

**SB**

**74**

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ORIGINAL  
COPIES

# Legislature to RE-LEGALIZE Airborne Wolf Shooting

ocel Berndt

In 1996 Alaskans overwhelmingly voted to ban same-day airborne wolf hunting except in the case of a biological emergency. Now, our state legislature is going against public opinion by gutting the citizens' initiative. This bill, SB 74, would allow the state to shoot wolves from the air under any circumstances. SB 74 is moving fast! Please call your local Legislative Information Office now to send a message to oppose SB 74 and any effort to change the 1996 ban on same day airborne wolf shooting.

Wolf Management Reform Coalition  
P.O. Box 103424  
Anchorage, Alaska 99510  
907-274-WMRC 96721

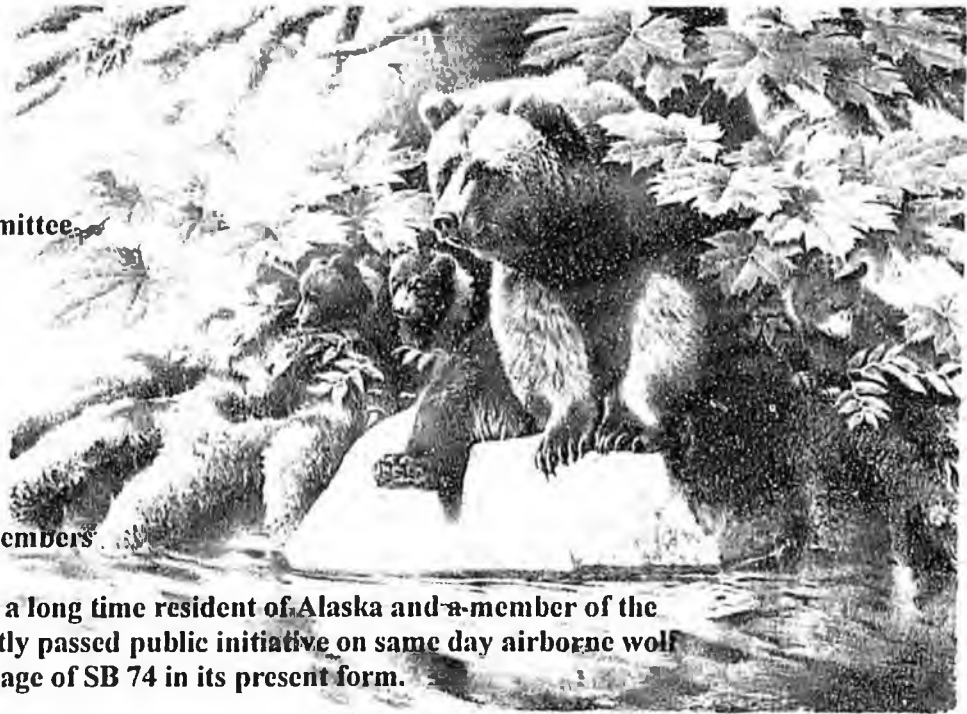
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778-3741 • Tok 883-5020 • Wrangell 874-3013

**Statement of Richard T Wallen  
To Alaska House Judiciary Committee  
Juneau, Alaska**

**May 3, 1999**



**Mr. Chairman and Committee Members**

**My name is Richard Wallen. I'm a long time resident of Alaska and a member of the Steering Committee for the recently passed public initiative on same day airborne wolf shooting. I'm opposed to the passage of SB 74 in its present form.**

**I served a term on the Board of Game from 1990 to 1993 following a decade of bitter controversy on the wolf issues. In an effort to resolve the issues a citizens' Wolf Management Planning Team, recommended by the board, was formed and facilitated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Members of the team came from all parts of the state and represented many viewpoints on wolf issues from those of animal protectionists to those of aerial wolf hunters. I recall that there were twelve team members and they convened monthly or bi-monthly during 1991 in different parts of the state. I attended several of the meetings, alternating with other Board of Game members.**

**Among the points of consensus coming out of this effort was a recommendation that same-day airborne hunting be banned, that wolves be elevated, for management purposes, to equal status with other large mammals, and that control programs be a special tool to be applied when ungulates were threatened with a decline toward a "predator pit". Notwithstanding the recommendations of the team, in late 1992 the board authorized three controversial wolf control programs over areas of the state about the size of Montana. Some of the team members, feeling betrayed, resigned in protest, and state and national public reaction was swift and painful for Alaska. Bowing to the magnitude of the protest, Governor Hickel halted the programs and convened a National "Wolf Summit" in Fairbanks, which I attended. The consensus of the Summit mirrored that of the Planning Team. Wolf Control should be reserved to prevent incipient biological emergencies.**

**The scale of the protest was beyond anyone's predictions. By the state's own figures, when the Governor cancelled the control programs, Alaska had lost \$85.6 million dollars in tourism revenues, and many millions more when the loss of Alaska jobs was figured in. I have included copies for you from the Alaska Economic Report, Feb:1993.**

**Some people dismiss that protest as interference in Alaska's affairs by 'Outsiders'. This conclusion overlooks Alaska public opinion. It dismisses the work of the Planning Team, the Wolf Summit, Alaska public opinion polls, and the recently passed Public Initiative.**

**Alaska's expensive Wolf Wars have exacted a toll in time, money and public confidence in Alaska's wildlife managers. Their history is one of wolf control advocates winning battles with Boards and Legislatures while losing the war in both public opinion and in control programs carried out. SB 74 in its present form will trigger another round in the Wars if control programs are instituted when no impending biological emergency can be demonstrated, if agents other than Fish and Game personnel are used, or if other actions are taken outside the guidelines approved by the voters in the initiative.**

# Alaska State Legislature

## Senate



Official Business

State Capitol  
Juneau, AK. 99801-1182**Senator Pete Kelly****Sponsor Statement****Senate Bill 74****An Act Relating to Hunting on the Same Day Airborne**

**Sound Wildlife management dictates that predation pressure on a low or declining prey population is reduced far before the situation becomes an emergency. The current statutory language precludes this option. This means that the Board of Game and Department of Fish and Game cannot respond quickly to precipitous declines or to long-term declines in important prey populations, caused by weather or any other reason, even if consequences for thousands of Alaskans would be severe.**

**The current statute would preclude taking immediate action without board approval of a control program. In 1994 the department had to take immediate action to medicate or remove two louse-infected wolves that left the Kenai Peninsula in order to prevent the spread of lice to other parts of the state. While uncommon, such situations do occur and aerial shooting should remain a clear option.**

**The current wording of AS 16.05.783 has the appearance of allowing the Board of Game to authorize a wolf control program using aerial shooting, but the language chosen would make that nearly impossible without legal challenge. The use of the terms "adequate data", "no feasible solution" and "biological emergency" in AS 16.05.783(a)(1) are problematic from both biological and legal points of view. Rather than establishing workable standards for determining when predation control is appropriate, the language creates ambiguity in that regard, which will lead to endless legal challenges.**

**This bill would preserve the original stated intent of the 1996 ballot measure, but would more clearly provide the board and department the latitude to employ aerial shooting for management purposes. Management actions should not be considered "hunting" when performed by department personnel or persons acting as agents of the state.**

May 7, 1999 (a)

5/7

DRAFT to AMEND SB No. 74  
Senator Pete Kelly

#2

\*Section 1: (a) would read

- (a) A person may not shoot [OR ASSIST IN SHOOTING] a free-ranging wolf, wolverine, fox, or lynx the same day that a person has been airborne. However, the Board of Game may authorize a predator [WOLF] control program involving shooting from the air if

\*Section 1: (1) would read:

- (1) The Commissioner of Fish and Game makes written findings based on biological data that
- (A) Predation is an important factor contributing to low or to a declining prey population that is inconsistent with a game management program authorized by the Board of Game and
- (B) Reduction of predation can reasonably be expected to result in aiding an increase in the prey population or in arresting the decline of a prey population  
or,
- (C) A disease or parasite is threatening the normal biological condition of a predator population or, if left untreated would spread to other populations.

\*Section 1: (2) would read:

- (2) The Commissioner determines that airborne or same day airborne shooting is necessary to accomplish a game management program authorized by the Board of Game.

5/7

Amendment #1

GROFT

OFFERED IN THE HOUSE  
TO: SB 74

BY REPRESENTATIVE

1. Page 1, line 5 insert after "airborne."

"However, the Board of Game may authorize a wolf control program involving the shooting of wolves from the air if

- (1) the Commissioner of Fish and Game makes written findings demonstrating that a biological emergency exists and that there is no feasible solution other than airborne control to eliminate the biological emergency, and
- (2) the program is conducted only by Department of Fish and Game personnel
- (3) the program is limited to the specific geographical area where the biological emergency exists, and
- (4) the program removes only the minimum number of wolves necessary to eliminate the biological emergency.

2. Page 2, line 8, after "flight" delete

“; and

(2) an employee or agent of the department who, as part of a game management program, is authorized to shoot or to assist in shooting wolf, wolverine, fox, or lynx on the same day that the employee or agent has been airborne.”

Insert:

“; or

(2) activities conducted by the Department of Fish and Game to remove diseased or louse infected wolves that are considered a threat to the health of the population.”

3. Page 2, line 13 insert

“Sec. 3 AS 1605.783 (d) is amended to read:

(2) “biological emergency” means a condition, as determined by the commissioner, where a wolf population in a specific geographic area is causing a serious decline in a prey population to the point that the prey population might not likely recover within a reasonable time without implementing wolf control.”

4. Page 2, line 13, Sec. 3 is renumbered to Sec. 4

5/3/99  
DICK BISHOP

Alaska Outdoor Council Testimony  
Senate Bill 74

"An Act relating to hunting on the same-day airborne."

The Alaska Outdoor Council supports Senate Bill 74. The Defenders of Wildlife, a national animal rights group, was instrumental in passing Ballot Measure 3 in 1996. Alaska voters were misled into believing that the ballot initiative would not prevent the Alaska Department of Fish and Game or the Board of Game from using same-day airborne taking if necessary to address wildlife conservation problems.

In reality, the initiative language was skillfully written so that the state could never use same-day airborne taking. While the wording of AS 16.05.783 appears to allow the Board of Game to authorize a wolf control program using same-day airborne taking, the choice of terms such as "biological emergency", "adequate data", and "no feasible solution" ensure that no program authorized by the board under this section could withstand a legal challenge by animal rights activists.

A basic premise of sound wildlife conservation is to manage in a manner that prevents decimation of wildlife populations important to tens of thousands of Alaskans. AS 16.05.783 requires not only that managers allow a "biological emergency" to occur before being allowed to take action, but that biologists demonstrate "with adequate data" that a wolf population "is causing the irreversible decline of a prey population" and that "there is no feasible solution other than airborne control" that can eliminate the emergency.

No professional biologist would ever risk his or her credibility attesting to these unreasonable criteria. There has never in the State of Alaska's history ever been an irreversible decline of a game population; the addition of a single animal to a severely diminished population, by definition, means that a decline is not irreversible. Moose and caribou declines are almost always the result of a host of mortality factors like weather, bear and wolf predation, not wolf predation alone. Finally, it can always be argued in court that feasible solutions exist other than airborne control to reduce mortality on a herd, such as stopping all hunting, habitat acquisition and improvement, heavier bear harvests, and even poisons. Therefore, the current wording of AS 16.05.783 provides limitless opportunities for a successful court challenge of any necessary state management program.

Senate Bill 74 does not allow same-day airborne hunting by the general public. It clarifies that same-day airborne taking can only be conducted by the state if a state management action is authorized by the Board of Game or the commissioner. In short it clarifies what the voters thought they were voting on in 1996.

As we have been discussing SB 74, the Alaska Board of Game is struggling with a chronic decline of moose and caribou numbers in Game Management Unit 13, one of the most important hunting areas in Alaska. A severe decline in moose numbers has already occurred in the upper Kuskokwim River drainage. AS 16.05.783, drafted by anti hunting and anti management activists, is providing the administration a most convenient excuse to take no effective management action to ensure sustained yield management for the benefit of thousands of Alaskans.

ALASKA AIRBORNE HUNTING SURVEY - JULY 1995 \*  
Conducted by Dittman Research Corporation, Anchorage, AK

METHODOLOGY

In July 1995, five hundred seventeen (517), randomly selected Alaskans over the age of 18, located in 64 communities were personally contacted by professional interviewing employees of the Dittman Research Corporation. A random sample design was used which ensured that all households had an equal chance of being polled. Data processing was completed through a computer system featuring the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS/PC+) program. Citizen opinion measurements by the Dittman Research Corporation, utilizing these methods and data processing systems, have proven to be virtually perfect predictors of political election results in Alaska for the past twenty-five years.

FINDINGS

**Question:** "Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with this next statement: No person should use an airplane in the act of hunting wolves, and is that strongly (agree/disagree) or just somewhat (agree/disagree)?"

**Response:** 66% agree (50% strongly agree, 16% somewhat agree)  
31% disagree (15% strongly disagree, 16% somewhat disagree)  
4% unsure

**Question:** "Do you agree or disagree with this statement: It is unsporting and violates a basic principle of hunting ethics for a person to use an airplane in the act of hunting wolves?"

**Response:** 71% agree (57% strongly agree, 14% somewhat agree)  
25% disagree (13% strongly disagree, 12% somewhat disagree)  
4% unsure

**Question:** "Do you agree or disagree with this statement: If a biological emergency exists, such as a moose or caribou population in danger of local extinction, the Department of Fish and Game should be allowed to use airplanes to conduct limited aerial wolf control programs?"

**Response:** 69% agree (39% strongly agree, 30% somewhat agree)  
26% disagree (17% strongly disagree, 9% somewhat disagree)  
5% unsure

**Question:** "If Alaska had a statewide ballot initiative that said, "No person may shoot a wolf, coyote, wolverine, fox or lynx that same day that person is airborne. However, if authorities conclude that a biological emergency does exist, a same-day aerial wolf control program conducted by Fish and Game personnel only may be authorized" - Do you think you would vote for or against that initiative?"

**Response:** 63% For  
33% Against  
4% Unsure

Please note that the support for the initiative exceeded opposition in all geographic regions of Alaska:

- Rural: 57% for, 45% against
- Central: 55% for, 42% against
- Southcentral: 65% for, 33% against
- Anchorage: 66% for, 29% against
- Southeast: 62% for, 27% against

\* The poll was commissioned by Defenders of Wildlife.

**ALASKA AIRBORNE HUNTING SURVEY - NOVEMBER 1998 \***  
Conducted by Dittman Research Corporation, Anchorage AK

METHODOLOGY

During the period of November 5 through November 16, 1998, five hundred six (506) Alaskans over the age of 16, located in 64 communities, were personally contacted via telephone by professional interviewing employees of the Dittman Research Corporation of Alaska. The views and opinions of Alaska residents were recorded on a strictly confidential basis. A random sample design was used which ensured that all households had an equal chance of being polled. Data processing was completed through a computer system featuring the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Citizen opinion measurements by the Dittman Research Corporation, utilizing the previously described methodology, analytical procedures and data processing systems, have proven to be virtually perfect predictions of political election results in Alaska for the past twenty-eight years.

FINDINGS

*In 1996 Alaskan voters approved an initiative to ban the same-day airborne killing of wolves by a margin of 58% to 42%. Today, two years later (1998), the margin appears to remain consistent - reported current support exceeds opposition by 17% (56% support, 39% oppose) and 70% say they would oppose legislative attempts to overturn the ban on airborne hunting.*

**Question:** "And what's your opinion now, two years later - do you support or oppose the hunting of wolves the same day that hunters had been flying?"

**Response:** 56% oppose  
39% support  
5% unsure

**Question:** "Under Alaska law, the State Legislature could attempt to repeal the current ban on same-day airborne wolf hunting early next year. Would you support repealing the ban, or do you feel the ban should be left in place?"

**Response:** 70% Leave ban in place  
24% Repeal the ban  
6% unsure

Opposition to repealing the same-day airborne hunting ban exceeds support in all geographic regions of Alaska and regardless of political affiliation.

Rural:	65% oppose, 30% support	Democrat	76%
		oppose, 19% support	
Central:	62% oppose, 31% support	Republican	60%
		oppose, 37% support	
Southcentral:	62% oppose, 32% support		
Anchorage:	76% oppose, 19% support		
Southeast:	76% oppose, 15% support		

\* The poll was commissioned by Defenders of Wildlife.

April 30, 1999

Dear Representative:

Attached are some materials relating to SB74, which passed the Senate in early March, and is currently in the House. These include the House district breakdown of the 1996 vote on Proposition 3, the breakdown of the Statewide vote by town and village, a 1998 Dittman poll, and an economic report of costs to the state's tourism industry.

As members of the coalition responsible for the citizen initiative that restricted same-day airborne wolf hunting (now AS 16.05.783), we urge you to vote against SB 74 as written.

We believe that SB74 does not currently reflect the will of the people in this state, nor does it represent the view of the people in your district. We believe that the public still opposes the use of aircraft to control wolves unless wolves are causing a serious decline in a prey population and there is no other alternative. SB 74 eliminates this standard completely. In addition, SB 74 allows the use of agents, raising serious questions of control and accountability.

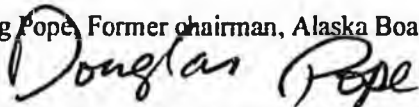
A suggested amendment to address Senator Kelly's concerns regarding As 16.05.783 was rejected by Senator Kelly, even though it had the support of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and others.

Proposed aerial wolf control programs have drained state time and resources over the years and have rarely been implemented. In 1996, an overwhelming 58.5 % of Alaskans voted against this method absent a serious biological problem. There is simply no widespread pressure to change current law. High numbers of wolves are already being taken each year by other legal means, such as trapping, snaring, and ground shooting, and the state is presently controlling wolves through sterilization and relocation.

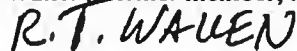
We urge you to vote in accordance with the people of Alaska and your district and oppose SB 74.

Sincerely,

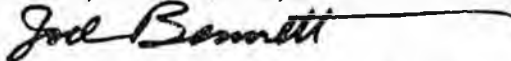
Doug Pope, Former chairman, Alaska Board of Game



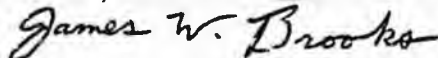
R.T. Wallen, Former member, Alaska Board of Game



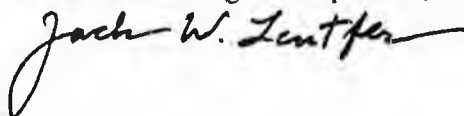
Joel Bennett, Former member, Alaska Board of Game



James Brooks, Former Commissioner of Fish and Game



Jack Lentfer, Former Regional Supervisor, Alaska Department of Fish and Game





750 W. 2nd Ave. #109, Anchorage AK 99501 / Ph. 907-258-6171 / Fax 907-258-6177

P.O. Box 22151, Juneau AK 99802 / Ph. 907-463-3366 / Fax 907-463-3312 / unite@akvoice.org

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To: House Judiciary Committee

Subject: Senate Bill 74

Date: 5/3/99

The Alaska Conservation Voice, is a coalition of twenty-nine conservation organizations representing over 15,000 individuals state-wide. We oppose Senate Bill 74, as it subverts the will of the citizens of Alaska that was explicitly expressed through passage of a 1996 ballot initiative.

The Alaskan public supports the principals of fair chase and repeatedly show<sup>on</sup> overwhelming opposition to same-day airborne wolf hunting, whether the hunter is from ~~Ø~~ out of State looking for a trophy or a sanctioned representative of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game conducting predator control.

SB 74 would allow same-day airborne shooting of wolves without a biological emergency. We take issue with this attempt to decry agency wildlife management and attempt to legislate these decisions by decree. Emotions run high when wolves are hunted from planes. Currently, extensive public outreach is implemented before initiating same-day airborne predator control. The public does not consider killing wolves a routine element of good wildlife management. ↑

The Alaskan public has already spoken via the initiative process regarding their opinion on the issue of same-day airborne wolf hunting. We urge you to be responsive to their voices. Please oppose SB 74.

Conserve Alaska. It's Only Natural.

(3) the person exhausted all other practicable means to protect life and property before the bear was taken.

(d) Notwithstanding (a) — (c) of this section, the department may authorize the taking of a problem brown or grizzly bear within one-half mile of a solid waste disposal facility at any time, if the taking of the bear is necessary to protect the public and is consistent with sound game management principles.

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(e) In this section

ery re-

(1) "criminal negligence" has the meaning given in AS 11.81.900(a);

(2) "property" means

(A) a dwelling, permanent or temporary;

(B) an aircraft, boat, automobile, or other conveyance;

(C) a domestic animal;

l

(D) other property of substantial value necessary for the livelihood or survival of the owner;

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(3) "solid waste disposal facility" means a facility for the disposal of solid waste, other than sewage, for which a permit has been issued under AS 46.03.100. (§ 1 ch 64 SLA 1989)

oration

**Sec. 16.05.783. Prohibition of same-day airborne hunting.** (a) A person may not shoot or assist in shooting a free-ranging wolf, wolverine, fox, or lynx the same day that a person has been airborne. However, the Board of Game may authorize a wolf control program involving the shooting of wolves from the air if

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(1) the commissioner of fish and game makes written findings based on adequate data demonstrating that a biological emergency exists and that there is no feasible solution other than airborne control to eliminate the biological emergency, and

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(2) the program is conducted only by Department of Fish and Game personnel

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(3) the program is limited to the specific geographical area where the biological emergency exists, and

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(4) the program removes only the minimum number of wolves necessary to eliminate the biological emergency.

(b) This section does not apply to a person who was airborne the same day if that person was airborne only on a regularly scheduled commercial flight.

(c) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction is punishable by a fine of not more than \$5,000, or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or by both. In addition, the court may order the aircraft and equipment used in or in aid of a violation of this section to be forfeited to the state.

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(d) In this section,

(1) "free-ranging" means that the animal is wild and not caught in a trap or snare; and

(2) "biological emergency" means a condition where a wolf population in a specific geographic area is causing the irreversible decline of a prey population to the point that the prey population may not likely recover without implementing wolf control. (§ 1 1996 Ballot Measure No. 3)

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**Effective dates.** — 1996 Ballot Measure No. 3, 1996 election. It was certified on November 27, 1996 which proposed enactment of this section, was approved by a majority of the voters in the November 5, and took effect February 25, 1997.

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**Sec. 16.05.785. Effect of failure to remove old markers.** If the Board of Fisheries by regulation uses department markers to establish waters closed to commercial fishing and the state fails to remove the old markers when new markers are posted to establish waters closed to commercial fishing, commercial fishing is expressly permitted in the waters between the new markers and the old markers until the old markers are removed. (§ 1 ch 70 SLA 1980)

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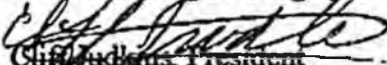
ALASKA BOATING ASSOCIATION



House Judiciary Committee Members:

Rep. Pete Kott  
Rep. Joe Green  
Rep. Jennette James  
Rep. Lisa Murkowski  
Rep. Norman Rokeburg  
Rep. Eric Croft  
Rep. Beth Kertula

I urge you to support the passage of SB 74 allowing the Fish and Game Department to use same day air borne management techniques in the management of wolves and other furbearers without the difficulties of first defining "biological emergency". Please do not allow well financed, state side, animal rights groups to influence your decision on this issue. When wildlife managers are not allowed to act before biological emergencies occur, biological disasters are often the result. Alaska's Wildlife Resources should be maintained for all Alaskan's for all times. Professional management with public input through our system of Advisory Committees and the Board of Game is the best way to manage our Wildlife Resources. Passage of SB 74 will provide the Department with a needed tool in the management of our Wildlife Resources. Again I urge you to support the SB 74.

  
Cliff Judkins, President  
Alaska Boating Association

Cliff Judkins - President • P.O. Box 874124 • Wasilla, Alaska 99687  
(907) 373-3591 • Fax 373-3592 • E-Mail: [cjudkins@customcpu.com](mailto:cjudkins@customcpu.com)

To: Pete Kott, Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
House Judiciary Committee

From: Richard Flanders  
1870 Becker Ridge Rd.  
Fairbanks, AK 99709-2709  
[richardflanders@compuserve.com](mailto:richardflanders@compuserve.com)

Re: SB74

I would like to voice support for SB74 that would allow ADF&G, under permit, to carry out predator control when they feel necessary. I think this would allow the department to manage predators when they feel it necessary, and to do it without a protracted court battle. They are the experts in the matter and we need to listen to them and do whatever necessary to make it possible for them to do what we pay them to do.

Richard Flanders  
(907)479-8873



# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HOUSE JUDICIARY

Committee Name

Committee on SB 74

Dated 5-3-99

Bill / Subject

MY NAME IS ED DAVIS. I AM AN AVID (A SUCCESSFUL CONSISTENTLY) MOOSE HUNTER. I AM ALSO A CO-FOUNDER OF "ALASKANS FOR FAIR CHASE", A GROUP OF FAIRBANKS HUNTERS WHICH ADVOCATES:

- 1) AN END TO AIRBORNE WOLF CONTROL BY THE GENERAL PUBLIC
- 2) HUNTING ETHICS (IE USE OF WILDERNESS SKILLS TO LOCATE & PURSUE GAME)

WE OPPOSE AIRBORNE WOLF CONTROL AS IT WOULD BE ALLOWED UNDER SB-74, BECAUSE: 1) IT BRINGS BACK THE DAYS OF LAND & SHOT WOLF CONTROL (LAND'S SHOT CANNOT WORK) INVITES RAMPANT VIOLATIONS

2) ~~IT~~ THE LACK OF HUNTER ETHICS REQUIRED UNDER THIS BILL

WILL:

A) UNDERMINE THE IMAGE AND PUBLIC RESPECT ~~OF~~ OF ALL HUNTERS

B) ALLOW ANYONE TO BECOME AN AGENT OF THE STATE AND PARTICIPATE IN AIRBORNE WOLF CONTROL, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT MAY BE BIOLOGICALLY JUSTIFIED IN A PARTICULAR TIME AND PLACE.

POLLS LEADING UP TO THE 1996 ELECTION SHOWED THAT A MAJORITY OF HUNTERS IN ALASKA OPPOSE AERIAL WOLF HUNTING. I URGE THIS COMMITTEE TO REVISE THIS BILL TO ALLOW GAMEDAY AIRBORNE WOLF CONTROL ONLY

- 1) WHEN AND WHERE IT IS BIOLOGICALLY JUSTIFIED, AND
- 2) IN A MANNER WHICH PREVENTS THE WHOLESALE ABANDONMENT OF HUNTER ETHICS AND REAUTHORIZATION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC TO PARTICIPATE IN AIRBORNE WOLF CONTROL.

SIGNED:

Ed Davis

Testifier

ALASKANS FOR FAIR CHASE

Representing

BOX 71616 FAIRBANKS, AK 99707

Address / Phone Number

Surveys show cancelled reservations and postponed trips**Wolf hunt cost to tourism: \$100 million-plus?**

The controversial aerial wolf hunt planned, and then temporarily cancelled, by state game officials may already have cost Alaska's tourism industry some \$100 million to \$150 million in lost revenues, industry leaders say. Surveys by the Alaska Tourism Marketing Council, a joint state-private tour promotion agency, calculate a direct loss of sales of \$85.6 million because of a tourism boycott called by U.S. wildlife protection groups. When the secondary impacts of jobs and lost money in the economy is added, the figure climbs to as high as \$150 million, according to Bob Dindinger, vice chairman of ATMC, and operator of a Juneau tour company. Dindinger, and other industry officials, presented the statistics at Governor Hickel's recent "wolf summit" in Fairbanks.

**Six percent halted Alaska trips**

ATMC sampled from among 200,000 people who had contacted the agency between Sept. 1 and Dec. 1 for advice on planning their summer, 1993 trip to Alaska. Nearly six percent of the group surveyed said they would cancel or postpone their travel plans for 1993. One in three surveyed had heard about an Alaska issue concerning wolves, and 20 percent said they knew details about the wolf killing issue.

ATMC did two waves of surveys. The first was before animal rights groups ran national advertising urging a tourism boycott of Alaska, when public opinion would be formed only by news accounts. The second followed the national ads. Significantly, the surveys showed postponements to grow by 200 percent, outright cancellations to grow by 50 percent and reconsideration of Alaska travel plans to increase by 75 percent. The scary thing, Dindinger said, was that animal rights groups cancelled the boycott midway between Wave 1 and Wave 2 research, but only 53 percent of Wave 2 respondents had heard the controversial hunt was cancelled.

ATMC, comprised of state officials and industry, will meet in February to consider options. More research will unlikely be done, but the association will also consider targeted media — cable TV, selected direct mail, public relations work with editors — to try and refurbish Alaska's tattered image.

Alaska Wilderness Recreation and Tourism Assoc., the trade group of some 158 mostly-small Alaska firms specializing in the fast-growing recreation and "eco-tourism" end of the business, reported results of surveys of its members. Forty four, or 28 percent, of AWRTC members responded to the survey, and while only one reported outright cancellations, most firms reported a definite slowdown in reservations during December.

Kirk Hoessle, owner of Alaska Wildland Adventures, reported his sales as of Dec. 31 were 15 percent below sales at that same time in 1991. The company had planned for growth based on prior years' experience, and December's lost sales will cost the company some \$115,000, he said. Tom Garrett, an association board member who operates Alaska Discovery Tours, a company that had offered wilderness tours for 22 years in different parts of Alaska, said his company had been booking trips at 50 percent above 1991 during November and early December. From Dec. 13, when news of the wolf hunt hit the national press, until Dec. 30, his company did not book a single tour. Since then inquiries and bookings have returned the earlier levels, but the interruption created real concern among company officials.

**"Eco-tour" volume grows fast**

Alaska Discovery gave these figures as examples of how small wilderness and wildland tours benefit local economies: The company's seven Arctic National Wildlife Refuge tours in summer, 1992, brought these revenues to Interior Alaska firms: C-Air Charters, \$10,522.50; Colville River Mercantile, \$1,737.80; Fairbanks Bed & Breakfast, \$2,176.08; Frontier Flying Service, \$153.25; National Car Rental, \$1,153.45; Mike O'Connor, \$1,200; Wright Air Service, \$15,683.45; Yukon Air Service, \$11,613, for a total of \$44,239.53. What is more significant is the rate of growth of spending. In 1991, for the same tours, the company spent \$31,522. In 1993, some \$50,000 is projected.