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Governor Bill Walker
STATE OF ALASKA

September 5, 2017

The Honorable Tony Knowles
1146 S Street
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Governor Knowles,

Thank you again for meeting with me and providing your constructive suggestions concerning Alaska's predator management program. I understand that you have also been in communication with Commissioner Cotten on these matters.

With regard to your first request, we will evaluate your suggestion that wolf, bear, and other predator harvests be eliminated in the vicinity of Denali National Park's northeast border. Please be assured that we will continue to explore meaningful, stable, and equitable solutions to this enduring issue.

We also appreciate your suggestions on ways to help ensure Alaska's predator management programs are scientifically sound and have the public's confidence. In addition to studies such as The Wildlife Society's relatively recent technical review of "Management of Large Mammalian Carnivores in North America" as applied in Alaska and beyond (http://wildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/IWS_TechReview_Management-Large-Mammalian-Carnivores_2012.pdf), and ADF&G's ongoing internal assessment of costs and efficacy of recent intensive management (IM) programs, the agency always welcomes external peer review. If you are able to help secure federal funding, we would support and fully cooperate with a 20-year follow-up to your previous review by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS).

As discussed, we envision that a new review could parallel the original review of the program, with emphasis on ensuring the program is science based. The new review would also cover the program's cost and sustainability relative to public opinion. In addition, we understand that you would like to include an evaluation of any effects IM programs may have on adjacent federal conservation units. Although we did not discuss the idea, we would also like the NAS to address the capability of ADF&G's Intensive Management Protocol (http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-f/research/programs/intensivemanagement/pdfs/intensive_management_protocol.pdf). The protocol was developed and implemented several years ago to assure transparency in planning, determining feasibility, documenting decision points for implementation (triggers for continuing, adapting, suspending, or terminating programs), monitoring, expenditures, and reporting.

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Of course, the scope of an NAS review would ultimately be determined by an NAS steering committee. We would welcome your participation in that process.

I appreciate your willingness to share your perspective and experience as a former Governor and your constructive suggestions regarding these controversial issues. I invite you to continue to dialogue directly with Commissioner Cotten related to the details of these matters on my behalf as we work to determine the best course moving forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill".

Bill Walker
Governor

cc: The Honorable Sam Cotten, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game