

# 2020 IN NUMBERS

## 30+ PARTNERSHIPS



In 2020, we partnered with over 30 organizations to provide programs across the state. We are building broad coalitions that unite Alaskans to speak up for wildlife.

## 34,000+ PUBLIC COMMENTS



We mobilized over 34,000 public comments on pressing wildlife issues, including regulations considered by federal agencies, the Alaska Board of Game, state development agencies, and local councils.



# ALASKA WILDLIFE ALLIANCE

2020 Annual Report

## 2,000 WILDLIFE WEDNESDAY ATTENDEES



We hosted 19 Wildlife Wednesdays and shared them online. Over 2,000 people learned about Alaska's wildlife, from whales to bats, bears to geese. Thank you to all our volunteer speakers and small business sponsors! You can view our Wildlife Wednesday presentations at [akwildlife.org](http://akwildlife.org) and on our Facebook page.

## 3 CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS



- Co-founded and hosted the Alaska Beluga Monitoring Partnership surveys in Kenai and Kasilof to track endangered Cook Inlet beluga whales (279 whales left).
- Continued partnership with the Coastal Observation and Seabird Survey Team to monitor seabird die-offs.
- Launched "Map the Trap" database to document trap encounters on Alaska's trails.

## 4 LAWSUITS



We challenged extreme sport hunting practices in Alaska's National Preserves, underregulated wolf trapping on Prince of Wales island, drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and the development of the Ambler Road.

## 32 WILDLIFE ISSUES



We submitted scientific and legal comments on 32 wildlife and habitat issues across Alaska. These comments influence decision makers, raise public awareness, and build an administrative record of wildlife advocacy for future work.

## 28 EVENTS



We hosted 28 wildlife education and advocacy events on a variety of wildlife topics. That means we engaged the public with wildlife-related topics at least twice each month!

## 45% MEMBER SUPPORTED



45% of our 2020 revenue came from individual memberships and donations. We simply could not do any of this work without support from people like you. Thank you for your continued support!

## Thank you to our 2020 supporters!

Aaron Unterreiner	Bert Hobmayer	Dave Nicholls	George Hochstetler	Joe Meehan	Laura Bernabe	Mary Hake	Rebecca Tift Photography	Teresa Becher	Stephen Grosz
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Alicia Marie	Brett Carrothers	Denise Saigh	Heather Duffy	Jonathan Pierce	Linda Boggs	Molly McCammon	Ryan Dreelin	Valerie Buckendorf	L. Hodgan
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Allegra Hamer	Brock Roden	Diane Weatherwax	Hugh Rose	Juliette Boselli	Linda Taylor	Nadia Pearce	Sandra Taylor	Veronica Slajer	Mary Bell
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Berhard Richert	Dave Hunsaker			Kimberly Porter	Kimberly Porter	Raymond Carr	Tami Murray		

Alaska Wildlife Alliance is committed to the protection of Alaska's wildlife for its intrinsic value, as well as for the benefit of present and future generations. We advocate for healthy ecosystems, scientifically and ethically managed to protect our wildlife in an increasingly dynamic world.



## In 2020 we gave voice to Alaska's wildlife

### At hearings

- Fairbanks Board of Game Advisory Committee on protections for wolves during the mating season
- Alaska Board of Game on wildlife management proposals in the Interior region and the Alaska Peninsula
- U.S. Department of Defense and Department of the Air Force regarding year-round mortar firing on Eagle River Flats
- Bureau of Ocean Energy Management regarding a potential lease sale in lower Cook Inlet
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game regulatory petition to close the 2020-21 hunting and trapping season of Alexander Archipelago wolves on Prince of Wales Island
- Alaska Department of Fish & Game regulatory petition to close the 2020-21 lynx trapping season in Chugach State Park
- Department of Interior on defining navigable waters in Alaska's National Parks
- Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority testifying against investment in the Ambler Road
- National Park Service on right-of-way access for the North Johnson Tract in Lake Clark National Park
- Fish and Wildlife Service proposed rule to liberalize hunting and trapping on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

### In the courts

#### **Alaska Wildlife Alliance v Bernhardt | Represented by Trustees for Alaska**

In August, our coalition sued the Department of Interior and the National Park Service to reverse a rule that would allow extreme sport hunting practices on Alaska's national preserves. The rule makes it legal to bait and shoot brown bears, hunt black bears while they hibernate, kill wolves during the denning season, and shoot swimming caribou from boats under power in places like Denali and Wrangell St. Elias National Preserves.

*Special thanks to Trustees for Alaska and coalition partners*

#### **Alaska Wildlife Alliance and Joel Bennett v Vincent-Lang | Represented by Joe Geldhof**

In October, we sued the State of Alaska and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game to prevent an unsustainable wolf trapping season on Prince of Wales Island. In only one season, trappers killed over 25% of the island's genetically distinct Alexander Archipelago wolves. We seek balanced management that ensures a healthy, sustainable wolf population on the island.

*Special thanks to Joe Geldhof, Joel Bennett, Grant Margeson, Tom Counts, and Dave Persons*

#### **Gwich'in Steering Committee v Bernhardt | Represented by Trustees for Alaska**

We are part of the coalition taking the Department of Interior and the Bureau of Land Management to court for their plan to open the Coastal Plains of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil companies. Stopping these lease sales is essential to protecting Arctic wildlife already stressed by climate change.

*Special thanks to Ronald Yarnell, Trustees for Alaska, and our coalition partners*

#### **Northern Alaska Environmental Center v. Bernhardt | Represented by Trustees for Alaska & Western Mining Action Project**

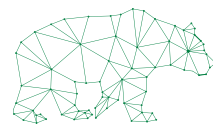
We serve on the coalition challenging the Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Army Corps of Engineers for approving the Ambler Road. The road would cut through Gates of the Arctic National Preserve, fragment one of the longest caribou migrations in the world, cross nearly 3,000 rivers and streams, dam tundra wetlands, and stir up asbestos that pollutes air and water - all to access new open-pit hard rock mining.

*Special thanks to Juliette Boselli, Anne Beaulaurier, Trustees for Alaska, and our coalition partners*

## We made progress

### Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

In 2015, the Fish and Wildlife Service passed a rule that prohibited brown bear baiting in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. The State of Alaska and Safari Club International sued the agency to try to reverse the rule, so Alaska Wildlife Alliance intervened as an intervenor-defendant in 2016. While the case worked its way through the court system, the Department of Interior changed course under the Trump Administration. To appease the State and trophy hunting interests in the federal cabinet, the Fish and Wildlife Service proposed a new Kenai Rule in 2020 that would legalize brown bear baiting and liberalize trapping in the refuge.

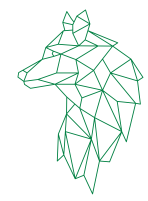


We led a coalition of nine organizations to gather comments in resistance to this new rule. We successfully secured two public comment periods, at which time over 34,000 people commented in overwhelming opposition to the rule. We conducted trainings for Alaskans to get involved and coordinated public testimony that resulted in a 10:1 outcry against brown bear baiting in the refuge. Meanwhile, the court ruled that the 2015 rule that prohibited brown bear baiting was, in fact, legal -- upholding the good rule we fought hard to pass in 2015. We are still waiting to see if our efforts to defeat the 2020 rule were successful. Thank you to all who commented and testified on behalf of wildlife!

### Alaska Board of Game

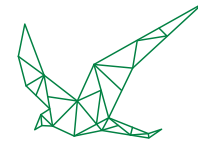
While we were not successful in securing protections for wolves during the mating season outside Denali National Park, we did have some wins at the 2020 Board of Game meeting. Thank you to all who submitted comments! Together, we:

- Prevented a new predator control program for bears in Minto Flats
- Prevented allowing the use of dogs to hunt lynx during the trapping season
- Prevented new intensive management programs for wolves in three game management areas in the Interior
- Prevented an extension of the wolf hunting and trapping season outside Denali National Park



### What's next?

Alaska is experiencing climate change at three times the rate of the lower 48. Meanwhile, Department of Interior changed the way the Endangered Species Act is applied to make it more difficult to protect wildlife from long-term threats posed by climate change. The Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service also published two new rules that severely limit critical habitat designations for threatened and endangered species. Climatic changes are rarely discussed by the Board of Game, which continues to represent only a fraction of Alaskans. Moving forward, we will:



- Testify, petition, and litigate for protections for Alaska's wildlife and the habitat upon which they depend;
- Develop pilot studies that promote biodiversity and demonstrate climate change adaptation approaches;
- Advocate for the restoration of the Endangered Species Act and a strengthening of state and federal critical habitat designations;
- Continue mobilizing citizen scientists to monitor Alaska's threatened, endangered, or distressed species;
- Hold state and federal wildlife managers accountable to ecosystem-based approaches that protect biodiversity and avoid scapegoating predators.

