

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Policies and Resolutions

2011

- #2011-189-BOG Subunits 9C and 9E (Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd) Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2011-188-BOG Units 9B, 17, 19, and 19B (MCH) Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2011-187-BOG Unit 16 Predation Control Area for Moose Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2011-186-BOG Board of Game Bear Conservation, Harvest, and Management Policy.
- #2011-185-BOG Board of Game Wolf Management Policy (this policy supersedes BOG policy 82-31-GB)
- #2011-184-BOG Game Management Unit 13 Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses
(*Supplement findings to 2006-170-BOG*)

2010

- #2010-183-BOG Harvest of Game for Customary and Traditional Alaska Native Funerary and Mortuary Religious Ceremonies.

2009

- #2009-182-BOG Units 12, 20B, 20D, 20E, and 25C Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2009-181-BOG Unit 19D-East Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2009-180-BOG Unit 19A Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2009-179-BOG Resolution Supporting Increasing Non-Resident Hunting License and Tag Fees

2008

- #2008-178-BOG Finding of Emergency: Predator Control Implementation Plans
- #2008-177-BOG Units 12, 20B, 20D, 20E, & 25C Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2008-176-BOG Units 16A & B Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2008-175-BOG Unit 9D (South AK Peninsula Caribou Herd) Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
- #2008-174-BOG Unit 19D East Supplemental Findings

2007

- #2007-173-BOG Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy – (#162 Revised)
- #2007-172-BOG Annual Reauthorization of Antlerless Moose

2006

- #2006-171-BOG Resolution supporting a Moratorium on New Zoo Applications
- #2006-170-BOG Unit 13 Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses
- #2006-169-BOG Unit 19D-East Intensive Management Supplemental Findings

#2006-168-BOG Unit 19A Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
 #2006-167-BOG Unit 16 Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
 #2006-166-BOG Unit 13 Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
 #2006-165-BOG Unit 12 and 20E Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
 #2006-164-BOG Board of Game Bear Management and Conservation Policy
 #2006-163-BOG Resolution Regarding Declining Fish and Wildlife Enforcement in Alaska
 #2006-162-BOG Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy
 #2006-161-BOG Finding of Emergency: Predator Control Implementation Plans

2005

#2005-160-BOG Finding of Emergency: Methods of Harvest for Hunting Small Game in the Skilak Loop Special Management Area of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
 #2005-159-BOG Resolution in Support of Allowing Guides to Take Wolves while Under Contract to Clients
 #2005-158-BOG Resolution in Support of Public Education Program on Predator Control
 #2005-157-BOG Reauthorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
 #2005-156-BOG Supporting Joint Federal and State Deer Harvest Reporting
 #2005-155-BOG Supporting Governor’s Lawsuit Against Federal Government; Extent and Reach of Subsistence Regulations in State Navigable Waters

2004

#2004-154-BOG Supporting Increasing Resident and Non-Resident Hunting License and Tag Fees
 #2004-153-BOG Increase FY06 Budget for Boards of Fisheries and Game and State Advisory Committees
 #2004-152-BOG Predator Control in Portions of Upper Yukon/Tanana Predator Control Area
 #2004-151-BOG Bear Baiting Allocation
 #2004-150-BOG Authorizing Predator Control in Central Kuskokwim Area, Unit 19A
 #2004-149-BOG Signage for Traplines on Public Lands
 #2004-148-BOG Authorizing Predator Control in Western Cook Inlet, Unit 16B
 #2004-147-BOG Bear Conservation and Management Policy
 #2004-146-BOG Americans with Disabilities Act Exemptions

2003

#2003-145-BOG Authorization of Airborne Shooting in Unit 19D East Predation Control Program
 #2003-144-BOG Authorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
 #2003-143-BOG Authorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
 #2003-142-BOG Resolution of the Alaska Board of Game Concerning a Statewide Bear Baiting Ballot Initiative
 #2003-141-BOG Request for Commissioner’s Finding Regarding Same-Day-Airborne Wolf Hunting in Game Management Unit 13
 #2003-140-BOG Guidelines for a Unit 19D East Predation Control Program

#2003-139-BOG A resolution of the Alaska Board of Game Concerning Management of Kenai Peninsula Brown Bear Mortality

2002

#2002-138-BOG Request to US Forest Service re: Management of Guided Brown Bear Hunting in Unit 4

#2002-137-BOG Unit 1C Douglas Island Management Area Findings

#2002-136A-BOG Unit 1D Brown Bear Drawing Hunt Finding

#2002-136-BOG Government to Government Relations with Tribes in Alaska

2001

#2001-135-BOG Resolution concerning Unit 19D-East Adaptive Management Team Work

2000

#2000-134-BOG Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Team Findings

#2000-133-BOG Habituation of Wildlife (unsigned – left in draft)

#2000-132-BOG Reaffirm Resolution re: Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources/Ballot Initiative Process

#2000-131-BOG Finding of Emergency: Unit 19D-East (Wolf Control Implementation Plan)

#2000-130-BOG Resolution re: Support of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999

1999

#99-129-BOG Snow Machine Use in the Taking of Caribou

1998

#98-128-BOG Findings on Elk Management in Region I

#98-127-BOG Findings on Commercial Guiding Activities in Alaska

#98-126-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 25B and Unit 25D

#98-125-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 21D

#98-124-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 18

#98-123-BOG Emergency Findings – Caribou in Unit 9

#98-122-BOG 1998 Intensive Management Findings: Interior Region

#98-121-BOG Findings: HB 168, Traditional Access

#98-120-BOG Resolution re: Ballot Initiative Banning Use of Snares

#98-119-BOG Trapping and Snaring of Wolves in Alaska

#98-118-BOG Customary and Traditional Use of Musk Ox in Northwest Unit 23

1997

#97-117-BOG Customary and Traditional Use of Musk Ox on the Seward Peninsula

#97-116-BOG Dall Sheep Management in the Western Brooks Range

#97-115-BOG Resolution supporting Co-management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources

#97-114-BOG Resolution re: Dual Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources

#97-113-BOG Resolution re: Methods and Means of Harvesting Furbearers and Fur Animals Including Wolves

#97-112-BOG Resolution re: Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources/Ballot Initiative Process

#97-111-BOG Finding to Include Unit 22 (except 22C) in the Northwest Alaska Brown Bear Management Area

#97-110-BOG Finding of Emergency re: Stranded Musk Oxen

#97-109-BOG Findings re: Unit 16B-South Moose

#97-108-BOG Resolution re: Subsistence Division Budget

#97-107-BOG Findings re: Wanton Waste on the Holitna and Hoholitna Rivers

1996

#96-106-BOG Delegation of Authority re: Issuing Permits to Take Game for Public Safety Purposes

#96-105-BOG Delegation of Authority to Implement Ballot Measure #3

#96-104-BOG Finding of Emergency re: Western Arctic Caribou Herd

#96-103-BOG Findings – Antlerless Moose in Unit 20A

#96-102-BOG Findings – Nelchina Caribou Herd Management

#96-101-BOG Findings – Intensive Management for GMU 19D East

#96-100-BOG Establishment of the Nenana Controlled Use Area

#96-99-BOG Moose Populations in Unit 26A

#96-98-BOG Taking Big Game for Certain Religious Ceremonies

#96-97-BOG Forty Mile Caribou Herd Management Plan

#96-96-BOG Finding of Emergency – Moose in Remainder of Unit 16B

1995

#95-95-BOG Resolution – Wildlife Diversity Initiative

#95-94-BOG Resolution – Change Name of McNeil River State Game Refuge to Paint River State Game Refuge

#95-93-BOG Requiring License Purchase in advance

#95-92-BOG *Open Number*

#95-91-BOG Delegation of Authority – Comply with Alaska Supreme Court Opinion in Kenaitze vs. State

#95-90-BOG Board Travel Policy

#95-89-BOG Findings – Noatak Controlled Use Area

#95-88-BOG Delegation of Authority to Increase Bag Limits in Unit 18 for Mulchatna and Western Arctic Caribou Herds

#95-87-BOG Subsistence Needs for Moose in Unit 16B

#95-86-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 19D

#95-85-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 20D

#95-84-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 13

#95-83-BOG Resolution: Subsistence Use on National Park Lands

#95-82-BOG “No Net Loss” Policy for Hunting and Trapping Opportunities

#95-81-BOG Resolution: Remove Federal Management of F&W on Public Lands and Waters

#95-80-BOG Resolution to Legislature to Define Subsistence

1994

#94-80A-BOG Wolf Predation Control Program in Unit 20A
#94-79-BOG Delegation to Commissioner to Adopt Regulations Resulting from Kenaitze Decision which Invalidates Nonsubsistence Areas
#94-78-BOG Addendum to Findings on Unit 16B Moose
#94-77-BOG Resolution on SB325 (Repeal Antlerless Moose Statute)

1993

#93-76-BOG Findings on McNeil River Refuge Bears
#93-75-BOG Resolution on Adak Caribou
#93-74-BOG Delegation of Authority for Permits to Take Furbearers with Game Meat
#93-73-BOG Delegation of Authority to Make Emergency Regulations Permanent, Moose in Unit 19D
#93-72-BOG Wolf Control Findings – Delta Area
#93-71-BOG Resolution on Round Island Walrus Hunt
#93-70-BOG Findings on Unit 16B Moose Seasons and Bag Limits
#93-69-BOG Resolution on Popof Island Bison
#93-68-BOG Resolution on Commercialization of Moose
#93-67-BOG Resolution on Elk Transplants in Southeast
#93-66-BOG Resolution on Clear-cut Management in the Tongass National Forest

1992

#92-65-BOG Findings in Units 12, 20B, D, and E on Wolves
#92-64-BOG Findings in Unit 20A Wolves
#92-63-BOG Findings in Unit 13 Wolves
#92-62-BOG Findings Wolf Area Specific Management Plans for Southcentral and Interior
#92-61-BOG Resolution on Unit 13 Moose
#92-60-BOG Findings Unit 13 Moose Seasons and Bag Limits
#92-59-BOG Findings Unit 19 A&B Moose – Holitna and Hoholitna Controlled Use Area
#92-58-BOG Findings on Kilbuck Caribou re Fall Hunt
#92-57-BOG Report of the Board of Game, Area Specific Management Plans for Wolves
#92-56-BOG Relating to Moose in GMUs 19A and 19B per Superior Court order in Sleetmute vs. State
#92-55-BOG Relating to Endorsement of State Closure of Deer Hunting in GMU 4 and Requesting Federal Closure

1991

#91-54-BOG Findings on Strategic Wolf Management Plan
#91-54a-BOG Relating to Kilbuck Caribou Management Plan
#91-53-BOG Relating to Taking of Walrus from Round Island by Residents of Togiak
#91-53a-BOG Board Direction to Committee for Strategic Wolf Plan
#91-52-BOG Findings on Unit 13 Moose Season and Bag Limits

1990

#90-51-BOG Findings on Strategic Wolf Management Plan
#90-50-BOG Relating to Kilbuck Caribou Management Plan
#90-49-BOG Findings on Kwethluk Emergency Caribou Hunt Petition
#90-48-BOG Relating to the Use of Furbearers by Rural Alaskans, Including Alaska Natives
#90-47-BOG Relating to the Commercialization of Moose and other Wildlife
#90-46-BOG Relating to Destruction of Moose by the Alaska Railroad

1989

#89-45-BG Delegation of Authority to Adopt Waterfowl Regulations

1988

#88-44-BG Delegation of Authority for March 1988 Meeting
#88-43-BG Resolution Supporting Funding for Division of Game

1987

#87-42d-BG Procedures for Delegations of Authority (Replacing #75-2-GB)
#87-42c-BG Delegation of Authority to Correct Technical Errors
#87-42b-BG Delegation of Authority to Correct Technical Errors Before Filing Regulations
#87-42a-BG Delegation of Authority to Adopt Emergency Regulations (Replacing #75-3-GB)

1986

#86-41-BG Finding of Emergency: New State Subsistence Law
#86-40-BG Delegation of Authority

1985

#85-39-GB Resolution on Resources v/s Logging
#85-38-GB Findings: Madison vs. State Requirements
#85-37-GB Lime Village Management Area Findings
#85-36-GB Findings: Waterfowl hunting in and near Palmer Hayflats

1984

#84-35-GB Resolution on Waterfowl Stamp
#84-34-GB Transplant of Musk Ox to Nunivak Island

1983

#83-33-GB Resolution on Guide Board
#83-32-GB Findings on Moose in GMU 16B

1982

#82-31-GB Supplement to Wolf Population Control

1981

- #81-30-GB Findings and Policy Regarding Nelchina Caribou
#81-29-GB Finding and Policy for Future Management of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd
#81-28-GB Letter of Intent: Wolf Reduction in Alaska

1980

- #80-27-GB Letter of Intent Regarding Use of Alaska's Game for Religious Ceremony
#80-26-GB Findings and Policy Regarding Bowhunting
#80-25-GB Standing Committee II on Deer
#80-24-GB Regarding Advisory Committee Coordinators

1979

- #79-23-GB Authorization to Export Animals from Alaska
#79-22-GB Staff Directive to Subsistence Section
#79-21-GB Relating to Brown Bear in GMU 4
#79-20-GB Relating to Brown Bear in GMU 4
#79-19-GB Brown Bear, GMU 4
#79-18-GB Relating to Muskoxen

1978

- #78-18-GB Statement of Direction: Use of Airplanes in Controlling Predation by Wolves
#78-17-GB Relating to (d)(2) Legislation, State's ability to Manage Fish & Wildlife Resources
#78-16-GB Relating to (d)(2) Legislation, State's ability to Manage Fish & Wildlife Resources

1977

- #77-15-GB Delegation of Authority to Commissioner to Address Petitions
#77-14-GB Repeal of Regulations Relating to Registration of Camps by Guides for Hunting Bears
#77-13-GB Regarding Closed Season for Caribou (rescinded November 30, 1977)
#77-12-GB Regarding the 17(d)(2) Land Settlement

1976

- #76-11-GB Trapping Wolves by ADF&G
#76-10-GB Request for Public Safety Involvement in Enforcement of Caribou Regulations
#76-9-GB Management Goal: Western Arctic Caribou
#76-8-GB Export of Live Game Animals Outside of Alaska
#76-7-GB Muskox to Anchorage Children's Zoo (rescinded November 30, 1977)
#76-6-GB Taking of Wolves by Helicopter
#76-5-GB Regarding the Taking of Wolves in Units 23 and 26A

1975

- #75-4-GB Endorsement of Trapping as a Legitimate Use of Renewable Resources
- #75-3-GB Delegation of Authority to Adopt Emergency Regulations (See #87-42a-GB)
- #75-2-GB Procedures for Delegations of Authority (See #87-42d-GB)
- #75-1-GB Effectuating Delegation of Authority

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2011-186-BOG**

**BOARD OF GAME BEAR CONSERVATION, HARVEST,
AND MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Expiration Date: June 30, 2016

Purposes of Policy

1. To clarify the intent of the Board and provide guidelines for Board members and the Department of Fish and Game to consider when developing regulation proposals for the conservation and harvest of bears in Alaska, consistent with the Alaska Constitution and applicable statutes.
2. To encourage review, comment, and interagency coordination for bear management activities.

Goals

1. To ensure the conservation of bears throughout their historic range in Alaska.
2. To recognize the ecological and economic importance of bears while providing for their management as trophy, food, predatory, and furbearer species.
3. To recognize the importance of bears for viewing, photography, research, and non-consumptive uses in Alaska.

Background

The wild character of Alaska's landscapes is one of our most important natural resources and the presence of naturally abundant populations of brown/grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*) and black bears (*Ursus americanus*) throughout their historic range in Alaska is important to that wild character. Bears are important to Alaskans in many ways, including as food animals, predators of moose, caribou, deer and muskox, trophy species for nonresident and resident hunters, furbearers, problem animals in rural and urban settings, and as objects of curiosity, study, awe, and enjoyment. Bears are also important components of naturally functioning Alaskan ecosystems.

Bear viewing is a rapidly growing industry in selected areas of the state. The interest exceeds the opportunities provided now by such established and controlled sites as McNeil River, Pack Creek, Anan Creek, Wolverine Creek and Brooks Camp. In most areas, hunting and viewing are compatible uses but the Board may consider bear viewing as a priority use in some small areas, especially where access for people is good and bears are particularly concentrated. The Board and the Department will continue to discourage people from feeding bears to provide viewing opportunities.

Bears are frequently attracted to garbage or to fish and hunting camps, and can be a nuisance where they become habituated to humans and human food sources. Dealing with problem bears has

been especially difficult in Anchorage, Juneau, and the Kenai Peninsula. The department has worked hard, and successfully, with municipalities to educate people and solve waste management problems. The department's policy on human food and solid waste management (<http://www.wc.adfg.state.ak.us/index.cfm?adfg=bears.bearpolicy>) provides guidance on reducing threats to humans and the resulting need to kill problem bears.

Bears can pose a threat to humans in certain situations. Statewide, an average of about six bear encounters a year result in injuries to people. Most attacks now occur in suburban areas and do not involve hunters. About every two or three years, one of the attacks results in a human fatality. The Department and the Board will continue to educate people about ways to minimize threats to humans and the resulting need to kill problem bears.

Alaska is world-renowned as a place to hunt brown bears, grizzly bears and black bears. Alaska is the only place in the United States where brown and grizzly bears are hunted in large numbers. An average of about 1,500 brown and grizzly bears is harvested each year. The trend has been increasing, probably because of both increased demand for bear hunting and increasing bear numbers. Many of the hunters are nonresidents and their economic impact is significant to Alaska. Hunters have traditionally been the strongest advocates for bears and their habitat, providing consistent financial and political support for research and management programs.

Because bears can be both prey and predator, their relationship with people is complex. Throughout much of Interior Alaska and in some areas of Southcentral Alaska, the combined predation by bears and wolves keeps moose at relatively low levels. Bear predation on young calves has been shown to contribute significantly to keeping moose populations depressed, delayed population recovery, and low harvest by humans. People in parts of rural Alaska (e.g. Yukon Flats) have expressed considerable frustration with low moose numbers and high predation rates on moose calves in hunting areas around villages. The Board and the Department have begun to take a more active role in addressing bear management issues. Because the Constitution of the State of Alaska requires all wildlife (including predators) to be managed on a sustained yield basis, the Board of Game and the Department will manage all bear populations to maintain a sustained yield, but the Board recognizes its broad latitude to manage predators including bears to provide for higher yields of ungulates (*West vs State of Alaska*, Alaska Supreme Court, 6 August 2010).

Brown and grizzly bears

Although there is no clear taxonomic difference between brown and grizzly bears, there are ecological and economic differences that are recognized by the Board and Department. In the area south of a line following the crest of the Alaska Range from the Canadian border westward to the 62nd parallel of latitude to the Bering Sea, where salmon are important in the diet of *Ursus arctos*, these bears are commonly referred to as brown bears. Brown bears grow relatively large, tend to be less predatory on ungulates, usually occur at high densities, and are highly sought after as trophy species and for viewing and photography. Bears found north of this line in Interior and Arctic Alaska; where densities are lower and which are smaller in size, more predatory on ungulates, and have fewer opportunities to feed on salmon; are referred to as grizzly bears. Brown and grizzly bears are found throughout their historic range in Alaska and may have

expanded their recent historic range in the last few decades into places like the Yukon Flats and lower Koyukuk River.

Although determining precise population size is not possible with techniques currently available, most bear populations are estimated to be stable or increasing based on aerial counts, Capture-Mark-Resight techniques (including DNA), harvest data, traditional knowledge, and evidence of expansion of historic ranges. Throughout most coastal habitats where salmon are abundant, brown bears are abundant and typically exceed 175 bears/1,000 km² (450 bears/1,000 mi²). A population in Katmai National Park on the Alaska Peninsula was measured at 550 bears/1,000 km² (1,420 bears/1,000 mi²). In most interior and northern coastal areas, densities do not exceed 40 bears/1,000 km² (100 bears/1,000 mi²). Mean densities as low as 4 grizzly bears/1,000 km² (12 bears/1,000 mi²) have been measured in the eastern Brooks Range but these density estimates may be biased low and the confidence intervals around the estimates are unknown. Extrapolations from existing density estimates yielded statewide estimate of 31,700 brown bears in 1993, but the estimate is likely to be low.

Although some northern grizzly bear populations have relatively low reproductive rates, most grizzly bear and brown bear populations are capable of sustaining relatively high harvest rates comparable to moose, caribou, sheep, goats, and other big game animals that exist in the presence of natural numbers of large predators in most areas of Alaska. In addition, grizzly bears and brown bears have shown their ability to recover relatively quickly (<15 years) from federal poisoning campaigns during the 1950s and overharvest on the Alaska Peninsula during the 1960s. Biologists were previously concerned about the conservation of brown bears on the Kenai Peninsula and brown bears there were listed by the state as a “species of special concern”. The Department implemented a conservation strategy there through a stakeholder process. In recent years it has become apparent that brown bears remain healthy on the Kenai and the Board and the Department no longer believes there is a conservation concern.

In some areas of the state (e.g. Unit 13) where the Board has tried to reduce grizzly bear numbers with liberal seasons and bag limits for over 15 years, there is no evidence that current increased harvests have affected bear numbers, age structure, or population composition. In areas of Interior Alaska, where access is relatively poor, long conventional hunting seasons and bag limits of up to 2 bears per year have not been effective at reducing numbers of grizzly bears. In these areas, most biologists believe that as long as sows and cubs are protected from harvest it will not be possible to reduce populations enough to achieve increases in recruitment of moose.

Black bears

American black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are generally found in forested habitats throughout the state. Like brown and grizzly bears, black bears also occupy all of their historic ranges in Alaska and are frequently sympatric with grizzly and brown bears. Because they live in forested habitats it is difficult to estimate population size or density. Where estimates have been conducted in interior Alaska, densities ranged from 67 bears/1,000 km² (175 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Yukon Flats to 289 bears/1,000 km² (750 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Kenai Peninsula. In coastal forest habitats of Southeast Alaska’s Alexander Archipelago black bear densities are considered high. A 2000 estimate for Kuiu Island was 1,560 black bears/1,000 km² (4,000 black bears/1,000 mi²).

In most areas of the state, black bears are viewed primarily as food animals, but they are also important as trophy animals, predators of moose calves, and for their fur. The Board recently classified black bears as furbearers, recognizing the desire of people to use black bear fur as trim on clothing, to enhance the value of black bears, and to enable the Board and the Department to use foot-snares in bear management programs. The classification of black bears as a furbearer has legalized the sale of some black bear hides and parts (except gall bladders), and has thus made regulations in Alaska similar to those in northern Canada in this regard.

Black bears exhibit higher reproductive rates than brown and grizzly bears. In all areas of the state black bear populations are healthy and can sustain current or increased harvest levels. However, hunting pressure on black bears in some coastal areas like Game Management Unit (GMU) 6 (Prince William Sound), GMU 2 (Prince of Wales Island) and parts of GMU 3 (Kuiu Island) may be approaching or have exceeded maximum desired levels if trophy quality of bears is to be preserved, and are the subjects of frequent regulatory adjustments.

In some other parts of the state, deliberately reducing black bear numbers to improve moose calf survival has proven to be difficult or impossible with conventional harvest programs. The Board has had to resort to more innovative regulations promoting baiting and trapping with foot snares. The Department has also tried an experimental solution of translocating bears away from an important moose population near McGrath (GMU 19D) to determine if reduced bear numbers could result in significant increases in moose numbers and harvests. The success of the McGrath program has made it a potential model for other small areas around villages in Interior Alaska, if acceptable relocation sites are available.

Guiding Principles

The Board of Game and the Department will promote regulations and policies that will strive to:

1. Manage bear populations to provide for continuing sustained yield, while allowing a wide range of human uses in all areas of the state.
2. Continue and, if appropriate, increase research on the management of bears and on predator/prey relationships and methods to mitigate the high predation rates of bears on moose calves in areas designated for intensive management.
3. Continue to provide for and encourage non-consumptive use of bears without causing bears to become habituated to human food.
4. Favor conventional hunting seasons and bag limits to manage bear numbers.
5. Encourage the human use of bear meat as food.
6. Employ more efficient harvest strategies, if necessary, when bear populations need to be substantially reduced to mitigate conflicts between bears and people.
7. Primarily manage most brown bear populations to maintain trophy quality, especially in Game Managements 1 through 6, and 8 through 10.
8. Work with the Department to develop innovative ways of increasing bear harvests if conventional hunting seasons and bag limits are not effective at reducing bear numbers to mitigate predation on ungulates or to deal with problem bears.

9. Simplify hunting regulations for bears, and increase opportunity for incidental harvest of grizzly bears in Interior Alaska by eliminating resident tag fees.
10. Recognize the increasing value of brown bears as a trophy species and generate increased revenue from sales of brown bear tags.
11. Review and recommend revision to this policy as needed.

Conservation and Management Policy

The Board and the Department will manage bears differently in different areas of the state, in accordance with ecological differences and the needs and desires of humans. Bears will always be managed on a sustained yield basis. In some areas, such as the Kodiak Archipelago, portions of Southeast Alaska and the Alaska Peninsula, brown bears will generally be managed for trophy-hunting and viewing opportunities. In Southeast Alaska and Prince William Sound, black bears will generally be managed as a trophy species, food animals, or for viewing opportunities. In Interior and Arctic Alaska, black bears and grizzly bears will be managed primarily as trophy animals, food animals, and predators of moose and caribou. However in some parts of Interior Alaska, the Board may elect to manage populations of black bears primarily as furbearers.

Monitoring Harvest and Population Size

The Board and the Department recognize the importance of monitoring the size and health of bear populations on all lands in Alaska to determine if bear population management and conservation goals are being met. In areas where monitoring bear numbers, population composition, and trophy quality is a high priority, sealing of all bear hides and skulls will be required. At the present time, all brown and grizzly bears harvested under the general hunting regulations must be inspected and sealed by a Department representative. Where monitoring bear numbers and harvests is a lower priority, harvest may be monitored using harvest tickets or subsistence harvest surveys.

Harvest of black bears will generally be monitored either with harvest tickets or sealing requirements. Where harvests are near maximum sustainable levels or where the Department and the Board need detailed harvest data, sealing will be required.

Large areas of the state have subsistence brown/grizzly bear hunts with liberal seasons and bag limits, mandatory meat salvage, and relaxed sealing requirements. The Department will continue to accommodate subsistence needs.

Bear viewing also is an important aspect of bear management in Alaska. Increasing interest in watching bears at concentrated feeding areas such as salmon streams and sedge flats, and clam flats is challenging managers to find appropriate levels and types of human and bear interactions without jeopardizing human safety. Bear hunting and viewing are compatible in most situations.

Nothing in this policy affects the authority under state or federal laws for an individual to protect human life or property from bears (5 AAC 92.410). All reasonable steps must be taken to protect life and property by non-lethal means before a bear is killed.

Managing Predation by Bears

In order to comply with the intensive management law (AS 16.05.255) the Board and Department may implement management actions to reduce bear predation on ungulate populations that are important for high levels of human use. The Board may elect to work with the Department to remove individual problem bears or temporarily reduce bear populations in Game Management Units, Subunits, or management areas. The Board and the Department may also need to reduce bear predation on ungulates to provide for continued sustained yield management or conservation of ungulates. In addition, it may be necessary for the Department to kill problem bears to protect the safety of the public under AS 16.05.050 (a) (5). In some cases the Board may direct the Department to prepare a Predation Control Areas Implementation Plan (5 AAC 92.125) or in other cases the Board may authorize extensions of conventional hunting seasons, or implement trapping seasons to aid in managing predation on ungulates.

To comply with AS 16.05.255 (“Intensive Management Law”), to maintain sustained yield management of wildlife populations, or to prevent populations of ungulates from declining to low levels, the Board may selectively consider changes to regulations allowing the public to take bears, including allowing the following:

- Baiting of bears
- Trapping, using foot-snares, for bears under bear management or predator control programs.
- Incidental takes of brown or grizzly bears during black bear management or predator control programs.
- Use of communications equipment between hunters or trappers.
- Sale of hides and skulls as incentives for taking bears.
- Diversionary feeding of bears during ungulate calving seasons.
- Use of black bears for handicraft items for sale, except gall bladders.
- Use of grizzly bears for handicraft items for sale, except gall bladders.
- Taking of sows accompanied by cubs and cubs.
- Same-day-airborne taking.
- Aerial shooting of bears by department staff in moose and caribou calving areas
- Suspension or repeal of bear tag fees.
- Use of helicopters for transporting hunters and their equipment.

The Board intends that the above-listed methods and means will be authorized primarily in situations that require active control of bear populations, and only for the minimum amount of time necessary to accomplish management objectives.

Vote: 5-1-1

March 25, 2011

Anchorage, Alaska



Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2011-185-BOG**

**BOARD OF GAME WOLF MANAGEMENT POLICY
(Policy duration: Date of finding through June 30, 2016.
This policy supersedes BOG policy 82-31-GB)**

Background and Purpose

Alaskans are proud that wolves occur throughout their historic range in Alaska. Wolves are important to people for a variety of reasons, including as furbearers, big game animals, competitors for ungulate prey animals, and as subjects of enjoyment, curiosity, and study. Wolves are important components in the natural functioning of northern ecosystems. Over time, many people have come to appreciate wolves as exciting large carnivores that contribute significantly to the quality and enjoyment of life in Alaska.

The primary purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the public, the Department, and the Board of Game on wolf management issues as the Board and the Department implement constitutional and statutory direction and respond to public demands and expectations. The Board recognizes the need for ongoing responsible wolf management to maintain sustainable wolf populations and harvests, and to help maintain sustainable ungulate populations upon which wolves are largely dependent. The Board also recognizes that when conflicts arise between humans and wolves over the use of prey, wolf populations may have to be managed more intensively to minimize such conflicts and comply with existing statutes (e.g. AS 16.05.255). Under some conditions, it may be necessary to greatly reduce wolf numbers to aid recovery of low prey populations or to arrest undesirable reductions in prey populations. In some other areas, including national park lands, the Board also recognizes that non-consumptive uses of wolves may be considered a priority use. With proper management, non-consumptive and consumptive uses are in most cases compatible but the Board may occasionally have to restrict consumptive uses where conflicts among uses are frequent.

Wolf/Human Use Conflicts

Conflicts may exist between wolves and humans when priority human uses of prey animals cannot be reasonably satisfied. In such situations, wolf population control will be considered. Specific circumstances where conflicts arise include the following:

1. Prey populations or recruitment of calves into populations are not sufficient to support existing levels of existing wolf predation and human harvest;
2. Prey populations are declining because of predation by wolves or predation by wolves in combination with other predators;
3. Prey population objectives are not being attained; and
4. Human harvest objectives are not being attained.

Wolf Management and Wolf Control

The Board and the Department have always distinguished between wolf management and wolf control. Wolf management involves managing seasons and bag limits to provide for general public hunting and trapping opportunities. These seasons provide for both subsistence and other traditional economic harvest opportunities and, as a side benefit, allow for participants to directly aid in mitigating conflicts between wolves and humans or improving ungulate harvest levels. In most cases, seasons will be kept to times when wolf hides are prime. However, some hunters are satisfied to take wolves during off-prime months including August, September and April, and opportunity may be allowed for such harvest.

Wolf control is the planned, systematic regulation of wolf numbers to achieve a temporarily lowered population level using aerial shooting, hiring trappers, denning, helicopter support, or other methods which may not normally be allowed in conventional public hunting and trapping. The purpose of wolf control is not to eradicate wolf populations. Under no circumstances will wolf populations be eliminated or reduced to a level where they will not be able to recover when control efforts are terminated, and wolves will always be managed to provide for sustained yield.

In some circumstances it may be necessary to temporarily remove a high percentage (>70%) of wolf populations to allow recovery of prey populations. In other situations, it may be necessary to temporarily remove a smaller percentage of wolf populations (40-70%) to allow prey populations to increase or meet human harvest objectives. Once prey population objectives have been met, wolf populations will generally be allowed to increase to or above pre-control levels.

During the 1997 review of predator control in Alaska by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences (National Research Council 1997), only two clearly successful cases were found where increased harvests of ungulates resulted from control in the Yukon and Alaska. In the last 13 years since that review, several other programs have been successful, including programs in GMUs 9, 13, 16 and 19. In addition, there is now a thirty year history of intensive wolf and moose management and research, including 2 periods of wolf control in GMU 20A. It is clear, and well documented, that periodic wolf control has resulted in much higher harvests of moose than could be realized without control (Boertje et al., 2009). Biologists now have considerable experience successfully managing moose at relatively high density (Boertje et al., 2007). The GMU 20A case history has provided a great deal of information on what biologists can expect from intensive management programs and these programs are scientifically well founded. However, GMUs are different ecologically and new information on which areas are best suited to intensive management programs will continue to be gathered.

Decisions by the Board to Undertake Wolf Control

Generally, there are two situations under which the Board will consider undertaking wolf control (implementing extraordinary measures outside normal hunting and trapping). In rare cases, control may be implemented where sustained yield harvests of ungulates cannot be maintained or where extirpation of ungulate populations may be expected. More commonly, the Board may implement wolf control to comply with Alaska Statutes (AS 16.05.255) where ungulate populations are declared "depleted" or where ungulate harvests must be significantly reduced and these

populations have been found by the Board to be important for “high levels of human harvest”. In most cases when wolf control is implemented, the Board will favor and promote an effective control effort by the public. Experience has shown that often a joint effort by the public and the Department has been most effective. However, the Board recognizes that there are areas and situations where the public cannot effectively or efficiently control predation and that the Department may, under its own authority and responsibilities, conduct the necessary wolf population control activities. Such situations arise in part because public effort to take wolves tends to diminish before an adequate level of population control is achieved. In areas where wolf reduction is being conducted, ungulate and wolf surveys should be conducted as frequently as necessary to ensure that adequate data are available to make management decisions and to ensure that wolf numbers remain sufficient to maintain long-term sustained yield harvests.

Methods the Board Will Consider When Implementing Wolf Control Programs

- 1) Expanding public hunting and trapping into seasons when wolf hides are not prime.
- 2) Use of baiting for hunting wolves.
- 3) Allowing same-day-airborne hunting of wolves when 300 ft from aircraft.
- 4) Allowing land-and-shoot by the public.
- 5) Allowing aerial shooting by the public.
- 6) Allowing use of Department staff and helicopters for aerial shooting.
- 7) Encouraging the Department to hire or contract with wolf trappers and other agents who may use one or more of the methods listed here.
- 8) Allowing denning by Department staff and use of gas for euthanasia of sub-adults in dens.

Terminating Wolf Control

Depending on the response to wolf control and ungulate population and harvest objectives, control may either be of short or long duration. In some cases, control may last less than five years. In other cases it may be an ongoing effort lasting many years. As ungulate harvest objectives are met, the Board will transition from a wolf control program to a wolf management program, relying to a greater extent on public hunting and trapping. In cases where ungulates respond very well and hunting is ineffective at controlling ungulate numbers for practical reasons, it may be necessary for the Board to restrict the taking of predators.

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Vote: 6-0-1

March 25, 2011

Anchorage, Alaska



Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

**Findings for the Alaska Board of Game
2008-175-BOG**

**Unit 9D (Southern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd)
Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
March 6, 2008**

The Board of Game finds as follows, based on information provided by Department staff, Alaska residents and users of caribou in Unit 9D. These findings are supplemental to the findings set forth in 5AAC 92.108.

1. The caribou population size, currently estimated to be 600 caribou, is less than the population objective of 4,000 – 5,000. The population objective has not been achieved for at least the last five years.
2. The Unit 9D caribou harvestable surplus, as described in 5 AAC 92.106(3)(A), is currently estimated at zero, which is less than the harvest objective of 200 – 500. The harvest objective has not been achieved for at least the last 7 years.
3. The Unit 9D caribou population is depleted due to poor recruitment, and has already resulted in a complete hunting closure so that there is no human harvest of the population.
4. Increases in abundance and productivity are achievable utilizing the recognized and prudent active management technique of predator control.
5. The bull ratio of 15 bulls per hundred cows and the increasing age of the cows in the herd cause concern that the herd may no longer be viable in another year or two, and recovery will be difficult unless immediate action is taken. Collared cow caribou have shown a 79% to 85% pregnancy rate. However, calf survival during the first four weeks after birth has resulted in a survival rate between 0.5 to 1 calf per 100 cows by October.
6. The population and harvest objectives have not been achieved, at least in part, because wolf and brown bear predation have been important causes of mortality in the population, to the extent that the population is unlikely to recover, and objectives are unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future unless predator control is conducted.
7. Reducing predation can reasonably be expected to aid in achieving the population and harvest objectives.

Vote: 6-0-1
March 8, 2008
Fairbanks, Alaska

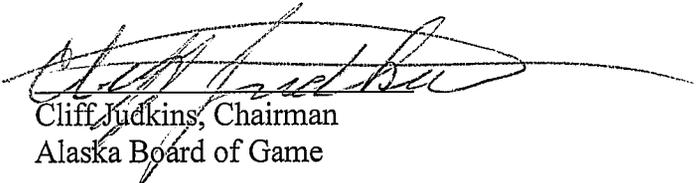

Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

**Finding for the Alaska Board of Game
2008-174-BOG**

**Unit 19D East Supplemental Findings
March 5, 2008**

The Board of Game finds that the moose population has increased within the Experimental Micro Management Area (EMMA) to the point that the limited harvest is now appropriate, although predator control should be continued in order to consolidate gains made. The following information supports a limited harvest.

1. The moose population has increased by approximately 350 animals (524 to 874) between 2001 and 2007.
2. The bull/cow ratio is well within management objectives, having increased from 18/100 to 39/100 between 2001 and 2007.
3. At 39 bulls per 100 cows, there is a harvestable surplus of bulls that can be used to provide an opportunity that is critical to local subsistence users. The Board of Game notes that local users have voluntarily refrained from taking moose in this area, which is where many of them live, for the past five years.



Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 6-0-1
March 5, 2008
Fairbanks, Alaska

Finding for the Alaska Board of Game
2007-173-BOG

Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy
March 12, 2007

At the March 2007, Southcentral/Southwest Region meeting in Anchorage, the Board of Game modified the Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy, #2006-162-BOG, by adding item #4 to the guidelines that shall be applied when determining the allocation percentage for drawing permits to nonresidents:

1. Allocations will be determined on a case by case basis and will be based upon the historical data of nonresident and resident permit allocation over the past ten years.
2. Each client shall provide proof of having a signed guide-client agreement when applying for permits.
3. Contracting guides shall be registered in the area prior to the drawing.
4. When a guide signs a guide-client agreement, the guide is providing guiding services and therefore must be registered for the use area at that time.


Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 7-0
Amended: March 12, 2007
Anchorage, Alaska

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2006-164-BOG**

**BOARD OF GAME BEAR CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY
MAY 14, 2006**

GENERAL BEAR MANAGEMENT

Purposes of Policy

1. To assure all management actions provide for the conservation of Alaska's bear species, their habitat and food sources, and are consistent with the Alaska Constitution, and applicable statutes.
2. To encourage review and comment and interagency coordination for bear management activities.

Goals

1. To ensure the long-term conservation of bears throughout their historic range in Alaska.
2. To increase public awareness and understanding of the uses, conservation, and management of bears and their habitat in Alaska.

Background

Brown/grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*) are large omnivores found throughout most of Alaska. Although they are considered the same species, brown and grizzly bears occupy different habitats and have somewhat different lifestyles and body configurations. Grizzlies are typically found in interior and northern areas. They are generally smaller than brown bears and more predatory. Brown bears live in coastal areas of southern Alaska where they have access to productive salmon streams.

Brown/grizzly bears are found throughout their historic range in Alaska, and unlike populations in the contiguous 48 states, they are not considered a threatened or endangered species. Estimating precise population numbers is difficult because of the bears' secretive habits and often densely vegetated habitat, but in most places in the state, populations are considered stable or increasing. Throughout most coastal habitats where salmon are abundant, bear densities typically exceed 175 bears/1,000 km² (450 bears/1,000 mi²). A population in Katmai National Park on the Alaska Peninsula was measured at 550 bears/1,000 km² (1,420 bears/1,000 mi²). In most interior and northern coastal areas, densities do not exceed 40 bears/1,000 km² (100 bears/1,000 mi²).

Densities as low as 7 bears/1,000 km² (20 bears/1,000 mi²) have been measured in the eastern Brooks Range. Extrapolations from existing density estimates yielded an estimate

of 31,700 brown bears in 1993. All indications are that the population has increased in the past decade.

American black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are generally found in forested habitats throughout the state. Black bears also occupy their historic range in Alaska, often overlapping distribution with brown/grizzly bears. Because they live in forested habitats it is very difficult to estimate population size or density. Where estimates have been conducted in interior Alaska, densities ranged from 67 bears/1,000 km² (175 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Yukon Flats to 289 bears/1,000 km² (750 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Kenai Peninsula. In coastal forest habitats of Southeast Alaska's Alexander Archipelago black bear densities are considered high. A 2000 estimate for Kuiu Island was 1,560 black bears/1,000 km² (4,000 black bears/1,000 mi²). A statewide black bear population estimate is not available because, unlike the many brown/grizzly bear and wolf estimates that are available across the state, very few black bear population estimates have been conducted.

Brown/grizzly bears have relatively low reproductive rates and require abundant resources. Black bears exhibit higher reproductive rates than brown/grizzly bears; however, rates are still lower than for other big game animals with the exception of brown/grizzly bears. Population stability can be threatened by human-caused mortality and from fragmentation or destruction of habitat. This combination is present to a sufficient extent on the Kenai Peninsula that brown/grizzly bears there have been designated by the State as a "population of special concern". To address situations where bear populations have declined because of human activities, the Department has implemented remedial management actions. In the Kenai situation, a conservation strategy has been developed through a public stakeholder process.

In most areas of the state black bear populations are healthy and can sustain current or increased harvest levels. However, in some areas such as Unit 20B and 20D in the interior, the Kenai Peninsula, and Southeast Alaska, hunter demand for black bears is high, harvest is high, and these populations require closer monitoring. Bears are intelligent animals that learn to adapt to new situations. This ability, coupled with their enduring drive to rebuild fat reserves prior to denning, makes bears experts in finding ways to get a meal. Garbage is often a source of food from people. If this happens, bears learn to exploit human-related food resources and lose their natural tendencies to avoid people. Frequently, such bears become classified as "nuisance" bears and often are killed in defense of live or property (DLP).

Respected by most, and feared by many, bears can pose a threat in certain situations. Statewide, there are an average of about six encounters a year in which a human is injured. About half of those involve hunters in search of other quarry. About every two or three years, one of the attacks results in a human fatality.

Whenever bears and people interact with each other there are potential benefits and dangers. Displacing bears from feeding sites has serious consequences for them. Human behavior around bears not only impacts their own personal safety and viewing experience,

it also impacts the health and safety of the bears and the people who come to the area later. When bears and people meet, it is important that bears never get food from them and that people are trained how to react to bear encounters. Comprehensive education is recognized as a vital component in all aspects of any bear viewing program.

Public interest in bears has increased dramatically in Alaska during the past decade. Some of this interest is incidental to other pursuits such as sport fishing, hiking, flight seeing, eco-tours, or marine water cruises but some of it is specifically targeted at bear viewing. Bear viewing is a rapidly growing industry in selected areas of the state. The interest exceeds the opportunities provided now by such established and controlled sites as McNeil River, Pack Creek, Anan Creek, Wolverine Creek and Brooks Camp. As a result, private entrepreneur businesses are providing viewing opportunities in some high-density bear areas. Many of these sites and programs involve highly habituated bears that most frequently result in mutually exclusive conflicts with other uses of bears. Habituation of bears should be discouraged and maximum public benefits pursued by providing management programs designed to provide for public viewing opportunities in areas where other uses are already excluded or to carefully integrate uses on a time and area basis.

Alaska is world-renowned as a brown/grizzly bear hunting area. Alaska is the only place in the United States where they are hunted in large numbers, and the vast majority of record book bears come from the state. An average of about 1,500 brown/grizzly bears are harvested each year. The trend has been increasing. Many of the hunters are nonresidents and their economic impact is significant to Alaska. Hunters have traditionally been the strongest advocates for bears and their habitat, providing consistent financial and political support for research and management programs.

Because bears can be both prey and predator, their relationship with people is complex. In areas where a population of large ungulates has been reduced to low levels, bears may have a significant influence on the decline of species such as moose, caribou and deer. This is especially true when bears are found in combination with thriving wolf populations. Alaskan studies of bear interactions with moose, for instance, indicate that bears may contribute significantly to calf mortality. Coupled with wolf predation, the combined mortality rates can far exceed human induced mortality and contribute to major moose population declines, depressed populations and delayed recoveries. The role of bears in these situations greatly exacerbates the debate over predator control and complicates evaluation of potential and initiated management actions.

Guiding Principles

1. Manage bear populations to allow a wide range of human uses, while providing for long-term bear population sustainability.
2. Establish minimum population goals that ensure the long-term viability of bears recognizing the reproductive capacity of each bear species.
3. Manage bears at the scale of subunits or units to achieve appropriate overall predator-prey relationships rather than pursue single species management.
4. Protect the genetic diversity of bears.
5. Continue and, if appropriate, accelerate research for the management of bears.

6. Consider short-term and long-term effects of habitat loss and fragmentation on bear populations.
7. Provide for consumptive and non-consumptive uses of bears in management plans and encourage economic benefit to the state and its citizens while maintaining sustainable bear populations.
8. Do not allow identified prey populations to decline to a point where predation keeps them at low levels.
9. Avoid, where possible, activities that encourage the habituation of bears and manage bear viewing opportunities that are not mutually exclusive of other uses.
10. Encourage wildlife viewing of bears and other species in their natural settings as part of a broader outdoor experience.
11. Implement this policy in such a manner that the Department and the Board can respond promptly to unforeseen situations.
12. Pursue informational and educational efforts to help the public understand more about bears and their management.
13. Work with enforcement agencies to identify priorities and to assist with and encourage adequate enforcement activities.
14. Review and recommend revision to this policy as needed.

Conservation and Management

A. Management Strategies

The Department will manage both bear species differently according to their population and human use characteristics in different parts of the state. In some areas, such as the Kodiak Archipelago, portions of Southeast Alaska and the Alaska Peninsula, bears are managed for trophy-hunting and viewing opportunities. In many other areas of the state, bear populations are largely unaffected by human harvest. Bears are an important big game species sought by resident and nonresident hunters and are managed for a variety of objectives.

Generally, bear hunting will be conducted on a sustained yield basis, except in areas where a bear predation control program is authorized. Harvests will not be allowed to threaten the long-term population survival of bears. In most areas of the state, sustained brown/grizzly bear harvests will generally be 4-8 percent of the estimated total population and up to 12 percent for black bears. Some bear populations may be able to sustain a harvest above these guidelines and these will be evaluated for more liberal harvest programs. Lacking precise population data, managers will continue applying indirect parameter to assess the status of bear populations.

All brown/grizzly bears harvested under the general hunting regulations must be inspected and sealed by a Department representative. Black bears must be sealed in some units but not all. Non-resident hunters of brown/grizzly bears must be accompanied in the field by a registered big game guide or a resident relative. For both species, sows accompanied by cubs, and the cubs, are protected, but cubs are defined as bears in their first year of life for

black bears and for the first two years of life for brown/grizzly bears. The Department will continue to maintain these strategies and regulations for most of the state, unless it is necessary to consider methods to increase bear harvests as part of a bear predator control program.

The effect of management actions on the economic contribution of bears to Alaska's users of bears should be considered. Maintaining a regulatory structure that assures reasonable standards of data integrity with responsible management strategies and population sustainability will help avoid threats of international sanctions. Large areas of the state have subsistence brown/grizzly bear hunts with liberal seasons and bag limits, mandatory meat salvage, and relaxed sealing requirements. The Department will continue to accommodate subsistence needs and will consider the impacts on subsistence activities.

Bear viewing and bear/human interactions are also important aspects of bear management in Alaska. Increasing interest in watching bears at concentrated feeding areas such as salmon streams and sedge flats is challenging managers to find appropriate levels and types of human and bear interactions without jeopardizing human safety or bears or other legitimate uses of bears. Bear hunting and viewing are compatible in many situations. However, there are areas where the two uses are potentially mutually exclusive. Land and wildlife managers are faced with tough decisions that could either minimize those conflicts or promote single use regulations at the expense of other uses. For instance, federal withdrawals totaling over 40 million acres are managed to protect large segments of Alaska's big game resources habitat and major portions of these areas provide park-like observation opportunities. Logically these areas could first be utilized for habituated wildlife viewing opportunities before traditional uses of bears and other wildlife are unnecessarily impacted in other areas. Bear management programs on state and private lands should be designed to achieve maximum benefits to Alaskans. Specifically, state management programs should avoid habituating bears wherever possible. Conflicts between user groups can frequently be reduced if viewing programs adopt "best viewing practices."

In areas where bear management plans have been developed, the Department will adhere to the recommendations included in those plans as long as they are consistent with the newest policies and regulations adopted by the Board.

Nothing in this policy affects the authority under state or federal laws for an individual to protect human life or property from bears (5 AAC 92.410). All reasonable steps must be taken to protect life and property by non-lethal means before a bear is killed.

B. Research Strategies

Developing and implementing precise, cost-effective methods for determining bear populations will continue to be a research priority for the Department. Work to date suggests that no single population estimation method will work across the state given the vast areas, varied topography, differing vegetation communities and great differences in bear density. Some methods work well in one area but not in another. Aerial stream

surveys, line-transect surveys, capture-mark-recapture, intensive aerial surveys, and DNA analysis are some of the tools that can be utilized to provide population estimates.

Predator-prey relationships between bears and large ungulates have not been thoroughly examined in most of the state. Bears use a wide variety of foods seasonally including vegetation, fish, mammals, birds, and carrion and they are exceptionally adaptable in their ability to capitalize on available food resources. Consequently, the impact of ungulate prey abundance on bears is difficult to ascertain. Similarly, the impact of bears on prey populations is multifaceted and can be further compounded by the presence of other predators such as wolves.

Where appropriate, the Department will cooperate in research efforts with other agencies. Research findings will be reported in a timely fashion and presented in a form that is easily understood by the public.

C. Information and Education Strategies

Public education is critical in any bear management program. Perhaps as much as any species in Alaska, bears elicit a wide variety of emotions, have myriad uses, and directly impact peoples' lives both in the field and near settlements. Clear, objective information is necessary for citizens and managers alike to make wise decisions when dealing with bears. As the agency primarily responsible for bear management, the Department must take a lead role in producing and disseminating this information.

Bear information will be developed for a wide range of audiences and be delivered in a variety of media. A principal focus of bear education will be to promote a better understanding of life history, behavior, and habitat associations. Specific messages will include discussions of bear/human interactions, bear hunting, bear viewing, and bear predation on moose, caribou, and sheep. To assure consistent and accurate presentation of bear information, the Department will continue to work with the Alaska Interagency Bear Safety Education Committee.

The Department will strive to include the public in all bear management decisions. The primary method of public involvement will be through existing local Fish and Game Advisory Committee and Board processes. Citizen-driven bear management plans will be sponsored and supported by the Department. To date, such plans have been developed for Game Management Unit 4, the Kenai Peninsula, and the Kodiak Archipelago. The Department is committed to implementing as many of the recommendations from bear management plans as possible.

Because of the economic importance of guiding and other commercial enterprises associated with the varied uses of bear, it is recommended that extra efforts are made to notify all concerned parties that area specific predator control activities are being considered.

BEAR PREDATION MANAGEMENT

Purpose of Policy

1. To guide the Board of Game (Board) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department) in implementing any bear predation management actions pursuant to AS 16.05.255(e) and 5 AAC 92.106, when the Board determines ungulate populations important for human consumption are being kept at low levels because of bear predation.

Goals

1. To provide guidelines for developing, implementing, and evaluating bear management actions designed to reduce bear specific predation in precise areas for specific time periods required by predator control implementation plans.

Background

In areas where the Board has authorized for intensive management (IM) activities, set IM population and harvest objectives and those objectives are not being met and bear predation has been found to be a major factor in the decline in prey populations or in keeping prey populations from recovering, the Board can authorize bears to be included in predator control planning. Whenever bears are considered and authorized for predator control activities, the implementation control plan must specify whether one or both bear species are to be considered in the control plan.

Based on careful consideration of scientific information and public comment, the Department and the Board believe that in some limited circumstances it may be beneficial and appropriate to control predation by bears to achieve population and human use objectives.

Guiding Principles

1. Where bear reductions are authorized, the first step should be to reduce bear numbers through general hunting provisions such as liberalized seasons, bag limits, hunting methods and means and tag wavers.
2. Where predation regulates prey populations, identify to the extent possible, the relative contribution by each primary predator species so that management response can be focused and effective.
3. Implement measures to reduce black and/or brown bear numbers to allow prey species to increase population management objectives in areas managed for high consumptive use where predation by bears itself or in combination with other predators is keeping prey at low levels.
4. Manage bears at the appropriate scale that may vary from an entire Game Management Unit to a specifically defined area (e.g. key calving sites).
5. If liberalization of general hunting provisions does not adequately reduce the target bear population, an additional control program may be authorized. This program should be conducted for the minimum time necessary to achieve the stated

- management objectives and may utilize methods and means not approved for general hunting.
6. Consider the management goals and objectives of state, federal, and private land owners and work cooperatively with them to design, implement, and evaluate bear control activities.
 7. Encourage federal and private land owners, where possible, to work cooperatively in any management and/or species control programs.
 8. If reduction in bear numbers fail to result in reasonable increases in availability of prey populations for human use, management practices intended to reduce bear populations should be reconsidered.

Management Strategies

In areas where bears have been identified as an important component in reducing and/or holding prey populations well below objectives, higher harvest levels than those listed under general management strategies will be allowed. In these areas, specific harvest reporting conditions will be imposed which may include additional requirements for permits, sealing, and/or reporting. In addition, the Department will closely monitor the effects of higher harvest on the bear and prey populations.

Research Strategies

In areas where bear predation control programs are considered, the Department may conduct research to quantify the contributions of each bear species and of wolves to the causes of decline in the ungulate population important for human use. Alternatively, the Department may use standard survey and inventory data and interpretation of other research results to guide the decision-making process. Monitoring activities designed to determine the effects of high levels of bear harvest on recovery of depressed ungulate populations would help focus management efforts in the most cost-effective manner.

Information and Education Strategies

In any situation where the Board or Department believes bear predation control may become necessary, the public will be informed as soon as possible. Detailed information on the specific location, the predator, prey and habitat concerns, and the proposed management action and its anticipated costs and duration will be widely disseminated. Public meetings may be held in the affected area and in major Alaska communities, in addition to regularly scheduled Board and Advisory Committee meetings. Once implemented, the Department will provide the Board and the public with an annual report and evaluation of the management action.

Board Consideration

The Board may consider bear control on a bear species when:

1. Bear predation has been determined to be an important factor in the decline of a prey population or is preventing recovery of a low density prey population.

2. Bear predation is an important factor preventing attainment of approved prey population of human-use objectives.
3. Efforts to control bear predation can be reasonably expected to achieve improvement in sustainable human use of ungulates.

If the Department or the Board determines that one or more of these conditions exist in a given IM area, at the Board's direction, an implementation plan will be prepared for public review.

It is the intent of the Board of Game that bear control programs authorized under this policy shall be directed at only specified target areas and is not intended for implementation under general hunting regulations.

Under methods and means the Board may selectively consider:

- Relocation
- Sterilization
- Use of communications equipment between hunters or trappers
- Sale of hides and skulls as incentive
- Use of bears for handicraft items for sale
- Trapping
- Bear baiting
- Changing the definition of a legal bear
- Same day airborne taking, except aerial shooting
- Diversionsary feeding

Vote: 7/0
May 14, 2006
Anchorage, Alaska



Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

FINDINGS OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Snowmachine Use in the Taking of Caribou
in Game Management Units 22 and 23

BOG 99-129

RECEIVED
DEC 21 1999
BOARDS

At the October 1999, Region V meeting in Barrow, the Board considered a proposal to include Game Management Unit 22 in the exception already accorded Unit 23, which allows the taking of caribou from a snowmachine. After receiving public and staff testimony on the proposal, the Board of Game found that:

- Residents of Units 22 and 23 have a long tradition of positioning caribou using snowmachines to facilitate selection of individual animals for harvest. Before the use of snowmachines, dog teams were used similarly.
- This practice is not strictly in accord with statewide regulations governing the taking of game (5 AAC 92.080); however, neither does it constitute harassment.
- Existing regulations for Unit 23 make an exception to the general regulations and allow this practice, but employ broad language that can be construed to allow harassment and shooting from a moving machine, both of which are not acceptable to the board.
- Regulatory changes are desired to permit the responsible practice of this tradition in Unit 22.

Therefore, the Board of Game:

- adopted a single exception to 5 AAC 92.080 for both game management units;
- explicitly provided that caribou could not be shot from a moving snowmachine;
- permitted only the specific activity of "positioning" caribou using snowmachines to allow selection of individual animals for harvest. Wording was chosen that allowed for causing individual animals to move in a desired direction, but not to the extent of harmful "driving" or "herding" of caribou.

Date: October 29, 1999
Barrow, Alaska

Vote: 6-0-1

Lori Quakenbush
Lori Quakenbush, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Alaska Board of Game Findings
Trapping and Wolf Snaring in Alaska
98-119-BOG

At its March, 1998 meeting in Fairbanks, the Board of Game considered several proposals that restrict or eliminate the use of snares for harvesting wolves and other trapping concerns. Extensive public testimony and advisory committee reports regarding concern over the reduction or loss of snares as a method of harvesting wolves, and other trapping concerns was also received on both the proposals and the potential ballot initiative banning wolf snaring.

Based on this testimony and information provided by the Division of Wildlife Conservation and the Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection, and considerable deliberation, the BOG makes the following findings:

1. Snares are an important harvest tool for Alaska trappers, and the restriction or removal of that tool will result in personal and financial hardship for trappers and others dependent on the fur trade for their livelihood. In most areas of Alaska, economic opportunities are few, and the inability to harvest wolves with snares will lead to significantly reduced income levels in already depressed communities.
2. The harvest of wolves, through regulated methods and means, is an important management tool used by the Department of Fish and Game and the BOG in maintaining harvestable quantities of big game species, and is considered to be an important factor in the management of those species. Restricting or eliminating the use of snares to harvest wolves will reduce wolf harvest numbers, leading to potential predator to prey ratio imbalances and low moose and caribou densities in many areas.
3. It is strongly substantiated through many years of scientific monitoring and research that wolves are a highly prolific, productive and resilient species, capable of sustaining consistent harvestable surplus rates of over 30% annually on any given wolf pack. The annual reported harvest from Alaska's estimated wolf population of 7000 seldom exceeds 20% in a given area or statewide under existing harvest and management regimes.
4. ~~The source of the data used by snaring opponents and ballot initiative supporters is the result of an intensive wolf trapping and snaring program conducted by the Department of Fish and Game in 1993-1994 in GMU 20A. It can not be considered representative of common trapping practices. Trappers use varying numbers of snares at a set, rarely more than 12, determined by location and prevailing conditions. There is no evidence that trappers use snares set in the manner of a drift net, or that they set snares in multiple heights.~~
5. The rate of incidental catch by trappers of non-target species such as moose, caribou, eagles, ravens, and bears is very low, due to the careful and exact placement of their snares, and the timing of trapping seasons, in habitats, locations, and configurations that minimize catch of other species. Other species of furbearers caught in wolf snares, such as fox, wolverine and lynx, are desirable and legal, and are not considered to be incidental non-target catches to the trapper.
6. The instances of wolves being caught around other parts of the body, such as the legs and feet are rare. In cases where wolves are caught around the foot, the snare rarely breaks the flesh. Most wolves caught in snares are caught around the neck, leading to swift and humane death. A very small

percentage of wolves are caught around the torso. These wolves are usually still alive when the trapper returns to the set.

7. We heard widespread public support among Alaska residents, particularly those residing in rural areas, for the use of snares by trappers to harvest wolves. There is no evidence to support the notion that the bush communities support a ban on wolf snares.
8. Alaska trappers are conscientious and operate within the laws and regulations governing trapping. Snares are rarely left operable at the end of the season. Snares are valuable to the trapper, and great effort is made to recover snares set in the field.
9. Regulated trap checks are not reasonable in Alaska, considering climatic conditions, length of traplines, and other considerations that would make a time limit impossible to comply with.
10. Trap identification is not warranted at this time. Trappers have experienced harassment by those against trapping and worry about the information being made available to the public. The Alaska Trappers Association assists law enforcement officers in determining who traps belong to. Most traplines are well known by other people and Department staff, further assisting in the identification of those trappers.

The Board of Game found that much of the information used in the claims against snaring came from a specific intensive wolf management program. Many more snares were used per set and higher density of snares were used for a longer season in habitats not normally trapped. The area also had a higher density of moose than most of Alaska. Two grizzly bears were caught before the normal trapping season begins, and two eagles were caught in snares set by helicopter in high terrain.

It is our conclusion that the numbers used by the Alaska Wildlife Alliance and Alaskans Against Snaring Wolves are inflated and do not represent common trapping practices or actual rates of wolf harvest or incidental take of other species.

ADOPTED DATE: March 26, 1998
Fairbanks, Alaska

Lori Quakenbush
Lori Quakenbush, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
Regarding Customary and Traditional Use of Muskoxen
in Northwestern Unit 23
98-118 BOG

At its October 1997 meeting in Nome, the Board of Game took up a proposal sponsored by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to determine whether there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen in northwestern Unit 23. The muskoxen now in Unit 23 were introduced in 1970 and have been protected from hunting by state law, since then. Muskoxen in Unit 23 represented an unusual situation for the C&T determination process because muskoxen have been absent from that area for many years. Unlike muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula no federal hunt has been established on this population of muskoxen on federal lands so there has been no reported recent use of muskoxen by residents of Unit 23.

Board deliberations on the findings of a customary and traditional use lead to the following conclusions:

Criterion 1: A long-term consistent pattern of non-commercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user's control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.

While the Board of Game did not find that a consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance on this re-established population had occurred over a period of not less than one generation (approximately 30 years), the Board did find that the reason was due to an interruption by circumstances beyond the users' control.

Muskox bones and horns have been found near Cape Thompson and Kivalina associated with other cultural materials at known archeological sites. Inupiaq oral histories include references to muskoxen and one muskox was reported to have been taken by a Point Hope resident in 1946. In addition to the direct evidence of customary and traditional use of muskoxen in Unit 23 there is a good record for use of muskoxen on the North Slope by the Inupiaq culture. The Inupiat people of northwestern Unit 23 share that culture, which includes the use of muskoxen for food and blankets.

Criterion 2: A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.

Due to the long interruption of the availability of the population the board could not determine directly when muskoxen were taken in Unit 23. A pattern of taking muskoxen during the late-winter and spring has become established for muskox hunting on the newly established federal hunt on the Seward Peninsula and on the North Slope. Even though the

federal hunt was established with specific seasons, extensions have been granted to accommodate the developing pattern of taking.

Criterion 3: A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.

Due to the long interruption of the availability of the population the board could not determine directly the method and means of harvest in Unit 23. In neighboring areas, the primary transportation is by snowmachine and foot without the use of aircraft or other expensive commercial services. Muskoxen harvests are efficient and economical to local hunters. The grouping behavior of the animals when approached allows hunters to easily get within range and select animals to harvest.

Criterion 4: The area in which the noncommercial, long-term and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game population has been established.

The current range of muskoxen is within the area that has traditionally been used for subsistence hunting of large land mammals by residents of Point Hope and Kivalina. Therefore, if hunting were allowed it would likely occur in this area.

Criterion 5: A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.

While many families now use freezers for storage, most fish is smoked or dried as is some moose and caribou. Since muskoxen have not been harvested in this area in many years the Board of Game could not address the handling and preparation of muskoxen directly. However, available information suggests that the handling and preparation, preservation and storage would occur in the same manner as that of other big game subsistence species. On the Seward Peninsula and on the North Slope, the meat is salvaged and used and hides are used for warmth as blankets or clothing. There has been no trophy use of horns or hides.

Criterion 6: A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.

Hunting knowledge in the communities within Unit 23 are known to be passed along from parent to child. Learning commonly occurs when children accompany their parents during hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. When hunting large animals young boys are taught hunting skills by older brothers, fathers, or uncles.

Criterion 7: A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.

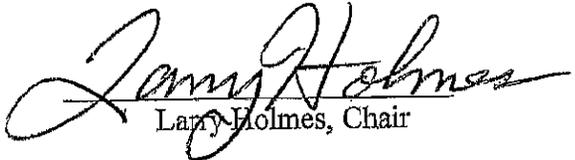
Sharing of big game and other wild resources is common in communities of Northwest Alaska as demonstrated by subsistence surveys indicating that virtually every household received such gifts.

Criterion 8: A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.

Communities in Unit 23 take, use, and rely upon a wide diversity of game resources. Documented harvests ranged from 398 pounds per capita in Kotzebue in 1989 to 762 pounds per capita per year in Kivalina 1992 (Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1997). The typical community harvests about 50 different species of plants, fish, and wildlife each year. It is also well documented that economic opportunities for cash are few and mean household income is low, therefore wild foods are essential to many people of Unit 23.

After weighing the individual criteria, the board found that there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen in Unit 23. The board believed that muskoxen were used, to the extent they were available, prior to extirpation from the area, and that this use would have resumed, but for legal constraints, as soon as animal were again available. The extirpation was not within the control of current users.

DATE: January 18, 1998
Bethel, Alaska


Larry Holmes, Chair

VOTE: 7-0

97-117-BOG
Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
Regarding Customary and Traditional Use of Muskoxen
on the Seward Peninsula

At its October 1997 meeting in Nome, the Board of Game took up a proposal to find a positive Customary and Traditional (C&T) finding for muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula. Muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula represented an unusual situation for the C&T determination process because muskoxen disappeared from the Seward Peninsula and have been absent from that area for at least 100 years. The muskoxen now on the Seward Peninsula were introduced in 1970 and have been protected from hunting by state law, since then. A federal hunt began on this population of muskoxen on federal lands of the Seward Peninsula in 1995-96 and more than 30 muskoxen have been harvested.

Board deliberations on the findings of a customary and traditional use lead to the following conclusions:

Criterion 1: A long-term consistent pattern of non-commercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user's control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.

While the Board of Game did not find that a consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance on this re-established population had occurred over a period of not less than one generation (approximately 30 years), the Board did find that the reason was due to an interruption by circumstances beyond the users' control.

Muskox bones found on and near the Seward Peninsula, the lack of geographical barriers to prevent muskoxen from reaching the peninsula from known populations to the north, and a name for muskoxen in the local language provided evidence that muskoxen once inhabited the area and were known by the people. Interviews conducted by ADF&G Division of Subsistence have included elders of the Seward Peninsula who remember their elders talking about muskoxen. Although the Board found no direct evidence of use of muskoxen prior to the federal hunt established in 1995 by the residents of the Seward Peninsula, there is a much better record for the North Slope of Alaska. A large majority of the people of the Seward Peninsula are Inupiat Eskimos and share the same culture with the Inupiat of the North Slope. Had the Inupiat of the Seward Peninsula been allowed to hunt muskoxen soon after their introduction in 1970 there would be a recorded pattern of taking and use of approximately one generation at the time of this request for a finding. It is reasonable to assume the use of muskoxen would be similar to that found for the Inupiat of the North Slope of Alaska.

Criterion 2: A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.

A pattern of taking muskoxen during the late-winter and spring has developed during the recent federal hunt. Even though the hunt was established with specific seasons, extensions have been granted to accommodate the developing pattern of taking.

Criterion 3: A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.

The primary transportation is by snowmachine and foot without the use of aircraft or other expensive commercial services. The Board heard testimony that the harvest would be more efficient and economical if the hunters were not forced to travel farther from their villages to hunt on more distant federal lands.

Criterion 4: The area in which the noncommercial, long-term and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game population has been established.

For this criterion the area has been defined by land ownership. Federal lands farther from the villages are open for muskox hunting while state and private lands closer to the villages are closed. The Board is confident that a harvest area would be established for muskoxen in the absence of the legal constraints although it would likely be somewhat different from the present area.

Criterion 5: A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.

The Board heard testimony that harvested muskoxen were being handled, prepared, preserved, and stored in the same manner as other big game subsistence species. The meat has been salvaged and used and hides have been used for warmth as blankets or clothing. There has been no trophy use of horns or hides.

Criterion 6: A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.

On the Seward Peninsula hunting traditions are known to be taught to children by their parents and grandparents. Although hunting of muskoxen was illegal between 1970 and 1995, information about muskox movements, habits and behavior, especially regarding human safety, was being transferred among generations.

Criterion 7: A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter; and gift-giving.

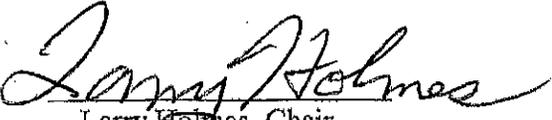
The limited number of muskoxen available to be harvested in the federal hunt have been shared widely within the communities. Sharing of big game and other wild resources is common in communities of Northwest Alaska as demonstrated by subsistence surveys indicating that large percentages of households received such gifts. The Board believe that had the harvest of muskoxen been allowed in the past, this species would be fully incorporated into the subsistence pattern of these communities.

Criterion 8: A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.

Subsistence use of about 50 different species of fish, game, and plants is well documented for the Seward Peninsula communities (ADF&G Community Profile Database, Vol. 5 Arctic Region, Division of Subsistence). It is also well documented that economic opportunities for cash are few and mean household income is low, therefore wild foods are essential to many people of the Seward Peninsula.

After weighing the individual criteria, the Board found that there is a customary and traditional use of muskoxen on the Seward Peninsula. The Board believes that muskoxen were used, to the extent they were available, prior to extirpation from the peninsula, and that this sporadic use would have resumed, but for legal constraints, as soon as animals were again available. The extirpation was not within the control of current users.

Date: 11/16/97
Anchorage, Alaska


Larry Holmes, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 4-2-1
Fleagle absent

97-116-BOG
Findings of the Alaska Board of Game on Dall Sheep Management
in the Western Brooks Range

The Board of Game considered information on the management and use of Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range contained in reports from the Division of Wildlife Conservation, the Division of Subsistence and public testimony at its meeting in Nome, Alaska. Based on this information the Board makes the following findings.

1. Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range occur in three populations: the DeLong Mountains in Game Management Units 23 and 26A west of the Etivluk River, the Baird Mountains in Game Management Unit 23 and the Schwatka Mountains in Game Management Units 23, 24 and 26A east of the Etivluk River.
2. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in the DeLong Mountains is 0 to 9 sheep per year.
3. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in the Baird Mountains is 18 to 47 sheep per year.
4. The amount necessary to provide for subsistence use of Dall sheep in Game Management Unit 23 and Game Management Unit 26A portions of the Schwatka Mountains is 2 to 4 sheep per year.
5. The harvest of Dall sheep in the western Brooks Range should be allocated according to the following model, developed for game populations with Customary and Traditional (C&T) uses and a variable harvestable surplus:
 - a. If the harvestable surplus is less than the minimum necessary for subsistence purposes, the department may issue Tier II subsistence permits and apply conditions to the hunt consistent with the C&T use pattern.
 - b. If the harvestable surplus is between the minimum and maximum necessary for subsistence purposes, the department may issue subsistence registration permits and apply conditions to the hunt consistent with the C&T use pattern.
6. Applying this model to sheep of the Western Brooks Range results in the following determinations:
 - a. The harvestable surplus of sheep in the DeLong and Baird Mountains is variable. When the harvestable surplus is sufficient to allow subsistence harvest in either population, the department may issue subsistence registration permits. The conditions of the permits shall prohibit use of aircraft. (In deference to the request of subsistence users, no harvest will be allowed if the harvestable surplus is below the minimum necessary for subsistence.)

b. Because the harvestable surplus in the Schvatka Mountains substantially exceeds the demand for both C&T use and general hunting, the department may allow general hunting under authority of harvest tickets.

c. When the harvestable surplus in these populations is greater than the maximum amount necessary to provide for subsistence use, the department may issue general drawing permits to harvest the number of sheep in excess of that amount.

Date: 11/16/97
Anchorage, Alaska


Larry Holmes, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 6-0-1
Absent: Fleagle

97-111-BOG

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game to include Game Management Unit 22,
except 22C, into the Northwest Alaska Brown Bear Management Area**

At its October 1997 meeting in Nome, the Board of Game reviewed public testimony and reports from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Wildlife Conservation and Subsistence Division staff regarding the population status and harvest data for brown bear in Game Management Unit 22. Through the information available the Board finds that there is a long-standing pattern of subsistence use in this area in the harvest of these animals for their meat and fur for non-trophy purposes. The Board finds that 20-25 bears per year is the amount necessary to provide a reasonable opportunity to satisfy subsistence needs in Game Management Units 21 and 22.

Subunit 22C is excluded from the management area since it includes a large population base who hunt brown bear primarily for their trophy value, consider them a nuisance, or prefer to use them in a nonconsumptive fashion as commonly practiced by broader user populations. Exclusion of Unit 22C does not constitute an undue burden or hardship on Unit 22C residents who wish to harvest a brown bear for subsistence purposes since neighboring subunits are readily accessible and utilized by them. This is directly reflected in the harvest data of 1991-95, which show that of the 74 bears harvested by Unit 22C residents in that 5-year time frame, only 18 were taken in Game Management Unit 22C.

DATE: 10/30/97
Nome, Alaska


Larry Holmes, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

VOTE: 6-0-1

FINDINGS OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Moose Populations in GMU 26A
96-99-BOG

- A. Prior Board findings on human use of moose in GMU 26A indicate that high levels of human consumptive use are not a priority in this area. Therefore, adoption of proposal 62 restricting hunting opportunity will not trigger an intensive management process.
- B. The Board finds that restricting moose harvests in this area for conservation purposes will not significantly affect subsistence use because the subsistence moose harvest has, in recent years, been limited to less than seven animals and caribou provide most of the ungulate food resource.
- C. The Board finds that subpopulations of moose outside the lower Colville River drainage have declined greatly. Testimony by ADF&G biologists on the environmental factors influencing these populations indicates that no harvest is possible at this time.
- D. The Board finds that adoption of this proposal will not result in significantly increased costs to individuals. Costs may decline if hunters do not hunt.

4/18/96
Date
Juneau, Alaska

Larry Holmes
Larry Holmes
Chair

vote: 6-0-0-1

FINDINGS OF THE BOARD OF GAME

Noatak Controlled Use Area in Game Management Unit 23

During the publicly convened Board of Game (BOG) meeting in November 1994, the BOG voted to reconsider previous action taken in March 1994 when the Noatak Controlled Use Area (CUA) was enlarged. Reconsideration occurred during the public BOG meeting in March 1995. The BOG heard public and advisory committee testimony, and staff reports. Based on testimony and reports, and after due consideration, the BOG finds that:

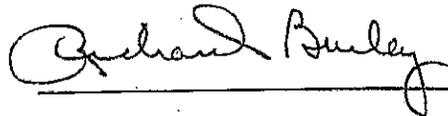
1. The Noatak CUA was enlarged primarily to resolve a significant conflict between hunters who use aircraft for access and local hunters who use boats during late August and early September along the Noatak River. Conflict occurs when low altitude flights by aircraft-borne hunters disturb wildlife and disrupt hunting activities of those using boats. Conflict also occurs when hunters transported by aircraft occupy the best camping and hunting locations along the River, thereby preventing local residents from using traditional hunting sites;
2. Along with recent restrictions in moose seasons and bag limits, the Noatak CUA was originally proposed to help reduce harvests on a declining moose population. Moose densities in the area have significantly declined in recent years, and the number of non local resident and non resident moose hunters have significantly increased. However, as amended and passed by the BOG in March 1994, the effect of the CUA on the harvest of moose in the Noatak River drainage is unclear;
3. The Noatak CUA was enlarged to maintain a reasonable opportunity for subsistence hunters using boats within the River corridor without unduly restricting hunters using aircraft. Access by aircraft-borne moose and caribou hunters in the Noatak River drainage remains available throughout the hunting season on tributary rivers adjacent to the CUA, on the Noatak River above the CUA, and in the CUA before 25 August and after 15 September. In addition, hunters who traditionally have relied on aircraft to access the CUA area can continue to do so while it is in effect by using a registered guide who operates throughout the fall with boats and ATV's in the CUA, by accompanying local residents who access the CUA by boat, or by floating into the CUA and arranging to be picked up by aircraft after 15 September. The Western Arctic Caribou Herd is also available to aircraft-borne hunters throughout the year in numerous areas outside of the CUA in Game Management Unit 23 and elsewhere in Northwest Alaska;

4. The enlarged Noatak CUA has existed for only 1 year, which is inadequate time to evaluate its effectiveness in reducing user conflicts and moose harvests. In addition, extremely high water levels during fall 1994 confounded the effects of the CUA on hunter access and harvest levels both in and outside of the CUA in Game Management Unit 23;

5. No compelling reason to rescind the regulation has been presented;

6. Accordingly, the BOG voted to not rescind the existing regulation establishing the Noatak CUA.

Adopted March 21, 1995



Richard Burley, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Policy #81-29-GB

Finding and Policy for
Future Management of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd

1. The management goal of the Game Board's resolution #1, September 21, 1976, was to rebuild the Western Arctic Caribou Herd to 100,000 breeding age animals. This goal will in all probability be attained during summer 1981.
2. This herd is a principal source of food for residents living within the range of the herd. Other Alaska residents and some nonresidents utilize a small portion of the herd, of which the harvest has been severely restricted since fall 1976.
3. The recent rapid rate of recovery of the herd at approximately 14 percent annually is in part a result of unusually low natural mortality due to the recent mild winters, possible reduced rates of wolf predation, and the herd conservation concerns of the residents also on the herd's range in conjunction with harvest restriction.
4. At the present population level of approximately 140,000 animals there are portions of the herd's range which remain underutilized by the herd--notably the Koyukuk valley.
5. Assessment of the habitat's capabilities and condition can be determined by evaluations at varying population levels and consistent or nonconsistent migration patterns arising from development of access corridors or other human activities.

THEREFORE, future management of the Western Arctic Caribou Herd should be to:

1. Provide a greater proportion of the annual increment to those users most dependent on the herd for sustenance;
2. Allow a gradual increase in herd size for expansion into traditional ranges;
3. Maintain a portion of the annual increment for periods of increased natural mortality; and
4. Maintain periodic assessments of the habitat to determine long-term carrying capacities.

ADOPTED: Anchorage, Alaska
April 5, 1981

VOTE: 6-0 (Bennett absent)

Dr. Samuel J. Harbo, Jr.
Chairman, Alaska Board of Game

APPENDIX I

STATEMENT OF DIRECTION from
Alaska Board of Game

April 7, 1978

I. Permits allowing the use of airplanes in controlling predation by wolves in an area may be issued by the commissioner when he finds that:

- 1) the highest priority use of wildlife in an area is determined to be that use of prey species for food or recreational hunting;
- 2) the prey populations have been reduced to or are held at a level below that allowed by the habitat;
- 3) the prey populations are below levels that could reasonably satisfy the priority uses;
- 4) adequate control of predation cannot be attained by manipulation of hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits;
- 5) predation control based on aircraft use governed by a permit is judged to be an effective control method for that area, and;
- 6) such predation control in an area can be adequately supervised and regulated.

II. Permits may also be issued if the commissioner finds that a prey population in an area is endangered by predation. Permits allowing the use of airplanes in control of predation on wildlife may also be issued if the commissioner finds that a prey population in an area is endangered by predation.

Harbo moved, seconded by Farnen that the above be a statement of direction to the Commissioner and the Department of Fish and Game - carried 6/0.