallbladder.

CONTACT: Gayle A. Horetski
Deputy Commissioner
465-4322

CSHB 490(RES) would make it a Class C felony offense for a person to knowingly sell, purchase, offer to sell, or possess for sale the meat, hide, claws, or other parts of a black or brown bear. While it is against the law to sell bear parts in Alaska now (see 5 AAC 92.200(b)(2)), it is only a misdemeanor offense. The bill would also make it a Class A misdemeanor crime to knowingly possess more than one bear gallbladder.

Some Asian cultures prize bear gallbladders for their reputed medicinal or aphrodisiac properties, and bear gallbladders can be sold for hundreds of dollars each. Because of its geographical location and ties with the Pacific Rim, Alaska could become a crossroad for traffic in wild animal parts. This bill would help to safeguard Alaska's bear population from illegal hunting fueled by the demand for bear parts in foreign countries. The Department of Public Safety supports CSHB 490(RES).


for Richard D. Burton
Commissioner

4

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

POSITION PAPER

Bill Number: CSHB 490

Sponsor: Representative Grussendorf

Bill Title: "An act prohibiting the sale or purchase of parts of bears and prohibiting the possession of more than one bear gall bladder."

Department Position: The department supports this legislation.

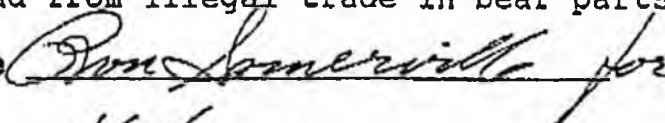
Legislative Intent: The purpose of this bill is twofold: to increase the penalties for the unlawful sale of bear parts, and to specifically prohibit the purchase or sale of bear parts by statute.

Effects of Legislation on Department Programs: This legislation would have no effect on the activities of the department, as the sale or purchase of bear parts is already prohibited. It would preempt the Board of Game's current statutory discretion to allow the sale or purchase of bear parts. Presently, such activity is prohibited, unless the Board of Game were to specifically authorize such activity by regulation. To date, the Board of Game has not authorized any sale of bear parts.

This bill prohibits possession of more than one gall bladder of a bear. Regulations presently allow harvest of up to seven bears in a calendar year. Some Alaskan hunters salvage gall bladders for personal use--as medicine or for use as a tonic. This bill would force hunters to "waste" legally harvested gall bladders and to leave them in the field when a bear is taken.

The increase in fines would bring the penalties in line with the potential profit to be had from illegal trade in bear parts.

Commissioner's Signature



Date

4/8/92

Ketchikan Daily News

March 19, 1992

In brief

Poached bears reported

Fish and Wildlife Trooper Jim Pagel has been investigating the killing of five black bears that were shot and wasted at the head of Carroll Inlet. The bears were killed sometime in late September 1991. The poacher took very little from the animals, according to a press release from the Alaska State Troopers. The bears' bodies were found and reported by a hunter, Pagel said.

Pagel estimated that the bears were dead for four days when they were discovered. The bears' coats were in prime shape, Pagel said. One of them was a large, trophy size bear, he said.

The five bears were shot by a poacher using a high powered rifle, the release said. Pagel said the poacher used a small skiff or canoe to get up the river at the head of the inlet.

The Alaska Fish and Wildlife Saffeguard Program is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information that leads to the arrest of whoever is responsible for killing the bears.

Pagel declined to specify for the record what was taken from the bears so as not to compromise the investigation.

to the visiting Soviets.

the Fairbanks campus.

9-24-91

Officers seize 173 bear bladders worth \$175,000

The Associated Press

Bear gall bladders valued up to \$175,000 have been seized at Anchorage International Airport by Fish and Wildlife Protection officers.

The 173 gall bladders were being shipped to Anchorage by a Canadian animal parts dealer, the state Department of Public Safety said in a release. They were seized at the airport Sunday.

The shipment was addressed to Charles Choi, 37, and Bong Kim, 45.

both of Anchorage. The department wouldn't say if the men had been arrested, but said that potential charges against the men include smuggling and violations of the Endangered Species Act.

An investigation is continuing by Fish and Wildlife Protection, the U.S. Customs Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

It is believed the bladders were from Canadian black bears and were to be shipped on to Asia. The public safety

department estimated that the street value of the parts in Asia could be as high as \$175,000.

Joe Campbell, a Fish and Wildlife Protection trooper, said Tuesday that the bladders and other animal parts are used in traditional Asian folk medicines to treat a variety of ailments, including heart disease, arthritis and blood disorders.

Campbell wouldn't say how Fish and Wildlife Protection learned of the shipment.

Big bucks bait bear poachers

Gallbladder demand greases black market

By JOE HUNT

TIMES WRITER

Poachers in the Lower 48 and black market entrepreneurs in Alaska are prospecting a potential gold mine in illegal animal parts, wildlife law enforcers said.

The unwanted gallbladder from brown and black bears, left to decay in the Alaska bush, is valuable in Asian countries for its medicinal properties.

"It's almost getting to the point where it's valued as much as cocaine," said Dave Perrington, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service enforcement officer.

The highest quality gallbladders have been known to sell for as much as \$4,000 an ounce in Korea, roughly 13 times the going price for gold.

Gallbladders more commonly sell for \$200-\$1,000 each on the Asian market, according to wildlife protection officers specializing in the animal parts trade.

In addition, bear paw soup, served at the best restaurants in Seoul, is considered a rare cultural delicacy sold for \$100 or more a bowl.

It has been illegal to sell bear parts in Alaska since the mid-1980s. But the state's abundance of animals and wide-open, year-round hunting season creates an opportunity waiting to be exploited, they said.

"There are indications people are approaching hunters to keep the gallbladders (for sale or trade)," said Chuck Parker, special agent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"There's too much money to be made for people not to be dealing in this stuff. It's a big problem, but how big a problem we don't know," he said.

National Park Service rangers said they are aware of the potential in Alaska. "To our knowledge the problem in the parks is to a large degree theoretical," said ranger Steve Shackleton. "It's one of the nightmares we don't want to see occur up here."

Last month, a shipment of 173 black bear gallbladders from Canada, worth up to \$1,000 each on the Asian market, were seized at Anchorage International Airport. The package, from a dealer in

See Bears, page B5

Bears

Continued from page B1

Quebec, was addressed to two Anchorage men. The case is under investigation and no charges have been filed.

Another Anchorage man, caught smuggling 58 grizzly and black bear gall bladders through the Yukon Territory, pleaded guilty in March 1990 to illegally exporting bear parts from Canada. Jay Ahn admitted to a Whitehorse court he planned to sell the gallbladders: to friends and Oriental grocery stores in Alaska, the prosecutor told the court. Ahn was fined \$6,000 and sentenced to one day in jail.

In both cases the gallbladders were legally obtained in Canadian provinces which allow the sale of animal parts. Violations occur when the gallbladders are transported without the proper permits, imported without notifying customs or possessed with intent to resell them in Alaska, enforcement officials say.

Demand far outweighs supply, creating a market so lucrative that an underground network has developed connecting bear hunting regions of the U.S. with the population centers of Korea.

Poachers supplying the black market were responsible for devastating the bear population of Great Smokey Mountains National Park in North Carolina before federal agents infiltrated the network and ended the raids on the park. Two-thirds of the park's 500 black bears were killed over three years, their paws and gallbladders removed.

Poaching for parts placed California black bears in such trouble that hunting was banned for several years. A crackdown resulted in tougher laws making it a felony to sell bear parts in California and one seizure of more than 70 gallbladders from a hunting guide. The black bear population there is slowly recovering.

Bill Cook helped lead the multi-agency force that cracked the black market ring responsible for killing two-thirds of the black bears in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. The National Park Service investigator now teaches at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynnco, Ga., and has taught about the bear trade in Alaska.

"Yes. Absolutely. There's a potential for a large problem there," he said.

"I do know there are people out there — like in Glennallen — selling gallbladders and who have gallbladders drying on the side of their cabins," he said. "Oh yeah. It's happening up there."

Alaska has year-round legal hunting for black bear in many parts of the state and a high oriental population to support a market for the sale of gallbladders, he said. The bear parts do not have to be smuggled out.

The off-white gallbladder, used by the bear to create enzymes for digestion, resembles a baseball-sized balloon filled with water when fresh. Once it dries, it turns dark brown and shrinks to a teardrop shape the size of a fig. The bile inside hardens into molasses-colored crystals.

The bitter tasting gall is either cut into thin wafers to be eaten or ground into pepper-like granules to be sprinkled over food.



Times photo by DOUGLAS VAN REBETH

Chuck Parker, special agent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, displays a bear's dried gallbladder, which sells for \$4,600 an ounce in Korea — 13 times the going price for gold.

Its healing properties are widely believed in Korea and other Asian countries, said Choonga "Chuck" Kim, a leader in the Anchorage Korean community. The bear gallbladder has been an important medicine in Asia for thousands of years, he said.

The "Illustrated Natural Drugs Encyclopedia," published in Korea, says a bear gallbladder has many medicinal uses. It helps reduce fever from infectious diseases, aids digestion, soothes stomach aches, cures hepatitis, dysentery and jaundice, and should be used for people in a coma, though the book does not explain why.

Kim tasted bear gallbladder years ago when buying and selling animal parts was still legal in Alaska. He tried it out of curiosity mostly, he said. Dipping the wafers in sugar could not mask its taste. "It was awfully, awfully bitter. I could not tell what it did for me," he said.

Bear gallbladder is very rare in Korea, he said. Combine its rarity with its reputation as a powerful natural medicine and it is easy to see how it fetches top dollar. "It is valuable because they believe in it," he said.

Adult children often seek ga's

for their aging parents afflicted with a terminal illness, Kim said.

Bear gallbladders are still being used as medicine in Anchorage, Kim said. He said he does not know where they are coming from, but there are legitimate ways to get them in

Alaska. Gallbladder users can either go hunting for their own bear or they can ask hunter friends to save the organ for their use. There is no law against giving the gallbladder away.

A state law which encourages the waste of gallbladders when

there is a legitimate use for them does not make good sense to Kim. He said he would like to see the gallbladders made available as long as the bears were taken by legitimate means.

Oriental stores are no longer allowed to sell bear parts in any form. Pills and natural medicines produced in Asia containing minute amounts of animal parts are as illegal as selling the galls outright.

Jun Ro, a grocer at Seoul Oriental Food Store in Anchorage, said people occasionally ask for the medicines. It is usually requested by children wanting to buy it for their parents, he said.

Investigator Cook said his research of the Asian traditions has shown the gallbladder is prized for its powers to increase stamina. It is not an aphrodisiac as is often rumored, he said.

Western medicine has shown bear gallbladders to have some potential for dissolving gall stones in humans, he said. But Cook cautioned that it would be a mistake to mix western medicine with traditional Oriental beliefs.

"If I wanted to increase my stamina, in western medicinal thought I would take multiple vitamins," he said. "In eastern culture, I would ingest certain anatomical parts of animals that exhibited great stamina — like the black bear."

The high price of the black market trade gives the black bear the same potential for exploitation as the black rhino of

Africa, Cook said. Poachers seeking the rhino's prized horn for Oriental medicines have made it an endangered species.

Craig McClure inspects packages at Anchorage International Airport for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to guard against illegal import and export of animals and their parts. He has confiscated bear gallbladders and medicines made with black rhino and sees the correlation.

"It's the same concern we have over black bears," he said. "What happens when the market gets so viable people start to shoot black bears just because they can get X number of dollars for the gallbladders."

Hunting guides in Alaska used to be solicited by Asian dealers before the sale of animal parts was banned. Joe Klutch, president of the Alaska Professional Hunters Association, said his assistant guides used to keep gallbladders as a way to make extra money during the guiding season. They could get between \$75 and \$300 for gallbladders, he said.

The remoteness of Alaska helps reduce the profitability of poaching. The most efficient way to acquire gallbladders would be through the guides, officials said.

All that has ended, Klutch said. "I haven't even heard anyone discuss it in the last two or three years. It's just nothing anybody in the industry would want to risk."

Nov. 1 Times 2-17-92

"We think this is very significant" forced to ship in signature gath- special recall election later.

would deplete fish and game pop- ulations critical to Native nutri-

concerns are represented in one of the other lawsuits.

As bear population declines, trade in body parts expected to flourish

ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRINCE GEORGE, British Columbia — As the world's bear population declines, illegal traffic in the animals' parts will increase and become more lucrative, a provincial government official says.

"Every single bear in the world worth more dead than alive," Ivan Banci of the Environment Ministry said at the B.C. Trappers' Association's weekend con-

vention.

The Asian practice of using bear parts for medicine and gourmet food is centuries old, with some uses traced back more than 4,000 years, said Banci, acting fur-carnivore specialist with the ministry.

The five bear species in the 11 Asian countries with such traditions are all facing extinction because of overharvesting and

poaching, as well as environmental threats, she said.

"Asia is running out of bears," she said.

Bear cubs are sold in some Asian countries for \$1,600 to \$5,500. As cubs, they are pets. When they reach adulthood they are killed for their parts, Banci said.

Bear paws, a gourmet delicacy, bring almost \$600 a plate at ban-

quets in South Korea, she said. In Taiwan, a bear is killed in front of banquet guests to prove they are getting what they paid \$2,000 a plate for.

As many as 56 medicines are extracted from bears' gall, Banci said, which explains prices ranging close to \$3,000 for a bladder.

Although the chemical in bear gall has been available synthetically since 1955, she said, Japan's

medicines depend on natural products.

Those demanding the real thing are putting pressure on the world's bear population, estimated at about 1 million, Banci said.

Although the ministry knows poachers are shooting bears and removing only the high-priced parts, she said it is impossible for thinly spread conservation officers to patrol vast wilderness areas.

Prices effective March 18th thru March 31st, 1992

Europe



BUDWEISER
12 pk. 12 oz. cans
Regular, Light or Dry
\$5.99



MILLER
12 pk cans
High Life, Lite,
Genuine Draft,



COORS
12 pk bottles
Regular or Light
\$2.25

Sale of black-bear gallbladders leads to murder

By BILL ORDINE

KNIGHT-RIDDER NEWSPAPERS

In a place where homicide is exceptionally common, the circumstances in the murder of Haeng Gu Lee in New York City were decidedly uncommon.

Lee was stabbed five times and his throat was slashed in his Brooklyn apartment in October. But it wasn't the manner in which Lee died that made his death unusual, but rather the suspected motive.

Police say the 39-year-old Korean businessman was probably killed for his large cache of black-bear gallbladders.

Some Asians prize bear gallbladders for their medicinal use and as a reputed aphrodisiac. As a result, the demand for bear gallbladders has recently driven the price for the organs to astronomical levels. Though the sale of edible game parts from animals taken in the wild is outlawed in Pennsylvania, the sale of animal organs is legal in New York and Lee had been a supplier in the local Korean community, as well as nationally, for years.

The several dozen bear gallbladders taken from Lee's apartment were worth \$400 to \$600 each on the domestic market, according to law enforcement estimates. Sold in a powdered form in pharmacies in Asia, they could be worth 30 times as much.

"This is obviously a unique and challenging case," said New York Detective Thomas Dades who is investigating the slaying. "We're dealing with a subject that's pretty foreign to us, but we do know that the use of bear gallbladders is surprisingly popular and there's a lot of money involved."

That some of Lee's inventory came from Pennsylvania black bears is a strong possibility. Pennsylvania has the second-largest bear population in the Northeast United States next to Maine, and the Poconos have become a favorite haunt for suppliers to New York City's Asian market.

In January, an 18-month investigation by the Pennsylvania Game Commission bore fruit as officers cited seven people, all of Asian extraction, for either illegally buying or possessing animal parts.

The commission's investigation of illegal trafficking in wildlife parts began in the fall of 1990 when potential buyers began frequenting the check stations

Some Asians prize bear gallbladders for their medicinal use and as a reputed aphrodisiac. As a result, the demand for bear gallbladders has recently driven the price for the organs to astronomical levels.

where hunters register the bears they have killed during the state's three-day hunting season.

Commission authorities chased the buyers from the check stations, but that did not deter the traffickers, who merely set up shop a mile or so down the road.

According to James Beard, an assistant director with the commission's bureau of law enforcement, the antics of the traffickers bordered on the comic.

"We have videotape of these people all wanting to have their picture taken with a dead bear, holding its head up or holding the paws. They all wanted a turn," Beard said. "They use the pictures as a selling point ... that the gallbladder they're selling comes from this particular bear."

In January, authorities filed charges against the seven people - including a man and woman from Elkins Park, Pa., - after searches of a motel-restaurant in Paradise Township, Pa., a grocery store near Stroudsburg, Pa., and two private homes yielded contraband including bear gallbladders.

The resulting citations were for summary offenses that carry fines and no jail terms. So far, two people have pleaded guilty and have been fined a total of \$20,838; four cases are pending, and a warrant has been issued for a New Jersey man who cannot be located.

Judy Mills, an investigator for the World Wildlife Fund, finds the penalties relatively meager and certainly not much of a deterrent. In her own 18-month inquiry into the illicit bear-parts market throughout Asia, Mills discovered that a bear gallbladder, freeze-dried and powdered, could be sold overseas for more than \$200 a gram. That works out to a yield of \$15,000 to \$25,000 for a single gallbladder.

"The populations of the Asian black and brown bears have been decimated," Mills said. "In Korea, the handful of bears left are a national monument,

and it is illegal to sell anything from an Asian bear. But those countries still permit the importation of North American bears. With prices like that, you can imagine the pressure that will be put on the bear population here."

The chemical produced by bear gallbladders is ursodeoxycholic acid (UDCA), and bear gallbladders have been used as a popular ingredient in Oriental medicine for 3,000 years to relieve human liver and gallbladder disorders. The Japanese have been able to synthesize UDCA, but traditionalists still crave the real thing.

To meet the demand for UDCA, the Chinese have begun to "farm" bears, keeping them penned in tight, restrictive cages and surgically inserting a tube directly into the animal's gallbladder to "milk" the valuable chemical.

So far, though, the most expedient way for Asian users to obtain bear gallbladders is to import them from North America, where three-quarters of the world's approximately one million bears still prowl.

Last week, bear experts from around the world met at a conference of the International Bear Association in Missoula, Mont. At the conference, Mills and her husband, Chris Servheen, a biologist, presented a paper detailing the findings of their investigations.

"Imagine this," Mills said. "There are about one million bears in the world, and there are one billion potential users of bear galls."

The IBA governing body went on to recommend to the Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES), a conservation group that spawns treaties between governments, that it place the North American black bear on a list that would require origination documentation for imported bear parts. CITES meets this month in Kyoto, Japan.

Proponents of placing the North American black

bear in such a category say that it would help slow the killing of Asian bears - whose gallbladders are almost indistinguishable from those of their North American cousins - because merchants can easily pass off Asian bear gallbladders as those of North American bears. The listing, proponents say, would at least discourage poaching in this country.

Still, the recommendation is not universally embraced, even among conservationists. For instance, Pennsylvania Game Commission bear expert Gary Alt is skeptical that the special listing would help much.

Alt said he believed the listing "just adds a layer of bureaucracy and much more paperwork to the task of managing wildlife, and it may invite a lot of litigation because there is no evidence that the North American bear population has been reduced. I don't think this helps the animals or the people - unless you happen to be an attorney."

"I've asked the question, 'How many game protectors are finding bears in the forest with the gallbladders removed and their paws cut off?' (Bear paws are an Asian soup delicacy.) It's just not happening very much, and although it's an individual atrocity when it happens, statistically, it's not even measurable."

Commission law enforcement officials agree that there has been little, if any, evidence of outright poaching in the state for the purpose of supplying the Asian market with bear parts. But they are concerned that the arrests in January may have been just the opening shot of an assault on Pennsylvania's bear population.

"Poaching - taking bears out of season, killing them in their dens, setting out bait - has been our concern," said David Overcash, a wildlife conservation officer in Monroe County.

"Locals hear about how much money is involved, and you don't know how that will make a difference. If the prices I've seen are right, you could kill 10 bears, hop a plane (to Asia) and make a quick quarter-of-a-million dollars."

Said Beard, "Considering the demand out there for the gallbladders, people are going to (use) every means possible to get bear."

Including, apparently, the murder of Haeng Gu Lee.

any legal issues involving other former clients he had in 7 years he was in private practice leaving Arco, because that was unethical.

kind of contact with Arco, and he be cut out of the loop," he ethical prohibitions do not permit to set a time frame, and say, he no longer a client."

leaving Arco, Bonner went private practice, first for a firm doing in insurance defense. Then, own, he did "a little bit of oil, probate, estates ... what I describe as a general practice."

Malone, former revenue commissioner under Gov. Steve Cowper, is unusual for the job Bonner to be filled by someone without any tax experience, but he see an obvious conflict arising from Bonner's Arco past.

er was one of several Arco attorneys" from 1983 to 1987. can't do any work on tax or

royalty issues for Arco, according to Bonner and company officials. He specialized in environmental and labor matters.

Nor was Bonner involved in Arco's high-profile politicking through much of the 1980s that helped elect legislators — mostly Republicans — who voted down higher taxes.

"I did not give political advice," said Bonner, who described himself as an active Democrat.

At Arco, meanwhile, the former assistant attorney general, Worcester, won't be working on any tax or royalty issues because that also would violate lawyerly ethics, said Susan Andrews, an Arco spokeswoman.

"Worcester applied for an opening, and he also is now a senior attorney," Andrews said.

"He is working on a variety of matters. No tax. No royalty," Andrews said. "In fact, none of the issues that he was working on when he was working for the state."

12/6/91

Illegal bear hunting on rise, group says

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Illegal bear hunting to serve a flourishing Asian market is on the increase and diminishing the worldwide bear population, a wildlife group said Thursday.

Because of increased use of bear for food and medicine in 11 Asian countries, the animals "have far more value dead than alive," said a study prepared by TRAFFIC USA, the wildlife trade monitoring program of World Wildlife Fund.

"Ultimately, the bear's maximum economic worth is realized when it is reduced to its parts — gall bladder, paws, hide, claws and meat. ... The sum of saleable parts can make a dead bear worth \$9,000 in Japan," it said.

The group said its study is the first-ever on trade in bears and bear parts also noted that six of the eight bear species in the world are suffering a population decline.

"The Asian appetite for

bears and bear parts has placed most Asian populations in severe jeopardy," said Kurt Johnson, a bear expert with TRAFFIC USA. "Now we have evidence that bear populations in other regions of the world are being hunted to satisfy that demand."

The group said lax enforcement of hunting regulations in the United States combined with smuggling makes it easy to export illegally.

Bear gallbladders are used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat high fever, convulsions, hemorrhoids, hepatitis, cirrhosis, diabetes and other diseases.

Gourmets find the bear appealing, too; WWF reported that bear paws are considered a delicacy in Taiwan.

The group said bear carcasses are now being found in the forests of the United States, Soviet Union and Canada with only their gallbladders missing.

The study recommends strengthening international and domestic laws restricting bear hunting as a means of protecting the U.S. bear population.

APD veteran to Seward chief job

By MARILEE ENGE

Daily News reporter

Capt. Tom Walker, a 23-year veteran of the Anchorage Police Department, was offered and accepted a police chief job in the city of Seward on Wednesday.

Walker, who graduated from APD's academy and rose through the ranks to become a sergeant and a detective, said that becoming a small town police chief was his career-long goal. If his hiring is approved by the Seward City Council on Monday night, Walker would start work after the first of the year.

The 49-year-old officer was selected from 17 applicants and beat out David Brossow, a 17-year member of the Seward force, who came open in September when longtime Chief Bencardino resigned. He had earlier been selected for his department's mishandling of a suspect case.

Assistant City Manager Mike Yanez said Walker was selected for the length and breadth of his experience. Walker moved from patrolman to dispatch sergeant, robbery and assault detective, homicide sergeant and patrol lieutenant. He was assigned to develop APD's first special operations and tactics unit, which the department called Intervention and Response Team.

After five years as head of CIRT, Walker was promoted to captain of detectives, which he said was "the best job in the Anchorage Police Department." He supervised investigations into Anchorage's most violent and high-profile crimes and frequently commented on them for the media.

But he said he never aspired to a higher position. He gave up his sights on the Seward job about 10 years ago. He keeps a pleasure boat there, his wife grew up there, and two brothers live there.

"I'm looking for a slower pace, different challenges," he said. "Not that I plan to leave the office with my feet on my desk."

Yanez said Walker will most certainly supervise eight patrol officers, five dispatchers, five jail officers, a motorist clerk and an animal control officer. Criminal justice, which consists of "small town stuff" such as driving, domestic violence, theft, vandalism and fights.

"Very rarely do we have a real felony," Yanez said. "I can't remember a homicide since I've been here."

Missing hunter found on island

The Associated Press

JUNEAU — The Coast Guard rescued a lost hunter on Bold Island in southeast Alaska late Wednesday.

Scott Sullivan, 30, of Ketchikan was reported overdue Wednesday afternoon by his brother. The Coast Guard dispatched a 41-foot rescue boat to the island, four miles south of Ketchikan.

A crewman on the fishing

boat Sabrina, spotted Sullivan on the island and the Coast Guard to take him back to Ketchikan. The Coast Guard agency said in a news release Thursday.

Sullivan sustained cuts and bruises, but no serious injuries, the Coast Guard said.

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"If the party could save the lives of one or two people ..."



ALASKA OUTDOOR COUNCIL, INC.

P O Box 34097
Juneau, AK 99803
463-3830

May 5, 1992

RECEIVED
MAY 05 1992

Representative Ben Grussendorf, Speaker
House of Representatives
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Dear Representative Grussendorf:

The Alaska Outdoor Council supports CSHB490 (Resources) with the proposed amendment delegating the responsibility for regulation of gall bladders to the Board of Game.

We appreciate your continuing interest in sound conservation (wise use) and protection of fish and wildlife, and in the proper functioning of the Boards of Fish and Game process.

Sincerely,

Richard H. Bishop
Legislative Affairs