



March 21, 2019

Geoff Bechtol  
Old Harbor School  
Three Saints Avenue  
Old Harbor, AK 99643

Geoff,

On behalf of all of the members of the Alaska Board of Game, I want to thank you and your students for the excellent presentation you gave us this week during our Southcentral meeting in Anchorage. We were extremely impressed with the depth and breadth of knowledge each student exhibited as well as their confident poise while presenting. We know how intimidating it can be for anyone to speak in public, especially in such a formal setting as the Board meetings, yet your students were smooth and professional.

As Board members, we were selected by the Governor and confirmed by the Legislature to be stewards of Alaska's wildlife resources. The only way we can accomplish that mission is to learn by listening to a wide variety of people from around the state, including scientists, local experts, managers and politicians. The presentation your class gave yesterday helped us better understanding Kodiak bears and allowed us to make informed decisions as we deliberated on proposed changes to the Kodiak bear hunting regulations soon after you left. The skills your students gained in science, cultural traditions and public speaking have already had a positive impact on the bears you have been studying this year.

We strongly believe that passing understanding and respect for the animals of our great state on to our youth is a vital component in conserving those animals and keeping our traditions strong. It was so refreshing to see such a glowing example of that during your presentation. Consequently, we gave you a standing ovation – a first for anyone who has given us a presentation.

Keep up the good work, and we look forward to your students being the future leaders of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Ted Spraker, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game