

## **ALASKA BOARD OF GAME FINDINGS**

### **Intensive Management for Unit 20D**

**95-85-BOG**

1. Given the long history and importance of hunting in Game Management Unit 20D, the Board finds that human consumption of moose and caribou is the preferred use of those species in Unit 20D.
  
2. Based upon information provided by the Department and public testimony regarding habitat condition and potential, population characteristics and trends, sustained yield principles and various ecological relationships, the Board has determined the moose population should be between 8,000 and 10,000 animals with an annual human harvest of 240 to 400. The current moose population is estimated at 2,800-4,800. Harvest during the past 5 years has averaged about 130 moose.
  
3. Based on information described above, the Board has determined the caribou population should be between 600 and 800 animals with an annual human harvest of 30 to 50. The population currently is estimated at 500. The season has been closed since 1992.
  
4. According to information provided the Board, the moose population has been depleted and its productivity reduced. The moose population and harvestable surplus are currently limited by wolf and bear predation and there has been a significant reduction in allowable moose harvest. Habitat in the Unit can support a density of at least 1.7 moose per square mile.
  
5. According to information provided the Board, the caribou population has been depleted and its productivity reduced through adverse weather, bear predation on calves and wolf predation. The caribou population and harvestable surplus

are limited by predation. Hunting of caribou has been prohibited since 1992.

6. The Board believes it is feasible to enhance the moose and caribou populations through recognized and prudent management techniques.

7. There is considerable research indicating brown bears are significant predators of moose and caribou calves, and the Board concludes the brown bear population should be reduced until there is a consistent and significant increase in moose and caribou calf survival.


8. Therefore, in order to increase calf survival, improve productivity and increase the moose population, the Board finds it appropriate to adopt regulations allowing hunters to take one brown bear per regulatory year and waive the \$25 tag fee for brown bear hunters in southeastern or northern Unit 20D. The Board believes that the combination of more liberal bag limit and no tag fee will result in a higher take of brown bear and reduced predation.

9. The wolf population in Unit 20D is currently approximately 80. There is considerable research indicating wolves are significant predators of caribou and moose. In light of the depletion of the caribou and moose populations, the Board believes it appropriate to set the wolf population objective at 15-125 wolves. This broad range is necessary to allow temporary reduction of the wolf population to low levels to stimulate prey population increases, followed by recovery of the wolf population to higher levels.

10. Department biologists estimate there will be 100-110 wolves this spring after pups are born. The Board concludes the wolf population should be reduced until moose and caribou populations and harvest reach established goals. The Board believes that a longer trapping season will contribute to a higher take of wolves and reduce predation.

11. The board finds it appropriate to request a draft wolf control implementation plan be developed by the Department and presented to the Board at the October 1995 meeting to allow the board to consider further options to reduce the number of wolves in the area.

DATE: March 31, 1995

  
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Dick Burley, Chair

VOTE: 6 Favor 0 Oppose 1 Absent