

**Alaskans for Wildlife * Alaska Wilderness League * Alaska Wildlife Alliance * Audubon Alaska
Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico * Born Free USA * Braided River
Center for Biological Diversity * Clean Water Action
Conservatives for Responsible Stewardship * Daily Kos * Defenders of Wildlife * Earthjustice
Endangered Species Coalition * Environment America
Environmental Protection Information Center * Eyak Preservation Council
Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges * Friends of the Earth * GreenLatinos
Gwich'in Steering Committee * Howling for Wolves * Institute for Science and Human Values
International Fund for Animal Welfare * Klamath Forest Alliance
League of Conservation Voters * National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Refuge Association * New Mexico Sportsmen
New Rules for Global Finance * Northern Alaska Environmental Center * Pacific Environment
Progressive Congress Action Fund * Public Citizen * Sierra Club
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance * Southwest Environmental Center
The Humane Society Legislative Fund * The Humane Society of the United States
The Wilderness Society * Upper Gila Watershed Alliance * Vet Voice Foundation
Western Watersheds Project * WildEarth Guardians * Wilderness Watch * WildWest Institute
Wolf Conservation Center**

February 14, 2017

RE: Vote NO on H. J. Res. 69

Dear Representative,

On behalf of our millions of members and supporters nationwide, we urge you to oppose H. J. Res. 69, the Congressional Review Act (CRA) resolution to rescind the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Alaska National Wildlife Refuges Rule. Voiding this vital rule would jeopardize iconic species in Alaska, subvert fundamental environmental laws and undermine management of federal public lands. H. J. Res. 69 is a blatant attempt to cede control of America's wildlife on over 76 million acres of national wildlife refuges in Alaska to appease narrow state interests, and could have drastic implications for federal management of public trust resources across the country.

The Alaska National Wildlife Refuges Rule helps protect bears, wolves and other native carnivores on federal public lands to conserve wildlife and natural ecosystems that benefit all Americans. The rule prevents application of Alaska's aggressive "predator control" policy on national wildlife refuges in the state. Alaska's scientifically indefensible predator control program aims to artificially increase game populations by driving down carnivore numbers through extreme practices, including killing mother bears and cubs, killing wolves and pups in their dens, and trapping, baiting and using airplanes to scout and shoot bears. The majority of Americans, including Alaskans, oppose these highly controversial, extreme measures that could reduce or eliminate these species across entire landscapes.

The Alaska National Wildlife Refuges Rule ensures America's refuges are managed as Congress intended, consistent with bedrock federal laws governing the National Wildlife Refuge System. Under the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act, FWS is required to maintain ecological integrity across refuge ecosystems and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) mandates conservation of species and habitats in their natural diversity on refuges in the state. ANILCA also prioritizes conservation of wolves, bears and other carnivores as a statutory purpose of

FWS management for many Alaska national wildlife refuges. The agency's reasonable regulation simply prevents violation of these federal laws, preserving America's wildlife heritage on these public lands while still allowing for traditional subsistence and sport hunting.

Voiding this vital rule would undermine federal authority to manage wildlife on more than 76 million acres of public lands congressionally reserved for wildlife conservation. It would impair science-based stewardship of natural resources, limit FWS's ability to sustainably manage wolves, bears, and other native carnivores, and upset the natural ecological balance on these wild lands that belong to all Americans.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is the only network of federal lands and waters dedicated to wildlife conservation. The System includes 566 national wildlife refuges, with at least one in every state and U.S. territory, preserving hundreds of millions of acres of habitat essential to the survival of an astounding diversity of wildlife, and providing millions of Americans access to wildlife-dependent outdoor recreation. Congress has designated 16 national wildlife refuges in Alaska, including some of the Refuge System's most incredible "crown jewels," like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Americans expect wildlife conservation on these federal lands will follow proven conservation principles and sound science, and support traditional ethical standards for species management. The Alaska National Wildlife Refuges Rule is necessary to ensure these expectations are met. We urge you to stand up for wildlife and the National Wildlife Refuge System and uphold this rule by voting NO on H. J. Res. 69.

Sincerely,

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