

#43 RC6

ALASKA STATE BOARD OF GAME

I have held an interest in our moose hunts all my life. As such I have concerns for even a conservative registration moose hunt in early winter. Growing up in Alaska in the 50's and 60's we had a November moose hunt, but there was nowhere near the number of hunters we have today.

Having trapped most of my 48 years while living in the Copper Basin I have always kept my eyes on our moose numbers. During most of November our bulls are still together in small groups after the post rut. Depending on the early snow conditions the moose move down to the lower elevations where they are going to subject to easy harvest. I am afraid that our large legal bulls that made it though the regular season will now be part of a large harvest. Two years ago the one-day winter moose hunt, two young moose hunters found my trapping and hunting cabin on the east fork of the Indian River. They went up a few miles from the cabin and shot two Bull Moose. They stayed the night in the cabin, got up the next morning and left for the road with just a little of the meat and a 60 inch set of horns. Luck would have it our local State Protection Officer stopped them on the trail and made them show him the kill site. They had not even finished gutting the first moose and never even started on the second moose, which was 45 inches plus.

Another concern I have is that in the Copper Basin area a large number of our trails were put in and maintained by our local trappers. Here trapping is still very important and we have a number of our local residents depending on trapping for there winter income. The last thing they need after setting out there line is to have 500 permit hunters running on their trap lines. I am afraid this hunt could cause problems, with the hunters not being aware of the large areas that are private Ahtna Native lands. Even though our moose numbers are the best we have had in years. I feel very strongly that a winter hunt is not in our best interest.

Thank you for your time and I would welcome any questions.

Don Horrell