

Personal comments for BOG

RC 31

My name is Dave Lyon. I am a 25 year resident of the Homer area. Currently I own and operate a water taxi business serving Kachemak bay. I have also been a registered guide in unit 17, commercial and charter fisherman, and a technician for fish and game in sport fish division.

I would like to speak specifically to moose hunting issues in the Homer area. My family depends on game and fish for the bulk of our protein. We haul water from our spring, heat with wood, and do not have grid electricity. Despite the fact that I live off the road system, accessing my home by snow machine or 4 wheeler for up to 8 months of the year, I do not have the luxury of living in a designated subsistence area, so my moose hunting is solely dictated by state regulation.

I do, however live in a designated intensive management area. This designation places the highest value of moose as a food source. This means that the department must manage moose to set population goals and harvest objectives.

According to the most recent moose surveys conducted by F&G, we are well within, if not in excess of our IM population goal.

Up until implementation of our existing antler restrictions, 15c had also been achieving harvest objectives in recent years.

After 2 years of restricted hunting, and what is shaping up to have been a mild winter, we now have a bull cow ratio in excess of what it was 3 years ago, and the best science available has led the department to recommend a loosening of antler restrictions to provide more hunting opportunity, and to once again work toward IM harvest goals. This, to my understanding, is the goal of IM, as well as one of the mission statements of fish and game.... To put meat in the freezer, and provide opportunity to hunt.

We also have a small cow hunt in Homer, this hunt, since its inception, has provided for the harvest of about 20 moose every year, mostly to local hunters. This hunt has not resulted in the decimation of the local cow population, and has had no measurable affect on our moose population. The harvest numbers have been steady, and over 800 hunters applied for this tag to hunt in 2012.

Anecdotally, I have seen more bulls, and more moose overall in our area in the last year than any years past.... But anecdotes are just that, stories about what we have seen. Our moose need to be managed with the best available science from our biologists, not on anecdotal recitations of what things once were.