

Background on the Antler Destruction Requirements in Unit 13 caribou subsistence hunts

Prepared for 1 July 2010 Board of Game Emergency Meeting by Becky Schwanke, ADFG, Glennallen

October 2006, Proposal 2 was a general proposal that listed ‘options for consideration’ concerning subsistence caribou and moose hunting in Units 11 and 13. The Department had No Recommendation (Board report prepared by the Division of Subsistence). **The Board adopted the proposal after several amendments were made, including the destruction of antlers for Unit 13 Tier II hunts.**

January 2008, Proposal 34 requested the repeal of antler destruction requirements for Unit 13 Tier II hunts. The Department recommendation was Take no Action: our rationale was that this was a discretionary hunt condition, and we could eliminate the condition if the Board so desired. Initially the Board voted 4-3 to take no action, but they brought it back up for discussion later in the meeting. **The Board amended the proposal to require the destruction of caribou antlers with 8 or more points (destruction requirements still applied to moose).**

March 2009, Proposal 85 requested the repeal of antler destruction requirements for subsistence moose and caribou hunts in Unit 13. The Department recommendation was Adopt: our rationale was that antlers from subsistence hunts could not be considered ‘trophy’ animals by B&C or P&Y standards, so this regulation was not effectively curbing the activity it was originally expected to. Regardless, hunters will often take the largest legal animal due the larger quantity of meat. **The Board voted to adopt this proposal, repealing the antler destruction requirements for both moose and caribou subsistence hunts in Unit 13.**

March 2009, Proposal 84, requested the authorization of a community hunt permit for moose and caribou for the Ahtna region. **Several amendments were made, including the caribou antler destruction requirement listed below, and the proposal was passed by the Board.**

The Emergency Petition by Warren Olson, dated 13 May 2010, requests for the Unit 13 Nelchina Caribou, RC566, Caribou Tier I Hunt, the “repeal of the requirement to destroy and leave in the field, antlers from caribou, harvested by drawing permit, during proper season, by hunters in Alaska”. This request is in reference to: 5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides, specifically section (f), which reads: Antlers or horns may not be transported from the field unless accompanied by all edible meat or unless possession of the meat has been transferred in accordance with 5 AAC 92.135. However, antlers taken under a subsistence caribou permit in Unit 13 must be removed from the skull plate, or the skull plate cut in half, and antlers and skull plate must be left at the kill site.

There are two subsistence caribou hunts in Unit 13 that would be affected by this petition, they are described in: 5 AAC 92.071 Tier I subsistence permits (RC566), and 5 AAC 92.072 Community subsistence harvest hunt area and permit conditions (Ahtna Community Hunt).

For reference, there are other existing antler destruction requirements in Alaska, see page 2 for details.

Additional existing antler destruction requirements for hunting in Alaska:

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy. Section (j) states: A proxy participating in a proxy hunt must remove at least one antler from the skull plate or cut the skull plate in half, on an antlered animal, for both the proxy's animal and the beneficiary's animal before leaving the kill site, unless the department has established a requirement that complete antlers and skull plates must be submitted to the department.

5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures. Section (5) states: ... the trophy value of an animal taken under a subsistence permit may be nullified by the department".

By discretionary permit hunt conditions, trophy destruction is required for Unit 22 and 23 subsistence muskoxen hunts if the skull is to be removed from the unit.

By discretionary permit hunt conditions, trophy destruction is required for Unit 21 subsistence moose hunts.

By discretionary permit hunt conditions, trophy destruction (removal of head and feet from hide) is required for subsistence brown bear hunt areas in portions of Units 9, 17-19, 21-24, and 26 if the hide is to be tanned or removed from the unit.