

# American Society of Mammalogists

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Honorable Sean Parnell  
Governor, State of Alaska  
P.O. Box 110001  
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

14 August 2012

Dear Governor Parnell,

The American Society of Mammalogists (ASM) was established in 1919 for the purpose of promoting interest in the study of mammals, as well as providing information for public policy, resource management, conservation, and education. With almost 3,000 current members, ASM is the largest and most influential mammal society in the world. The Society's publications, the *Journal of Mammalogy* and *Mammalian Species*, are renowned sources for information on the latest research on mammals.

ASM has strong ties to Alaska. Several members of ASM are residents of Alaska and a number of others, including a few former residents of Alaska, conduct research on Alaskan wildlife. The University of Alaska, Fairbanks hosted the annual meeting of ASM in 2009, and previously hosted the annual meeting in 1989. Thus, it is with great interest that we hear of a proposal to establish independent scientific advisory committees for state-managed fish and wildlife.

ASM strongly endorses the concept of independent scientific committees for this purpose. Independent, professional, nonpartisan advice to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Board of Game, and Alaska legislature on long-term research needs and other critical issues related to conservation and management is essential to the protection and wise use of Alaska's wildlife resources. Independent scientific advisory committees also promote public trust in management decisions, and provide a means for additional public input into management deliberations. There can be little argument that the best decisions are well-informed decisions.

If the Alaska legislature establishes the proposed Alaska Wildlife Scientific Advisory Committee, ASM welcomes the opportunity to nominate members with appropriate scientific backgrounds and experience with Alaskan wildlife. We will be happy to work

with ADF&G and other state agencies and boards to provide the strongest possible professional advice on issues related to the study, conservation, and management of Alaska's rich wildlife resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Edward J Heske". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Edward" on top, "J" in the middle, and "Heske" on the bottom.

Dr. Edward J. Heske  
President  
American Society of Mammalogists