

Submitted by Lisa Slepetski

I am OPPOSED to the following proposals and am submitting late comments regarding:

- Proposal 99 - Close areas within Units 14A, 14B, and 16A to trapping;**
- Proposal 199 - Prohibit trapping within 50 yards of multi-use trails and trailheads in Units 13, 14, and 16; AND**
- Proposal 228 - Require trap identification tags in Units 14A, 14B, and 16**

Both proposals 99 and 199 are too broad, and too vague. In proposal 99, the terms "developed" hiking trail, "groomed" ski trail, and "public funds" are subjective and poorly defined. It also implies trappers should not be allowed to utilize trails that are supported by public funds, though they are also citizens of the state engaging in lawful activity while contributing to Alaskan economics, culture, and/or personal subsistence/harvest. If "public funds" include a small local non-profit and not just borough or state, I am concerned any small community group could begin maintaining or grooming a trapper's trail and claim it as their own, excluding the trapper from the line they previously made themselves. I also see this as prohibiting a private landowner from trapping problem wildlife that may be threatening or harming their livestock, pets, or property.

With regards to proposal 199, the list of trails for inclusion is far too excessive and restrictive. Some trails were created by trappers. Many of the trails have existing leash laws that are being ignored. The trails are on property owned or managed by many different agencies - borough, state, AK Mental Health Trust, federal, and possibly Alaska Native Corporation land. Many of the trails on the list do not see heavy use, and the trails were just plucked out of the Mat-Su Rec Trails Plan without surveying actual use (numbers of people, or what activity they are engaged in). In managing multi-use trails, separating activities in time is common practice and trapping season for many species is 6 months or less, so a closed period already exists in which traps are absent. Traps are immobile objects while loose dogs can create problems of their own - for wildlife, themselves, other dogs, mushers, or people recreating or engaged in lawful hunting of small or large game besides trapping. They proposal also states that "many" trappers have snowmachines and would thus cause negligible effects on trapper time and effort, but this discriminates against those that can't afford snowmachines, youth whom may not have access/not have the ability to drive one, those that trap on land closed to snowmachines, and people who prefer skis or snowshoes.

In addition, Proposals 99 and 199 do not recognize that not all traps pose hazards to dogs. For example, I take my own dogs to check my marten tree sets. An under control dog can be

removed from a snare quickly - if the owner keeps their dog close and pays attention to it. Off leash dogs should not be ignored and let run wild anyway, as there are dozens of environmental and physical hazards that can hurt or kill a dog any time it is not on a leash. Education of non-trappers on how to recognize an active trapping area, how to remove dogs from traps, knowing the different types of traps and the true level of risk to their pet (120 conibear tree set vs 330 conibear), following leash laws or solid off-leash control, and knowing when/where trap season occurs are ways people can take responsibility for their pets. Continuing education of trappers on ethical behavior, as well as preserving trapping rights to ensure there is plenty of access and acreage, will allow people to trap in a responsible manner.

I am opposed to Proposal 228 because they are an added expense to trappers. Also, these identification tags could be unknowingly moved to illegal or non-ethical areas in an attempt to get a trapper in trouble, as was mentioned years ago when another proposal like this was brought up. Depending on the confidentiality of the identifier used, I am also worried if the general public could look up a trapper's name and or address and impose on their privacy.

Thank you for your time.