

Defenders of Wildlife Protect America's Wildlife (PAW) Act



Alaskans Speak Out

Joel Bennett, hunter and former member of the Alaska Board of Game Juneau, Alaska

“Wolves are a critical part of the northern ecosystem. I have hunted big game in Alaska for over 40 years and do not need predators killed at considerable state expense for my benefit. When I hunt, it is with the understanding that wolves and bears compete for the same animals and my odds should not be artificially increased. Any hunter worth his salt ought to just get out and pit his skills and experience in the wild and take it naturally as it comes.”



Vic Van Ballenberghe, wildlife biologist Anchorage, Alaska

“There is a ‘war on predators’ in progress in Alaska. The aerial gunning program risks the long-term sustainability of several wildlife populations and the habitat they need to survive. We’re missing a great opportunity here to learn from past mistakes and manage Alaska’s wildlife properly.”

Nick Jans, hunter and author Juneau, Alaska

“Without wolves, deer and moose numbers explode in unsustainable numbers, then crash, over and over. Wolves are a valued resource on which trappers and subsistence hunters depend. Beside that, blasting wolves from airplanes reflects horribly on the state’s image. Aerial predator control is a smoke screen for special interests. It's un-Alaskan, based on shaky science, and just plain wrong. Predator control subtracts from, not adds to, my wilderness experience and, in my opinion, doesn't improve my odds of hunting success.”



Seth Kantner, hunter Ambler, Alaska

“In the Brooks Range where I liked to hunt Dall sheep, fifteen years ago wolves began really killing them off. The wolf packs also killed nearly all the moose in that area where I camped and hunted—a thousand-square-mile area. The wolves’ trails in the snow were “highways,” packed and wide. The moose seemed to be gone. To find sheep I had to travel further and further up the drainages. Some people said the wolves needed to be shot out, but few hunters and no trappers made it that far into the mountains. I went elsewhere, ate caribou, bear and salmon instead. A few years later the number of wolves there plummeted. Dall sheep rebounded; the moose repopulated steadily. Now there are sheep, moose, wolves, ptarmigan, caribou, etc. in those mountains—in roughly the same numbers there were fifteen years ago. It’s called nature. No helicopters needed. Just patience.”

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Lorraine Ramsey, Alaska Native Anchorage, Alaska

“The wolf is a vital part of native Alaskan culture and we have been coexisting with wolves for hundreds of years. What the state government is doing is upsetting the natural balance of things and jeopardizing Alaska’s well-deserved image as a wildlife frontier.”



Dave Haas, hunter Juneau, Alaska

“I have hunted and been an adventurer in Alaska for 30 years. I've been fortunate enough to see wild wolves a few times. I value those experiences as the essence of being an Alaskan and an avid outdoorsman. While I depend upon venison yearly, I would never choose to have wolves shot or trapped to try and increase the deer population. I'll take what I can naturally get out there. I don't need or want any help from a posse in a plane. Predators keep it natural and make it valuable. There aren't many places in the world where you have that.”

Jeff Sloss, hunter and long time Alaska resident Juneau, Alaska

I've been hunting in Alaska for 18 years. But this aerial hunting isn't what hunting is all about. Where's the fair chase? Where's the tradition? It's time for our state to stop this nonsense and let our state's rich hunting tradition continue as it should.”



Brooke Edwards, wilderness guide Cooper Landing, Alaska

“We have many regular guests who come each year to enjoy the great fishing in Alaska. But more and more, I have people telling me they won't come to a state that allows this to go on. Aerial hunting is bad for business and bad for Alaska's image.”