

# American Society of Mammalogists

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21 July 2005

The Honorable Frank Murkowski  
State of Alaska  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Murkowski:

The American Society of Mammalogists (ASM) is a non-profit, professional scientific and educational society consisting of nearly 4,000 members from the United States and 60 other countries worldwide. The Society was founded in 1919 and is the world's oldest and largest organization devoted to the study of mammals. ASM is deeply concerned about the future of mammals worldwide in increasingly threatened habitats, and thus we strongly support conservation and responsible use of wild mammals based on sound and accurate scientific research.

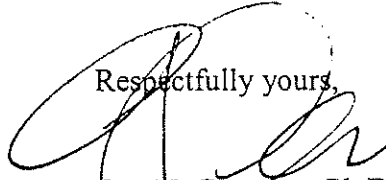
ASM is quite concerned with the potential mismanagement of large mammalian carnivores and their ungulate prey in Alaska. The new predator control programs approved by the Alaska Board of Game do not meet scientific standards required for the sound management of these valuable natural resources. For most of the state, there are no biologically-sound plans to document the current status of predator and prey populations nor are there plans to monitor the effectiveness of predator control. These data are necessary for adaptive management, as recommended by the biological standards and guidelines put forth by the National Resource Council for monitoring effectiveness of predator control programs in Alaska.

Thus, we recommend that the State of Alaska collect reliable data on populations of large carnivores and ungulates by working more closely with professional wildlife biologists. Additionally, current carrying capacities for ungulate populations should be used instead of relying on historical population estimates as the basis for harvests. The Alaskan environment and its mammalian predator and prey populations have changed over the years. Historical population estimates likely are imprecise, and the environment may no longer support such high densities of prey species. Finally, assessment of predator control should be conducted with approaches of sufficient scope, duration, and

spatial scale to implement adaptive-management practices that will assure the conservation of these unique mammals.

The American Society of Mammalogists encourages the State of Alaska to engage in management practices that will result in sustained populations of large mammals, including both predators and their prey.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy N. Cameron', written over the text 'Respectfully yours,'.

Guy N. Cameron, Ph.D., President  
American Society of Mammalogists