

**Findings for the Alaska Board of Game
2011-187-BOG
Unit 16 Predation Control Area for Moose
Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
March 30, 2011**


The Board of Game finds as follows, based on information provided by Department staff; Alaska residents and users of moose in Game Management Unit 16. These findings are supplemental to the findings set forth in 5AAC 92.108.

1. The moose in Unit 16B have been identified by the Board as a population that is important for providing high levels of human consumptive use. The Board established an intensive management population objective of 6,500 - 7,500 moose and an intensive management harvest objective of 310 - 600 moose annually for Unit 16B.
2. The most recent population size estimate for the moose in Unit 16B indicates that the population contained 5,800 moose, which is lower than the intensive management population objective of 6,500 - 7,500 moose.
3. The harvestable surplus of moose in Unit 16B, as described in 5 AAC 92.106(3)(A), is currently estimated to be 250 moose annually, which is less than intensive management harvest objective established by the Board of 310 - 600 moose annually.
4. The moose population in Unit 16B likely declined due to deep snow that was wide-spread and persisted for several months during the winters of 1983 and 1989. These deep snow events resulted in poor survival and low calf recruitment during those years, which instigated the population's decline. Poor calf recruitment currently limits population recovery and is not limited by range limitations evidenced by good pregnancy rates, high twinning rates, calf weights, and rump-fat measurements.
5. Predation on moose calves in Unit 16B is an important factor limiting population growth and recovery. Fall calf:cow ratios range between 11 - 19 calves:100 cows in 2008 to 2010. Research studies into the causes of moose calf mortality in Unit 16B have identified predation by black bears and brown bears as the primary factor limiting calf survival and recruitment.
6. The active wolf predation reduction program has resulted in an increased overwinter survival of moose in Unit 16B. Overwinter survival of moose calves increased from 60 percent prior to the start of wolf control activities to 88 percent after wolf control was initiated in 2004. Survival of yearlings and adults is also very high and exceeds pre-control levels.
7. Because adult moose that rut and calve in Unit 16B migrate into Unit 16A during winter months, it is necessary to manage wolf populations in Unit 16A to reduce predation on moose during winter months when there is a need to increase moose harvest opportunity in Unit 16B.
8. The low calf survival and recruitment in Unit 16B has resulted in a decrease in the number of harvestable moose, a complete closure of the nonresident season in 2001-2010, and season and

bag-limit restrictions for resident hunters. The reduced bull recruitment and bull numbers have resulted in a failure to provide for human needs.

9. The intensive management harvest objectives for moose in Unit 16B will not be achieved in the near future unless action is taken to improve calf survival and recruitment.
10. Increases in moose recruitment and abundance in Unit 16B are achievable utilizing the recognized and prudent active management technique of predator control.
11. The population and harvest objectives have not been achieved, at least in part, because wolf, black bear, and brown bear predation have been important causes of mortality in the population. Objectives are unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future unless predator control is conducted.
12. Reducing predation can reasonably be expected to achieve a sex and age structure that will sustain the population, provide for harvest, and allow growth toward objectives.

Vote: 5-1-1
March 30, 2011
Anchorage, Alaska



Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game