



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY ALASKA CHAPTER

5800 Kalgin Drive
Anchorage, AK 99516

The Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society strives to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve biological diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife resources in Alaska for the benefit of society.

November 26, 2014

To the Honorable Governor-elect William Walker and Lieutenant Governor-elect Byron Mallott,

On behalf of the Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS), I wish to congratulate you both on your recent election to office, and thank you for your willingness to lead our great state. We know there are many important and challenging issues facing the state and your administration. Several of these issues pertain to the conservation, management, and use of Alaska's natural resources, including wildlife.

The Alaska Chapter of TWS (<http://drupal.wildlife.org/alaska/>) is a non-profit organization of more than 200 professional wildlife biologists from state and federal agencies, native organizations, universities, for-profit companies, and non-governmental organizations. Our collective knowledge regarding wildlife in Alaska is our greatest strength. Further, TWS is a venue where diverse interests share knowledge and foster collaboration in the broader interest of science-based wildlife management.

As an organization, our focus is on the long-term health of Alaska's wildlife, and the sustained use and enjoyment of these resources by the public we collectively serve. In that spirit, we want you and your administration to know that we are an objective, science-based organization that can provide information and thoughtful analysis on important and relevant issues pertaining to conservation of wildlife and their habitats. In addition, the consensus among our members is that, across agencies and entities, there is far more that binds us together than divides us. Indeed, despite diverse agency mandates and policy the common thread binding our membership together is our strong commitment to Alaska's wildlife.

In that spirit, as you build a team to serve Alaskans, we hope you choose individuals to lead the Alaska Department of Fish and Game that value collaboration, communication, and consensus in wildlife conservation, and that they recognize the importance of science in resource management decisions. We believe that professional credibility is especially important for the Director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation. Historically, the Director has had technical training in wildlife science and was a proven leader from within the agency. We hope your administration will revive that tradition. Your appointment of individuals with knowledge of the history and culture of the agency, existing positive relationships with staff, belief in science-based management, and acumen in administrative duties will be a significant step in ensuring the credibility of the Department as well as the long-term conservation of the wildlife resources we all value.

We are happy to provide input and guidance when and where needed to ensure your success in managing and conserving our precious wildlife resources. Thank you for your time and consideration, and we wish you all the best as you lead our state forward.

Sincerely,

Grant Hilderbrand, Ph.D., C.W.B.

President, Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society