



WRTC's purpose is to disseminate data, share expertise and pass on to posterity the art and science of obtaining wild raptors for falconry.

Wild Raptor Take Conservancy

Alaska Falconry Association President,

Dear Mr. Tilton,

Wild Raptor Take Conservancy (WRTC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and expanding access to wild raptor populations for falconers. We are also dedicated to the accumulation and dissemination of information concerning take of wild raptors for the purpose of falconry. One of WRTC's main objectives is to see all forty-nine states open for nonresident take to all of America's falconers. Most States allow nonresident take of raptors for falconry with the exception of eight. Alaska is one of those eight and the WRTC would like to pursue opening Alaska for nonresident harvest under established guidelines so as to respect the rights of Alaskan falconers. Currently Alaska allows harvest (trapping, fishing, and hunting) of all wildlife species to nonresidents, except raptors. This is inconsistent with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's mission statement and other wildlife harvest principles in Alaska. In addition it is inconsistent with the Privileges & Immunities clause of the U.S. Constitution.

WRTC's members have spoken with Alaska falconers and have been informed that some are against nonresident take. We are perplexed as to why any falconer would be biased against another falconer since our strength is derived from our unity in such matters. It has been adequately documented by many world renowned raptor biologists that Alaska has extremely large and stable populations of nesting raptors particularly gyrfalcons and peregrines. Biologically, a nonresident harvest would have no impact on wild populations. Also if nonresident take was implemented correctly, there would be no adverse affect on the few resident falconers, so why would these few individuals be against it? WRTC is interested in listening to objections voiced by Alaskan falconers and/or the Alaska Department of Fish and Game concerning nonresident harvest of raptors.

The following is a list of ideas for implementation that might be helpful in alleviating potential concerns expressed by some Alaskan falconers:

No change in take of raptors for Alaskan falconers

No harvest by nonresidents from eyries used by the bird watching community (designated as such by the Fish & Game Department with the assistance of AFA)

No harvest on Native Lands without permission

If harvest is implemented correctly there would be no negative impact on the resource or on resident falconers. We hope the Alaska Falconers Association will appreciate the fact that there is nothing to lose and will therefore embrace the common good for American falconry. Allowing non resident raptor take will benefit falconry in the United States by allowing an individual to accomplish a life long dream to take a wild raptor in Alaska, or a breeder to improve the genetics of his captive bred stock. Taking a raptor in Alaska would be an accomplishment that would be a highlight of a persons falconry career and an adventure never forgotten. Alaska falconers would be a tremendous asset to help a fellow falconer realize those dreams.

The WRTC has already been instrumental in opening a few other states for nonresident take with absolutely no ill effects. At this time we would like to request an official written position from the Alaska Falconers Association as to whether you support or do not support a nonresident harvest of raptors in Alaska. If you do not support nonresident harvest we would appreciate an explanation as to why. Thank you for your time and hopefully we can work together so all our fellow falconers can enjoy a take of raptors in the great State of Alaska, just as they are able to do in the vast majority of States in this marvelous nation!

Sincerely,

James Ingram MD
President, WRTC