



January 7, 2008

TO: All the Friends of Romeo,

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game has been trying to decide what to do with Romeo. Their closed-door discussions are not public, so we can only guess at their intentions. Apparently, several people (including a man in ADF&G Sport Fisheries & his wife – former Californians) have been making frequent “nuisance” complaints about Romeo: “He was on the same trail; He whined at us; He followed us at a distance - I was so afraid!”, etc... There is plenty of solid evidence that Romeo has never caused any particular

problems, but that doesn't matter as these people just don't want him around. A second possible “problem” with Romeo is that he contradicts the “bad-wolf” image that some state legislators would like Alaskans to believe in. Several of these same legislators (and their friends) enjoy shooting wolves from their small planes, even making wagers with each other on their wolf-shooting prowess. They oppose the currently proposed legislation that would prevent them from continuing their “sport”. A publicly visual “good-wolf” is the last thing they would want.

Reliable sources have revealed that the ADF&G has decided to dart Romeo and relocate him far from Juneau. Previous Alaskan wolf relocation studies have shown that even if Romeo were relocated to an “ideal” site - he would have less than a 10% chance of survival. During the winter, Romeo is highly visible - watched daily by so many people, that it would be very difficult for the ADF&G to dart him locally without risking almost certain public objection. Thus, the current plan calls for his darting and relocation during the spring, when the ice (and the viewing public) have left the Mendenhall Lake area.

However, if at any time the ADF&G can find Romeo near Amalga they will immediately take him. They continue in their efforts to convince people that Romeo was the “alleged” wolf involved in the disappearance of a dog at Amalga last year... despite photographic evidence indicating the presence of other wolves (including a black one) living in the Amalga area, and despite the fact that a number of people observed Romeo laying on the shores of Mendenhall Lake on the exact day that the Amalga dog disappeared. Perhaps finding Romeo near Amalga is viewed by ADF&G as their easiest way to dispose of him with the minimum public outcry, which possibly explains why two unidentified men were following his tracks on the west side of Mendenhall Lake just before freeze-up. They inquired of two hikers if they'd seen Romeo, and then asserted that their “job” was to drive Romeo up Montana Creek and beyond to the Windfall Lake area (a virtually impossible task unless of course, they were also carrying some form of “aversion” equipment). Perhaps their real job was to just determine if Romeo was on his way to Amalga, which is still ridiculous because he has never been known to travel up there.

Public knowledge and vocal support are Romeo's best protection. (It would probably be just wishful thinking to hope that the ADF&G would change their plan to dispose of Romeo just because this winter he has been valiantly downing an average of two beavers per week in the Mendenhall Lake area, thus greatly assisting the USFS in their controversial beaver control program.)

Please share this information with any interested parties, and also contact Doug Larsen, the ADF&G Wildlife Conservation Division Director. He plays a large role in Romeo's final disposition and could be influenced by positive public input. His e-mail address is [doug.larsen@alaska.gov](mailto:doug.larsen@alaska.gov) and his work phone is (907) 465-4190. As always, be courteous and respectful.

Likely ADF&G would like Romeo to just "disappear" and not return next winter, but hundreds of Juneau people and unknown numbers of people outside of Juneau would feel his loss.