Leave the Wolves Alone!

Wolf control is not needed in Alaska

Loren Eiseley, the 1976 HSUS Joseph Wood Krutch medalist, has written a moving account of the celebration of a sparrow hawk, released after a night of capture, returning to its mate, waiting unseen in the broad blue sky of Nebraska. “I saw them both now. He was rising fast to meet them. They met in a great... whirling circle and a dance of wings... Then they were gone forever somewhere into those experiences. His writings remind us of a reality that is wild, and put our daily activities into the context of.

The Alaska Board of Game wants to increase moose and caribou populations to attract more tourists and hunters to the state. The intention is misguided at best, given that, in many parts of the state, populations of moose and caribou are increasing and may be near historic density. There may be one relatively small area in which moose and caribou populations are declining. This area does experience wolf and bear predation, but it also contains another predator—the sport hunter.

The first step in moose and caribou population management should be the elimination of the hunting season. If the Alaska Board of Game wishes to increase these populations statewide, then why not curtail sport hunting statewide? Tourists armed with cameras will be delighted to view the beauty of the Alaskan habitat and its abundant wildlife if they believe they are supporting and enhancing a sensitive and life-affirming government in the process. Since ecotourists outnumber sport hunters by an enormous ratio, economics should mandate animal protection rather than killing.

Many concerned citizens have already sent messages to Alaskan authorities. It is time for us all to speak again. Send Governor Hickel (State of Alaska, PO Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802–5526) a short, crisp message: Leave the wolves alone!