

ALASKA LEGISLATURE HOUSE JOURNAL 2007 2008

12254 HOUSE RES

00 HOUSE BILL NO. 94  
 01 "An Act relating to fishing, hunting, and trapping in marine park units of  
 the Alaska  
 02 state park system, amending the area within designated marine park units  
 of the Alaska  
 03 state park system, and adding marine park units to the Alaska state park  
 system."

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

05 \* **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by  
 adding a new section

06 to read:

07 LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. (a) The legislature  
 08 finds that

09 (1) marine parks promote and support recreation and tourism in  
 the state by

10 maintaining fish and wildlife resources and lawful existing uses of these  
 resources and by

11 protecting their natural, cultural, and scenic values; and

12 (2) by combining upland with the surrounding water, tideland,  
 and submerged

13 land into a marine park, the state is able to ensure public anchorages and  
 recreational beaches

14 will be managed as one unit with consistent development and regulations.

01 (b) It is the purpose of secs. 3 and 4 of this Act to expand the  
 marine park system in

02 Lynn Canal within the City and Borough of Juneau by the inclusion of the  
 islands selected

03 under the Alaska Statehood Act from the Tongass National Forest for the  
 purpose of

04 community recreation that have been tentatively approved or patented to  
 the state.

05 \* **Sec. 2.** AS 41.21.302(d) is amended to read:

06 (d) The commissioner may not prohibit fishing, hunting, or  
trapping within

07 a marine park unit of the Alaska state park system. The  
commissioner may not

08 restrict the exercise of fishing, hunting, or trapping rights  
 permitted under law or under

09 a regulation of the Board of Fisheries or the Board of Game within a  
 marine park unit

10 of the Alaska state park system.

11 \* **Sec. 3.** AS 41.21.304(11) is amended to read:

12 (11) Shelter Island: the following described parcels  
excluding

13 submerged land seaward of the 20 fathom bathymetric line:

14 Township 39 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian

15 Section 29: All

16 Section 31: All

17 Section 32: All

18 Section 33: All

19 Township 40 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian

20 Section 5: NW1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, NW1/4, S1/2

21 Section 6

22 Section 8

23 Section 9: W1/2;

24 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 41.21.304 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

25 (34) Juneau Area Islands: Aaron, Battleship, Benjamin,  
 Bird, Coghlan,

26 Cohen, Gull, Indian, Lincoln, Little, North, Portland, Ralston, and  
 Suedla Islands: the

**Debra Higgins**

---

**From:** Rep. Craig Johnson  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 19, 2007 8:56 AM  
**To:** Debra Higgins  
**Subject:** FW: HB94 Hearing

Trevor Fulton  
Legislative Aide  
Office of Rep. Craig Johnson  
907-465-4993

---

**From:** Gary Miller [mailto:gmler\_juneauak@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 18, 2007 10:14 PM  
**To:** Rep. Carl Gatto; Rep. Craig Johnson  
**Subject:** HB94 Hearing

When is HB 94 "An Act relating to fishing, hunting, and trapping in marine park units of the Alaska state park system, amending the area within designated marine park units of the Alaska state park system, and adding marine park units to the Alaska state park system.", going to get a hearing?

Gary Miller  
Juneau State Parks Advisory Board

---

Download Messenger. Join the i<sup>2</sup>n Initiative. Help make a difference today.

789-3757

- Gary Miller

called on 4/19 @ 9:05am

Told him the week of 4/30 would be the  
first available date

# CORRECTION

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENT(S)  
HAVE BEEN REFILMED TO  
ASSURE LEGIBILITY OR PAGINATION



Rev. 6/98

Central Microfilm Services  
Department of Education & Early Development  
State of Alaska

00 HOUSE BILL NO. 94  
 01 "An Act relating to fishing, hunting, and trapping in marine park units of  
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 02 state park system, amending the area within designated marine park units  
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02 Lynn Canal within the City and Borough of Juneau by the inclusion of the  
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16 Section 31: All

17 Section 32: All

18 Section 33: All

19 Township 40 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian

20 Section 5: NW1/4NE1/4, S1/2NE1/4, NW1/4, S1/2

21 Section 6

22 Section 8

23 Section 9: W1/2;

24 \* **Sec. 4.** AS 41.21.304 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

25 (34) Juneau Area Islands: Aaron, Battleship, Benjamin,  
 Bird, Coghlan,

26 Cohen, Gull, Indian, Lincoln, Little, North, Portland, Ralston, and  
 Suedla Islands: the

27 following described parcels excluding submerged land seaward of the  
 20 fathom  
 28 bathymetric line:  
 29 Township 38 South, Range 63 East, Copper River Meridian  
 30 Section 13  
 31 Section 24: E1/2NE1/4  
 01 Section 32: E1/2  
 02 Section 33: SW1/4  
 03 Township 38 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian  
 04 Section 18: SW1/4  
 05 Section 19  
 06 Section 20: W1/2SW1/4  
 07 Section 29: NW1/4NW1/4  
 08 Section 30: N1/2  
 09 Township 39 South, Range 63 East, Copper River Meridian  
 10 Section 4  
 11 Section 9  
 12 Section 10  
 13 Section 11  
 14 Section 13: E1/2  
 15 Section 14  
 16 Section 15  
 17 Section 16: E1/2  
 18 Section 22: N1/2  
 19 Section 23  
 20 Section 24  
 21 Township 39 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian  
 22 Section 8: SE1/4  
 23 Section 9: SW1/4  
 24 Section 16  
 25 Section 17: NE1/4  
 26 Section 18: S1/2  
 27 Section 19  
 28 Section 20: SW1/4  
 29 Section 30: except for USS 354  
 30 Section 34: S1/2  
 31 Township 40 South, Range 64 East, Copper River Meridian  
 01 Section 1: W1/2NW1/4  
 02 Section 3: NE1/4  
 03 Section 4  
 04 Section 5  
 05 Section 9  
 06 Section 10  
 07 Section 15  
 08 Section 16  
 09 Section 17: NE1/4  
 10 Section 36: SE1/4SE1/4  
 11 Township 40 South, Range 65 East, Copper River Meridian  
 12 Section 28: SW1/4  
 13 Section 31: SW1/4SW1/4  
 14 Section 32: E1/2  
 15 Section 33: W1/2  
 16 Section 34: W1/2E1/2, W1/2  
 17 Township 41 South, Range 65 East, Copper River Meridian  
 18 Section 1: NE1/4  
 19 Section 2: W1/2NW1/4, SW1/4  
 20 Section 3: NE1/4  
 21 Section 11  
 22 Township 41 South, Range 66 East, Copper River Meridian  
 23 Section 5: NW1/2NW1/4, NW1/4NW1/4NE1/4  
 24 Section 6: NW1/4.

**Debra Higgins**

---

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**Sent:** Thursday, April 19, 2007 8:56 AM  
**To:** Debra Higgins  
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Trevor Fulton  
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Gary Miller  
Juneau State Parks Advisory Board

---

Download Messenger. Join the i□m Initiative. Help make a difference today.

789-3757

- Gary Miller

called on 4/19 @ 9:05am

Told him the week of 4/30 would be the  
first available date



# Representative Beth Kerttula

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House Minority Leader

Date: March 27, 2007

To: Representative Carl Gatto  
Representative Craig Johnson  
Co-Chairs, House Resources Committee

From: Representative Beth Kerttula *Beth*

Re: House Bill 94, Marine Parks/Hunting Allowed

---

I respectfully request that the House Resources Committee schedules House Bill 94 Marine Parks/Hunting Allowed for a hearing.

Enclosed you will find:

- Sponsor statement
- HB 94
- Sectional analysis
- Proposed CS for HB 94 with explanation of changes
- Backup: map and description of proposed land additions
- Letters of support

Thank you for your consideration of my request.

**Debra Higgins**

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**From:** Christopher Clark [Christopher\_Clark@gov.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 30, 2007 10:28 AM  
**To:** Debra Higgins; Heath Hilyard  
**Cc:** 'Shannon Devon'; 'Melanie Lesh'; Rep. Beth Kerttula; Aurora Hauke; Hannah McCarty  
**Subject:** Revised HB 94 fiscal note from DNR  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red  
**Attachments:** HB094-DNR-Parks-04-30-07 Revised.pdf

Greetings, Debra and Heath.

Please discard the fiscal note I sent from DNR recently for HB 94 (Rep. Beth Kerttula's bill relating to fishing, hunting, and trapping in marine park units of the Alaska state park system, amending the area within designated marine park units of the Alaska state park system, and adding marine park units to the Alaska state park system) and replace it with the attached document.

Thank you.

Christopher Clark  
Deputy Legislative Director  
Governor Sarah Palin  
(907) 465-3994

*Paul  
4/23/07*

# FISCAL NOTE

*Revised  
4/30*

**STATE OF ALASKA  
2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: HB094-DNR-Parks-04-27-07  
 Bill Version: HB 94  
 ( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Title MARINE PARKS ADDITIONS/HUNTING ALLOWED  
 Sponsor Representative Kertula  
 Requester House Resources Committee

Dept. Affected: Natural Resources  
 RDU Parks and Recreation Management  
 Component Parks Management  
 Component No. 452

**Expenditures/Revenues**

(Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services	11.5	11.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5
Travel						
Contractual	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Supplies	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Equipment	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>						
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**FUND SOURCE**

(Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF	14.8	14.8	19.0	19.0	19.0	19.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>19.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

The costs associated with management of this new state marine park include funding for increased seasonal staffing to keep the area's camping beaches clean and safe; contractual funds for chartering boats to service the site; and miscellaneous supplies. A public use cabin is planned for this new site in FY09, therefore funding to maintain and service this cabin are included in the long term maintenance plan.

Prepared by: Chris Degernes  
 Division: Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
 Approved by: Tom Irwin, Commissioner  
 Agency: Natural Resources

Phone (907) 269-8702  
 Date/Time 4/27/2007  
 Date 4/27/2007

**HB**

**127**

**Debra Higgins**

---

**From:** Will Vandergriff [Will\_Vandergriff@legis.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 10, 2007 12:09 PM  
**To:** prdistribution  
**Subject:** PR - Seaton Applauds Board of Game Decision to Disallow Brown Bear Hunt in Kamishak Special Use Area  
**Attachments:** PR - Seaton Applauds BoG Decision on Kamishak Bear Hunt.doc

**MEDIATE RELEASE:** March 10, 2007

**CONTACT:** Will Vandergriff, 907-465-5446  
House Majority Press Secretary

## **Seaton Applauds Board of Game Decision to Disallow Brown Bear Hunt in Kamishak Special Use Area**

(Juneau) – Representative Paul Seaton (R Homer) applauded the recent Board of Game decision to ban bear hunting in the Kamishak Special Use Area. Seaton is the sponsor of HB 127, legislation that would add the lands of the Kamishak Special Use Area to the McNeil River Game Sanctuary.

“The Board has listened to the public, and has made the right decision,” Seaton said. “My legislation was introduced to accomplish the goal of increasing brown bear protection, and I am pleased that the bears that use the McNeil River Sanctuary area will be afforded this protection.”

Introduced prior to the Board of Game meeting, HB 127 provided critical momentum to the public opposition of the hunt.

“I believe the board took into account that if they did not prohibit this ill-conceived hunt from taking place, HB 127 would ride a wave of public support to the Governor’s desk, and the area in question would become part of the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary, effectively cutting off all hunting activities there,” Seaton said.

The bears of the McNeil River area support a popular bear viewing industry that injects millions of dollars into the economy of Southcentral Alaska each summer.

# # #

# REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SEATON

## SESSION ADDRESS

State Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182  
(907) 465-2689  
Fax: (907) 465-3472  
1-800-665-2689

## INTERIM ADDRESS

345 W. Sterling Highway  
Homer, Alaska 99603  
(907) 235-2921  
Fax: (907) 235-4008  
1-800-665-2689

## ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE House District 35

### Memorandum

Date: February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
To: House Resources Co-Chairman Craig Johnson  
From: Representative Paul Seaton  
Re: HB 127 Bill Hearing Request

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I respectfully request a hearing for HB 127 at your earliest possible convenience. HB 127 includes two parcels of land in the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. These two parcels are currently managed by the Department of Natural Resources as the Kamishak Special Use Area. Brown bear hunting has been prohibited in the Special Use Area for over two decades. In 2005 the Board of Game opened the Special Use Area to a brown bear hunt in the summer of 2007. By including the Special Use Area in the Sanctuary a bear hunt will be precluded. This will help protect McNeil and Katmai bear populations and in turn, the multi-million dollar bear viewing industry that has developed around them.

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bill Version: HB127-DFG-SF-02-22-07  
 ( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_

Dept. Affected: ADFG

Title McNeil River State Game Sanctuary

RDU Sport Fisheries

Component Research & Restoration

Sponsor Representative Seaton

Requester House Resources Committee

Component No. 2854

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill would expand the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. If the bill is adopted, ADF&G would apply land use management practices, including permitting activities, currently employed in the Sanctuary to the lands added to the Sanctuary. ADF&G is able to comply with the provisions in this legislation without additional funding and/or staff.

Prepared by: Tom Brookover, Regional Supervisor

Phone 267-2150

Division Sport Fisheries

Date/Time 2/22/07, 11:00 AM

Approved by: Tom Lawson, Director

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Agency Fish & Game

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Bill Version: HB127-DFG-SF-02-22-07  
 ( ) Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: ADFG  
 Title McNeil River State Game Sanctuary RDU Sport Fisheries  
 Component Research & Restoration  
 Sponsor Representative Seaton  
 P. requester House Resources Committee Component No. 2854

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Land & Structures	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grants & Claims	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1003 GF Match	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1004 GF	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1005 GF/Program Receipts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1037 GF/Mental Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other (Specify Type--Do not abbreviate)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Mark this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Part-time	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	0	0	0

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

This bill would expand the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. If the bill is adopted, ADF&G would apply land use management practices, including permitting activities, currently employed in the Sanctuary to the lands added to the Sanctuary. ADF&G is able to comply with the provisions in this legislation without additional funding and/or staff.

Prepared by: Tom Brookover, Regional Supervisor Phone 267-2150  
 Division Sport Fisheries Date/Time 2/22/07, 11:00 AM  
 Approved by: Tom Lawson, Director Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Agency Fish & Game

# FISCAL NOTE

**STATE OF ALASKA**  
**2007 LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Fiscal Note Number: HB127-DNR-MLW-02-21-07  
 Bill Version: HB127  
 () Publish Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Revision Date/Time (Note if correction): \_\_\_\_\_ Dept. Affected: Natural Resources  
 Title: McNeil River State Game Sanctuary RDU: Resource Development  
 Component: Director's Office/ML&W  
 Sponsor: Rep. Seaton  
 Requester: House Res. Component No.: 2440

**Expenditures/Revenues** (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

<b>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>						
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<b>CHANGE IN REVENUES (multiple)</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
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**FUND SOURCE** (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
1155 Timber Receipts						
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

Estimate of any current year (FY2007) cost: 0.0

Check this box (X) if funding for this bill is included in the Governor's FY 2008 budget proposal:

**POSITIONS**

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

**ANALYSIS:** (Attach a separate page if necessary)

HB 127 proposes to add approximately 144 square miles (92,160 acres) of state land, water and tidelands to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. The area contains no significant mineral deposits and is considered to have only moderate mineral potential.

The addition of these lands to the sanctuary will not significantly increase Mining, Land & Water's responsibilities and thus would have no fiscal impact to the department.

Prepared by: Dick Mylius, Acting Director Phone: 269-8600  
 Division: Mining, Land and Water Date/Time: 2/21/2007  
 Approved by: Tom Irwin, Commissioner Date: 2/21/2007  
 Agency: Natural Resources

# ALASKA STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## REPRESENTATIVE PAUL SEATON DISTRICT 35

### SPONSOR STATEMENT HB 127

HB 127 supports the important tourist industry of bear viewing by incorporating parts of the Kamishak Special Use Area (SUA) into the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. Brown bear hunting has been prohibited in the SUA for over two decades. In 2005, the Board of Game opened portions of the SUA to a brown bear hunt in 2007. This action was taken despite the opposition of hundreds of Alaskans, numerous Alaskan tourism industry groups, and against the recommendation of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game.

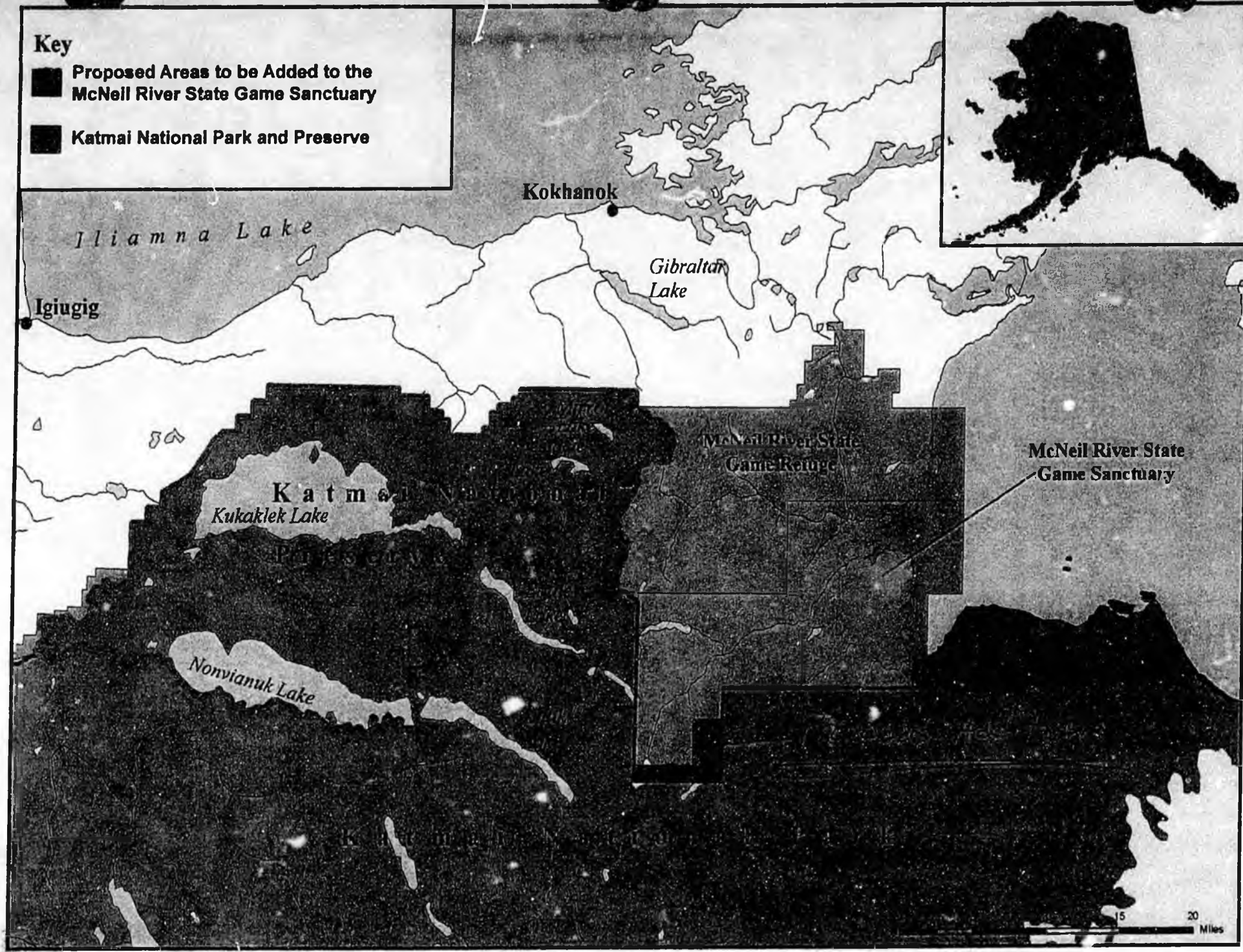
ADF&G has identified a serious decline in bear populations in the McNeil River area, due in part to years of poor chum salmon runs and liberalized bear hunting seasons in Game Management Unit 9B to the north and west of the Sanctuary. A bear hunt in the SUA would put further stress on these bear populations upon which the visitor industry relies. Including this area in the Sanctuary will disallow such a hunt.

Bear viewing in the McNeil River and Katmai areas has become an enormous economic engine for Southcentral Alaska. Statistics from 2004 indicate that approximately 11,523 people participated in bear viewing in the McNeil/Katmai area. An Institute of Social and Economic Research study conducted in 2005 determined that bear viewers on average spent \$2,828 per person. The annual economic value to Southcentral alone is estimated at over \$32 million.

HB 127 will have minimal impacts on current use patterns in the area. This bill does not affect commercial fishing around the Kamishak Bay coastline. Sport fishing lodges and guides that bring clients to the SUA do so on the Kamishak River which is within the current boundary of the Sanctuary and therefore they are already required to have Sanctuary permits. According to ADF&G, the SUA has seen minimal hunting activity in the past 30 years. Hunters have reported taking only four moose and one caribou in the SUA since 1976. The Department of Natural Resources has identified no mineral prospects or claims in the SUA.

**Key**

- Proposed Areas to be Added to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary
- Katmai National Park and Preserve



**AS 16.20.160 – EXISTING  
MCNEIL RIVER  
SANCTUARY LANGUAGE**

**Sec. 16.20.160. McNeil River State Game Sanctuary.**

The following state-owned land and water, including the tidelands but exclusive of marine water and submerged land, lying within the parcels described in this subsection is established as the McNeil River State Game sanctuary:

Township 12 South, Range 29 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 36

Township 12 South, Range 30 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 36

Township 13 South, Range 29 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 5 - 8

Sections 17 - 20

Sections 29 - 32

Township 13 South, Range 30 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 36

Township 13 South, Range 31 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 36

Township 13 South, Range 32 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 36

Township 14 South, Range 32 West, Seward Meridian

Sections 1 - 12

Sections 15 - 22

Sections 27 - 30.

**Sec. 16.20.162. Purpose; regulations.**

(a) The McNeil River State Game Sanctuary is established to

(1) provide permanent protection for brown bear and other fish and wildlife populations and their habitats, so that these resources may be preserved for scientific, aesthetic, and educational purposes;

(2) manage human use and activities in a way that is compatible with (1) of this subsection and to maintain and enhance the unique bear viewing opportunities within the sanctuary; and

(3) provide opportunities that are compatible with (1) of this subsection for wildlife viewing, fisheries enhancement, and fishing, for temporary safe anchorage, and for other activities.

(b) Hunting and trapping within the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary are prohibited.

(c) The department and the Department of Natural Resources

(1) may not enter into sales of land within the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary;

(2) may enter into leases within the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary if the commissioner finds that activity conducted under the lease is compatible with the purposes for which the sanctuary is established;

(3) may not accept transfer of state selected land from the federal government, or conveyance of other land, within the sanctuary if the land is subject to

(A) a lease, easement, or other right to operate or maintain a private facility on the land or to conduct a private enterprise on the land; or

(B) a continuing trespass by an unauthorized private facility or private enterprise.

(d) The McNeil River State Game Sanctuary is closed to mineral entry under AS 38.05.185 - 38.05.275.

(e) The boards may adopt regulations governing access, entry, development, construction, fishing, and other uses and activities affecting the natural habitat, fish and wildlife, and public use of the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary.

(f) The commissioner shall prepare a report and notify the legislature of its availability by January 30 of each year on

(1) the status of the brown bears and other fish and wildlife resources within the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary; and

(2) the effects of fishing and fishery enhancement activity on these resources.

# DNR VERIFICATION ON ABSENCE OF MINING ACTIVITY IN AREA

-----Original Message-----

From: Kerwin Krause [mailto:kerwin\_krause@dnr.state.ak.us]  
Sent: Friday, December 15, 2006 2:32 PM  
To: Rep. Paul Seaton  
Cc: Dick Mylius  
Subject: Additions to McNeil River State Game Refuge

Paul,

Yesterday you contacted me concerning your sponsoring legislation to add two areas to the McNeil River State Game Refuge. You had several questions concerning mineral orders: 1. You wanted to know if there were any mineral closing orders in these areas; and 2. you wanted to know if it would be possible for DNR to issue a mineral closing order in these areas prior to any new legislation being enacted for these areas. Based on our discussion, I marked the two areas you were interested in on the attached map. The areas you inquired about are shown in the dark outlined areas on the attached map in Township 14 South, Range 32 West; and Townships 13 South, Ranges 27-29 West. The acreage for these two areas totals about 1,250 acres. There are no mineral orders or mineral closing orders in these areas at the present time. There are no known (published) mineral prospects in these areas either. Because there are no known prospects, it is unlikely the mining industry will be staking any mining claims in these areas. As a result of this information, I do not think that you need to worry about claims being located in these areas. As you know, DNR could not issue a mineral closing order for this purpose since it exceeds 640 acres unless the legislature approved it. As a result, the areas couldn't be closed to mineral entry until the legislature acted on it. Because of the acreage limitation and the fact that there are no claims or prospects in the areas, I don't think you need to worry about claims being staked even once the bill was introduced until it was enacted. Hope this helps.

Kerwin

# ADF&G ON CURRENT USE OF KAMISHAK SUA

**Louie Flora**

---

**From:** Joe Meehan [joe\_meehan@fishgaw]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 26, 2007 4:41 PM  
**To:** Louie Flora  
**Cc:** Fink, Mark; Lem Butler  
**Subject:** FW: survey results

**Attachments:** KSUA Moose Hunters.xls; Douglas\_River.xls; Map.Bear.Movements.JPG

Louie –

As you can see from the attached file, annual anglers days at the Douglas River (in the Kamishak Special Use Area) ranged from 8 to 38 between 1989 and 2002 (no reported use from 2003 to 2005). The response rate was pretty low and these figures are estimates based on the response rate. Regardless, use is likely pretty low compared to other streams in the region. Sport fishing is an allowed activity in the sanctuary so this won't be affected by expanding the sanctuary. However, if the sanctuary is expanded, we will need to address access permits in this area. I would envision an internal and/or public review on how to manage visitor access permits in this area if the sanctuary is expanded.

As for hunting in the Kamishak Special Use Area, our area biologist (Lem Butler) reviewed harvest reports from 1976 to 2006. During this 31-year period, 13 hunters reported taking only 4 moose in this area. During this same period 1 caribou was reported taken, and 9 beaver, 1 otter and 4 wolves were trapped here (in 1985 and 1986, presumably during the winter of 85/86). This is pretty low use for both hunting and trapping. As I mentioned in my previous email, if the sanctuary is expanded with the existing language, hunting and trapping would be prohibited in this area.

One additional item I've attached to this email is a map showing movements of 4 brown bears from a GPS radio collar study that was conducted at the Douglas River in 2003 and 2004. As the map shows, these 4 bears moved between the Douglas River and the sanctuary. The other 8 bears that were collared at the Douglas River did not show the same movements. Just to give you an idea of use at the Douglas River, the researchers stated that they frequently saw as many as 50 bears at one time during spring as they fed in the coastal sedge flats at Douglas River.

If photos of this area would be any help, I can probably drum up a few. And let me know if you need anything else.

*Joe Meehan, Program Coordinator  
Lands and Refuge Program  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Wildlife Conservation  
333 Raspberry Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99511*

tel: (907) 267-2281  
fax: (907) 267-2433  
[joe\\_meehan@fishgame.state.ak.us](mailto:joe_meehan@fishgame.state.ak.us)  
ADF&G on the web at [www.wildlife.alaska.gov](http://www.wildlife.alaska.gov)

**Number of hunters that reported hunting moose in the KSUA**

Written discription of hunt location is not in the harvest database. Correct coding has not been confirmed.

YEAR	9C - UCU			Total	Harvest	9C - UCU	Geographic Description
	0101	0200	0201				
1976				0	0		
1977				0	0		
1978				0	0		
1979				0	0		
1980				0	0		
1981				0	0		
1982				0	0		
1983				0	0	0101	Kamishak River Drainage
1984			1	1	0	0200	Douglas River Drainage
1985				0	0	0201	Douglas River Drainage
1988			1	1	0		
1989				0	0		
1990				0	0		
1991				0	0		
1992				0	0		
1995				0	0		
1996				0	0		
1997			2	2	0		
1998		1	4	5	3		
1999			1	1	0		
2000			1	1	1		
2001		1	1	2	0		
2002				0	0		
2003				0	0		
2005				0	0		
2006				0	0		

Average	1
80's	0
90's	1
00's	1





# ALASKA DEPT. OF FISH & GAME: DOUGLAS BROWN BEAR RESEARCH

Representative GPS Location Data: ~ 15-minute intervals (2003/2004)

Please do not disseminate or use without permission.  
Contact: Sean Farley, Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game  
(907) 267-2203 e-mail: Sean.Farley@alaska.gov

McNeil River State  
Game Refuge

McNeil River State  
Game Sanctuary

All bears  
collared here.

KATMAI NATIONAL PARK

- Bear #1 Female with 3 yearlings (11,805 locations)
- Bear #2 Male (9,049 locations)
- Bear #14 Female with 1 yearling (6,443 locations)
- Bear #15 Male (5,333 locations)

0 3 6 9 12 15  
Miles



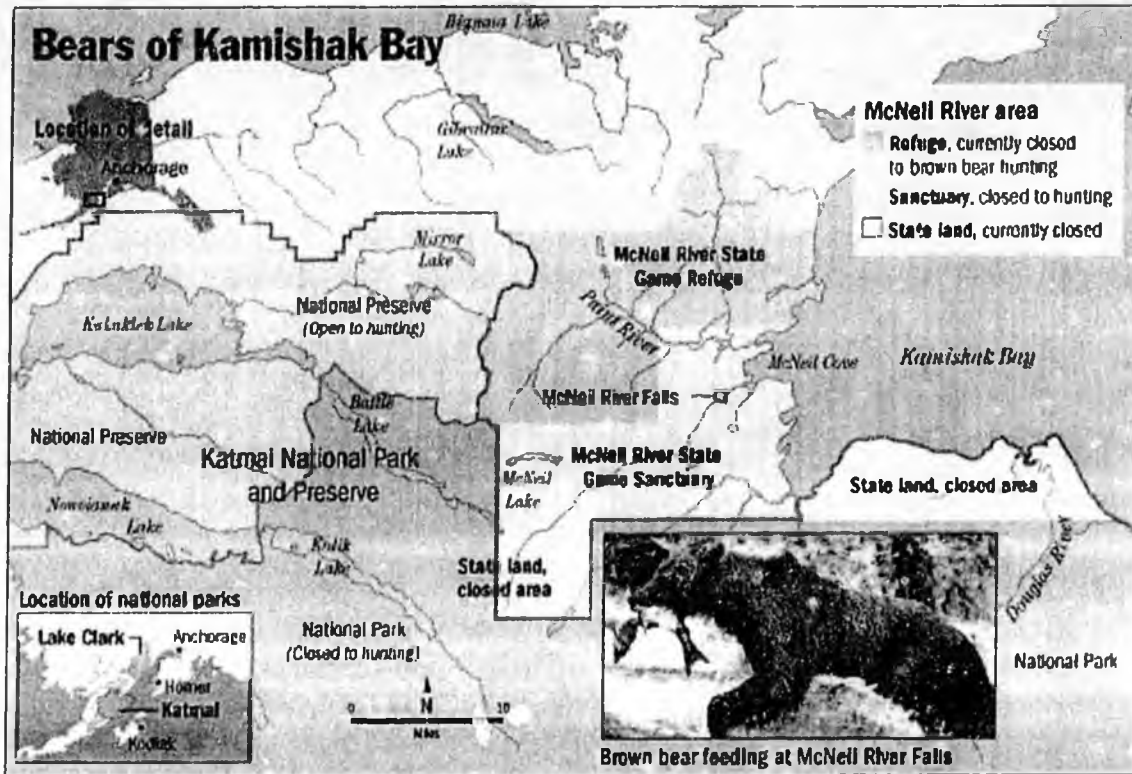
# PRESS

## Hunters show interest in bear refuges

(03/07/05)

State land around the Douglas River was closed to hunting 20 years ago because a land trade with the National Park Service was under discussion. But the trade never took place, and now the state Board of Game, which begins its spring meeting today, is considering opening the area again.

By TOM KIZZIA | Anchorage Daily News (Published: March 4, 2005)



RON ENOSTROM / Anchorage Daily News

HOMER -- Rod Arno remembers guiding bear hunters in the country south of Kamishak Bay. It was the only place in his career where he led a client to a coastal brown bear and then, the next day, returned with another client to shoot a second trophy feeding on the unsalvaged remains of the first one.

That state land around the Douglas River was closed to hunting 20 years ago because a land trade with the National Park Service was under discussion. But the trade never took place, and now the state Board of Game, which begins its spring meeting today, is considering opening the area again.

Arno, a hunting activist for the Alaska Outdoor Council, likes that idea. He's even more enthusiastic about reopening a state game refuge farther north, where bear hunting was closed in 1995. One reason for that particular closure was an enhanced salmon run on the Paint River was expected to create a magnet for bears. But the salmon project flopped.

"That threat is null and void now," says Arno. "So if there's ever an area to be looked at again, this would be a dandy."

## Brown bear harvest in Katmai National Preserve

A portion of state game unit 9C



Source: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

FOR ENVIROPHOTOS / Anchorage Daily News

It may sound routine to review closed areas where conditions have changed -- especially with bear populations in the area looking healthy. But as the Game Board prepares to take a broad look at areas closed to hunting and trapping, a push by hunters for change in the two Kamishak Bay areas is drawing thousands of public comments. The reason: Sandwiched between those two areas is the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary, Alaska's world-famous bear viewing destination.

In 1995, the last time the McNeil River bears were a full-blown issue in front of the board, bear viewing advocates exerted tremendous national pressure to close the refuge to the north, arguing it would be unethical to hunt "tame" bears that had grown used to humans.

Today, the forces against hunting in the area appear even stronger. Bear viewing flights have become a big and fast-growing part of Alaska's tourism industry, with brown bears between Katmai and Lake Clark national parks providing the biggest growth.

## MCNEIL RIVER BEARS DECLINE

What's more, the number of bears fishing at the crown jewel -- McNeil River falls -- has plunged in recent years, with declining runs of chum salmon suspected as the main culprit. At the same time, bear hunters in the 2003-'04 season killed twice as many bears in the national preserve west of McNeil as they had in previous seasons. If anything, bear viewing advocates say, it's time for more hunting restrictions in the area, not fewer.

"Why are the hunters doing it?" asks Chris Day, who flies about 1,000 tourists every summer with her Homer-based bear viewing company, Emerald Air. "It just seems ludicrous to me. It's like sticking a stick in a hornet's nest."

The answer, which should play out in public testimony before the board beginning today, has a lot to do with statewide concerns and trends. Hunting advocates say it's time to take a stand at McNeil River on the philosophical position that the same bear population can be ogled by tourists in one valley and shot by hunters in the next.

"Even though it's controversial, I find it a healthy debate as we look around the state," says Ron Somerville, a hunting community leader finishing a two-year term on the Game Board.

An important factor may be political timing. Game Board members appointed by Gov. Frank Murkowski have been highly sympathetic to predator control and other hunting priorities. Putting that political clout to the test at the 10-day meeting is likely to mean plenty of lunging, ear-flattening and other dominance displays familiar to past visitors to the McNeil River falls.

The bear-viewing industry is getting to be big business and will press for more hunting closures elsewhere, predicted board member Ted Spraker, a former state game biologist. He said the state's job is to keep bear populations healthy and often to separate viewers and hunters by seasons and areas. But it's not to ensure that old, large male bears sought by hunters are available for viewing, he said.

"What the viewing folks want is to go to where animals are not hunted at all," Spraker said.

Somerville said it's becoming a clash of two philosophies.

"The sanctuary was never intended to encompass the entire range of the bears. That's what it's become for some people," he said.

The McNeil River Sanctuary, where access is limited to state permit holders, is closed to hunting by law and will not be affected by the Game Board's deliberations. But the bears range 50 miles or more from the sanctuary's protection.

Arno sees another philosophical divide coming into play: between hunters who want to see healthy populations and viewers who become attached to individual bears.

"When I think of wildlife, I don't think of them in my anthropomorphic views of how they relate to my world," Arno said. "When I hunt, I think of relating to their world."

### **A COMPLICATED PICTURE**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game doesn't have information about how many hunters use the area now. Because the region is relatively accessible by plane from Anchorage and the Kenai Peninsula, it attracts both nonresidents hunting with guides and residents getting dropped off.

The two areas in question historically produced only a few brown bear kills every hunting season -- fewer than three on average around the Douglas River and three to six in the refuge around Paint River.

Not all hunters favor reopening the areas. Some, like guide Rob Hardy, say it would create unsporting opportunities. Hardy said the McNeil River effort is being pushed by "consumptive-use groups and the Second Amendment rights lobby" to regain some of the ground lost to hunting ever since the 1980 law created new national parks closed to hunters.

"For them, it's a no-brainer because the bear population is healthy," Hardy said.

Harvest numbers and other data -- such as the age of bears shot and the number of males - suggest that the region's overall bear population is stable, said Lem Butler, the state's wildlife biologist in King Salmon.

Even so, there are problems that complicate the picture for hunting advocates.

On Katmai National Preserve west of McNeil River, where hunting is allowed, bear harvest numbers spiked from 19 to 34 in the last of the every-other-year hunting cycles.

State biologists attribute the rise to a longer season, more hunting pressure and unusually large salmon runs into the lake's tributaries. Even though fewer bears are being shot elsewhere in the game management subunit, the sharp local increase is a concern, said Butler.

The Kukaklek Lake area in the preserve was also the scene last summer of suspected poaching, with seven bears found dead in the brushy tundra.

At the same time, the numbers of bears seen fishing at the McNeil River falls has plummeted. Only 78 recognizable bears stopped at the falls last year, the lowest number in 20 years and barely half the number from 1997, according to a new state report.

"It's time to sound the alarm," said Fish and Game's official 2004 McNeil River field report, noting that bear numbers have fallen below the threshold called for under the state's management plan.

Hunting outside the sanctuary may have contributed to the decline, along with poor chum runs, the state report said. The report said loss of wary bears would have little impact, but killing particular stars of the sanctuary, such as the cub-suckling "Teddy," would be "catastrophic."

#### **BEAR WATCHERS TO TESTIFY**

Public testimony, which begins Saturday in Anchorage, will include plenty of bear watchers. Karen Deatherage, the Defenders of Wildlife Alaska associate, said she has already turned in 6,000 written comments to the state. Opposition to expanded hunting has also been registered by several Fish and Game advisory committees and the Homer City Council.

Deatherage said a controversial idea like opening the McNeil River Game Refuge should come as a separate proposal from the public with advance notice, not as part of a general review of closed areas.

Fish and Game is taking a cautious approach. It is recommending that the board cut back October hunting in the Katmai Preserve, either with a shorter season or creation of a permit-only hunt. Elsewhere, the department supports the status quo, which would keep the state game refuge and other state-owned land in the area, including the inholding around Douglas River in Katmai National Park, closed to hunting.

Katmai National Park also supports shortening the state-managed hunting season on its preserve and keeping the other state areas closed to hunting. Park superintendent Joe

Fowler said hunting in the small reopened areas would have a significant impact on "unrivaled" bear-viewing uses in the surrounding closed areas.

Reporter Tom Kizzia can be reached at [tkizzia@adn.com](mailto:tkizzia@adn.com) or in Homer at 907-235-4244.

### **Testimony before Alaska Board of Game begins today**

- **THE MEETING:** The Alaska Board of Game will meet on Southcentral and Southwestern Alaska issues today through March 13 at the Coast International Inn, 3333 W. International Airport Road, Anchorage.
- **HOW TO TESTIFY:** Public testimony will begin today, following staff reports and run through the weekend. You can sign up to testify beginning at 8 a.m. today. The deadline to sign up won't be announced until this morning by board chairman Mike Fleagle. Call 1-800-764-8901 for updates.
- **THE AGENDA:** The board will consider a wide array of hunting and trapping proposals affecting the region. In addition to a review of all closed areas in the region, the board will face several high-profile issues,

including:

- Expanding (or cutting back) predator control programs aimed at reducing wolf populations;
- Hunting moose in the Anchorage Bowl;
- Developing a new system for allocating subsistence permits for the popular Nelchina caribou hunt; and
- Reopening areas adjacent to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary for brown bear hunting or cutting back hunting on the nearby Katmai National Preserve.
- **FURTHER INFORMATION:** The tentative meeting agenda, details on proposals and Department of Fish and Game recommendations are available on the state Web site at [www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/index.php](http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/index.php)

## **Game Board gives McNeil grizzlies room to roam**

(03/11/05)

Panel says hunting could be allowed on nearby state lands by 2007.

[\(Back to List\)](#)

By DOUG O'HARFA | Anchorage Daily News *(Published: March 11, 2005)*

The Alaska Board of Game decided Thursday that brown bears won't be hunted during the next two years on state lands adjacent to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary, temporarily settling a grizzly-sized controversy that drew thousands of impassioned comments from across the country.

But the board took several steps that could allow people to kill the salmon-eating bruins on nearby lands as soon as 2007, including one decision that cocked a bear hunt and aimed it at the National Park Service.

As in: Do a land trade or the bear gets it.

The board approved a proposal by Naknek area hunters to open chunks of state land south and southeast of the sanctuary to bear hunting, effective July 1, 2007. Board member Ron Somerville of Juneau said it would be a way to push the federal agency to start talking again with the state about trading the land for certain Katmai National Park parcels closer to Naknek, a request important to hunters in that community.

Board member Ted Spraker of Soldotna challenged the many people who oppose bear hunting around the famous McNeil bear sanctuary to "put pressure on the Park Service" to approve the land trade.

**The move surprised the Park Service and the state Department of Natural Resources -- the two agencies that would negotiate such a trade.**

**The state has no active proposals to trade that land, and staff is already swamped with other issues, such as the natural gas pipeline corridor, said DNR spokeswoman Nancy Welch.**

**The Park Service has talked with the state about the land between Katmai park and the McNeil sanctuary for two decades, and would be willing to talk again, Park Service spokesman John Quinley said.**

**But the Game Board didn't have to threaten a bear kill to get things rolling, he added.**

**"It's an interesting action to come from the game management board, to apparently take a high level of interest in how land exchanges are pursued," Quinley said. "We would have been willing to go back to the table with the state if the state had approached us and said, 'Let's see if we can make a deal.'"**

The action came during seventh day of the board's spring meeting, which continues through Sunday with discussions about predator control, changes in hunting regulations and a proposal to hold a moose hunt in Chugach State Park above the Anchorage Hillside.

The McNeil River sanctuary, located across Cook Inlet from Homer, next to Katmai National Park and Preserve, is one of the best places in the world to watch brown bears. Photographs of big brownies standing in swirling rapids as they snatch chum salmon have become icons for Alaska's wildlife. Proposals that might have allowed people to

hunt these bears on state land generated a huge controversy.

State biologists presented information that showed that the same brown bears wander all over that area, including areas now open to hunting in the Katmai preserve and the land the board said it may open to hunting.

On Thursday morning, the board decided to leave the state game refuge north of the sanctuary closed to brown bear hunting. But the panel asked the Department of Fish and Game to work up a proposal that would allow bear hunting there and bring it to the board in March 2007.

Both Somerville and Spraker said they wanted the new proposal to be part of an overview of state management and conservation of those bears, and the clash of philosophies that's developed between bear viewing and bear harvest.

"There is no mutually exclusive conflict between viewing bears and hunting them -- if you view them as a population," Somerville said. Killing bears in a well-managed harvest is no "mortal sin."

Sport hunting advocate and guide Rod Arno said the board's move will give biologists time to show that the Katmai-McNeil bears remain healthy in number and can sustain a harvest on state land. "It's not going to hurt a bit," he said.

The board also rejected proposals to close or delay bear hunting in the Katmai preserve west of the sanctuary, saying conflicts between viewers and hunters could be tackled during the review in 2007.

Then the panel voted 5 to 2 to open state land south and southeast of the sanctuary to pressure the Park Service to trade.

Whether the board has the legal authority to participate in land trade negotiations was raised by board chairman Mike Fleagle, formerly of McGrath and now of Anchorage. And board member Ben Grussendorf of Sitka questioned whether the board was wise in appearing to endorse this particular trade.

Fleagle, a staunch supporter of hunting rights, also said that he thought the board should not be opening these areas to bear hunting.

"I'm fairly adamantly opposed to new closures," he said. But "I think we've established a longtime closure here that is depended upon by people who enjoy the bears. ... It's going to anger a lot of people for very little benefit, in my opinion."

Opponents of bear hunting openings in the area said they were relieved by the board's decision to keep the refuge closed, and floored by the vote to open areas to the south.

"We're happy that they didn't open the refuge and the sanctuary to hunting, but we're back to the same issue," said Karen Deatherage, with the local office of Defenders of Wildlife. "Why are they trying to fix something that's not broken?"

Wildlife activist Paul Joslin, a biologist for the conservation group Friends of McNeil River, said he's upset the

board continued to pursue the issue.

"The public voice has been very clear on this issue," he said. "And now they're trading bears' lives to get the Park Service to do things."

Daily News reporter Doug O'Harra can be reached at [do'harra@adn.com](mailto:do'harra@adn.com).

For more on the Board of Game, visit [its Web site](#).

**adn.com**

Anchorage Daily News

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**McNeil bear hunt opposition grows****SANCTUARY: Board of Game opens nearby lands despite the declining population of tourist-pleasing bruins.**By MARY PEMBERTON  
The Associated Press*(Published: February 12, 2007)*

For decades, Larry Aumiller led small groups of people into the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary to watch as the largest congregation of brown bears in the world feast on salmon in the summer.

The former sanctuary manager said he emotionally couldn't do it any longer after a decision by the Alaska Board of Game increased opportunities to hunt the bears. Aumiller moved to Montana.

"To be honest, it was so heartbreaking I just couldn't be around it," Aumiller said.

If nothing changes, state lands used by the bears near the 114,400-acre sanctuary in Southwest Alaska will be open to hunting as of July 1, clearing the way for a fall hunt.

Opponents say it's not sporting to hunt the McNeil River bears, which are accustomed to humans and routinely come to within 10 or 15 feet of small groups of bear viewers allowed into the sanctuary each summer. Supporters say the bears are fair game when they wander outside the sanctuary.

The Game Board, which is appointed by the governor to regulate hunting in Alaska, voted to open the state lands to brown bear hunting at the request of hunters.

McNeil, created by the state 40 years ago, is arguably the best place in the world to view brown bears. That's because two things make McNeil exceptional; how close the bears will safely come to humans and how many there are at the sanctuary.

As many as 144 individual bears have been observed at McNeil River with as many as 72 bears observed at one time at the falls, according to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, a state agency separate from the Game Board.

However, numbers have declined significantly since 1998, with 78 individual bears spotted at McNeil River in 2004 and 87 in 2005 -- well below the average of 104 going back to 1983.



Hunt opponents say it wouldn't be sporting to shoot McNeil River bears because they don't fear humans. Supporters contend bears are savvy when they leave the sanctuary and should be fair game. *(Photo by AL GRILLO / Associated Press archive 2004)*



Larry Aumiller, front, former McNeil River State Game Sanctuary manager, leads a group of bear watchers to the McNeil River falls in July 2004. Aumiller moved to Montana because of a decision that allows bear hunting on state lands near the sanctuary. Alaska has an estimated 35,000-45,000 brown bears. *(Photo by AL GRILLO / Associated Press archive 2004)*

The Department of Fish and Game says numbers now are dipping below the threshold where quality bear viewing may be affected.

Critics say if hunting increases it is just a matter of time before one of the recognizable bears -- the ones that have been named by staff members over the years -- is killed.

There's Teddy. She is so tolerant of humans she will nurse her cubs just 10 feet from the sanctuary's viewing platform next to the falls.

"A bear like Teddy is invaluable," Aumiller said. "She is so good, so tolerant. In a way, she's worth 10 other bears."

The seven-member Game Board is being asked to consider 10 proposals to either reverse its decision or reduce hunting pressure on the bears when they wander outside the sanctuary 250 miles southwest of Anchorage. The board is expected to take up the proposals in March.

Game Board chairman Ron Somerville can't speak for other board members, but offered some of his views on the sanctuary bears.

While he can understand people getting emotional over the issue, the sanctuary was created to protect bear viewing, not individual bears, he said.

"It was never designed to protect the bears wherever they wandered," said Somerville, a retired wildlife biologist and administrator with the Department of Fish and Game.

Besides, the state constitution requires that game be managed for the maximum benefit of Alaskans, he said. If the McNeil River sanctuary bears were allowed to undermine that, it would be inexcusable, he said.

The sanctuary was created four decades ago to protect bear viewing at the falls. In 1993, the McNeil River State Game Refuge was established to the north, providing the bears with another buffer of protection. To the south is Katmai National Park, where no hunting is allowed.

According to the Department of Fish and Game, the McNeil River bears range throughout the region, using both the Katmai National Preserve to the west and areas north of the sanctuary, both of which allow hunting.

Brown bear harvests in the area have been well above average since 1998. From July 2002-June 2004, 111 bears were killed, about twice the two-year harvest average since the sanctuary was created, according to Fish and Game.

Alaska has an estimated 35,000-45,000 brown bears.

The Alaska Professional Hunters Association Inc. proposes keeping the 95,000 acres of state land closed because of the bad publicity that could result by opening them, said executive director Bobby Fithian. As it is, the sanctuary bears get great publicity worldwide, he said.

"From our point of view, the allocation or opportunity to harvest a minimum number of bears is not worth the negative feedback," Fithian said.

Another proposal by bear viewing guide Dave Bachrach in Homer would keep the state lands closed and restrict the Game Board from considering reopening them for at least 10 years.

"Alaska has plenty of places where brown bears can be hunted without involving lands surrounding the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary," his proposal says.

Bachrach said when he flies he can see bear trails leading from the sanctuary to the state land along the coast. It is where some of the bears den for the winter.

"Those bears are world famous. Their numbers appear to be in decline," Bachrach said. "Until they know why, how can we open the back door and allow hunters in to kill some more?"

Rod Arno, executive director of the Alaska Outdoor Council, said his group favors the board's decision to open the lands to brown bear hunting.

"As long as these are state lands and a harvest of surplus of brown bears in the area, the Alaska Outdoor Council would support a regulated harvest of brown bears," he said.

But Arno said there is more to it than that. There are other reasons besides increased hunting for why there are fewer bears at McNeil. The bears are going to two other nearby creeks where there are more salmon, and more bears have moved into the preserve, he said.

Arno disputes the theory that the McNeil River bears are so used to humans it would be unsporting to hunt them. Once the bears leave the falls and venture outside the sanctuary, they are as wily as other bears, he said.

"Having guided there personally, I know that those bears that frequent the McNeil falls, once they are away from that site they are just as leery as any bear that I have guided," he said.

Not so, said Aumiller.

"We are exposing those bears to a danger that they have not been allowed to learn exists," he said. "I think that is wrong."

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# PROP. 137 FROM MARCH 2005 BOARD OF GAME MEETING

**PROPOSAL 137 - 5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting. Modify the regulation as follows:**

Repeal paragraphs (a)(9)(C) dealing with GMU 9, as follows:

[THAT PORTION OF UNIT 9 EXTENDING SOUTH AND EAST OF MCNEIL RIVER STATE GAME SANCTUARY TO THE BOUNDARY OF KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE, AND INCLUDING ANY STATE LAND WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PERSERVE, IS CLOSED TO BROWN BEAR HUNTING;]

**ISSUE:** The Park Service was negotiating with the Naknek/Kvichak Advisory Committee and the State of Alaska, to trade state land (Unit 9A and 9C as described in C) for Park Service land (westernmost portion of Naknek Lake). Per the Park Service request, the Naknek/Kvichak Advisory Committee agreed to vote to close said state land to brown bear hunting with the understanding that efforts for the land swap would continue and they have not.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Nothing.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** No.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Hunters.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?**

**PROPOSED BY:** Naknek/Kvichak AC

(SW-05S-G-005)

\*\*\*\*\*

**FAVOR**

Fairbanks AC (AC 15)

Alaska Outdoor Council (PC 262)

Karyn D. Rode (PC 173)

**OPPOSE**

Homer AC (AC 18)

Chris Nowakoski (PC 100)

Lucy Foster (PC 101)

Kirsten Foster (PC 102)

Charles T. Robbins (PC 103)

Barbara Robbins (PC 104)

William Storey (PC 105)

Jennifer P. Bozzini (PC 108)

Maria Helm Sinskey (PC 109)

Samuella A. Shoss (PC 110)

Michael Felber (PC 111)

Pam Thompson (PC 112)

Alana Monge (PC 113)

Regina N. Fiske (PC 114)

V. Gwen Weisner (PC 116)

Jerry Chawes (PC 117)

Animal Protection Institute (PC 118)

**PROPOSAL 137 - Continued**

Janet O'Brien (PC 120)  
John & Deborah Pendergraft (PC 121)  
Alexandra Cupial (PC 122)  
Edgar Bailey & Nina Faust (PC 124)  
Christina and Mark Constantini (PC 125)  
Karen Hackenberg (PC 126)  
Sarah Walker (PC 127)  
Phillip A. Greenberg (PC 128)  
Lydia Pattison (PC 129)  
Sedgwick County Zoo (PC 130)  
Norita D. Rivera (PC 131)  
Anne Welch (PC 132)  
Erin McCabe (PC 134) (and approximately 47 other  
emailed comments to The Alaska Wildlife Alliance)  
Chet Metcalf (PC 135)  
Michael J. Welch (PC 137)  
Lynne Nelson (PC 138)  
Rachel Marsden (PC 141)  
Dave Bachrach (PC 143)  
Nathanael J. Paulson (PC 146) (and 36 other comments mailed together)  
Marie Schulien (PC 147) (and 9 other comments mailed together)  
Donna M. Cook (PC 148)  
Priscilla Herben (PC 150)  
Britt Ehrhardt (PC 151)  
Kristine A. Schmidt (PC 152)  
Audubon Alaska (PC 153)  
Philip H. Fensterer III (PC 155)  
Robert Pattison (PC 157)  
Merrill Lowden (PC 158)  
Mary Colucci Weinstein (PC 160)  
Rusty Grimpe (PC 163)  
Elise Snider (PC 164)  
Owen K. Hughes (PC 165)  
Dawn Y. Judson (PC 166)  
Gart Curtis (PC 167)  
Michelle R. Schireman (PC 168)  
Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies (PC 169)  
National Park Service-Katmai (PC 174)  
Nancy York (PC 175)  
Alaska Video Postcards (PC 176)  
C. Susan Rose (PC 177)  
Henriette Brasseur (PC 178)  
Mary C. Woodward (PC 179)  
Janet Lipner (PC 180)

PROPOSAL 137 - Continued

Gerri Tillett (PC 181)  
Richard G. Sheehan (PC 182)  
Laura & Joe Crapanzano (PC 184)  
Marie A. Zaccaria (PC 185)  
Thomas E. Meacham (PC 186)  
Jacqueline Parish (PC 187)  
Amanda Oulson (PC 188)  
Alicia C. Shelley (PC 190)  
Arthur Ogden Kimball (PC 191)  
Thorn Smith (PC 192)  
John Geeza and Julianna Switaj (PC 193)  
Christopher S. Morin (PC 200)  
Morgan McBride (PC 206)  
Todd Hardesty (PC 209)  
Alan & Mimi Moore (PC 210)  
Cyrinda Hoffman (PC 211)  
Art Greenwalt (PC 212)  
Frank and Christine Doerr (PC 215)  
Wendy Hughes (PC 216)  
Jacqueline Musgrave (PC 217)  
Joe Harvey (PC 218)  
Shannan Morin (PC 219)  
Anne Wieland (PC 220)  
Klaudia Jo Klaudi (PC 240)  
Claudio & Valanne Glooschenko (PC 241)  
Bill Watkins (PC 242)  
JoAnn Varner (PC 243)  
Toni A. Stark (PC 245)  
Devta Khalsa (PC 246)  
Tima Priess (PC 247)  
Alvin Leighton (PC 248)  
Laura Stamm (PC 249)  
Jennifer Tothe Payne (PC 250)  
Bette Brock Rutan (PC 251)  
April Warwick (PC 252)  
Amy Peloza (PC 253)  
John Gaguine (PC 254)  
Claude DeWandelcer (PC 255)  
Jan St. Peters (PC 256)  
Spence Guerin (PC 257)  
Marcia Denison (PC 258)  
Undersigned Homer Businesses (PC259) (43 names listed)  
Sierra Club Alaska Office (PC 260)  
Richard Hahn (264)

**PROPOSAL 137 - Continued**

Nancy Tankersley (PC 265)  
Jennifer K. Wells (PC 274)  
National Parks Conservation Association (PC 275)  
Marilyn Berling (PC 276)  
Danny McGovern (PC 277)  
Kathryn Smith (PC 279)  
Darren Doderer (PC 280)  
Annika Bratton (PC 282)  
Catherine Stepherone (PC 284)  
Jacqueline Lynn (PC 288)  
Robert Sabin (PC 290)  
Mary C. Ray (PC 292) (and 6,062 other  
emailed comments to Defenders of Wildlife)  
Shannon Campbell (PC 293) (and 33 other  
emailed comments to Defenders of Wildlife)  
Paul Joslin (PC 294)  
Larry Aumiller (PC 2)  
Kati Loeffler (PC 4)  
Janice Reed-Smith (PC 6)  
Kathey Cleal-Brodman (PC 8)  
Garth Illingworth (PC 11)  
Wendy Illingworth (PC 12)  
Heather Doncaster (PC 13)  
Martha O'Rourke (PC 15)  
Tom Gardiner (PC 16)  
Charlotte Gardiner (PC 17)  
John Daggett (PC 29)  
Jamini & Robert Arcell (PC 30)  
Scott Sway (PC 31)  
Maria B. Meijer (PC 32)  
AK Travel Industry Association (PC 34)  
William K. Avery (PC 36)  
Tabitha Graves (PC 37)  
Larry Wood (PC 39)  
Jonathon Bowden (PC 40)  
Bryan J. Hile (PC 43)  
Wendy Gardner (PC 44)  
David Goldblatt (PC 45)  
Douglas G. Sobey (PC 46)  
Kelly Riley (PC 48)  
Thomas Meachum (PC 49)  
Veronica A. Greco (PC 50)  
Karen Dulan (PC 53)  
Ann Warren (PC 57)

**PROPOSAL 137 - Continued**

Andrea L. Tebolt (PC 59)  
Lexie Cataldo (PC 60)  
Susan Lewis (PC 61)  
Roland Grove (PC 64)  
Larry & Joyce Lewis (PC 65)  
Heather Payne (PC 66)  
Susan Prince (PC 67)  
Michael Bret Hood (PC 68)  
Lisa Tryon (PC 69)  
Mollie Alstott (PC 70)  
Judy & Richard Leicester (PC 72)  
Tarn Ream (PC 74)  
Von Braschler (PC 75)  
Carol Jensen (PC 76)  
Steven R. Tarola (PC 77)  
Bill Sherwonit (PC 79)  
Ethel Bochmann (PC 80)  
Kirsten Flynn (PC 81)  
AK Society of Outdoor & Nature Photographers (PC 82)  
James Braswell (PC 84)  
James Jacksons (PC 85)  
Howard Maltby (PC 86)  
Robert Pattison (PC 87)  
Jonette Bronson (PC 89)  
Jeff Proudfoot (PC 90)  
Clarence Rode (PC 91)  
Gail Karr (PC 92)  
Donna Rode (PC 93)  
David Boyer (PC 94)  
Anderson Bradford (PC 99)  
National Parks Service (PC 25)  
Donna Ferraro (PC 295) (and 50 faxed comments  
to the Homer Chamber of Commerce)

**FINAL ACTION:** Carries    Fails    Tabled    No Action    See Prop. # \_\_\_\_\_

**ABSENT** \_\_\_\_\_ **ABSTAIN** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **TIME** \_\_\_\_\_ **TAPE #** \_\_\_\_\_

ATT: BOG COMMENTS  
ADF&G BOARDS SUPPORT SECTION  
907 465 6094  
February 18, 2005

RECEIVED

FEB 18 2005

BOARDS

COMMENT# 259  
Page 1 of 3

DATE: February 18, 2005  
TO: Alaska Department of Fish and Game - Juneau  
FROM: Homer Chamber of Commerce  
SUBJECT: Proposals # 129 and # 137

Number of Pages 51 Including Cover Sheet

Following are letters that were received at the Homer Chamber of Commerce from individuals concerning Proposals # 129 and #137.

*Derotha Ferraro*

Derotha Ferraro  
Executive Director

RECEIVED  
FEB 18 2005  
BOARDS

COMMENT# 295

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
BOARDS SUPPORT SECTION

We the undersigned Homer businesses are in OPPOSITION to BOG Proposals 129 and 137. Proposal 137 specifically targets 2 parcels of state land collectively known as Kamishak Special Use Area (these areas are embedded within Katmai National Park and McNeil River Sanctuary); Proposal 129 is a collective proposal to reconsider all hunting and trapping closures including McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and the two parcels of the Kamishak Special Use Area.

Bear viewing is a very important tourist draw for the town of Homer, millions of dollars of revenue are brought into our community each summer by wildlife viewing tourists who use Homer as a departure point for their bear viewing experiences. These tourists not only support the many air taxis and boats that offer bear viewing (who in turn provide jobs and purchase locally); but, more importantly they lodge, eat, halibut fish, kayak, shop and partake of many other activities while in the Homer area. It is said that every dollar spent circulates seven times within a community. Bear viewing is critical to Homer's economic diversity.

Opening hunting in or near McNeil and Katmai will significantly impact this valuable population of tolerant, human conditioned bears, diminishing the viewing experience and thereby impacting our businesses as people go elsewhere for their wildlife viewing experience.

EMERALD AIR SERVICE, INC  
BELUGA AIR  
NORTHWIND AVIATION  
KACHEMAK BAY FLYING SERVICE, INC  
MARITIME HELICOPTERS  
SMOKEY BAY AIR, INC  
AK ADVENTURES  
KACHEMAK BAY WILDERNESS LODGE  
LANDS END RESORT  
HALLO BAY BEAR LODGE  
SADIE COVE WILDERNESS LODGE  
TUTKA BAY WILDERNESS LODGE  
ACROSS THE BAY TENT AND BREAKFAST  
HOMER FLOATPLANE LODGE  
MAGIC CANYON RANCH  
GARDEN HOUSE  
ISLAND WATCH B & B  
GRIZZLY CHARTERS  
SILVER FOX CHARTERS  
MAKO'S WATER TAXI  
RAINBOW TOURS  
BAY EXCURSIONS WATER TAXI & TOURS

RECEIVED

FEB 18 2005

BOARDS

COMMENT# 259

Page 2 of 3

TRUE NORTH KAYAK ADVENTURES

EAGLE EYE PHOTO & COMMUNICATIONS  
SMOKEY BAY NATURAL FOODS  
CAPTAINS COFFEE ROASTING COMPANY  
FRESH SOURDOUGH EXPRESS BAKERY CAFÉ  
PANARELLI'S CAFÉ & DELI  
FLYING COLORS ART STUDIO  
THE SURF SHACK  
MCNAMARA CONSTRUCTION  
NEXUS EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
ULMERS DRUG AND HARDWARE  
HOMER BOOKSTORE  
UPPER CUT  
FISHERMANS FRIEND MARINE  
STEVE TYROLOA CPA  
WILD NORTH PHOTOS  
ALASKA BEAR QUEST  
SEEMORE WILDLIFE  
WILDLIFE HD  
HOMER BREWING COMPANY  
PRATT MUSEUM

COMMENT# 259  
page 3 of 3



February 10, 2005

Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Board Supports Section  
P.O. Box 25526  
Juneau Alaska 99502

RECEIVED

FEB 15 2005

BOARDS

Attn: Board of Game Comments

The Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA) represents nearly 1,000 tourism related businesses in Alaska. One of our objectives is to promote experiences that meet or exceed our visitor's expectations. Year after year, our research tells us that wildlife viewing is one of the 3 main reasons tourists tell us they visit Alaska. The ATIA has reviewed proposals for the March 2005 Board of Game meeting in Anchorage, Alaska and has the following comments.

In the current proposal packet before the Board of Game, proposals 129, 134 and 137 seek modifications to current regulations. ATIA's comments on these proposals are attached. ATIA's comments are made to help foster and enhance wildlife viewing opportunities in important tourism viewing areas.

Thank you for reviewing the attached comments. ATIA looks forward to working with the Board of Game in the future to assure healthy wildlife for visitors and Alaskan residents alike.

Sincerely,

Ron Peck  
President & COO

COMMENT# **34**  
page 1 of 2

Alaska Travel Industry Association  
2600 Cordova Street, Suite 201  
Anchorage, AK 99503  
(907) 929-2842 n/f (907) 561-5727

REC=

FEB 15 2005

BOARDS

**Alaska Travel Industry Association**  
**Comments to the Board of Game March 2005 Meeting**  
February 10, 2005

**Proposal 129:** These 4 areas are currently closed to hunting except as noted:

- Portage Glacier Closed Area - Currently closed to all hunting of game except migratory fowl where hunting is permitted after September 1
- Seward Closed Area - Closed to the taking of big game, except black bear
- Russian River Closed Area - Closed to hunting during June and July
- McNeil River State Game Sanctuary, including area south and west to the Katmai National Park and Preserve - Closed to brown bear hunting

**ATIA Recommendation:** Maintain closures as currently defined for each of the 4 areas to encourage greater opportunities for wildlife viewing. Any hunting allowed (migratory birds and bears as noted above) should primarily be to maintain healthy, maximized populations of wildlife.

**Proposal 134** - Proposal is to prohibit hunting within ¼ mile of residence or campground on Kenai Peninsula and lands south of Anchorage west of Prince William Sound to Seward

**ATIA Recommendation:** Support proposal to prohibit hunting within ¼ mile of residences or campgrounds in the area defined to encourage greater opportunities for wildlife viewing and promote safety of campers and Alaska residents.

**Proposal 137** - Game Management Unit 9 - State Game Management Area from McNeil River to Katmai National Park currently closed to brown bear hunting.

**ATIA Recommendation:** Maintain closures as currently defined to encourage greater opportunities for wildlife viewing.

COMMENT# 34  
page 2 of 2

February 17, 2005

Board Comments  
Alaska Board of Game

RECEIVED  
FEB 18 2005  
BOARDS

Dear Chairman and Board Members:

I am writing to provide a summary of scientific information available regarding proposals 33, 34, 29, 30, 129, and 137, all of which refer to brown bear management in Units 9 and 15. I am a PhD candidate at Washington State University and have been studying brown bears for the past 8 years, the last 4 of which have been on the Kenai and Alaska Peninsulas. As part of my work I have spent a considerable amount of time compiling all available information on these populations. Though you are likely to be aware of some of the information I am including, I hoped that by summarizing this information it may aid you in applying the available scientific data to your management decisions.

For both the Kenai Peninsula and the areas of 9C & 9B discussed in proposals 29, 30, 129, & 137, I think it's important to recognize that we do not currently have accurate estimates of brown bear populations. Coming from an academic perspective, the current methods to generate bear numbers in these areas would not withstand scientific evaluation or peer review. Thus, these numbers should be viewed cautiously. In the Kamishak Special Use Area north of Katmai National Park, I am not aware of any population estimate that has ever been conducted in this area. The National Park Service is currently analyzing aerial line transect data which includes the Douglas River/Kamishak Special Use Area, but a population estimate is not currently available and will not be available for at least another year based on my inquiry. It is my understanding that Dick Sellers conducted an aerial line transect of the Katmai Preserve in 1999. Otherwise, estimates are extrapolated from Black Lake over 200 miles south of Douglas River. Population growth or decline for all of Unit 9 has primarily been based on Black Lake. With variation in consistency of salmon runs and human use throughout Unit 9, it is unlikely that Black Lake is representative of all areas. As for the Kenai, I'm certain Ted Spraker is well aware of the difficulty in obtaining an accurate estimate of the Kenai Bear population and the uncertainty with the existing estimate.

It is my understanding that with the Kenai population estimate of 250-300 bears (I think the to-date working estimate is 275) that sustainable harvest is suggested at 14-17 bears. Thus, suggested harvest levels in both proposals 33 and 34 would exceed that value. The Kenai Conservation Strategy developed in 2000 by a stakeholder group of Kenai residents suggests adhering to the sustainable harvest levels. Additionally, in November 1998, ADF&G identified Kenai Peninsula brown bears as a "Species of Special Concern" suggesting that the population is "vulnerable to a significant decline due to low numbers, restricted distribution, dependence on limited habitat resources, or sensitivity to environmental disturbance". The IBBST stated in 1999 that "a statistically defensible estimate is required for future harvest management" and additionally stated that "The Kenai brown bear population age structure is of major concern because the female age distribution is markedly different from that of a normal population. Few young females from 3-6 years of age have been found". I am not aware of any data that has been collected since 1999 that suggests that this situation has changed. Though I respect the public interest and desire to increase brown bear harvest on the Kenai, it seems risky given the lack of an accurate population estimate and the variety of threats to brown bears on the Kenai including DLP mortalities, unreported mortalities, and habitat encroachment via recreation and

COMMENT#

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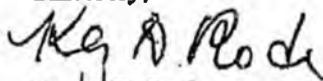
Page 1 of 5

development. I think utilizing information regarding human/bear encounters on the Kenai as an index of population growth or decline can provide false conclusions. Human activity continues to increase on the Kenai, and an increase in bear/human interactions could be a result of more people out and about on the Kenai, rather than a true increase in the bear population. Bear safety education and continued improvement of waste management could help substantially in reducing DLP's on the Kenai, which would be one way to improve the chances of having an annual harvest. Public misunderstanding of bear behavior appears to be involved with a number of DLPs each year. Being involved in public education programs in Homer, I was surprised at the lack of information local residents had regarding bear behavior and safety issues.

Lastly, I would like to provide data regarding bear movements and habitat use patterns in the Douglas River/Kamishak Special Use Area. However, I should precede this by addressing the land swap issue referred to in proposal 137. When I began my research in this area 3 years ago I inquired about the history of the special closure designation for brown bear hunting. In 1985 this area was closed to brown bear hunting due to it's proximity to both Katmai National Park and McNeil Sanctuary. Board members specifically stated that "we shouldn't allow a firing line to be established between what are arguable the two best places to view bears in the state". Though I knew the Park Service was interested in obtaining this area, I do not know the reason the land swap never occurred. However, the closure of this area by the Board does not mention a pending land swap as part of the closure validation. Attached is a map showing bear movements for 5 of 16 bears collared in my dissertation research within the Kamishak Special Use area surrounding Douglas River. Minimum convex polygon home ranges sizes averaged 520.38 +/- 477.7 km<sup>2</sup> for males and 160.24 +/- 315.0 for females. The female with 3 yearlings on the map had the largest home range of any bear of 1223.7 km<sup>2</sup>. Two of the males had home ranges over 900 km<sup>2</sup>. Daily travel distances averaged 10 km with both males and females traveling up to 40 km in a single day. Bears were collared from late May through mid-October in 2003 and 2004. Over half the bears migrated from Douglas River to either the Park, Preserve, or McNeil Sanctuary in mid-summer. During 800 hours of observation in 2003, bears approached observers within less than 150 meters on 231 occasions, or about once every 4 hours. Our observations suggest that these bears are mostly unafraid of people. I have also provided harvest data for Units 9B and 9C which illustrates the increased harvest in both these areas. In 1999, 2001, and 2003, harvest exceeded suggested sustainable levels and between 1998 and 2003 harvest doubled from the preceding 5 years.

I hope this information will be helpful in your decision-making process regarding brown bear management in Units 9 and 15. I appreciate your consideration of the available scientific information.

Sincerely,



Karyn D. Rode

PhD Candidate

Washington State University

[karynrode@hotmail.com](mailto:karynrode@hotmail.com)

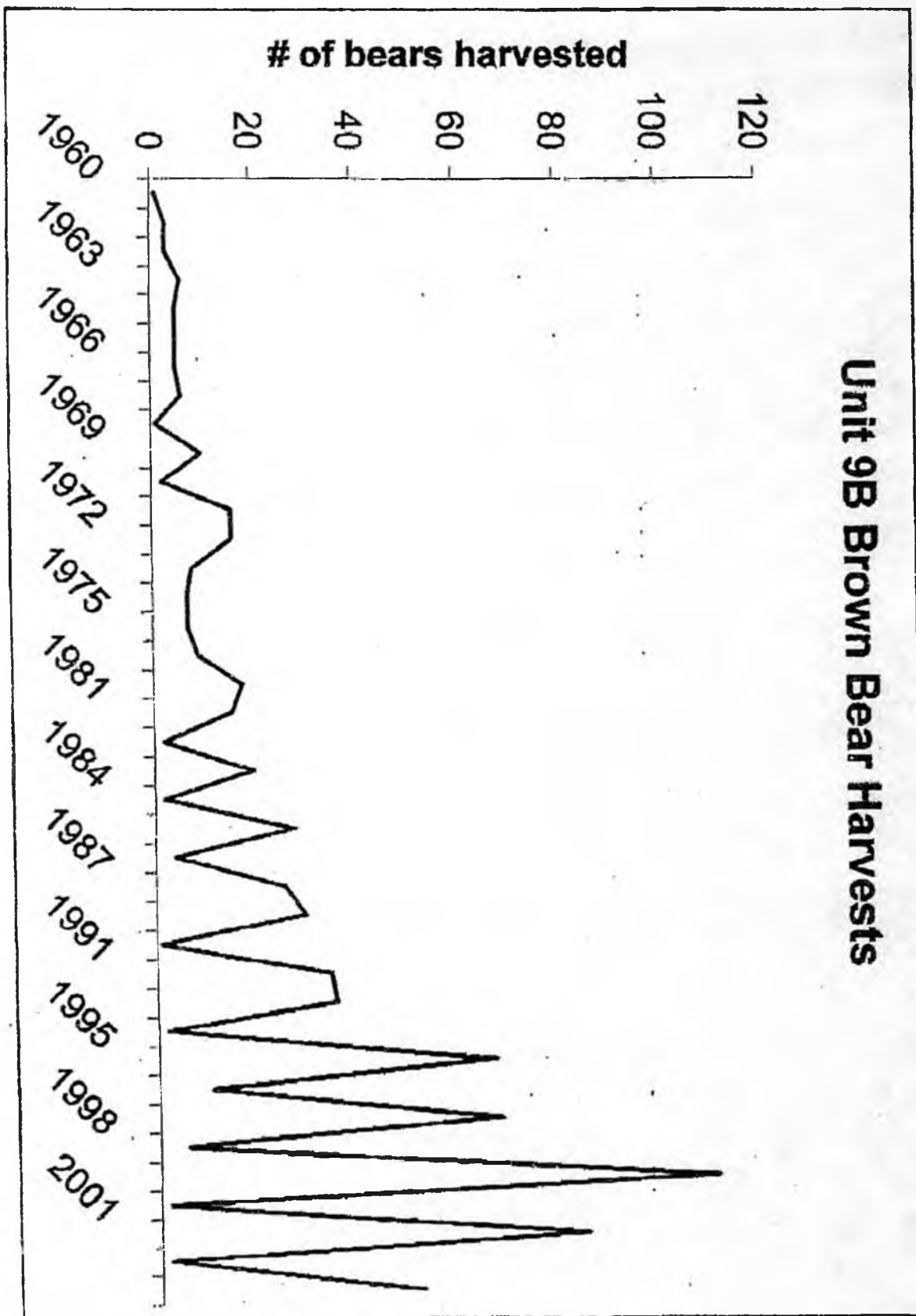
907-783-0027

COMMENT#

173

Page 2 of 5





**Unit 9B Brown Bear Harvests**

*Submitted by Karyn D. Rede*



# ADF&G COMMENT ON PROP. 137

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal opens state lands south and east of McNeil State Game Sanctuary in Subunit 9C and state lands within the boundaries of Katmai National Park and Preserve to bear hunting.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: Take no Action

RATIONALE: See proposal 129.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**PROPOSAL 138**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal recommends authorizing the use of ORVs and snowmachines to take wolves in Subunits 9C and 9E, provided that the motorized vehicle is not moving.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: No recommendation

RATIONALE: Unlawful methods of taking game are listed in 5 AAC 92.080. Based on the proposal's text, this proposal recommends adding Subunits 9C and 9E to 5 AAC 92.080(4)(D), which is an incremental change to the current legal method of motorized vehicle use. The wolf population in Unit 9 is healthy and likely increasing. Wolf harvests vary annually with weather conditions, but are typically minimal. Authorization of this method of taking wolves is not likely to reduce the wolf population in the area.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**PROPOSAL 139**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would prohibit trapping within ¼ mile of roads and residences in Subunit 9C and require that a sign be placed near the road to mark traps and trap lines.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: Do not adopt

RATIONALE: This is a conflict between user groups and a public safety issue. Pet owners want to run dogs on trails or near their houses without restraints, and each year dogs are caught in traps or snares. Dog owners have expressed concern about traps set along the road and trail systems. It is hard to predict how large of an impact this closure would have on trapping in Subunit 9C. Lack of proper snow conditions and frequent warm temperatures limit the use of snowmachines and ORVs in this area. As a result, the ¼ mile closure would likely reduce the overall trapping effort and fur harvest. Requiring signs at the trail heads or common access points would make pet owners aware of trapping activity, but will likely result in signs being posted at the head of all trails extending ¼ mile off the road system.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**PROPOSAL 140**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Amend the Sourdough Controlled Use Area restriction to allow the use of ORVs to hunt small game.


DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: Do not adopt

RATIONALE: See staff comments in proposal 129. The Sourdough Controlled Use Area is small, only 92 mi<sup>2</sup>, however it lies along the Richardson Highway in an area that the Nelchina Caribou Herd migrates through consistently each year. Non-motorized areas are important to many hunters, and this is the only non-motorized area that can consistently be hunted for caribou year after year in Unit 13. More than half of this controlled use area lies within BLM managed lands that are open to federal subsistence regulations. In most years the state Tier I caribou season runs through the end of March; the federal caribou hunting season runs through the end of March every year.

Law enforcement in this area would be very difficult if the area were opened to snowmachines for hunting small game, but not caribou. Even though this controlled use area has a general non-motorized hunting restriction, ORVs are allowed on designated trails allowing some access to the area using snowmachine. While hunters are required to keep their vehicles on the trails, they can leave their vehicle on a trail, and pursue small game on foot. Also, vehicles are only controlled west of the Richardson Highway and can be used east of the highway.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**PROPOSAL 141**

# ADF&G RATIONALE ON PROP. 137 COMMENT

<p>The McNeil River State Game Refuge is closed to brown bear hunting.</p>	<p>The lands closed to bear hunting by this regulation represent 571 mi<sup>2</sup> of state lands adjacent to one of the most well known brown bear sanctuaries in the world. The refuge was closed to bear hunting in 1995 in response to continued opposition to a drawing hunt in the area. The Department recommends no changes to the McNeil Refuge restrictions at this time. However, the Board may want to consider moving this closure to "areas closed to hunting" 5AAC 92.510.</p>	<p>Status quo</p>
<p><b>Unit 9C</b></p>		
<p>state lands south and east of McNeil State Game Sanctuary in the northeast corner of Subunit 9C and on any state lands within the boundaries of Katmai National Park and Preserve</p>	<p>The lands closed to bear hunting by this regulation represent 87 mi<sup>2</sup> of state lands surrounded by the world's two most well known brown bear sanctuaries that were established by the state and federal governments to protect bear populations. The value of these areas to wildlife viewers stem from the fact that the brown bear population is not hunted. Because this is not one contiguous area, some lands that are closed by this regulation are small areas with poorly defined borders and are largely inaccessible.</p>	<p>Status quo</p> 
<p>Current Language: that portion of Unit 9 extending south and east of McNeil River State Game Sanctuary to the boundary of Katmai National Park and Preserve, and including any state land within the boundaries of Katmai National Park and Preserve, is closed to brown bear hunting;</p>		
<p><b>Unit 10</b></p>		
<p>Canada Goose hunting closure in Unit 10</p>	<p>This closure is redundant with the seasons and bag limits listed under 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(E) and should be removed to allow future regulations to provide hunting opportunity for Canada Geese in Unit 10. The Unit 10 Canada Goose closure was established to protect the Aleutian Canada Goose when it was listed as an endangered species. The Aleutian Canada Goose was de-listed in 2002 and is currently above the management objectives for population size. The Pacific Flyway Council is under political pressure to slow population growth and is willing to consider opening a season in Unit 10.</p>	<p>Amend to eliminate Closed Area</p>
<p>Current Language: Unit 10, except Unimak Island, is closed to the taking of Canada Geese;</p>		
<p><b>Unit 10</b></p>		

# LANGUAGE ALLOWING BEAR HUNT ADOPTED 2005

## 5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting

(9) Unit 9:

(A) in Unit 9, the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary and contiguous tidelands are closed to hunting;

(B) repealed 7/1/2003;

**(C) through June 30, 2007, that portion of Unit 9 extending south and east of McNeil River State Game Sanctuary to the boundary of Katmai National Park and Preserve, and including any state land within the boundaries of Katmai National Park and Preserve, is closed to brown bear hunting;**

---

**From:** doug hill [deeryard2001@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 18, 2007 12:17 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** HB 127 - Thank You - From an Alaskan Resident and Hunter

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Blue

Representative Seaton,

Thank you very much for introducing HB 127 - "An Act amending the boundaries of the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary."  
Thank you also for your foresight and thoughtful comments regarding the future of the McNeil River State Bear Sanctuary.

I am a hunter and I do not support hunting of bears in the Kamishak Special Use Area

Doug Hill  
PO Box 220236  
Anchorage, Alaska 99522  
907-348-8519  
deeryard2001@yahoo.com

---

Don't get soaked. Take a quick peak at the forecast with the Yahoo! Search weather shortcut.  
[http://tools.search.yahoo.com/shortcuts/#loc\\_weather](http://tools.search.yahoo.com/shortcuts/#loc_weather)

**DATE:** February 15, 2007

**TO:** Representative Paul Seaton

**FROM:** Duane Howe  
41640 Gladys Ct  
Homer, AK 99603

**SUB:** HB 127 to add the Kamishak Special Use Area to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary

Thank you for sponsoring HB 127. I hope the bill will pass and be signed into law without delay. I see no need to change the management plan for brown bears in the McNeil River State Game Refuge and Sanctuary and Kamishak Special Use Area. The situation seems to call for maintaining at least as much protection as has been afforded the bears for the last 20 years, since their numbers seem to be near their lowest levels during that period of time.

The Fish & Game Department has recommended leaving the hunting ban in place as have the Homer Fish & Game Advisory Committee and the professional guides of Alaska. It makes no sense to me to kill bears that are providing education and entertainment for hundreds of people annually, not to mention many times the revenue for the local economies than the bears would provide as dead trophy animals.

Alaska may be the last frontier where hunting is part of the culture, but it doesn't have to be the last place where values other than those offered by the blood sports are appreciated and supported. The area involved represents a tiny fraction of the bear country in Alaska. Keeping it off limits for hunting will not cause a hardship for anyone and will doubtlessly avoid an embarrassment for the state of Alaska.

Please continue your efforts for HB 127.



Cc Gatto, Craig, Kohring, Roses, Wilson, Edgmon, Guttenberg, Kawasaki

**FAX**

To:

Date: February 16, 2007

To: House Resources and Finance Committee  
Representative Paul SeatonFrom: Karen Case  
P O Box 27944  
Fresno, CA 93729**RE: HB 127**I am writing to ask that you support **HB 127**.

Adding the Kamishak Special Use Area to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary (a National Natural Landmark) will help to maintain a quality visitor/wildlife viewing experience, which translates into millions of tourism dollars. This revenue will benefit the local economy of Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and particularly the State of Alaska.

To safeguard the declining bear population at McNeil River, and not jeopardize the successful bear-viewing program to an area that has been closed to hunting for over 20 years, I strongly urge you to **support HB 127**.

Thank you.

---

**From:** Catherine & Erik [cark1@worldnet.att.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 17, 2006 7:46 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Bears  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Representative Seaton,

Alaska is getting very bad national attention for the Game Board's plan to allow hunting of human-habituated bears around the McNeil River Sanctuary, and rightfully so. It is very hard to understand how they could possibly justify it, but since they seem to be intent on the plan it makes sense to head them off and prevent future mistakes legislatively. We urge you to introduce legislation to increase the size of the sanctuary by adding state land.

Thank you,

Catherine Cassidy  
Erik Huebsch  
PO Box 599  
Kasilof, AK 99610  
262-6189

---

**From:** finnicum@tds.net  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 18, 2006 5:08 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Sanctuary

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Rep. Seaton;

I am writing to you with great concern over a threatened part of Alaska.

I urge you to introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River sanctuary. These lands should be protected in perpetuity from any activities including hunting that might interfere with the world class bear viewing opportunities in the area. The economic value of ecotourism far exceeds, in contrast, the value of killing bears that have become habituated to humans.

I think you will find that helping to conserve the natural splendor of Alaska's beautiful outdoors will be far more economically viable for the state by bringing in more "eco" tourists.

Please help to save the McNeil River habituated bears from a horrible "trick". They have come to trust humans, and violating that trust is wrong. Please introduce this legislation that will help these majestic symbols of Alaska.

You are in my prayers as you make decisions to protect America's gem, Alaska.

Thank you and God Bless you,

Lisa Pack Finn, um  
6921 Mobile Road  
Blue Ridge, GA 30513  
706-632-7716

"If all the beasts were gone, man would die from loneliness of spirit, for what happens to the beast happens to the man."

--Chief Seattle

---

**From:** Mark Dickson [Marksd@gci.net]  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 18, 2006 9:29 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Bear Hunting  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Rep. Seaton;

I urge you to introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River sanctuary. These lands should be protected in perpetuity from any activities including Brown Bear hunting that might interfere with the world class bear viewing opportunities that has developed in the area in recent years. The economic value of ecotourism far exceeds, in contrast, the value of bear hunting.

Thank you,

*Mark Dickson*

*58987 Deitz Lane  
Homer, Ak. 235-6878*

---

**From:** Alaskan Affair [patriciacue@acsalaska.net]  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 18, 2006 1:01 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Legislation  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Representative Seaton,

I have visited the McNeil River Bear Sanctuary and found a unique place where bears live in an environment free from human interference. In this place, humans are reminded of the beauty of nature.

I am writing to ask you to introduce legislation to add additional acreage to the sanctuary which will ultimately prohibit hunting of the McNeil/Katmai bears. The bears and the habitat provide our state and our country with a resource that goes beyond that which hunting will provide. As our world becomes ever more crowded and wildlife pushed aside in the name of development, we have the opportunity to create a perpetual ecosystem that is the envy of the world.

Thank you for your consideration. I will continue working toward with effort with other legislators and look forward to your response.

Patricia Cue  
PO Box 143  
Homer, AK 99603  
235-2495

---

**From:** Nceiland@aol.com  
**Sent:** Friday, November 24, 2006 8:16 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** RE: McNeil River Sanctuary  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

***Dear Rep. Seaton;***

***I urge you to introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River sanctuary. These lands should be protected in perpetuity from any activities including hunting that might interfere with the world class bear viewing opportunities in the area. The economic value of ecotourism far exceeds, in contrast, the value of killing bears that have become habituated to humans.***

***Thank you,***

***Nita Eiland  
5203 Eighth Street  
Zephyrhills FL 33542  
nceiland@aol.com***

---

**From:** Wesley Hill [psychhill@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 30, 2006 11:08 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** adding lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Dear Rep. Seaton;

I urge you to introduce legislation to add state lands to the McNeil River sanctuary. The McNeil River Sanctuary and the new lands should be protected in perpetuity from any activities including hunting that might interfere with the world class bear viewing opportunities in the area. The economic value of ecotourism far exceeds, in contrast, the value of killing bears that have become habituated to humans.

Thank you,

Wesley Hill and Debbie Evensen  
PO Box 1092  
Homer, Alaska 99603

907-235-8900

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**From:** Keith Hicks [ghicks3@woh.rr.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 09, 2006 4:07 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Sanctuary Lands  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Green

Dear Representative Seaton:

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. Although I do not reside in your district, I feel that we all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line.

Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area. His information that has been presented to us and that he has shared with you previously makes a great deal of sense and deserves great and open discussion. Your position in the Legislature gives you the capability to do that. Thank you for your time to read this and I hope to act positively on the request.

Respectfully,  
Keith Hicks  
Ohio

All Email checked by Norton AntiVirus

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**From:** Karen Case [spiritdriven@sbcglobal.net]  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 09, 2006 6:00 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Sanctuary...  
**Attachments:** Katamai map large.JPG

**Dear Representative Seaton:**

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line.

Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

Respectfully,  
Karen Case  
Fresno, California  
USA  
spiritdriven@sbcglobal.net

---

**From:** RAdki1841@aol.com [mailto:RAdki1841@aol.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 09, 2006 6:54 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Ian Laing; Louie Flora; Katie Shows  
**Cc:** RAdki1841@aol.com  
**Subject:** Adding state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary

Dear Representative Seaton,

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line.

Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

The world is watching you! Please do the right thing. Protect the bears. Stop any proposed hunting in this area.

Respectfully,  
Rosemary C. Adkisson  
1841 Country Club Drive  
High Point, NC 27262  
336-889-7975



---

**From:** barbara@avcreations.net  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 09, 2006 8:06 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Green

Dear Representative Seaton:

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in real-time with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line. Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

Respectfully,  
Barbara C. Nicholson  
912 Burnham Court  
Glenview IL 60025-4140

---

**From:** Sylvia-Gaertner [Sylvia-Gaertner@gmx.de]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2006 3:48 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Bear hunting

Dear Representative Seaton:

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line.

Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

Respectfully,

Sylvia Gaertner

E-Mail : [Sylvia-Gaertner@gmx.de](mailto:Sylvia-Gaertner@gmx.de)

---

**From:** Parisa S. [p\_sarandi@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 14, 2006 6:02 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Bear action Alert

Dear Representative Seaton:

I am urging you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line. Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

Respectfully,

---

Everyone is raving about [the all-new Yahoo! Mail beta](#).

---

**From:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 23, 2007 4:31 PM  
**To:** Louie Flora  
**Subject:** FW:

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Elizabeth Wasserman [mailto:homingin@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 06, 2006 5:51 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:**

Dear Rep. Seaton;

It appears the only way to truly protect the bears that use the McNeil River area is to increase the size of the Sanctuary, where they are protected from hunting. I really appreciate Frank Mullen bringing forward a proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary. We are looking to you to lead the way in this effort.

I urge you to introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River sanctuary. These lands should be protected in perpetuity from any activities including hunting that might interfere with the world class bear viewing opportunities in the area. The economic value of ecotourism far exceeds, in contrast, the value of killing bears that have become habituated to humans.

Even more important to me than ecotourism opportunities is maintaining healthy populations of brown bears, a keystone species in this coastal ecosystem. Alaskan brown/grizzly bears are a merely a remnant of the great bear population that once extended through the western United States all the way down to Mexico.

You are in a position to help protect these animals and their ecosystems. Please help.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Wasserman

Elizabeth Wasserman  
PO Box 1422  
Anchor Point, AK  
99556  
(907) 235-1543 home  
(907) 235-7903 work  
homingin@yahoo.com

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**From:** Earthview02@aol.com  
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2006 7:04 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** Please add land to the McNeil River Sanctuary  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Blue

Dear Representative Seaton,  
I am writing to urge you to support the addition of more land to the McNeil River Sanctuary. I first became aware of the sanctuary last year through the National Geographic live webcam site that brought the bears into my life and now I am forever touched and changed by the experience of watching them fish, lie around, and raise their young in their habitat. We humans have so much land; please give more to the grizzlies, true natives of Alaska.  
Thank you so much,  
Hillary Maurer  
West Branch, Iowa

---

**From:** finnicum@tds.net  
**Sent:** Monday, December 11, 2006 7:21 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Sanctuary

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Blue

Dear Representative Seaton:

I am writing you with great concern about one of Alaska's treasures, the McNeil River Sanctuary and the brown bears that inhabit it.

I urge you introduce legislation that will add state lands to the McNeil River Sanctuary, to protect the bears from being hunted.

I believe that the hunting the bears at McNeil River Sanctuary is the same as shooting fish in a barrel. These are animals that are used to close proximity of human beings and see humans as no danger. It is unthinkable to consider killing these "habituated" creatures.

I first learned about the bears of McNeil River Sanctuary from the National Geographic Grizzly Wildcam this past summer, through a partnership with Pratt Museum and the National Park Service. It was outstanding! I learned so much about bear behavior, coping in their environment, struggling to live. It's real; I was looking at it, seeing them in "real-time" with nothing glossed over. The wildcam makes bear and other wildlife issues a reality. This is your responsibility Rep. Seaton. We all must be good stewards. If we don't do things right now, we will not have the chance to correct it down the line.

Please, I strongly urge you bring forward Frank Mullen's proposal to add more state land to the Sanctuary, and stop any proposed hunting in that geographic area.

Thank you for your time in reading this email.

You are in my prayers as you make these decisions. God bless you.

Respectfully,

Lisa Pack Finnicum  
6921 Mobile Road  
Blue Ridge, GA 30513  
706-632-7716

"If all the beasts were gone, man would die from loneliness of spirit, for what happens to the beast happens to the man."

--Chief Seattle

---

**From:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 23, 2007 5:41 PM  
**To:** Louie Flora  
**Subject:** FW: McNeil

---

**From:** Eileen Mullen [mailto:emullen2003@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 14, 2006 1:18 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil

Dear Paut,

I really appreciate that you are making an effort to protect the McNeil Bears from being hunted.

As a person in the tourist industry, it is only logical that we keep the wild life we have for the pleasure and knowledge of everybody. Much of the Homer economy depends on having live bears to view.

Have a happy holiday. And hello to Tina

Sincerely,

Eileen

---

**From:** AK Adventures [dave@akadventures.us]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 12, 2007 2:55 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** HB 127 - McNeil River Sanctuary legislation

Dear Paul,

Thank you for your introduction of this important piece of legislation. Great timing too since it was the front page story in the Anchorage Daily News today. Please let me know if there is anything I can do help your efforts to get this legislation passed. I'm planning write to the House Resources and Finance Committee members and I will also testify by phone to the committee.

Additionally, I will testifying at the Anchorage Board of Game (BOG) meeting in March regarding my own proposal to close the Kamishak Special Use area to brown bear hunting, so if there is anything I can do for you or your staff while I'm at the BOG meeting please let me know.

Sincerely,

Dave Bachrach

AK Adventures  
PO Box 2828  
Homer, AK 99603  
Phone: 907.235.1805  
Fax: 907.235.1886  
[www.goseebears.com](http://www.goseebears.com)

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**From:** Bill Conley [conley1@gci.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 14, 2007 2:52 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Carl Gatto; Sen. Charlie Huggins

Gentlemen

I am concerned about Game Board Chairman Ron Somerville opening brown bear hunting in the area of McNeil River.

His excuse being the State Constitution requires that game be managed for the maximum benefit of all Alaskans.

I would question his discernment as to whether the number of hunters who would fly to this area will outnumber the number of photographers. Other than the obvious hunting permit fees, what will be the most financial compensation to the locals.

Personally, I do not find it very sporting to casually walk up to an animal, that has been accustomed to humans, to bag a trophy. Seems like an avid sportsman would want more competition.

Please encourage Mr. Sommerville to close the area for hunting, and for Mr. Seaton's bill to be passed prior to July.

Thank You. Bill Conley, Valdez, Ak.

---

**From:** seasidefarm [seaside@xyz.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 14, 2007 8:04 PM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** HB 127

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Yellow

Dear Paul---I am strongly in favor of this bill. Please do all you can to have it pass.  
Thank you. Mossy Kilcher

---

**From:** Mary Jane Shows  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 10:11 AM  
**To:** Louie Flora  
**Subject:** FW: New Pom:HB 127 Mcneil River State Game Sanctuary

-----Original Message-----

**From:** POMS@legis.state.ak.us [mailto:POMS@legis.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 10:06 AM  
**To:** Mary Jane Shows  
**Subject:** New Pom:HB 127 Mcneil River State Game Sanctuary

Roberta Highland  
Po Box 2460

Homer 99603-2460,

I strongly support HB 127. This bill helps protect the world famous bears of McNeil River. These bears travel hundreds of miles and it's imperative we separate the hunters and these habituated bears. This bill is a very sensible solution to the controversy between hunters and wildlife viewers.

---

**From:** Mary Jane Shows  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 3:15 PM  
**To:** Louie Flora  
**Subject:** FW: New Pom:HB 127 Mcneil River State Game Sanctuary

-----Original Message-----

**From:** POMS@legis.state.ak.us [mailto:POMS@legis.state.ak.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 2:10 PM  
**To:** Mary Jane Shows  
**Subject:** New Pom:HB 127 Mcneil River State Game Sanctuary

Robert Archibald  
Po Box 2460

Homer 99603-2460,

This legislation should be enacted. The small allowed minority has now become the loud majority. This area generates more revenue for the state and its citizens as a bear viewing venue and natural bear habitat. Declining bear population and habitat demands protection now and for future generations.

---

**From:** barbara@avcreations.net  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2007 4:49 PM  
**To:** Rep. Carl Gatto; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Vic Kohring; Rep. Bob Roses; Rep. Paul Seaton;  
Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki  
**Subject:** Please Support HB 127

Dear Representatives,

I am writing to ask you to please support legislation HB 127, to add some parcels of land to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary.

Last summer, I learned of the National Geographic BearCam at McNeil falls, and spent much time watching the bears fish and interact with one another. The bears have learned over the years that humans are not a threat to them - at least, they haven't been - in this area. So these "trusting" bears will be at even greater risk if hunters are permitted in the area. This is not "sport".

This is good for Alaska (the human part) as well: Adding the Kamishak Special Use area to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary will help to maintain a quality visitor/wildlife viewing experience, which translates into millions of tourism dollars. This revenue will benefit the local economy of Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough and particularly the State of Alaska.

So I request that you support HB 127, as citizens of Alaska, the US, and the world. We humans need to take some responsibility for "brother bear".

Thank you for your support,

Barbara Nicholson  
912 Burnham Court  
Glenview, IL 60025-4140  
847-998-1527  
barbara@avcreations.net

---

**From:** lapatton@kc.rr.com  
**Sent:** Friday, February 16, 2007 10:58 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton  
**Subject:** McNeil River Sanctuary

February 16, 2007

Dear Representative:

I am writing in regards to the bears at the McNeil River Sanctuary. I am very concerned about proposed hunting regulations that would allow bears that wander into adjoining areas to be killed.

Although these bears seem to be doing well, the number of bears at McNeil River has declined significantly since 1998. Sanctuary managers have identified a level where further depletion of the bears could affect the quality of the bear-viewing program. I understand that trophy hunting is a source of revenue to your great State, but it will also cause a further decline in the number of bears at the Sanctuary, another source of revenue.

While the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has recommended a "Status quo" in this area, the Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee has voted twice to keep the area closed to hunting. Since the area has been closed to brown bear hunting for over 20 years it seems prudent to let it remain so for the protection of the animals who have little fear of humans and the destruction they can cause.

To maintain a quality visitor/wildlife viewing experience, and to generate millions of dollars in tourism, I believe it is essential to add the Kamishak Special Use Area to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary. Not only will the revenue benefit the economy of the Great State of Alaska, it will benefit the Kenai Peninsula Borough and the local economy of Homer.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Lynne Patton, concerned citizen and animal lover  
2301 Maple Avenue  
Leavenworth, KS 66048  
(316) 841-9548

---

**From:** Leo & Dorothy Keeler [info@akwildlife.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 16, 2007 10:59 AM  
**To:** Rep. Paul Seaton; Katie Shows; Louie Flora; Ian Laing  
**Subject:** McNeil River Legislation  
**Importance:** High

Dear Representative Seaton,

As past leaders of Friends of McNeil River, we want to THANK and applaud you for introducing legislation that will help to protect McNeil River bear viewing. McNeil is a world renowned site and your efforts will benefit millions of people. We are sure you are aware of many of the past debates and fights over McNeil, but we want to provide you a summary of our history in hopes it helps you fight your legislative battles. We also propose a solution that will provide more hunting opportunity overall, yet better protect the bears.

During the 8 years I served as President of FOMR, (1992 – 2000) we under took numerous battles. Those against us tried to use statements that we were trying to protect every bear every place it went in order to mislead people from the real objective, manage for bear viewing opportunity. The Paint River Fish Ladder controversy pointed out the need to establish a no "BEAR" hunting area around the McNeil River Sanctuary. Since the Kamashak Special Management Area and Katmai Park provided no bear hunting to the west of McNeil, the McNeil River Refuge centered on Paint River was established to the north and east.

Unfortunately, the legislation for the Refuge did not close it to bear hunting and we had years of fighting the Board of Game before they did so. It took national pressure with CBS News and others focusing on poor hunting practices in order to get them to close the Refuge to bear hunting. Now, the opening of the Kamashak Special Management lands to bear hunting has re-ignited those debates. We have been in contact with Jerry Bowen, a correspondent with CBS News and understand that he will cover and air a piece on McNeil the weekend the BOG begins its meeting.

Those against closing the Refuge to bear hunting tried to present the issue as "Anti-Hunting", and would not talk about wildlife viewers having different values and needs. We never asked to stop all hunting, only bear hunting. We accept the potential bear deaths that may be caused because of bears getting into a moose hunter's camp. We also do not expect that every place a McNeil bear goes will be closed to hunting. But we can not accept the opening of areas previously closed as in the best interest of "ALL ALASKANS."

I think many in the Alaska Outdoor Council will always try to present wildlife viewers as "Anti-Hunters" because that is a rallying cry. In fact, AOC passed a resolution to fight against establishing any new wildlife viewing areas as they fear, and rightly so, that as wildlife viewing at a sight increases, there will be reductions in hunting opportunity. (We can provide you with a copy of it, if you need.) But Alaska is a large State with a growing population that demands more and different uses of its resources. Hunting will never be banned in Alaska, nor should it be, and the loss of a few acres here and there as special wildlife viewing places are recognized will be applauded by the majority of people.

I fear that if the legislation to add the Kamashak lands to the Sanctuary is successful, that the next battle will be to open the Refuge. Since the Paint River fish ladder has not operated, wildlife viewing

opponents will say there is no need for the Refuge.

May I suggest a way that your proposed legislation could stop all battles and retain as much hunting opportunity as possible? I believe that if the Kamashak lands were added to the Refuge, and the Refuge closed to bear hunting, and only bear hunting, by legislation, everyone would benefit. It would show the Legislature's acknowledgement of both hunter's feelings and wildlife viewers needs. This would acknowledge the wisdom, and acceptance, of past actions that closed the Kamashak and the Refuge lands closed for more than 10 years.

We sincerely appreciate all your efforts and are willing to help in any way we can. Please let us know if there is any additional information or assistance we can provide.

Sincerely,

Leo & Dorothy Keeler

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**From:** meg hahr [meg\_hahr@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 16, 2007 12:13 PM  
**To:** Rep. Carl Gatto; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Vic Kohring; Rep. Bob Roses; Rep. Paul Seaton;  
Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Bryce Edgmon; Rep. David Guttenberg; Rep. Scott Kawasaki  
**Subject:** Please support HB 127!

Please support HB 127 to safeguard the McNeil River bears. I am very concerned by the Board of Game's decision to allow hunting of brown bears in the Kamishak Special Use area. Please consider these reasons for supporting HB 127:

- The number of bears at McNeil River has declined significantly since 1998 and has fallen below the level identified by sanctuary managers where it may affect the quality of the bear-viewing program.
- This area has been closed to brown bear hunting for over 20 years.
- Opening this area to trophy hunting could cause further decline in the number of bears at the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary (A National Natural Landmark).
- The Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee has voted twice to support keeping this area closed to hunting.
- The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has recommended "Status Quo" for this area.
- Adding the Kamishak Special Use area to the McNeil River State Game Sanctuary will help to maintain a quality visitor/wildlife viewing experience, which translates into millions of tourism dollars. This revenue will benefit the local economy of Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough and particularly the State of Alaska.

Thank you for securing the future of McNeil River bears through your support of HB 127!

Meg Hahr  
33783 Wolf Trail Lane  
Seward, AK 99664

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