

REVOKING THE PREDATOR RULE IN ALASKA'S NATIONAL PRESERVES

Passed: 215 - 196

SUMMARY:

The House passed an amendment that would prohibit conservation protections for wolves, bears, and other large carnivores on Alaskan national preserves. (*September 7, 2017, Roll Call No. 478*)

BACKGROUND:

The National Park System was created to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. In Alaska, under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), 104 million acres of federal lands were dedicated for specific conservation purposes. These lands included nationally renowned refuges and parks, such as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Denali National Park.

The National Park Service (NPS) issued a rule in 2015 to conserve native carnivores on tens of millions of acres of national preserve land in Alaska. The rule was put in place to protect bears, wolves and other carnivores from aggressive hunting policies propagated by the State of Alaska to artificially increase populations of moose and other game species for sport hunting. The National Park Service issued the rule to maintain the balance of predator and prey and safeguard biodiversity on Alaska's national preserves, while still allowing traditional and sport hunting.

Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) offered an amendment (H. Amdt. 351) to H.R. 3354, the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2018, that would block the NPS rule to protect iconic wildlife that live on Alaska's national preserves. This legislation aims to follow in the footsteps of Congress's elimination of protections for predators on national wildlife refuges by eliminating protections for predators on national preserves. Specifically, the amendment would prohibit any funding from being used to implement the NPS rule to protect wolves, bears, and other large carnivores in Alaska's national preserves from excessive and cruel non-subsistence hunting practices permitted by the State of Alaska. By prohibiting funding from being used to implement the rule, Representative Young's amendment effectively voids it. His amendment also prohibits any funding from being used to develop, issue, or implement any other similar rule in the future. The House passed this legislation on September 7, 2017.

OUTCOME:

On September 7, 2017, the House passed the Young amendment, 215 - 196. "No" was the pro-conservation vote.