



THE STATE  
of ALASKA

GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

Department of Fish and Game

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
Headquarters

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June 11, 2018

Barbara Baker, President  
Government Relations Liaison  
Greater Appalachian Llama & Alpaca Association

Dear Ms. Baker,

We receive your letter recently in regards to the *Risk assessment on the use of South American camelids for back country trekking in British Columbia* study and report (RA) commissioned by British Columbia's Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR). We appreciate your interest on this issue and want you to know that at this time we have no intentions to promote or support limiting the use of South American camelids on public land in the state of Alaska.

For your information, we supported the RA project at the request of the FLNR wildlife veterinarian with a contribution of \$5,000. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (DFG) staff were told the total cost for the project was approximately \$25,000. The final report was submitted to DFG because we provided funds and hoped to get more information on what risks there may or may not be with camelid / wildlife interaction or contact. We believed it was a worthwhile project hoping that if potential disease risks could be more accurately assessed we could move on to solutions and disease risk issues with other species. As you know, there is no significant new information presented in the RA. After discussing the document internally and with other biologists from several jurisdictions (including the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agency Wild Sheep Work Group - WSWG), we will continue to focus and enhance our evaluation of disease risk from species other than llamas or related camelids. There is not enough information presented in this report or other current publications to warrant spending additional resources on this issue. Also, we understand that the WSWG pulled the RA report from their website partially due to some concerns about the report itself. DFG currently has no plans to change or focus our disease surveillance efforts related to camelids.

We recognize that many different animals, both wild and domestic, can be potential vectors or sources for disease in Alaska's wildlife. DFG will continue to monitor and evaluate the state's wildlife populations for risk of disease transmission from other animals (wild and domestic), endemic sources in the environment, and within the wildlife population itself.

B. Baker

- 2 -

June 11, 2018

Thank you for writing us in regards to your concerns over the report from British Columbia. It is always good to hear from others that are affected by what we do as we managers of Alaska's wildlife. Good luck to you and your organization in the future.

Sincerely,

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Bruce Dale  
Director