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DOROW CARSON
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Tom [Signature]
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

[Signature]
Printed Name

Jim Fowler
Signature

DAVID H ANDERLES
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

TOM CRAIG
Printed Name

Tom Craig
Signature

Brandon Nieske
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

ERIK NELSON
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

BEN KINSMAN
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

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William H. Anthes
Printed Name

William H. Anthes
Signature

Fe Alba
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Gina Febrero
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Margie Thynes
Printed Name

Margie Thynes
Signature

Kimm Schwartz
Printed Name

KSchwartz
Signature

BERNA BLAIR
Printed Name

Berna Blair
Signature

CAREY MARTIN
Printed Name

Carey H. Martin
Signature

Guy Burman
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

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Karen Middag
Printed Name

Karen Middag
Signature

Jennifer Mastin
Printed Name

Jennifer Mastin
Signature

Donna Holman
Printed Name

Donna Holman
Signature

RAMON MIRANDA
Printed Name

Ramon Miranda
Signature

Tim Snyder
Printed Name

Tim Snyder
Signature

Jerry Martin
Printed Name

Jerry Martin
Signature

Robert E. Ford
Printed Name

Robert E. Ford
Signature

MYCAH ESCANO
Printed Name

Mycah Escano
Signature

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Rita Fahey
Printed Name

Rita Fahey
Signature

Sybil Doyon
Printed Name

Sybil Doyon
Signature

Katherine Andreassen
Printed Name

Katherine Andreassen
Signature

Jo Ellen Baham
Printed Name

Jo Ellen Baham
Signature

Penny Lantz
Printed Name

Penny Lantz
Signature

Jill Cowan
Printed Name

Jill Cowan
Signature

Sally Potter
Printed Name

Sally Potter
Signature

Ira D. Chatman
Printed Name

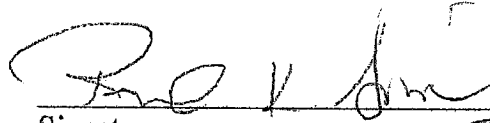
Ira D. Chatman
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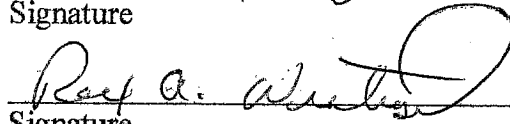
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Richard K Gould
Printed Name


Signature

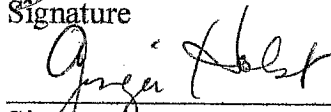
Rex A. Westergaard
Printed Name


Signature

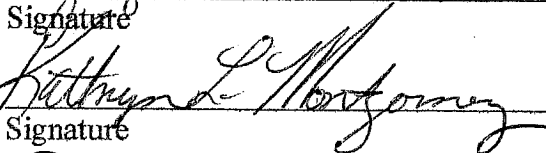
LES CRONK
Printed Name


Signature

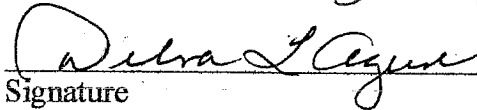
GINGER HOLST
Printed Name


Signature

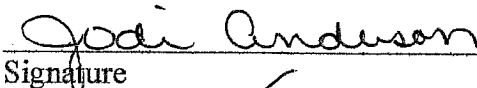
Kathryn L Montgomery
Printed Name



Signature

DEBRA AZURE
Printed Name


Signature

Jodi Anderson
Printed Name


Signature

 MILES KASTE
Printed Name

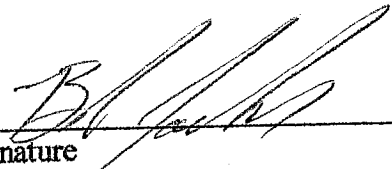

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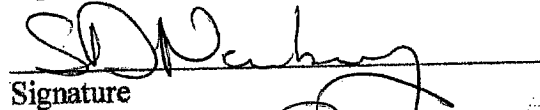
Bob JACKSON
Printed Name


Signature

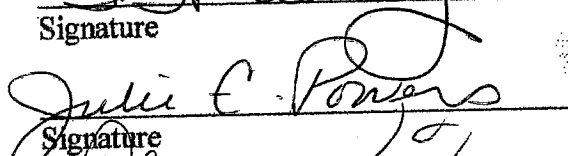
JONNA K. CRAIGON
Printed Name


Signature

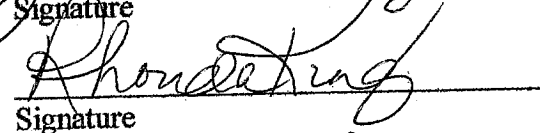
Summer Newberry
Printed Name


Signature

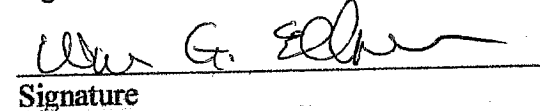
Julie Powers
Printed Name


Signature

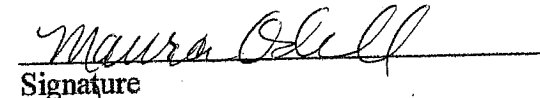
Rhonda King
Printed Name


Signature

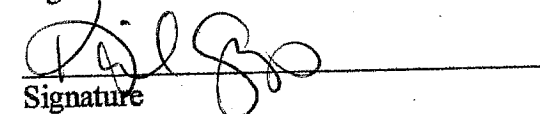
William Elberson
Printed Name


Signature

Maura Odell
Printed Name


Signature

Kimberly Groves
Printed Name


Signature

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Chris Hopkins
Printed Name

Chris Hopkins
Signature

Chris Jewett
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

MIKE Skuts
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Vernalea M. Burnette
Printed Name

Vernalea M. Burnette
Signature

DON EAZELQUIST
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Ken C Perry
Printed Name

Ken C Perry
Signature

Rick Erickson
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

JUDEE METTLER
Printed Name

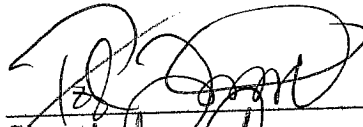
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TODD D. LESKO
Printed Name


Signature

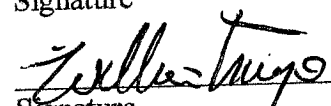
STEPHEN PETERS
Printed Name


Signature

RICH ELLIOTT
Printed Name


Signature


William TROUPÉ
Printed Name


Signature

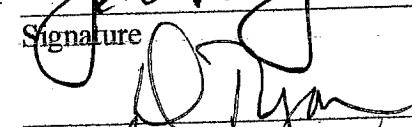
William M Johnston
Printed Name


Signature

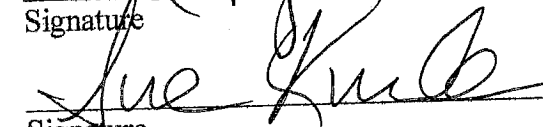
Joseph E Johnston
Printed Name


Signature

DORNA RYAN
Printed Name


Signature

Sue Kurlie
Printed Name


Signature

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Chris Parks
Printed Name

Chris Parks
Signature

Leticia Parks
Printed Name

Leticia Parks
Signature

John Peterson
Printed Name

John C. Peterson
Signature

George THOMPSON
Printed Name

George Thompson
Signature

John Kimmel
Printed Name

John Kimmel
Signature

Joe Hick
Printed Name

Joseph R. Hick
Signature

Robert Karlson
Printed Name

ROBERT KARLSON
Signature

John D. Karlson
Printed Name

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Signature

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Row Meyer
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Shelli Meyer
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

WON DYAKAWOFF
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Roger Amundson
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

Kelly Dunn
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

John Milner
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

R. Dennis Pope
Printed Name

[Signature]
Signature

[Signature]
Printed Name

Shawn Murphy
Signature

[Signature]
Printed Name

Patty Ruess

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MATTHEW MAGEE
Printed Name

M. Magee
Signature

CHARLES D. ALLEN
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

DAN JENKINS
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

WES MINGG
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

CJ Van Sloun
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

Tracy Benedict
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

Jim Hines
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Signature

Robbie T. Whitten
Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
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Daniel E. Berg
Printed Name

D. Berg
Signature

Eric Johnson
Printed Name

Eric Johnson
Signature

JAMES M. GRAHAM
Printed Name

James M. Graham
Signature

Steve Dillard
Printed Name

Steve Dillard
Signature

Betsy Burdett
Printed Name

B. Burdett
Signature

Roger A. Stone
Printed Name

Roger A. Stone
Signature

Larry Stanton
Printed Name

L. Stanton
Signature

Charles S. Marshall
Printed Name

Charles S. Marshall
Signature

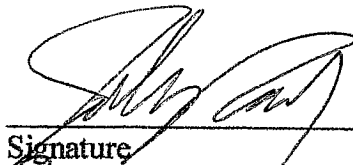
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John Pool

Printed Name



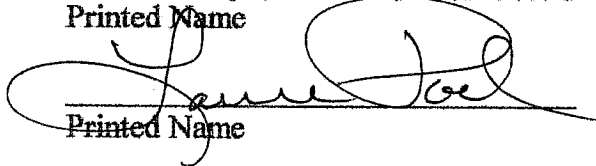
Signature

Shannon Sneller

Printed Name



Signature



Printed Name

Laurie Pool

Signature

DAVID A. DEAL

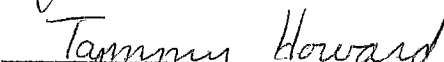
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Signature

Tammy Howard

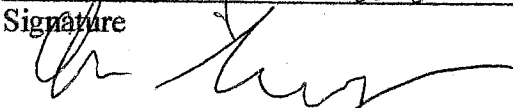
Printed Name



Signature

Chris Dewberry

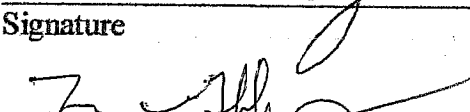
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Signature

Tom GAFFNEY

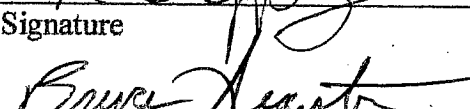
Printed Name



Signature

Bruce NEGERTER

Printed Name



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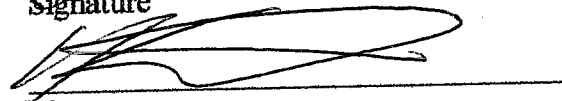
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STEPHEN LOCKIEAR
Printed Name


Signature

KEVIN LARSON
Printed Name


Signature

Steve Cannon
Printed Name

Steve Cannon
Signature

Dolliea Ketchikan
Printed Name

Dolliea Ketchikan
Signature

JOAN MARTIN
Printed Name

Joan Martin
Signature

Edward N. Jones
Printed Name

Edward N. Jones
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Calvin S Beattie
Printed Name

Calvin S Beattie
Signature

Steve Kemble
Printed Name

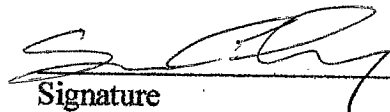
Steve Kemble
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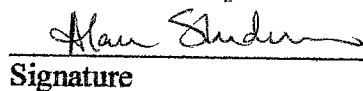
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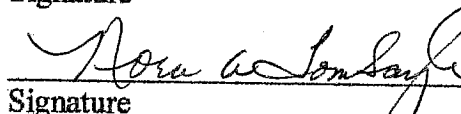
Sean Conley
Printed Name


Signature

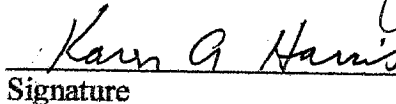
Alan Skidmore
Printed Name


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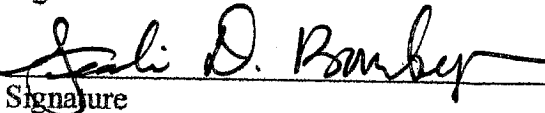
Nora Tomblugh
Printed Name


Signature


KAREN HARRIS
Printed Name


Signature

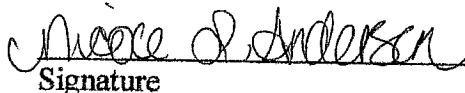
JEANCA BOMBERGER
Printed Name


Signature

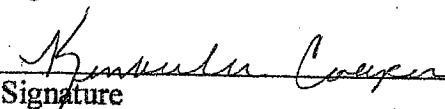
DAWN UTTKE
Printed Name


Signature

Nicole Anderson
Printed Name


Signature

Himberlee Cooper
Printed Name


Signature

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Helen Keene
Printed Name

Helen Keene
Signature

Mary Keene
Printed Name

Mary Keene
Signature

Colleen E. Scallon
Printed Name

Colleen Scallon
Signature

Robert Rudee
Printed Name

Robert Rudee
Signature

Virginia L Clay
Printed Name

Virginia L Clay
Signature

Alexis Schofield
Printed Name

Alexis Schofield
Signature

Dore DAVIES
Printed Name

Dore Davies
Signature

Daryl Easterling
Printed Name

Daryl Kay Estly
Signature

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SHAWN RICHARDSON

Printed Name



Signature

Jennifer Lara

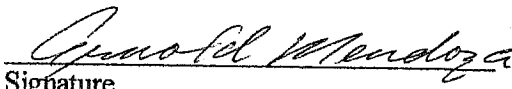
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Signature

Arnold Mendoza

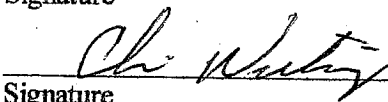
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CHRIS WEHNING

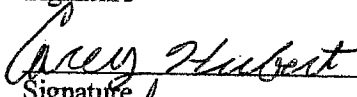
Printed Name



Signature

CAREY HUBERT

Printed Name



Signature

Axel Swanson

Printed Name



Signature

Printed Name

Signature

Printed Name

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Racheal Milne
Printed Name

R. Milne
Signature

Stacy Scoville
Printed Name

Stacy Scoville
Signature

Jeremy Bethel
Printed Name

Jeremy Bethel
Signature

Stephan Elie
Printed Name

Stephan Elie
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Printed Name

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RC 11

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DAVID D. HARBOUR
Printed Name

David D. Harbour
Signature

HUGH STRUTHERS
Printed Name

Hugh Struthers
Signature

ERNEST MELOCHE
Printed Name

Ernest Meloche
Signature

Printed Name

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Douglas J. Thompson
Printed Name

Douglas J. Thompson
Signature

Marcia Hilley
Printed Name

Marcia Hilley
Signature

DON FREIDENBLOOM
Printed Name

D. Freidenblom
Signature

Steve Seley Jr.
Printed Name

STEVE SELEY JR.
Signature

Paul Peterson
Printed Name

Paul Peterson
Signature

Rebecca Terber
Printed Name

Rebecca Terber
Signature

Kelly Love
Printed Name

Kelly Love
Signature

Robert L. HOBSEN
Printed Name

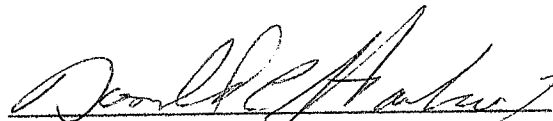
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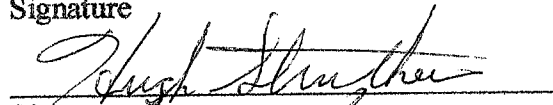
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Printed Name


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HUGH STRUTHERS
Printed Name


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ERNEST MELOCHE
Printed Name


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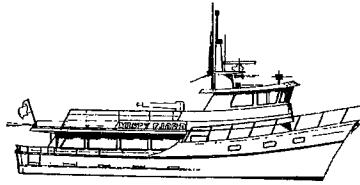
Rebecca Terber
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Kelly Love
Printed Name

Kelly Love
Signature

Robert L. Hooben
Printed Name

Robert L. Hooben
Signature



RC 12

ALASKA COASTAL QUEST

11-5-10

State of Alaska Board of Game:

My name is Dale Pihlman. I am speaking for myself. I am a lifetime Alaskan resident, born here in Ketchikan. I am a former Fisheries Management Biologist with ADF&G and have spent about 25 years in the tour/ charter business out of Ketchikan. I am here today to support proposals that would recognize the value of bear watching to the local economy and provide for appropriate conservation measures and bear hunting restrictions. Specifically, I support proposals 2,3,4,5,19,33 and 34.

I am not anti-hunting. I grew up in a subsistence lifestyle. I hunted deer to help put meat on the table. And as a former management biologist I support the concept of harvesting where there is a sustainable population. I support the public's right to hunt bear where there is such population. However, there are places in our area that are extremely valuable to tour industry where hunting is apparently reducing the population and often creating conflict between hunters and viewers. I have heard stories of some of these incidents which can only be categorized as barbaric. As a state in which tourism is a large and growing industry, we can and should do much better.

I first addressed this issue in the form of a proposal to this board in 2006. I proposed that Rudyerd Bay and Walker Cove and drainages be designated a non-hunting bear sanctuary. I'll briefly relate the incident that prompted this proposal. That summer, I was approached by an acquaintance who asked me if I had a charter boat available. He explained that he met a passenger off of one of the cruise ships that had just come from Rudyerd Bay. The ship's staff had pointed out a bear on the beach for the passengers to see. This man wanted to charter a boat to go back out there and shoot the bear. To me this tells a story of the absurdity of killing an animal in an area where obviously it was so valuable as an attraction. Probably 2500 passengers on the ship viewed that bear as well as many others on other vessels and airplanes that day. During my years in the tour business, I have learned that the most prized experience a visitor can have to view a bear. A live bear in a highly trafficked viewing area is so much more valuable to the economy than a dead one and is such great advertising to enhance Alaska's image as a land of scenic beauty and wildlife, hence as a visitor destination.

This board has a responsibility to oversee the management of game for all the State's residents. In the respect, the visitor industry is being vastly shortchanged by this board. I urge you to adhere to the guidelines of your organization and create regulations that allow a more equitable and appropriate sharing of one of the State's greatest treasures, its wildlife.

REF # 13

ATTN: Board of Game Comments
 Alaska Department of Fish and Game
 Boards Support Section
 P.O. Box 115526
 Juneau, AK 99811-5526
 Fax: 907-465-6094

Date: October 21, 2010

From: Michelle Masden
 Cell 617-6925

25 year Ketchikan Alaskan resident

PROPOSAL 3-5 AAC 92.510: Close the Eagle Creek/Whitman Lake Hatchery area to bear hunting: I am in support of this proposal for the same reasons listed for Proposal 4- 5 AAC 92.510

PROPOSAL 19 - 5 AAC 92.510: Close the Dog Salmon Creek Wildlife Viewing area to bear hunting in Unit 2. I am in support of this proposal for the same reasons listed for Proposal 4- 5 AAC 92.510

PROPOSAL 4 - 5 AAC 92.510: I am in support of Proposal 4 closing Margaret Creek in Traitors Cove to bear hunting. To simplify the area closed to hunting, it should read the same as at the Anan Creek Bear hunting closure: **Margaret Creek: to within 1 mile of Margaret Creek downstream from the mouth of Margaret Lake including the area within one mile radius from the mouth of Margaret Creek outlet is closed to hunting.**

For review, Anan was closed to Black bear hunting in 1939 and to brown bear hunting in 1996. When the Anan Creek proposal came up for review in 1996, the ADF&G's recommendation to the Board of Game voted to adopt this closure. While the 2010 ADF&G recommendations to the Board of Game state "no recommendation" with respect to Proposal 4, in the Black Bear Management reports of 2001 and 2007, the ADF&G reports that "Margaret Creek is a contentious area." Further stating "that there have been several clashes with hunters and bear viewers during the past several years and that this site received more complaints to the Tongass USFS Supervisor than any other site in all of SE Alaska. Bear viewers would like to see some or all of the areas closed to hunting." And in conclusion they state that "as local bear viewing interest continues to grow we will undoubtedly be faced with allocation issues related to both human safety and bear preservation issues."

The Alaska Board of Game needs to address the escalating problems that exist at Margaret Creek between the two user groups, bear hunters and bear viewers. The problems include but are not limited to: Dwindling Bear Populations, Safety, Incompatibility, Habituated Bears, Easy Access to Hunting and Economics.

For the past 18 years I have owned and operated a single plane air taxi service out of Ketchikan. The air taxi business is one of transportation that includes bear hunters and bear viewers. They are two valid but very different and incompatible user groups. I have been transporting bear hunters and guiding bear viewers for all 18 years. I began taking visitors to Anan Creek in 1993 and to Traitors Cove in 2000.

Dwindling Bear Populations: To date no population density studies have ever been conducted in Unit 1A. Presently the best guess of population density is 1.5 bears per square mile. Black bear estimates for Unit 1A are based on studies conducted in Washington State in the 1960's. Using only this data, in 1990 Wood and Larson calculated a slightly higher density for most of southern southeast Alaska. By their own admission these are only assumptions as no data was ever collected here in Alaska. (Black Bear Management Report 2007). We do not really know how many bears per square mile exist in Unit 1A. The only real data that ADF&G has with respect to bear populations in Unit 1A is the harvest data. There is no way to track other sources of mortality including illegal kills and wounding loss. However, according to the 2001 and 2007 Black Bear Management reports the ADF&G expect wounding loss to become a more serious issue if non-resident harvest continues to increase. Non-resident harvest has increased, from a historical 34% in the past 20 years to 52% over the past three years, 2004-2007. The ADF&G conclude that they continue to see increasing numbers of non-resident hunters. Harvest data for Traitors Cove show non-resident hunting to account for 49% of the harvest there from 2000 to present. (38 of 78 bears in 11 years) Additionally the ADF&G report that transporters are increasing in Unit 1A, which is supportive of non-resident hunters. These management reports also address the long term results of logging and the subsequent declines in bear populations. Margaret Creek/Traitors Cove is an area that has seen extensive logging. The report states "second growth stands at many previously logged Revilla Island sites are now reaching the stem exclusion stage and ADF&G expects productivity of this habitat to decline resulting in lower bear densities." Margaret Creek is one such an area. Supporting declines in populations, the 2010 Bear Trails reports the public (field biologists, local residents, hunting guides, tour operators, transporters, local hunters) are increasingly voicing concerns about chronic

low bear numbers compared to 10-15 years ago. Finally I have personally witnessed the consistent decline in bears at Margaret Creek over the past ten years of guiding bear viewers there.

2000	5-7 bears average in view at any one time from the viewing platform
2008	3-5 bears average in view at any one time from the viewing platform
2009	0-3 bears seen from platform in 2 hour period, some groups see no bears at all
2010	0-1 bears seen, no bears were seen from the platform, 50% of visitors who went to Margaret saw no bears at all and 70% of the scheduled bear viewing tours we sold were cancelled due to lack of bears. This is a loss of significant revenue dollars and is problematic for all six companies permitted to go there. The lack of bears at Margaret could mean an annual economic loss to Ketchikan of over \$1.2 million.

By comparison the 2010 Anan bear monitoring done by the USFS states: 9 black bears and 1 brown bear seen on a 2 hour average scan with 3 bears in view at any one time. 79% of the time there are over 20 people on the viewing platform. Anan sees a similar number of bear viewers annually as Margaret, with 60 permits per day and over 3000 permits per season issued by the USFS. In the 18 years I have taken visitors to Anan, without exception, every single group has seen bears.

Safety: Over the years that I have been guiding groups to Margaret, I have witnessed many unsafe and disturbing practices of bear hunters using this area. Even though it is illegal to discharge a gun from the viewing platform, nearly every year either myself or one of my bear guides have found spent ammunition shells on the viewing platform at the observatory site. We have also found shells at both the upper and lower bridges. On more than one occasion we have been standing on the viewing platform when gun shots have been fired very close to the platform near the creek. We have come upon hunters on the bridges with their rifles aimed at the creek. The bear hunters will also congregate on the viewing platform with their rifles.

There are approximately 60 visitors per day (or 3436 persons per year) permitted by the USFS to visit the Margaret Creek bear viewing observatory site. According to the USFS about 17% of the total bear viewing visitors to Margaret are unpermitted local residents. That could bring the bear viewer count up to 70 persons on any given day. With this number of people in the area it is only a matter of time before someone is injured either by a stray bullet or a wounded bear. Some research has shown that a wounded bear may act aggressively towards people or abandon the area all together. (BOG's 1996 Proposal 16/Gilbert 1993)

Incompatibility: Bear hunting and bear viewing activities are a dangerous and incongruent mix. On many occasions over the past 10 years I have unloaded passengers at the dock at Margaret Creek. Those passengers have been witness to some of the following: dead bears laying on the dock, dead bears hanging from the masts of boats tied up to the dock and eerie bear carcasses needlessly tied up to the dock underwater. Along the road we have encountered bear hunters with dead bears on the back of their ATV's. A privately owned vehicle used to transport bear viewers was stolen by a bear hunter to transport his bear down to the dock. In all, listening to gun shots, being in the range of live fire near the viewing platform, finding spent shells on the platform, being witness to dead bears and watching hunters in and around the bear viewing platform are not compatible activities. It is difficult for bear viewers to understand why the State of Alaska Board of Game still allows hunting in this area.

Habituated Bears: "Habituated bears are characterized by a lack of response to human presence or activity." (Aumiller 1994). "It is unclear whether all bears that become habituated to people in viewing areas are more susceptible to hunting mortality elsewhere" (Titus 1993) The potential hazards of allowing hunting near a bear viewing observatory warrants a closure of bear hunting within the Margaret Creek watershed. According to the USFS, consistency of bear-human interactions is an important guideline for management for bear viewing areas. "Humans who interact with bears should behave consistently and homogenous management encourages consistent behavior." (Aumiller 1994). Viewing bears in an area where the bear population is also hunted does not appear to be compatible under the circumstances now present at Margaret Creek. If Margaret Creek were closed to bear hunting, hunters in the area will benefit by not having negative reactions expressed by visitors when they learn that bears, being habituated to human presence, may also be hunted in the same area.

Easy Access to Hunters: ADF&G records indicate that bear hunters tend to target/concentrate in areas where access is easy and bears congregate. The ADF&G harvest records show from beginning in January 1, 2000 through

October 22, 2010 there have been 844 black bears harvested in Unit 1A or an average of 76 bears per year. "Hunters harvest bears throughout Unit 1A, although the highest harvests continue to come from WAA's 405(Thorne Arm), 406 (Carroll Inlet), 407 (George Inlet), and 510 (NW Revilla Island- which includes Traitors Cove)." (Black Bear Management Report 2007). Over the same time period, January 1, 2000 – October 22, 2010, 78 bears have been harvested in the Traitors Cove /Margaret Creek area an average of 7 bears per year. 7 bears per year represents 10% of all bears harvested annually in Unit 1A are being taken from Traitors Cove (Harvest Units 904,1004 &1005). There are at least 104 minor harvest units altogether in Unit 1A. Margaret Creek offers easy access for hunters with a dock, a road system and congregating bears on the salmon stream. If 10% of all bears harvested in Unit 1A are coming from Traitors Cove, this demonstrates that they are using areas that have easy access. Closing only the Margaret Creek drainage to bear hunting would still leave most of Traitors Cove open to hunting.

Economics: The US Fish and Wildlife published a document in July 2008 entitled "Wildlife Watching in the US: The Economic Impacts on National and State Economies in 2006." This document states "Wildlife related-expenditures in 2006 were \$45.7 billion. Expenditures on wildlife watching are equivalent to the amount of revenue from all spectator sports (football, baseball, and other sports) all amusement parks, and arcades, casinos (except casino hotels), bowling centers and skiing facilities. Nearly a third of the US population, 71 million people, enjoyed wildlife watching in 2006. This is more than 4 times greater than attendance of all National League Football teams during the 2006 season. Expenditures rippled through the economy generating more than \$122 billion in total industry output and 1,063,482 jobs. The more than 1 million jobs supported by wildlife watchers are almost three times the number of people who work for the US Postal Service. The magnitude of its economic impacts prove that wildlife watching is a major force, driving billions in spending around the country. These economic impacts can be the life blood of a local economy. Rural areas can attract thousands of wildlife watchers each year, generating millions of dollars." Wildlife watchers increased 24% from 2001 to 2006 and Trip Related Expenditures increased 38% from 2001-2006. This report includes a table listing the top ten states of economic output, Alaska is not on the list. In fact 24 states make more revenue in wildlife watching than Alaska. In 2006, of the total Wildlife-Watching Economic Expenditures Alaska saw less than 1% of the \$122 billion generated in the entire US.

The demand for wildlife viewing is growing and the current demand far exceeds the opportunities. It is time Alaska supported its wildlife viewing infrastructure and become proactive in protecting a vital resource for its future, the bears!

Over the years as logging has diminished on the Tongass, many businesses in Ketchikan have evolved to depend on tourism. The Ketchikan Visitors Bureau reports that 1,000,232 tourists visited Ketchikan in 2009. There are hundreds of Ketchikan businesses directly and indirectly involved in tourism, including land, sea and air tour companies. Currently there are 10 air taxi businesses operating in Ketchikan employing approximately 213 people. Additionally there are many ancillary businesses who depend on and benefit greatly from the air taxi companies. They include but are not limited to insurance companies, aviation maintenance, retail fuel companies, advertising & promotional companies, office supply companies, public utilities, independent tour salesman, local property taxes, licensing and permitting fees, the list goes on. Air taxi business is one of transportation, transportation of locals, loggers, tourists, hunters, etc.. The amount of air taxi revenue dollars generated during the summer months transporting tourists for bear viewing exceeds the dollars generated, over the entire year, from general transportation of locals. The combined potential revenue dollars to Ketchikan air taxi companies from all the bear viewing observatories in this area including Polk Inlet/Dog Salmon Creek, Margaret Creek/Traitors Cove, Anan Bay and Neets Bay amounts to over \$4.9 million annually. The following numbers were obtained from the USFS data and published bear viewing tour prices.

Dog Salmon/Polk Inlet	1600 visitors	(\$365 per person x 1600 = \$584,000)
Traitors Cove/Margaret Creek	3436 visitors	(\$365 per person x 4000 = \$1,254,140)
Anan Creek	384 visitors	(\$485 per person x 384 = \$147,456)
Neets Bay	8000 visitors	(\$365 per person x 8000 = \$2,920,000)
Totals for Bear Viewing	13,410 visitors	\$4,905,596 total revenue dollars

The AK Rainforest/Eagle Creek land based tour operation states they have 16,000 visitors who go to Herring Cove for bear viewing at \$100 per person x 16,000 = \$1,600,000. This brings the total bear viewing visitors up 29,410

Alaska Board of Game Meeting – Ketchikan, Nov. 5-8, 2010

TESTIMONY

I am Len Laurance, Marketing Director for Taquan Air and Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary, a Honorary Lifetime Member of the Alaska Travel Industry Association, and a 47 year Alaska resident.

I urge your SUPPORT of proposals:

- 3 (close a portion of Unit 1A at Herring Cove to bear hunting)
- 4 (close the Margaret Creek drainage area in Unit 1 to bear hunting)
- 19 (close the Dog Salmon Creek area to bear hunting in Unit 2)

Taquan Air is the holder of U.S. Forest Service outfitter/guide permits to take guests (a total of 3,200 in 2010) to the improved trail and wildlife viewing platforms at Margaret Creek (Traitors Cove) on Revillagigedo Island, and Dog Salmon Creek (Polk Inlet) on Prince of Wales Island. Taquan has been taking groups of visitors on guided bear viewing tours to the viewing platform at Margaret Creek for 17 years and at Dog Salmon Creek for 6 years. With FS approval, Taquan Air expanded the float at Traitors Cove in 2002 to provide additional dock space for floatplanes and boats. Traitors Cove and Polk Inlet are each approximately 20 minutes flying time from Ketchikan. The facilities at both locations are maintained and staffed in season by the FS.

Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary (ARS) is the operator of a 40 acre wildlife preserve at Herring Cove, 8 miles by road from Ketchikan. A major salmon hatchery is located here on Eagle Creek, operated by the non-profit Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association. The ARS property is located across the creek from the hatchery and borders the Tongass National Forest. Eagle Creek also flows through the sanctuary. Major runs of spawning salmon in this stream attract bears and other wildlife. ARS constructed an improved trail system and other visitor amenities at the sanctuary prior to opening in 2004. In 2010 we hosted 16,000 guests on guided wildlife viewing tours, during the July-September spawning season. Bears are the prime draw.

Bears are an asset for Alaska. Bear viewing is critical to the success of Taquan Air and ARS. We enjoy a 5 month tourism season, in which bear viewing takes place in just two of those months. Bear viewing represented

\$3,000,000 in revenue for these businesses last summer. Add to this the income of Ketchikan's other bear viewing operators, for a total of \$8,00,000 in 2010. Along with this income comes jobs and a large portion of local spending. This is an industry with room for growth. Demand for bear viewing tours shows no sign of diminishing.

Declining bear populations. Since 2005 our guides have reported declining bear populations each year at all of the popular bear viewing locations in the greater Ketchikan area. Hunting appears to be the prime reason for this. We support the rights of hunters to hunt and wildlife viewers to view wildlife. However, these rights should be regulated with regard to all users being able to recreate simultaneously and have sustainable wildlife for all desired activities. Bears at the established viewing areas are not sustainable for both user groups.

Economic Impacts. With a total of 177 employees, Taquan Air and Alaska Rainforest Sanctuary have a significant impact in Ketchikan. Further declines in bear populations at prime wildlife viewing sites will have negative impacts on jobs, local spending, and Ketchikan's reputation as a prime wildlife viewing location.

Recommendations. Adopt proposals 4 (Margaret Creek) and 19 (Dog Salmon Creek). FS trails and viewing platforms are in place at these locations. Also, proposal 3 (Herring Cove), already a long established local bear viewing site, located in a residential area.

Questions. I will be pleased to answer any questions.

Thank you.
