



March 25, 2020

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
PO Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Commissioner Vincent-Lang:

Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) is requesting an appropriate allowance for an out-of-season hunt for villages in our region to provide food for residents who are isolated in their communities under the impacts of COVID-19. While life has not changed significantly for urban dwellers, rural residents must take above and beyond precautionary measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. TCC villages, which already experience a constrained food supply, are now facing food security threats due to decreased flights and self-imposed travel restrictions.

Travel restrictions between Fairbanks, TCC villages and hub communities have limited the ability of households, village grocery stores and tribes to obtain groceries. Villages have increased risk to COVID-19, including housing shortages, lack of water and sewer infrastructure, limited health care professionals, health disparities, and high elder populations. Leadership from several villages report that implemented travel restrictions and measures to avert the spread of the coronavirus in their communities are posing significant barriers to obtain packaged food and are the basis for an emergency opening. The situation begs for the immediate need of traditional food resources that are available in the local environs of villages. The emergency opening is anticipated to provide nutritional needs for communities until transportation networks and emergency relief efforts are resolved.

TCC requests the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to decree emergency openings that allow communities to harvest one or two moose in the next week as needed and self-report to the ADF&G in order to meet their nutritional needs in this extraordinary period facing COVID-19. TCC requests for ADF&G's guidance on information needed by the State of Alaska to approve the emergency out-of-season opening request and reporting requirements so communities can conform to appropriate statutes and regulations. The current circumstance is extraordinary to the ceremonial, potlatch and cultural permits that are occasionally authorized in the fish and game regulations. TCC believes that the COVID-19 measures are equivalent to "dire emergency" conformance in state game regulations.



We look forward to working with you to address these critical needs.

Sincerely,
TANANA CHIEFS CONFERENCE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor Joseph".

Victor Joseph
Chief/Chairman