

PRESS ADVISORY
February 25, 2010

Denali Park, Alaska

**LOCAL GROUP GATHERS MORE THAN 500 SIGNATURES SUPPORTING
WOLF BUFFER ZONES OUTSIDE DENALI NATIONAL PARK**

Denali Citizens Council (DCC), a grassroots organization with offices at the gateway to Denali National Park, has gathered more than 500 signatures supporting retention and expansion of wolf buffers on key border areas next to Denali National Park and Preserve.

“There is a strong base of support among local, regional and statewide citizens for proposals increasing the size of existing buffer zones,” said Nancy Bale, President of the group. Bale plans to testify before the Alaska Board of Game this weekend and will read excerpts from comments made on the petition. The Board will consider five proposals, including one from the National Park Service, that favor enlargement of no-wolf hunting/trapping zones on state lands at the northeastern border of the park.

“Denali National Park has worldwide notoriety for the opportunity to view wolves in their natural habitat, with hundreds of thousands of visitors each summer,” Bale said. “However, the population of these wolves has recently declined to a low of 65. Studies of this problem have concluded that human-caused wolf mortality has increased over the past few years.”

Part of the problem, according to Bale, is that wolf packs travel outside the park in the winter to key state lands over the northeastern border of the park. These forays have been studied using radio-collars. Some wolves travel from denning areas deep inside the park to these lands. “This special and predictable vulnerability on certain state lands is a key factor in Denali Citizen’s Council’s decision to put forth a Proposal to the Board of Game,” said Bale. “Our Board voted unanimously to put forth this Proposal.”

The Board of Game will take public testimony this weekend, February 26-28, then will spend the next week deliberating proposals. The key proposals advocating increased buffer zones are Prop 55, 58, 59, 60 and 65. The meeting will be held at the Westmark Hotel, 813 Noble Street, Fairbanks, Alaska.

For more information, contact:

DCC, PO Box 78, Denali Park, Alaska 99755

Nancy Bale, President Denali Citizens Council, 907-277-3825, nancy@denalicitizens.org

Julia Potter, Community Organizer DCC, 907-750-0023, 907-683-3396, mail@denalicitizens.org

DCC website: <http://www.denalicitizens.org>

DCC Board

Nancy Bale
Anne Beaulaurier
Jean Balay
Cass Ray

Hannah Ragland
Nan Eagleson
Jared Zimmerman
Charlie Loeb

Julia Potter, Community Organizer