BOG comments 2.14.2014

by: Smokey Don Duncan

RC37

Prop. # 51 Lengthening the wolf season to August 5- June 15th. Over the years, there have been many requests to open wolf season before sheep seasons for the reasons stated. The reason is valid. The June 15th date reflects times when hunters are in the field and moose calves are vulnerable. The 2 main objections to changing the seasons are pups too young and hides no good. As a hunter the wolf is the trophy, not the hide, the beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Saving the wolf for a trapper is not a valid argument. And Pups too young to which I say moose should get as much protection and sympathy.

Prop. #56, 57, 58, and prop #161 for the statewide meeting address Salvaging grizzly meat. My 2 proposals suggest eliminating it entirely like it use to be or to align it with the definition of edible meat of black bear in the spring hunts over bait. The question is: Should we be required to salvage all the grizzly meat like we do on moose but only during the spring baiting season; Salvage grizzly like we do black bears in the spring If it were a big bear I would remove it from close proximity to the bait. I never leave black bear carcasses or guts. If some salvage is required I would like F&G to maintain a list of those people who will come pick it up for human consumption.

Prop # 107 non resident moose season in Minto Flats. This proposal was made in part because of a BOG members suggestion at the 2012 meeting. The FBKs AC supported this proposal with 2 changes. 1 would allow the Board to decide the number of drawing permits and 2: the amendment would NOT allocate 50% of the permits to guided hunters. I chose 8 permits as a decent starter number. I chose to allocate 50% of the permits to guided hunters to reflect appreciation to the industry for all the years of black bear hunting the area which undoubtedly help secure the current over population of moose in the area. While MFMA is with in my GUA, I have never guided moose hunters there. However if I did in the future, it most likely not be concentrated in the MF proper, rather it would likely be in the uplands away from the water systems.

Prop.# 115 moose 20 C. I'll w/draw the resident part of the proposal but stand by the lengthening of the Non-resident moose season to Sept. 25. The FBK AC supported this. Previous to 2012 the requirement was any size bull for resident and non residents. Considering that the bull to cow ratio is 49/100 and the limited non resident participation, It will not hurt to lengthen the time frame for NR hunters to look for a 50+ inch moose. At current participation levels, and a 100% success rate for non-residents it would not effect anything.

Concerning the buffalo fence, We should at least try aerial seeding the Delta and Gerstle river with oats, barley and perennial grass with Delta produced seeds.

The unit 19 black bear removal study was about \$5000/ bear. I suggest we subsidize a guide operation at half that amount to do the same job. Request the BGCSB eliminate GUA restrictions for black bear in the area. Let the guide industry help. Reducing black bear helps moose. Look at unit 20 B for proof of concept. We should not have to prove or learn the lesson again.

Concerning all the sheep proposals. I do not guide sheep. I do not want to hear one person say any changes are needed for conservation reasons. Crowding can be addressed in several ways, none of which would require NR hunters to be restricted to a 10% draw. Reasonable opportunity is a 6 week season. It does not mean not seeing another hunter for 10 days or an exclusive personal hunting area. It is the opening day mentality and time frame crowding, not area crowding

For the record; the guide client agreement came about because permittees were shopping the guides and going with low bidder. The G/C agreement eliminates guides via the GUA restrictions. It is stupid too have to pick an area before the client draws.

I would like to see an area with a number of NR permits held aside for a guide pool for those of us who only wish to take a sheep hunter every now and then. Make no mistake about it. The guide client agreement, the GCPlan and other maneuvers are attempts to secure and monopolize valuable hunting areas with out having to pay the fair price the State deserves.

50% of the harvested sheep are taken in the first 10 days.
50% of the legal sheep are not harvested at all.
A draw hunt is equivalent to an easy, exclusive hunt.
Successful Res. and NR hunters average same number of hunt days
Unsuccessful NR hunters spend 2x more in the field than unsuccessful residents.
The Fed EGUA are helping cause the problem and so is the actions taken by the Board in unit 14.

Options Divide the season into draw and open general season
Limit sheep to 1/2-3-4 years
Limit permit applications.
Leave the season open year round.
I do not trust the sheep survey working group because of personal bias.
SB 160 and HB 158 Guide Concession Plan is dead oa = Unconstitutional and indefensible.