



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Fish and Game

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
Headquarters Office

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October 22, 2015

Dr. Eileen Lacey, President
American Society of Mammalogists
Museum of Vertebrate Zoology
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Via US mail and email

Dear Dr. Lacey:

Thank you for the letter of 7 July 2015 to Commissioner Cotten regarding the status of wolves in Southeast Alaska. I have been asked to respond to your letter. In the letter you made three requests, only the first of which is directed to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). One request is directed to the USDA Forest Service, and the other to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, so I am copying the USDA Regional Forester and the USFWS Regional Director with my response here.

The Division of Wildlife Conservation is the primary manager of wolves across Southeast Alaska and, based on regulations adopted by the Board of Game, manages wolf harvest to maintain wolf populations consistent with sustained yield principles. Over the past two decades, we have also invested significant resources to better understand the relationships between deer, wolves, habitat and humans with a focus on Game Management Unit 2 (GMU 2, Prince of Wales and associated islands). In fact, many of the references cited in your letter were the result of funding by ADF&G and are indicative of our commitment to the conservation of wolves.

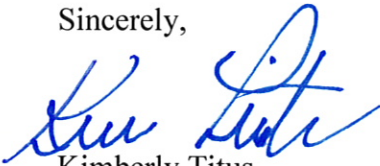
You requested that ADF&G issue an emergency order closing the wolf hunting and trapping seasons in GMU 2. While we are not closing the season as you request, we are significantly restricting harvest in coordination with the Forest Service. Attached is a copy of the joint ADF&G/USFS press release regarding establishing a harvest quota of 9 wolves for the upcoming hunting and trapping seasons. ADF&G intends to limit the State hunting and trapping season to no more than 10 days; again, a very conservative approach to offer an opportunity to harvest wolves. The State's season is dependent on the harvest during the federal hunting (Sept. 1-March 31) and trapping season (Nov. 15-Mar. 31) as it will open prior to the States' season (Dec. 1-March 31). ADF&G will adjust (shorten or close) the State seasons based on the number of wolves taken during the federal subsistence seasons.

This is not the first letter sent by the American Society of Mammalogists to ADF&G requesting management actions regarding predators. In these letters the society offered to assist with these

types of conservation and management issues in Alaska. As you can appreciate, many factors must be considered (e.g., biological, social and legal) when considering management goals for any species.

I would be happy to sit down with you and other members of society leadership so that we can discuss your letter in more detail and the applied research and management work we are conducting to conserve Alaska's wildlife and especially predators. I would welcome the society's more active involvement in the many public forums associated with topics like wildlife and forest management in Alaska.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Titus
Chief Wildlife Scientist

Cc: Beth Pendleton, Regional Forester, U. S. Forest Service, Alaska Region - *electronic*
Geoffrey Haskett, Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Alaska Region - *electronic*

Attachment: ADF&G/Tongass National Forest – press release



NEWS RELEASE



Forest Service

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Bruce Dale, Director, Wildlife Conservation
ADF&G; www.adfg.alaska.gov

Tongass National Forest

Earl Stewart, Forest Supervisor
Matt Anderson, Craig Ranger District
Rachelle Huddleston-Lorton Thorne Bay District Ranger
US Forest Service; www.fs.usda.gov/tongass/

For Immediate Release

Aug. 21, 2015

Contacts:

ADF&G, Ryan Scott
Regional Supervisor, (907) 465-4359, ryan.scott@alaska.gov

U.S. Forest Service, Jeff Reeves
Subsistence Biologist, (907) 826-1649, jreeves@fs.fed.us

2015 Unit 2 Wolf Harvest Quota Announced

CRAIG, Alaska—Biologists with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service, announce that the Unit 2 wolf harvest for regulatory year (RY) 2015-16 will be set at nine wolves. Game Management Unit (Unit 2), includes Prince of Wales Island and a series of small adjacent islands.

ADF&G currently manages Unit 2 wolves for an annual harvest that should not exceed 20 percent of the unit-wide, fall population. It is impossible to survey the entire unit and a prediction from a study area was used to develop the fall 2014 population estimate of 89 wolves, with a range of 50 to 159. The harvest quota of nine wolves reflects 20 percent of the population estimate plus a reduction for any other human-caused mortality that may occur. This strategy is intended to ensure a conservative and sustainable harvest. In addition, ADF&G intends to limit the state of Alaska wolf hunting and trapping season length in Unit 2 to 10 days. The state season length will depend on the number of wolves taken during the federal subsistence hunting (Sept. 1-March 31) and trapping (Nov. 15-March 31) seasons and will be shortened or closed if the harvest from the earlier federal season approaches nine wolves. ADF&G views this management action as a conservative approach to Unit 2 wolf management in light of the most recent population estimate.

All other hunting and trapping seasons in Unit 2 remain unchanged and are not affected by this announcement.

Please call the ADF&G Ketchikan area office at 907-225-2475 or Craig Area office at 907-826-2561 for more information. For more information from the U.S. Forest Service please call Matt Anderson at 907-826-3271, Rachelle Huddleston-Lorton at 907-828-3304, or Jeff Reeves at 907-826-1649. Maps of Federal lands within Unit 2 are available at Forest Service offices. Maps and additional information on the Federal Subsistence Management Program can be found on the web at <http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/index.cfm>.

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