

January 15, 2014

From: Debra Waugaman Curnow

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**ATTN: Board of Game Comments**  
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**Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Game (BOG):**

**PROPOSALS 99 & 100 OPPOSE  
Eliminate or Modify the Wood River Controlled Use Area (WRCUA).**

While proposals to eliminate the Wood River Controlled Use Area come up almost every cycle, the BOG has wisely upheld the regulation and I respectfully ask you do not change the regulation now.

The statements in these proposals are inaccurate in stating there is "no access to the area and particularly "no access to the east side". The WRCUA is heavily accessed by bush plane, horse, mule, raft and on foot.

I am a lifelong Alaskan and property owner in the WRCUA, I have been accessing this area by plane, horseback and on foot for over 40 years. Personally I travel several hundred miles every year on horseback from Healy Creek over Cody Pass and down Wood River to the Northern end of the WRCUA, hunting mainly on the Eastern side of the Wood River. My family has been hunting this area up to the headwaters of the Wood River and Healy drainage since 1940.

ATV use for hunting in this area would be devastating:

1. **Traditional Hunting** – The WRCUA is the primary area used by resident hunters and guides in the Interior who prefer more traditional hunting methods and means.
3. **Social Issues** – Numerous user conflicts and access abuse has been documented in recent years and would increase on private property. Guide conflicts would also increase, especially now with the Guide Concession Program on hold or cancelled which was supposed to help address user/guide conflicts.
4. **Habitat** – Some places make sense for ATV use, this area does not. Most the WRCUA contains much brush, tundra and swampy ground. Widespread destruction of the countryside would occur in the first season if ATVs were allowed access during hunting season. Reversing the destruction of habitat would likely not occur in our lifetime.

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Page Two

5. **Commercial Use** – Most traditional guide operations would be put out of business and the ATV guides would take over. Wilderness horse packing trips would not be compatible with widespread ATV use in the area. Additionally commercial flight services, recreational and touring companies would be severely impacted.

Changes to the status of the WRCUA would be detrimental to Big Game Guides, the Resident Hunter and Non-Resident Hunter. My father was a Master Guide-Outfitter and I am a Registered Guide and owner of a wilderness horse packing business in the area. The vast majority of our clients choose our operation because of the remote wilderness and traditional hunting and recreation. The unique opportunities in this area are valued today more than ever for residents and commercial operations.

I do support responsible use of motorized vehicles for hunting access; however, ATV use for hunting in this area would be a huge mistake.

Please uphold the Wood River Controlled Use Area designation as it stands and **Do Not Adopt Proposals #99 or #100.**

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment.

Respectfully,



Debra Waugaman Curnow