

FINDING OF EMERGENCY

The Alaska Board of Game finds that an emergency exists and the attached regulations are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety or general welfare. The facts constituting the emergency include the following:

As a result of the disastrous impact of the low salmon runs in the Yukon River, there are food shortages and imminent widespread threats to health and safety to individuals and communities throughout the disaster area. Residents of Kaltag rely tremendously on the fall chum salmon run for food. The Board of Fisheries management plan calls for 600,000 fall chum salmon; the department estimates that this year the fall run will reach only 450,000 chum. Restrictions in subsistence fishing time were recently implemented in this area of the Yukon River.

The board has received information that hunters in a portion of Unit 21D, outside of the Koyukuk Controlled Use Area, need to take the field as quickly as possible in order to ensure affected villages of adequate supplies of meat given current shortages and uncertain weather conditions.

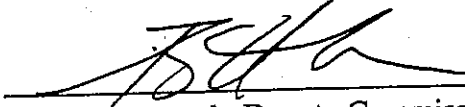
Providing traditional alternatives to food sources is preferred in responding to the disaster emergency. Moose harvest necessary to cope with the disaster emergency is within sustained yield guidelines for the harvestable surplus of the relevant moose populations. Moose densities along the Yukon River within the boundaries of Unit 21D are currently low-to-moderate, and data indicate that bull numbers are healthy. Although the low fish runs are expected to result in more hunting activity in the unit, the department does not anticipate a significant increase in the overall moose harvest. Increased hunting activity early in the season may result in an increased bull harvest, but may result in fewer cows harvested later in the season. The department will continue to monitor the hunts in accordance with its sustained yield obligations.

ADOPTION ORDER

Under the authority of AS 16.05.255, AS 16.05.258, and under a delegation of authority from the Board of Game under AS 16.05.270, the attached regulations are therefore adopted as emergency regulations to take effect immediately as provided in AS 44.62.180 (3).

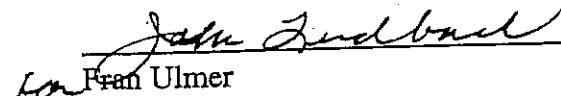
This action is not expected to require an increased appropriation.

DATE: 8-31-98  
Juneau, Alaska

  
Robert Bosworth, Deputy Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

FILING CERTIFICATION

John Lindback for  
I, Fran Ulmer, Lieutenant Governor for the State of Alaska, certify that on Aug 31, 1998, at 4:48 p.m., I filed the attached regulations according to the provisions of AS 44.62.

  
for Fran Ulmer  
Lieutenant Governor

Effective August 31, 1998  
Register 147, October 1998

Expires December 28, 1998  
unless made "permanent"  
by the adopting agency.

98-124-508  
FINDING OF EMERGENCY

The Alaska Board of Game finds that an emergency exists and the attached regulations are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety or general welfare. The facts constituting the emergency include the following:

Low salmon runs in the Yukon River have resulted in food shortages and imminent widespread threats to health and safety to individuals and communities throughout the disaster area. The board has received information that hunters in the communities in a portion of Unit 18, west of but not including the Andreafsky River drainage and north and west of a line from Mountain Village to Kuzilavak Mountain and then to Cape Romanzoff, need to begin hunting as quickly as possible in order to ensure affected villages of adequate supplies of meat given current shortages of fish and uncertain weather conditions. At this time the department is assessing the 1998 fall chum salmon run as very low in abundance and late in timing. The chinook and summer chum salmon runs were also late and low in numbers. All species of salmon arriving in the river have shown signs of stress, such as low weight, small size, parasites and fungus. Restrictions in subsistence fishing time were recently implemented in this area, and emergency food drops have occurred under the governor's declaration of a disaster emergency.


Providing traditional alternatives to local wild food scarcity is preferred in responding to the disaster emergency. Moose harvest necessary to cope with the disaster emergency is within sustained yield guidelines for the harvestable surplus of the relevant moose populations. The moose population along the lower Yukon River has been increasing during the past several years. The department does not believe that opening the season four days earlier than in the past will have any noticeable effect on the moose population and will likely not result in a marked increase in the number of bull moose harvested during the 1998-99 season. The department will continue to monitor the hunts in accordance with its sustained yield obligations.

ADOPTION ORDER

Under the authority of AS 16.05.255, AS 16.05.258, and under a delegation of authority from the Board of Game under AS 16.05.270, the attached regulations are therefore adopted as emergency regulations to take effect immediately as provided in AS 44.62.180 (3).

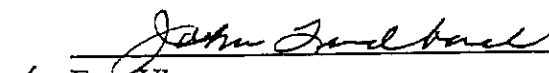
This action is not expected to require an increased appropriation.

DATE: 8.31.98  
Juneau, Alaska

  
Robert Bosworth, Deputy Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

FILING CERTIFICATION

John Lindback, for  
I, Fran Ulmer, Lieutenant Governor for the State of Alaska, certify that on Aug. 31, 1998, at 4:50 p.m., I filed the attached regulations according to the provisions of AS 44.62.

  
for Fran Ulmer  
Lieutenant Governor

Effective August 31, 1998  
Register 14<sup>th</sup> October 1998

Expires December 28, 1998  
unless made "permanent"  
by the adopting agency.

98-123-BOG

FINDING OF EMERGENCY

The Alaska Board of Game finds that an emergency exists and the attached regulations are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety or general welfare. The facts constituting the emergency include the following:

The Northern Alaska Peninsula caribou herd population management goal is 15,000 to 20,000 caribou, with a minimum bull:cow ratio of 40 bulls per 100 cows. The herd size was 16,500 caribou in 1992 and declined to 12,000 in 1994. The current estimate is 9,200 animals.

The board has been concerned by this gradual population decline and has been watching it closely; it was the department's belief that the regulations currently in place were restrictive enough to protect the population, and yet offer some hunting opportunity for local and nonlocal hunters.

Now that the population size has dropped below 10,000, the existing regulations do not adequately protect cows. The harvest of cows occurs primarily during the winter months, primarily by Unit 9 residents. Last year, the harvest of cows was estimated at 500 animals. Prudent management of this herd would require that cow harvest is reduced as much as possible to reverse the downward trend. Although the overall population has declined below 10,000 animals the bull:cow ratio is relatively high at 42 bulls per 100 cows; therefore, bulls can be harvested without contributing to the decline or dropping the bull:cow ratio to an unacceptable level.


Accordingly, the board finds that the most effective measure to curtail the population decline is to substantially reduce harvest of cow caribou and redirect the winter and spring harvest by residents from cows to bulls. This is especially important in Unit 9C where much of the winter harvest occurs. Additionally, it is important for all hunters to take only bulls during September through November to protect calves and maximize productivity. If regulatory action is delayed, the population will continue to decline to an unacceptable level and may result in closure to the hunting of this herd in the future.

ADOPTION ORDER

Under the authority of AS 16.05.255, AS 16.05.258, and under a delegation of authority from the Board of Game under AS 16.05.270, the attached regulations are therefore adopted as emergency regulations to take effect immediately as provided in AS 44.62.180 (3).

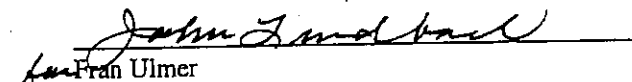
This action is not expected to require an increased appropriation.

DATE: 8.19.98  
Juneau, Alaska

  
Frank Rue, Commissioner  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

FILING CERTIFICATION

John Lundback For  
I, Fran Ulmer, Lieutenant Governor for the State of Alaska, certify that on Aug 20, 1998, at 9:33 a.m., I filed the attached regulations according to the provisions of AS 44.62.

  
Fran Ulmer  
Lieutenant Governor

Effective August 20, 1998  
Register 147, October 1998

Expires December 17, 1998  
unless made "permanent"  
by the adopting agency.

<u>CARIBOU</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>FINDING</u> for high levels of human consumptive use
<i>Tok Area</i>		
Chisana 40-mile	southern Unit 12 20D, 20E, 25C	negative positive
<i>Ft. Yukon Area</i>		
Central Arctic Porcupine	Unit 26B 26C, 25A, 25B	positive positive
<i>Galena Area</i>		
Ray Mountains Wolf Mountains Galena Mountains	20F and 24 Unit 21C 21D and 21C	negative negative negative
<i>McGrath Area</i>		
Tonzona Sunshine Mountain Beaver Mountain Rainy Pass Farewell/Big River	Unit 19C 21A and 19D Unit 21A Unit 19C 19C and 19D	negative negative negative negative negative
<i>Delta Junction Area</i>		
McComb	20D	positive
<i>Fairbanks Area</i>		
Delta White Mountain Denali	20A and 13E 20F, 25 and 20B 20C and 13E	positive negative negative

<u>MOOSE</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>FINDING</u> for high levels of human consumptive use
<i>Tok Area</i>		
Yukon River	portion Unit 20E	negative
40-mile	portion Unit 20E	positive
Unit 12	Unit 12	positive
<i>Ft. Yukon Area</i>		
Southern Brooks Range	Unit 25A	negative
Eastern Yukon Basin	Unit 25B	negative
Yukon Flats	Unit 25D	positive
Central North Slope	Unit 26B	negative
Eastern North Slope	Unit 26C	negative
<i>Galena Area</i>		
Lower Nowitna River	Unit 21B	negative
Unit 21C	Unit 21C	negative
Yukon River drainage	Unit 21D	positive
Koyukuk River drainage	Unit 24	positive
<i>McGrath Area</i>		
Mid. Kuskokwim River	Unit 19A	positive
Up.Holitna,Hoholitna,Aniak R	Unit 19B	positive
South Fork, Tonzona, Big R	Unit 19C	negative
Up.Kuskokwim River lowlands	Unit 19D	positive
Up. Innoko & Nowitna rivers	Unit 21A	negative
Mid. Yukon River drainage	Unit 21E	positive
<i>Delta Junction Area</i>		
Unit 20D	Unit 20D	positive
<i>Fairbanks Area</i>		
Unit 20A	Unit 20A	positive
Unit 20B	Unit 20B	positive
Unit 20C	Unit 20C	positive
Unit 20F	Unit 20F	negative
Unit 25C	Unit 25C	negative

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME**  
**98-121-BOG**

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game regarding HB 168,  
An Act relating to the use of traditional means of access to assist in taking game or fish and to  
traditional means of access for traditional outdoor activities on land and water set aside for fish  
and game purposes.

The Board of Game uses access restrictions that often affect areas larger than 640 acres, in the  
form of Controlled Use Areas.

One of the principle actions available to the board for protection of wildlife, habitat, broadest  
possible hunter opportunity, and hunt quality in areas of heavy harvest pressure and user conflict  
is the establishment of Controlled Use Areas. Controlled Use Areas allow separation of user  
groups and modes of hunting in space and time, thus reducing conflicts between them while  
maximizing hunter opportunity as a whole.

By their nature, however, Controlled Use Areas restrict access. For that reason, the board  
considers their establishment in cases where significant conflict between user groups or  
particular resource considerations have reached a level where separation of uses is less restrictive  
of overall opportunity than other alternatives available to the board, such as adjustment of season  
and bag limits, limiting participation through drawing hunts, or area closures.

Some examples of conflicting groups include motorized versus nonmotorized, aircraft versus  
boat, airboat versus prop boat, bowhunters versus rifle hunters. Separating hunter groups by  
restricting access in space and/or time has been used to the mutual satisfaction of the groups  
involved. Generally, there has been broad public support for these actions.

The Board of Game has not done a complete analysis of this bill, therefore it is unclear to us how  
this legislation would affect the board's ability to resolve user conflicts and protect wildlife  
habitat and populations in the future for the benefit of users. If, however, the bill's effect is to  
remove the board's ability to establish controlled use areas or their equivalent, it would greatly  
compromise the board's ability to maintain overall hunter opportunity. It would force the more  
frequent employment of more restrictive actions such as shorter seasons, lower bag limits and  
area closures in order to protect the resource and resolve user conflicts.

DATE: March 30, 1998  
Fairbanks, AK

Lori Quakenbush  
Lori Quakenbush, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 7-0

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME  
RESOLUTION #98-120-BOG**

**Relating to ballot initiative banning use of snares for harvesting wolves.**

**WHEREAS**, the Alaska Board of Game recognizes that wolves are an important resource valued by Alaska residents, both socially and economically, and that the elimination of snares as a method of harvest would lead to economic and personal hardship for those dependent on trapping for their livelihood or recreation, and

**WHEREAS**, the harvest of wolves is a biologically sound practice that plays an important role in the management of other species, especially ungulates, and traps and snares are important cost-effective methods for balancing predator and prey. Snares, when properly deployed, are among the most efficient, humane, and selective methods of wolf harvest, and

**WHEREAS**, the group that is attempting to bring this issue to the voters has apparently submitted enough signatures to ensure a place on the ballot in 1998, with the intent to ban the use of snares to harvest wolves, and to criminalize the possession, sale, and purchase of wolves that have been snared, and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Game found (98-BOG-119) that information used by the group is not representative of common trapping practices ,and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Game has a record of integrating informed public debate with scientific data and historical records to develop wildlife management strategies, and the use of ballot initiatives to decide management issues circumvents this process, and

**WHEREAS**, passage of this initiative would have significant adverse social, economic, and wildlife management implications, and


**WHEREAS**, the Board of Game and the Department of Fish and Game is constitutionally and statutorily mandated to manage Alaska's wildlife, including wolves, according to the sustained yield principle,

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Game cannot support this proposed ballot initiative, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board of Game urges Governor Knowles and Commissioner Rue to issue a detailed position statement on the impacts that this initiative would have on rural economics and wildlife management in Alaska, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Board of Game recognizes the right of Department personnel and individual Board members to speak freely as individuals on this issue, and encourages them to do so.

**ADOPTED DATE: March 26, 1998**  
Fairbanks, Alaska

  
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Lori Quakenbush, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game

**Alaska Board of Game Findings**  
**Trapping and Wolf Snaring in Alaska**  
**98-119-BOG**

At its March, 1998 meeting in Fairbanks, the Board of Game considered several proposals that restrict or eliminate the use of snares for harvesting wolves and other trapping concerns. Extensive public testimony and advisory committee reports regarding concern over the reduction or loss of snares as a method of harvesting wolves, and other trapping concerns was also received on both the proposals and the potential ballot initiative banning wolf snaring.

Based on this testimony and information provided by the Division of Wildlife Conservation and the Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection, and considerable deliberation, the BOG makes the following findings:

1. Snares are an important harvest tool for Alaska trappers, and the restriction or removal of that tool will result in personal and financial hardship for trappers and others dependent on the fur trade for their livelihood. In most areas of Alaska, economic opportunities are few, and the inability to harvest wolves with snares will lead to significantly reduced income levels in already depressed communities.
2. The harvest of wolves, through regulated methods and means, is an important management tool used by the Department of Fish and Game and the BOG in maintaining harvestable quantities of big game species, and is considered to be an important factor in the management of those species. Restricting or eliminating the use of snares to harvest wolves will reduce wolf harvest numbers, leading to potential predator to prey ratio imbalances and low moose and caribou densities in many areas.
3. It is strongly substantiated through many years of scientific monitoring and research that wolves are a highly prolific, productive and resilient species, capable of sustaining consistent harvestable surplus rates of over 30% annually on any given wolf pack. The annual reported harvest from Alaska's estimated wolf population of 7000 seldom exceeds 20% in a given area or statewide under existing harvest and management regimes.
4. The source of the data used by snaring opponents and ballot initiative supporters is the result of an intensive wolf trapping and snaring program conducted by the Department of Fish and Game in 1993-1994 in GMU 20A. It can not be considered representative of common trapping practices. Trappers use varying numbers of snares at a set, rarely more than 12, determined by location and prevailing conditions. There is no evidence that trappers use snares set in the manner of a drift net, or that they set snares in multiple heights.
5. The rate of incidental catch by trappers of non-target species such as moose, caribou, eagles, ravens, and bears is very low, due to the careful and exact placement of their snares, and the timing of trapping seasons, in habitats, locations, and configurations that minimize catch of other species. Other species of furbearers caught in wolf snares, such as fox, wolverine and lynx, are desirable and legal, and are not considered to be incidental non-target catches to the trapper.
6. The instances of wolves being caught around other parts of the body, such as the legs and feet are rare. In cases where wolves are caught around the foot, the snare rarely breaks the flesh. Most wolves caught in snares are caught around the neck, leading to swift and humane death. A very small




percentage of wolves are caught around the torso. These wolves are usually still alive when the trapper returns to the set.

7. We heard widespread public support among Alaska residents, particularly those residing in rural areas, for the use of snares by trappers to harvest wolves. There is no evidence to support the notion that the bush communities support a ban on wolf snares.
8. Alaska trappers are conscientious and operate within the laws and regulations governing trapping. Snares are rarely left operable at the end of the season. Snares are valuable to the trapper, and great effort is made to recover snares set in the field.
9. Regulated trap checks are not reasonable in Alaska, considering climatic conditions, length of traplines, and other considerations that would make a time limit impossible to comply with.
10. Trap identification is not warranted at this time. Trappers have experienced harassment by those against trapping and worry about the information being made available to the public. The Alaska Trappers Association assists law enforcement officers in determining who traps belong to. Most traplines are well known by other people and Department staff, further assisting in the identification of those trappers.

The Board of Game found that much of the information used in the claims against snaring came from a specific intensive wolf management program. Many more snares were used per set and higher density of snares were used for a longer season in habitats not normally trapped. The area also had a higher density of moose than most of Alaska. Two grizzly bears were caught before the normal trapping season begins, and two eagles were caught in snares set by helicopter in high terrain.

It is our conclusion that the numbers used by the Alaska Wildlife Alliance and Alaskans Against Snaring Wolves are inflated and do not represent common trapping practices or actual rates of wolf harvest or incidental take of other species.

**ADOPTED DATE: March 26, 1998**  
Fairbanks, Alaska

  
**Lori Quakenbush, Chairman**  
**Alaska Board of Game**

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game  
Regarding Customary and Traditional Use of Muskoxen  
in Northwestern Unit 23  
98-118 BOG

At its October 1997 meeting in Nome, the Board of Game took up a proposal sponsored by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to determine whether there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen in northwestern Unit 23. The muskoxen now in Unit 23 were introduced in 1970 and have been protected from hunting by state law, since then. Muskoxen in Unit 23 represented an unusual situation for the C&T determination process because muskoxen have been absent from that area for many years. Unlike muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula no federal hunt has been established on this population of muskoxen on federal lands so there has been no reported recent use of muskoxen by residents of Unit 23.

Board deliberations on the findings of a customary and traditional use lead to the following conclusions:

Criterion 1: A long-term consistent pattern of non-commercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user's control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.

While the Board of Game did not find that a consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance on this re-established population had occurred over a period of not less than one generation (approximately 30 years), the Board did find that the reason was due to an interruption by circumstances beyond the users' control.

Muskox bones and horns have been found near Cape Thompson and Kivalina associated with other cultural materials at known archeological sites. Inupiaq oral histories include references to muskoxen and one muskox was reported to have been taken by a Point Hope resident in 1946. In addition to the direct evidence of customary and traditional use of muskoxen in Unit 23 there is a good record for use of muskoxen on the North Slope by the Inupiaq culture. The Inupiat people of northwestern Unit 23 share that culture, which includes the use of muskoxen for food and blankets.

Criterion 2: A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.

Due to the long interruption of the availability of the population the board could not determine directly when muskoxen were taken in Unit 23. A pattern of taking muskoxen during the late-winter and spring has become established for muskox hunting on the newly established federal hunt on the Seward Peninsula and on the North Slope. Even though the

federal hunt was established with specific seasons, extensions have been granted to accommodate the developing pattern of taking.

Criterion 3: A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.

Due to the long interruption of the availability of the population the board could not determine directly the method and means of harvest in Unit 23. In neighboring areas, the primary transportation is by snowmachine and foot without the use of aircraft or other expensive commercial services. Muskoxen harvests are efficient and economical to local hunters. The grouping behavior of the animals when approached allows hunters to easily get within range and select animals to harvest.

Criterion 4: The area in which the noncommercial, long-term and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game population has been established.

The current range of muskoxen is within the area that has traditionally been used for subsistence hunting of large land mammals by residents of Point Hope and Kivalina. Therefore, if hunting were allowed it would likely occur in this area.

Criterion 5: A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.

While many families now use freezers for storage, most fish is smoked or dried as is some moose and caribou. Since muskoxen have not been harvested in this area in many years the Board of Game could not address the handling and preparation of muskoxen directly. However, available information suggests that the handling and preparation, preservation and storage would occur in the same manner as that of other big game subsistence species. On the Seward Peninsula and on the North Slope, the meat is salvaged and used and hides are used for warmth as blankets or clothing. There has been no trophy use of horns or hides.

Criterion 6: A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.

Hunting knowledge in the communities within Unit 23 are known to be passed along from parent to child. Learning commonly occurs when children accompany their parents during hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. When hunting large animals young boys are taught hunting skills by older brothers, fathers, or uncles.

Criterion 7: A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.

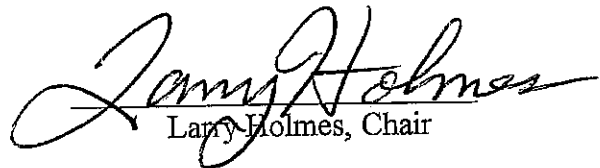
Sharing of big game and other wild resources is common in communities of Northwest Alaska as demonstrated by subsistence surveys indicating that virtually every household received such gifts.

Criterion 8: A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.

Communities in Unit 23 take, use, and rely upon a wide diversity of game resources. Documented harvests ranged from 398 pounds per capita in Kotzebue in 1989 to 762 pounds per capita per year in Kivalina 1992 (Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1997). The typical community harvests about 50 different species of plants, fish, and wildlife each year. It is also well documented that economic opportunities for cash are few and mean household income is low, therefore wild foods are essential to many people of Unit 23.

After weighing the individual criteria, the board found that there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen in Unit 23. The board believed that muskoxen were used, to the extent they were available, prior to extirpation from the area, and that this use would have resumed, but for legal constraints, as soon as animal were again available. The extirpation was not within the control of current users.

DATE: January 18, 1998  
Bethel, Alaska

  
Larry Holmes, Chair

VOTE: 7-0

97-117-BOG  
Findings of the Alaska Board of Game  
Regarding Customary and Traditional Use of Muskoxen  
on the Seward Peninsula

At its October 1997 meeting in Nome, the Board of Game took up a proposal to find a positive Customary and Traditional (C&T) finding for muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula. Muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula represented an unusual situation for the C&T determination process because muskoxen disappeared from the Seward Peninsula and have been absent from that area for at least 100 years. The muskoxen now on the Seward Peninsula were introduced in 1970 and have been protected from hunting by state law, since then. A federal hunt began on this population of muskoxen on federal lands of the Seward Peninsula in 1995-96 and more than 30 muskoxen have been harvested.

Board deliberations on the findings of a customary and traditional use lead to the following conclusions:

Criterion 1: A long-term consistent pattern of non-commercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user's control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.

While the Board of Game did not find that a consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance on this re-established population had occurred over a period of not less than one generation (approximately 30 years), the Board did find that the reason was due to an interruption by circumstances beyond the users' control.

Muskox bones found on and near the Seward Peninsula, the lack of geographical barriers to prevent muskoxen from reaching the peninsula from known populations to the north, and a name for muskoxen in the local language provided evidence that muskoxen once inhabited the area and were known by the people. Interviews conducted by ADF&G Division of Subsistence have included elders of the Seward Peninsula who remember their elders talking about muskoxen. Although the Board found no direct evidence of use of muskoxen prior to the federal hunt established in 1995 by the residents of the Seward Peninsula, there is a much better record for the North Slope of Alaska. A large majority of the people of the Seward Peninsula are Inupiat Eskimos and share the same culture with the Inupiat of the North Slope. Had the Inupiat of the Seward Peninsula been allowed to hunt muskoxen soon after their introduction in 1970 there would be a recorded pattern of taking and use of approximately one generation at the time of this request for a finding. It is reasonable to assume the use of muskoxen would be similar to that found for the Inupiat of the North Slope of Alaska.

Criterion 2: A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.

A pattern of taking muskoxen during the late-winter and spring has developed during the recent federal hunt. Even though the hunt was established with specific seasons, extensions have been granted to accommodate the developing pattern of taking.

Criterion 3: A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.

The primary transportation is by snowmachine and foot without the use of aircraft or other expensive commercial services. The Board heard testimony that the harvest would be more efficient and economical if the hunters were not forced to travel farther from their villages to hunt on more distant federal lands.

Criterion 4: The area in which the noncommercial, long-term and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game population has been established.

For this criterion the area has been defined by land ownership. Federal lands farther from the villages are open for muskox hunting while state and private lands closer to the villages are closed. The Board is confident that a harvest area would be established for muskoxen in the absence of the legal constraints although it would likely be somewhat different from the present area.

Criterion 5: A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.

The Board heard testimony that harvested muskoxen were being handled, prepared, preserved, and stored in the same manner as other big game subsistence species. The meat has been salvaged and used and hides have been used for warmth as blankets or clothing. There has been no trophy use of horns or hides.

Criterion 6: A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.

On the Seward Peninsula hunting traditions are known to be taught to children by their parents and grandparents. Although hunting of muskoxen was illegal between 1970 and 1995, information about muskox movements, habits and behavior, especially regarding human safety, was being transferred among generations.

Criterion 7: A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.

The limited number of muskoxen available to be harvested in the federal hunt have been shared widely within the communities. Sharing of big game and other wild resources is common in communities of Northwest Alaska as demonstrated by subsistence surveys indicating that large percentages of households received such gifts. The Board believe that had the harvest of muskoxen been allowed in the past, this species would be fully incorporated into the subsistence pattern of these communities.


Criterion 8: A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.

Subsistence use of about 50 different species of fish, game, and plants is well documented for the Seward Peninsula communities (ADF&G Community Profile Database, Vol. 5 Arctic Region, Division of Subsistence). It is also well documented that economic opportunities for cash are few and mean household income is low, therefore wild foods are essential to many people of the Seward Peninsula.

After weighing the individual criteria, the Board found that there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula. The Board believes that muskoxen were used, to the extent they were available, prior to extirpation from the peninsula, and that this sporadic use would have resumed, but for legal constraints, as soon as animals were again available. The extirpation was not within the control of current users.

Date: 11/16/97  
Anchorage, Alaska

Vote: 4-2-1  
Fleagle absent

  
Larry Holmes, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game

97-116-BOG  
Findings of the Alaska Board of Game on Dall Sheep Management  
in the Western Brooks Range

The Board of Game considered information on the management and use of Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range contained in reports from the Division of Wildlife Conservation, the Division of Subsistence and public testimony at its meeting in Nome, Alaska. Based on this information the Board makes the following findings.

1. Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range occur in three populations: the DeLong Mountains in Game Management Units 23 and 26A west of the Etivluk River, the Baird Mountains in Game Management Unit 23 and the Schwatka Mountains in Game Management Units 23, 24 and 26A east of the Etivluk River.
2. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in the DeLong Mountains is 0 to 9 sheep per year.
3. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in the Baird Mountains is 18 to 47 sheep per year.
4. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in Game Management Unit 23 and Game Management Unit 26A portions of the Schwatka Mountains is 2 to 4 sheep per year.
5. The harvest of Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range should be allocated according to the following model, developed for game populations with Customary and Traditional (C&T) uses and a variable harvestable surplus:
  - a. If the harvestable surplus is less than the minimum necessary for subsistence purposes, the department may issue Tier II subsistence permits and apply conditions to the hunt consistent with the C&T use pattern.
  - b. If the harvestable surplus is between the minimum and maximum necessary for subsistence purposes, the department may issue subsistence registration permits and apply conditions to the hunt consistent with the C&T use pattern.
6. Applying this model to sheep of the Western Brooks Range results in the following determinations:
  - a. The harvestable surplus of sheep in the DeLong and Baird Mountains is variable. When the harvestable surplus is sufficient to allow subsistence harvest in either population, the department may issue subsistence registration permits. The conditions of the permits shall prohibit use of aircraft. (In deference to the request of subsistence users, no harvest will be allowed if the harvestable surplus is below the minimum necessary for subsistence.)

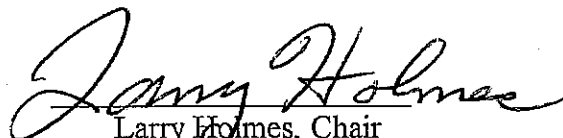


b. Because the harvestable surplus in the Schwatka Mountains substantially exceeds the demand for both C&T use and general hunting, the department may allow general hunting under authority of harvest tickets.

c. When the harvestable surplus in these populations is greater than the maximum amount necessary to provide for subsistence use, the department may issue general drawing permits to harvest the number of sheep in excess of that amount.

Date: 11/16/97  
Anchorage, Alaska

Vote: 6-0-1  
Absent: Fleagle

  
Larry Holmes, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game