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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Kenai Peninsula Fall 2012 Brown Bear Hunts Close by Emergency Order**

**SOLDOTNA** – The fall 2012 brown bear drawing permit hunts (DB301, DB303, DB305, DB307, DB309) and registration permit hunt (RB300) in Game Management Units 7 and 15, will be closed because the total human-caused mortality of female brown bears has reached the management objective. Human-caused mortality includes defense-of-life-and-property kills, automobile collisions, illegally taken brown bears, and hunter kills.

The department manages harvest so that annual human-caused mortalities do not exceed 10 reproductive-age females. From January 1, 2012, through October 9 2012, biologists have documented 11 human-caused reproductive-age female brown bear mortalities on the Kenai Peninsula including 9 from fall hunts and one recent DLP. Therefore, the fall portion of the 2012/13 brown bear drawing permit season, and the 2012 fall brown bear registration permit season, are closed by emergency order effective October 10.

Given the Board of Game direction to manage on a 3-year average, the Department will use some management flexibility to adjust the fall season dates. Most female bears will be in their dens by late October and the Department plans to reopen the brown bear season to allow additional opportunity for hunters to target male bears. This season will reopen on October 25 at 12:01 am and is currently planned to continue through November 30, if all human-caused mortalities have not exceeded 10 reproductive-age female brown bears from January 1 through October 25 based on a 3 year average.

Drawing permit holders (DB301, DB303, DB305, DB307, and DB309) will also be able to hunt the adjusted fall season and during the spring (April 1, 2013, through June 15, 2013) provided they did not harvest a bear this fall.

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