

Young urges wolf hunting

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) urged the Department of the Interior to file a stay against Judge Oliver Gasch's ruling to stop the wolf control program in Alaska.

"The wolf control program is under the jurisdiction of the State of Alaska — it is not a federal matter," Young said. "The ruling completely disregards previous court decisions as well as the provisions of the Alaska Statehood Act. It could have grave consequences for the state's right to manage its own game in the future."

In a meeting with the Interior Department, Young stated his objections to Gasch's ruling and requested that Interior act immediately before weather conditions prevent future hunting.

"If the wolf control program is not completed on schedule, the wolf packs will wipe out a large portion of the caribou herd, especially during the calving season," Young said.

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game wolf control plan, the majority of the wolves will be taken from the caribou herd's calving grounds where most of the wolf predation occurs. This program began last year in an effort to halt the rapid decline of the Western Arctic caribou herd.