

Roxann Dayton

Big Lake, Alaska

Chair and members of the Board:

I'm an Alaskan with a background in wildlife and fisheries work, both in the field and behind the maps that guide our management.

I hold a degree in biology with an emphasis on wildlife. I've worked as a field technician for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries. I helped conduct salmon escapement enumeration in Bristol Bay using counting towers, test fishing, sonar, fish scale sampling, and smolt surveys. I also participated in harbor seal population surveys on Tugidak Island, south of Kodiak, to establish a baseline population for research to determine why the population was declining. That work taught me the value of rigorous biological data, long-term monitoring, and transparent public processes in managing Alaska's natural resources.

In addition, I worked as a cartographer for ADF&G's Habitat Division, developing Blue Atlas Population maps for the State. I also collected ecological and wildlife data for the Susitna Hydroelectric Project, helping assess impacts on species and habitats.

These roles taught me the value of high-quality data, long-term ecological monitoring, and adherence to processes in responsibly managing Alaska's public resources.

I want to express grave concern about the predator control program in the Mulchatna region.

In March 2025, a Superior Court ruled the program unconstitutional. The State's actions were found to violate three provisions of the Alaska Constitution:

Article VIII, Section 1 – Public Interest: All resource decisions must align with the public interest. This program moved forward with limited transparency or public input.

Article VIII, Section 2 – Sustained Yield: Our Constitution requires sustainable management of resources. The court noted a lack of updated ecological review before authorizing the mass removal of predators.

Article VIII, Section 3 – Common Use: Wildlife must be managed for all Alaskans, not just a specific user group. The program was implemented without broad stakeholder engagement.

On March 27, this Board passed an emergency regulation authorizing the killing of bears, just days after a Superior Court judge ruled the original program unconstitutional and void. That decision lacked updated ecological data, bypassed public input, and defied an awful court order. Eleven more bears and one wolf were killed under that action.

A second judge later determined that the State acted in bad faith. That phrase is rare and serious. It reflects a pattern of governance that bypasses legal limits and dismisses the public's right to be involved in wildlife decisions. Whether the intent was to protect caribou or serve local communities, the process must remain legal, science-driven, and publicly accountable.

As someone who has worked on the ground in biological research, I understand the complexity of wildlife management. However, sidestepping constitutional protections, court rulings, and due process is not the way forward.

I urge this Board to reflect deeply on the legal and ethical responsibilities entrusted to you with meaningful public input. I respectfully urge this Board to treat this moment as an opportunity as a turning point toward greater transparency, scientifically justified decisions, and reform. Recommit to legal process. Require updated science. Engage Alaskans meaningfully in wildlife decisions that affect us all. Alaskans deserve wildlife management that honors our laws, science, and the public trust we all share in these lands and animals.

Our wildlife is held in common. Our process must be, too.

Thank you for your time.