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Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: October 17, 2023

GMU 1D RB050 Closed to Brown Bear Hunting

(Juneau) – An emergency order (R1-14-23) has been issued to close the RB050 brown bear hunting season in Unit 1D at **11:59 P.M., on Wednesday, October 18, 2023.**

During 2020, forty-nine brown bears (24F: 23M: 2 Unk) were killed in GMU 1D including 19 harvested by hunters (9F: 10M) and 30 non-hunt kills (15F: 13M: 2 Unk) (agency kills, defense of life and property, and vehicle collisions). This record high mortality level resulted in an estimated 16-20% reduction in the population and prompted the development of a new brown bear management strategy for GMU 1D. The goal of this plan is to recover the brown bear population and future sustainable hunting opportunity. The plan does that by temporarily reducing hunting mortality through a harvest cap and by seeking to reduce human-bear conflict that results in bear mortalities through educational outreach by ADF&G and our partners. Due to low reproductive rates of brown bears, we anticipate this plan being in effect through 2025.

Beginning in spring 2021 ADF&G limited hunter harvest of brown bears in GMU 1D to five total brown bears including no more than two females in a calendar year. Because other human caused mortality (DLP, etc.) reduces the population, hunting will also be closed when total brown bear mortality for the calendar year reaches seven total bears or two female bears. Human-caused mortality in excess of seven bears may be deducted from the hunting harvest quota for the following hunting season (i.e., the next calendar year).

As of October 17, 2023, a total of three brown bears have been harvested (one male and one female in the spring season, and one male in the fall season). Four additional brown bears (One females, one cub, one male, and one unconfirmed sex) were killed in defense of life and property along with one illegally harvested male for a total mortality of eight brown bears. Because the total brown bear mortality has reached eight bears (including at least two females) and due to the vulnerability of brown bears in this area to overharvest, this emergency order is being issued.

Hunters are encouraged to target male brown bears to help preserve future hunting opportunity.

Contact: Carl Koch at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at (907) 465-4329.

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