



## ***OPPOSE H.J. RES. 69: REPEAL OF THE FWS WILDLIFE PROTECTION RULE***

***Resolution would allow inhumane and indiscriminate killing on National Wildlife Refuges***

### **Summary of the FWS Rule on Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife in Alaska**

The Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) rule on Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska was published in the Federal Register on August 5, 2016, and deals with state-sponsored and recreational killing of keystone predator species like gray wolves and grizzly bears. The rule prohibits so-called “predator control” activities on Refuges unless they are consistent with federal law and the purposes of the Refuge, and are based on sound science in response to a conservation concern.

The rule also bans the use of some of the most decimating and inhumane killing tactics on Refuges, including killing black and brown bear cubs or mothers with cubs, killing brown bears over bait, killing wolves and wolf pups in their dens, and shooting bears from a helicopter. Finally, the rule updates procedures for allowing temporary and permanent closures of Refuge lands if necessary to conserve wildlife by extending the possible emergency closure period from 30 to 60 days and providing for greater public participation in decision making. The rule will maintain the natural diversity of Refuges in Alaska, as required by the Alaska National Interest Lands Act (ANILCA) and the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act.

The rule will protect the interest of all Americans in the National Wildlife Refuges their tax dollars support. The State of Alaska, which employs extreme predator control measures in an attempt to artificially inflate populations of elk, moose, and caribou popular with trophy hunters, recently filed a lawsuit alleging that FWS has exceeded its authority by trying to regulate take of wildlife on refuge lands in Alaska. However, this lawsuit is unlikely to succeed and is opposed by a coalition of Alaska-based and national conservation groups including the Alaska Wildlife Alliance, Denali Citizens Council, National Parks Conservation Association, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Humane Society of the United States.

### **Messages**

- The rule restricts only a very small number of the worst practices across a relatively small portion of available hunting lands in Alaska. Only four percent of trophy hunting statewide occurs on Refuges. The rule does not impact subsistence hunting.
- Alaska’s predator control program is not based on sound science. It assumes that killing predators will increase populations of their prey, but no monitoring or evaluation of the program is conducted.
- A 2016 poll conducted by Remington Research Group showed that a majority of Alaskans oppose the use of predator killing tactics addressed in this rule.
- According to a 2011 study commissioned by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, wildlife viewing accounts for more than twice as much economic output and more than twice as many jobs as hunting.
- Instead of bringing up bills that would create jobs and raise workers’ paychecks, House Republicans are wasting valuable floor time on a resolution that allows wanton and wasteful killing of baby animals.”