

7 Jan. 2015

Mr. Chairmen and members of the Board of Game

Re: Comments on the Wood Bison Plan

The Fairbanks Advisory Committee Supports the Wood Bison Plan with prejudice.

Our committee have concerns about access and possible trespass fees. The last meeting the WBPT held was supposed to be made up of members who could agree with consensus. That did not happen. The Team left that meeting undecided/unclear on access.

- A. Doyon's representative could not give any assurance that non-shareholders would be granted access. It was noted by the representative, that Doyon has never granted permission to a non-shareholder to take game on their lands.
- B. The other land owners left the meeting, stating they agreed to allow access with possible trespass fees and were going to have their villages pass resolutions. As to date we know of only one village who has passed a resolution and they have asked for a \$300.00 fee.

Fees

We don't have an answer to trespass fees yet. So we raise the questions and comments.

- A. How will this work? Since the release site is a checker boarded with several villages land ownership and corporations lands and individual lands.
 - (1) Because bison will do what bison do and move when they want. Will a hunter have to pay each land owner's fees? A onetime fee for all lands?
 - (2) What if the hunter, pays one village or corporation for access were he believes the bison are. But the bison he wants to take or has taken is on some other entities privet lands? What happens then? With the State's new amended trespassing laws (2014), could that individual be charged with illegal take? Loose their bison? Be fined?
 - (3) How binding are "resolutions"?
- B. Our committee is also concerned about the allocation.
 - (1) We understand the allocation spilt and is very generous to the locale landowners. (20% of harvestable surplus) We feel the Board should address privet landowners and encourage them not to have trespass fees for "other Alaskans". As they are receiving a more than fair share of the allocation (a State resource) and do not have to participate in a drawing hunt application, but are not excluded from doing so.
 - (2) We strongly feel allocating 20% of the harvest to a "weighted/favorable" registration hunt for those in the communities has to account for some consideration of compensation.
 - (3) We also believe some other financial opportunities will arise from Wood Bison in the area.
 - (4) There are examples of privet land owners in Delta and Copper River that do charge for access on their lands to hunt plains bison but their lands do not exclusively contain the bison herds in those areas. Also Alaskans can choose to apply for a different bison hunt, that have no possible access fees associated with it. This herd would be unique in that the only public land available to hunt without fees, would be BLM. We have no idea what BLM has in mind for restrictions, if any at this time.

- C. We absolutely respect ownership of lands. We are just pointing out the Department, though a course of unknown/unforeseen events, has put the planning team between a rock and a hard spot. With no State land within the Wood Bison range. Non-shareholders and non- locale Alaskans are very susceptible to costly trespass fees to a State resource. (funded by privet and State and P.R. monies)

Thank you for your time and considerations to our concerns.

Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee

Al Barrette

Wood Bison Planning Team representative For FAC.