

To: Alaska Board of Game (BOG)

From: Juneau-Douglas Fish and Game Advisory Committee (JDAC)

Dear Chairman Spraker and Board of Game Members,

The Juneau/Douglas Advisory Committee (JDAC) would like to express our concerns regarding proposal WP18-11 submitted to the Southeast Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (RAC). That proposal would designate a federal priority for moose in the Berners Bay drainage near Juneau in GMU 1C. Although we have been told that proposal is unlikely to be adopted by the Federal Subsistence Board this cycle, we anticipate similar proposals in the future and want to bring this issue and background information to the Board's attention.

Berners Bay is isolated by geographic barriers and although there are natural moose populations in the Chilkat River valley to the north and Taku River valley to the south, moose are not native to Berners Bay. The current population originated from a successful transplant of calves from the Mat-Su area in 1958 and 1960. The first hunt was opened in 1963. In most years that population now supports a small harvest by state drawing permit.

The Berners moose population is carefully managed by ADF&G to maintain numbers at a level the limited habitat can support. ADF&G maintains 20-35 radiocollared moose to monitor survival and reproduction and to facilitate annual population estimates that are used to set the number of drawing permits available to hunters. Careful monitoring and management were particularly important following the record-setting winter of 2006-2007 when about a third of the population died. The hunt was closed from 2007 through 2013 and only re-opened in 2014 when surveys indicated there was a small harvestable surplus. The population is currently estimated to be about 130 moose. Although harvest has been higher in the past, in recent years only 5-7 bull permits have been issued.

Berners Bay is also a popular place for Juneau residents to hunt brown bears, black bears, and mountain goats and to trap a variety of furbearers. Although the Juneau road system and a public boat ramp allow easy access to the Berners Bay area, access to most of the hunting and trapping opportunity within the Berners Bay watershed is difficult. Typically, local knowledge and the assistance of Juneau residents with airboats or jet boats and knowledge of the river systems is required. Consequently, residents of Juneau account for the overwhelming majority of hunting and trapping effort and harvest in Berners Bay. In the last ten years (RY07 – RY16) Juneau hunters accounted for 91% to 100% of all big game hunting effort (Table 1) and 85% to 100% of all big game harvested in Berners Bay (Table 2). Juneau trappers accounted for harvest of 100% of all furbearers except wolf where they accounted for 83% (Table 3). In contrast, hunters and trappers from federally qualified communities in Southeast accounted for $\leq 1\%$ of hunting and trapping effort and harvest in Berners Bay. Tables can be found at the end of this letter.

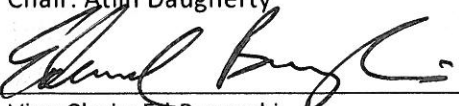
Based on the origin of the moose population, challenges accessing hunting opportunity, the demonstrated ties of Juneau hunters and trappers have to the area, and absence of use by hunters and trappers from federally qualified communities, the JDAC believes it is inappropriate to designate a federal subsistence priority for moose or other harvested species in the Berners Bay watershed.

We request that the Board of Game endorse the following resolution against establishing federal subsistence priorities for any harvested game species in the Berners Bay watershed and forward it to Federal Subsistence Board Chairman, Anthony Christiansen, with a cc to Southeast RAC Chairman, Michael Bangs.

Thank you for considering this issue, which is so important to the people of Juneau.

Juneau-Douglas Fish and Game Advisory Committee


Chair: Atlin Daugherty


Vice Chair: Ed Buyarski

2/22/2018
Date

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Big Game Species	Residence Community	Effort by Regulatory Year										Total	
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Number	Percent
Brown Bear	Juneau	27	36	25	20	26	15	30	16	18	11	224	91
	SE Subsistence					1	1	1				3	1
	Other Alaska			1	3	1		2	1		2	10	4
	Nonresident					1	1		2	4	2	10	4
Goat	Juneau	11	16	15	6	11	5	14	15	10	4	107	91
	SE Subsistence								1			1	1
	Other Alaska	2				2		1				5	4
	Nonresident	1	1						1	2		5	4
Moose	Juneau								5	5	5	15	100
	SE Subsistence												
	Other Alaska												
	Nonresident												

Table 1. Big game hunting effort in Berners Bay, GMU 1C, by community of residence, RY07 – RY16.

Big Game Species	Residence Community	Harvest by Regulatory Year										Total	
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Number	Percent
Brown Bear	Juneau	1	3	1	1	4	1	1	1	2	0	15	100
	SE Subsistence												
	Other Alaska												
	Nonresident											0	0
Black Bear	Juneau	10	4	15	15	13	7	7	6	6	6	89	85
	SE Subsistence										1	1	1
	Other Alaska							1				1	1
	Nonresident	2	4		2	5		1				14	13
Goat	Juneau		4	4	1	2	1	3	3	2	3	23	85
	SE Subsistence												
	Other Alaska					2		1				3	13
	Nonresident		1									1	4
Moose	Juneau								4	4	4	12	100
	SE Subsistence												
	Other Alaska												
	Nonresident												

Table 2. Big game harvest in Berners Bay, GMU 1C, by community of residence, RY07 – RY16.

Furbearer Species	Residence Community	Harvest by Regulatory Year										Total	
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Number	Percent
Beaver	Juneau	25	8	18	4	20	10	6	20	19	3	133	100
Fisher	Juneau								1			1	100
Lynx	Juneau			1	1							2	100
Marten	Juneau	25	9	11	36	58	19	16	38	59	35	306	100
Otter	Juneau	1		3	1		1	6	1	9	2	24	100
Wolf	Juneau				1			1	1	5	2	10	83
	Gustavus				1							1	8
	Nonresident			1								1	8
Wolverine	Juneau	6	1	1	2	3	4	1	3		1	22	100

Table 3. Furbearer harvest in Berners Bay, GMU 1C, by community of residence, RY07 – RY16.