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 km^2 (450 bears/1,000 mi^2). A population in Katmai National Park on the Alaska Peninsula was measured at 550 bears/1,000 km^2 (1,420 bears/1,000 mi^2). In most interior and northern coastal areas, densities do not exceed 40 bears/1,000 km^2 (100 bears/1,000 mi^2). Mean densities as low as 4 grizzly bears/1,000 km^2 (12 bears/1,000 mi^2) 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 km^2 (175 bears/1,000 mi^2) on the Yukon Flats to 289 bears/1,000 km^2 (750 bears/1,000 mi^2) 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 km^2 (4,000 black bears/1,000 mi^2).

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
2009-180-BOG

Unit 19A Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
March 9, 2009

The Board of Game finds as follows, based on information provided by Department staff and residents and users of moose in Unit 19A. These findings are supplemental to the findings set forth in 5AAC 92.108, in the Unit 19A predation control implementation plan in 5 AAC 92.125, and in Board of Game Findings 2004-150-BOG and 2006-168-BOG.

1. The moose population size, currently estimated to be 3,200-5,275 moose, is less than the population objective of 7,600-9,300 moose (derived from the combined Units 19A and 19B objective based on proportionate area). The population objective has not been achieved for at least the last 8 years.

2. The Unit 19A moose harvestable surplus, as described in 5 AAC 92.106(3)(A), there is no harvestable surplus in eastern Unit 19A (upstream from and excluding the George River drainage), excluding the Lime Village Management Area. In western Unit 19A (downstream from and including the George River drainage), the harvestable surplus is 60 bulls. This is less than the harvest objective of 400-550 moose (also based on proportionate area). The harvest objective has not been achieved for at least the last 8 years.

3. The Unit 19A moose population is, thus, depleted and reduced in productivity, which has already resulted in a significant reduction in the allowable human harvest of the population.

4. Enhancement of abundance or productivity is feasibly achievable utilizing the recognized and prudent active management technique of predator control.

5. The Board has repeatedly, since 2002, been required to significantly reduce the taking of moose in Unit 19A by restricting harvest, seasons and bag limits as compared to the level and timing of hunting opportunity that was allowed when the population was not depleted and reduced in productivity.

6. The population and harvest objectives have not been achieved, at least in part, because wolf predation has been an important cause 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 achievement of the population and harvest objectives.

Vote: 5-0-2
March 9, 2009
Anchorage, Alaska

Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

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 for the Alaska Board of Game
2006-168-BOG

Unit 19A Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
May 14, 2006

The Board of Game finds as follows, based on information provided by Department staff and residents and users of moose in Unit 19A. These findings are supplemental to the findings set forth in 5AAC 92.108, in the Unit 19A predation control implementation plan in 5 AAC 92.125, and in Board of Game Findings 2004-150-BOG.

1. The moose population size, currently estimated to be 2,700-4,250 moose, is less than the population objective of 7,600-9,300 moose (derived from the combined Units 19A and 19B objective based on proportionate area). The population objective has not been achieved for at least the last 5 years.

2. The Unit 19A moose harvestable surplus, as described in 5 AAC 92.106(3)(A), there is no harvestable surplus in eastern Unit 19A (upstream from and excluding the George River drainage), excluding the Lime Village Management Area. In western Unit 19A (downstream from and including the George River drainage), the harvestable surplus is 60 bulls. This is less than the harvest objective of 400-550 moose (also based on proportionate area). The harvest objective has not been achieved for at least the last 5 years.

3. The Unit 19A moose population is, thus, depleted and reduced in productivity, which has already resulted in a significant reduction in the allowable human harvest of the population.

4. Enhancement of abundance or productivity is feasibly achievable utilizing the recognized and prudent active management technique of predator control.

5. The Board has repeatedly, since 2002, been required to significantly reduce the taking of moose in Unit 19A by restricting harvest, seasons and bag limits as compared to the level and timing of hunting opportunity that was allowed when the population was not depleted and reduced in productivity.

6. The population and harvest objectives have not been achieved, at least in part, because wolf predation has been an important cause 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 achievement of the population and harvest objectives.

Vote: 6-0-1
May 14, 2006
Anchorage, Alaska

Mike Fleagle, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

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 waviers.
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
- Diversionary feeding

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

Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Findings for the Alaska Board of Game
2006-162-BOG

Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy
March 18, 2006

At the March 2006, Interior Region meeting in Fairbanks, the Board of Game adopted the following guidelines to be applied when determining the allocation percentage for drawing permits to nonresidents:

- 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.

- Each client shall provide proof of having a signed guide-client agreement when applying for permits.

- Contracting guides shall be registered in the area prior to the drawing.

Vote: 6-0
March 18, 2006
Fairbanks, Alaska

Mike Fleagle, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2004-150-BOG

Authorizing Wolf Predation Control in the Unit 19(A) Portion of the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area With Airborne or Same Day Airborne Shooting

March 10, 2004

Purpose and Need

This action of the Board of Game (Board) is to authorize a wolf predation control program in the Game Management Unit 19(A) portion of the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area in accordance with AS 16.05.783, Same day airborne hunting, 5 AAC 92.039, Permit for taking wolves using aircraft, and 5 AAC 92.110, Control of predation by wolves. This authorization does not currently include the Unit 19(B) portion of the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area.

There is no expectation that the Intensive Management population and harvest objectives for moose will be achieved in a reasonable time frame unless wolf predation on moose is reduced through a wolf predation control program.

Identified Big Game Prey Population and Wolf Predation Control Area

The Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Implementation Area includes both Units 19(A) and 19(B) and encompasses approximately 17,680 mi^2, including all land ownerships. The Board has identified moose populations in Units 19(A) and 19(B) as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use in accordance with the Intensive Management statute and regulations (AS 16.05.255(e)–(g), 5 AAC 92.106, and 5 AAC 92.108).

The Board's present authorization for wolf control using airborne or same-day-airborne shooting includes those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage within Unit 19(A) defined in 5 AAC 92.450(19)(A), encompassing approximately 9,969 mi^2.

Background

Unit 19(A) encompasses the Central Kuskokwim River and the communities of Lower and Upper Kalskag, Aniak, Chuathbaluk, Crooked Creek, Red Devil, Sleetmute, Stony River, Lime Village, and other smaller settlements. Residents of Unit 19(A) depend on moose as a primary subsistence food source. Residents of communities in Unit 18 travel up the Kuskokwim River to harvest moose for subsistence and other uses, as do other Alaska residents who access the area by aircraft.

Unit 19(B) is also included in the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area. It encompasses the upper portions of several tributaries to the Kuskokwim River. Although there are no communities in the unit, the area provides moose that are important for subsistence use

and personal consumption of moose by Alaska residents. Units 19(A) and (B) have also provided hunting opportunities that are important for non-resident hunters and the guiding and transporting industries.

For several years, the Central Kuskokwim Fish and Game Advisory Committee (CKAC) has expressed concern to the Board about declining moose numbers in Units 19(A) and 19(B). The committee has submitted several regulation proposals and recommended wolf predation control to stop the decline of the moose population and boost moose numbers in the area. In response to the concerns of the CKAC and other users, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) initiated a comprehensive planning process for the area with a citizen based planning committee composed of a broad cross-section of stakeholders in Units 19(A) and (B) wildlife management. Upon reviewing information on the moose populations, the majority of the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Planning Committee (CKMC) agreed:

> ***"There is a major concern that the moose populations in Units 19(A) and 19(B) will not meet the needs of local subsistence users and other consumptive users. Local observations and available scientific data indicate that the moose population has substantially declined and in some areas is very low and will continue to jeopardize subsistence and other uses."***

The Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan developed by the CKMC is a comprehensive plan for the area that includes a recommendation for a wolf predation control program for Units 19(A) and (B). The control program is one component of a multifaceted plan to rebuild the moose populations in the Central Kuskokwim region. The CKMC recommended that the first priority for wolf predation control efforts should be the areas most important for providing moose for subsistence uses. Unit 19(A) is where the majority of subsistence moose hunting by local residents and residents of Unit 18 occurs.

Status of the Moose Population

A moose population estimate conducted in Unit 19(A) in March 1998 indicated a density of 1.25 moose per mi^2 in the Holitna and Hoholitna drainages where moose are most abundant. Moose densities are much lower in surrounding areas of lower habitat quality. A March 2001 population estimate in Unit 19(A) in the Aniak River area indicated a density of 0.7 moose per mi^2. The Aniak survey area is surrounded by other areas of lower habitat quality where moose densities are much lower. Extrapolation of the 1998 and 2001 survey data results in a population estimate of 6,800 – 11,300 moose for Units 19(A) and 19(B). If the moose population has decreased since the last (2001) population estimation survey as is suggested by other moose survey data and observations of local residents and others, the population is probably lower.

There is a great deal of concern about the low calf:cow and bull:cow ratios in the moose population in Unit 19(A). A November 2001 trend count conducted in a relatively small and heavily hunted area along the Holitna/Hoholitna Rivers indicated only 8 calves:100 cows and 6 bulls:100 cows (sample size 196 moose).

A late winter survey to estimate calf survival conducted in April 2003 in Unit 19(A) resulted in

an estimate of 7.6% calves in the moose population in Holitna/Hoholitna drainage (sample size 107 adults and 9 short-yearlings) and 8.9% in the moose population in the Aniak drainage (sample size 61 adults and 6 short-yearlings).

The calf:cow ratios in fall and percent of calves found in spring surveys support the belief that calf survival in the moose population is very low, a decline in moose numbers is occurring, and the actual number of moose is likely lower.

The Department's data is specific to 19(A), but the information is indicative of the entire Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area.

Trends in Moose Harvest

Numbers of reported hunters and moose harvested have declined substantially since the mid 1990s (Figure 1). Total reported moose harvest in Units 19(A) and (B) has declined 48% from the 1994-95 season (331 moose) to the 2002-03 season (148 moose). In Unit 19(A), the number of moose reported harvested by local residents and other Alaska residents declined approximately 65% (from 138 moose to 48 moose) between 1994-95 and 2002-03. Hunting in Unit 19(B) by non-local Alaska residents has declined from 199 hunters who harvested 71 moose in 1994-95 to 80 hunters who harvested 14 moose in 2002-03. Numbers of moose taken by nonresident hunters declined in Units 19(A) and (B) from 101 moose taken in 1994-95 to 83 moose taken in 2002-03. If estimated unreported harvest is added to these figures, the trend of harvest having declined by approximately 50% over the last 8 years is unchanged.

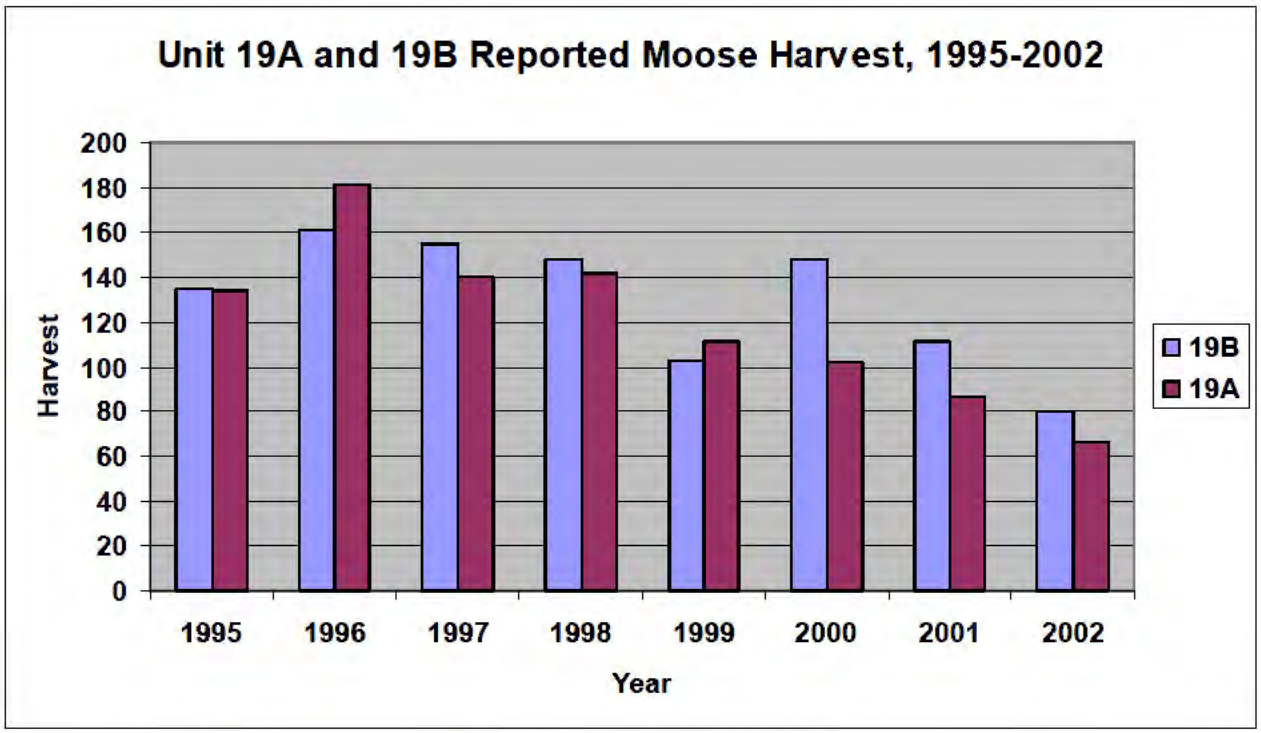

Figure 1. Decline in reported moose harvest in GMUs 19(A) and 19(B) since 1995.

The Objectives For The Big Game Prey Population Established By The Board Of Game Have Not Been Achieved

Intensive Management Objectives for Units 19(A) and 19(B) (5 AAC 92.108)	Current Estimated Moose Population and Harvest (reported and unreported) for Units 19(A) and 19(B)
Population: 13,500 – 16,500 moose Harvest: 750 – 950 moose	Population: 6,800 – 11,300 Harvest: 200 – 300

The current estimate of the moose populations and harvest levels are well below the population and harvest objectives established in 5 AAC 92.108, Identified big game prey populations and objectives. The estimated harvest number provided above includes both reported and unreported moose harvest.

Predation is an Important Cause for the Failure to Achieve the Population and Harvest Objectives Established by the Board of Game

The wolf population in Unit 19(A) is estimated at 180-240 wolves in 24-28 packs; that is approximately 1.8-2.4 wolves per 100 square miles. Wolf population estimates are extrapolated from other areas based on average pack size, land area, and estimated prey biomass and also take into account observations of local hunters and trappers, and department observations not associated with wolf surveys. Extrapolated estimates of moose and wolf populations suggest the current moose-to-wolf ratio is between 18:1 and 24:1. Moose can be expected to persist at low densities with little expectation of increase unless moose calf and adult survival improve. These data, information gained from studies on moose mortality in Unit 19(D)-East and other similar areas of Alaska, and observations of local residents suggest that wolves are currently a major limiting factor for moose in the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area.

Reduction of Predation Provides a Reasonable Expectation of Achieving the Population and Harvest Objectives

Data from moose mortality and predator/prey studies conducted throughout Alaska and similar areas in Canada suggest that reducing the number of wolves in the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area can reasonably be expected to increase the survival of calf as well as older moose. Mortality studies conducted in Unit 19(D) East have shown that wolves accounted for 37% of calf mortality and 40% of yearling and adult mortality. In terms of the total population, wolves killed approximately 26% of the calf population and 8% of the adult and yearling population annually. Reducing wolf predation on moose, in combination with reducing harvest (particularly of cows), can reasonably be expected to initiate an increase of the moose population towards the population and harvest objectives.

The Board Establishes and Recommends the Following:

1. The first priority for wolf predation control activities in the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area are the areas most important for providing moose for subsistence harvest by residents of the region. In general, Unit 19(A) is the most important for providing moose for subsistence purposes.

2. Methods and means to take wolves may include land and shoot or shooting from aircraft as designated by the Department and in accordance with 5 AAC 92.039. The present Board authorization for airborne or land and shoot taking of wolves is for Unit 19A only.

3. Permits shall be issued to members of the public qualified to operate within the constraints of the program, and able to accomplish the objectives of the program as designated by the Department.

4. The Department should seek to accomplish an approximate 80% reduction in the wolf population in the Unit 19(A) portion of the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Area for a period of 5 years beginning on July 1, 2004. Based on the wolf population estimate of 180-240 wolves, approximately 140-190 wolves should be taken the first year of the program.

5. At no time should the wolf population in the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Control Implementation Area be reduced to fewer than 40 wolves.

6. The Board recognizes that the CKMC recommendation for a wolf predation control program is based on available scientific data that indicates low survival in the moose population and the observations of local residents and other users who report significant declines in the moose population. This is the best information currently available. The Board encourages the Department to continue efforts to obtain additional moose population information to increase knowledge about the population and to evaluate the progress of the wolf predation control program.

7. The Department should establish a program to monitor the wolf population that will make maximum use of data obtained from pilots involved in the wolf reduction program. The Department should also conduct wolf surveys to provide additional assurances that the minimum wolf population will be maintained and to measure the success of the program.

8. The wolf predation control program should be re-evaluated after a 5-year period or when the moose population is estimated to reach the Intensive Management population objectives, whichever occurs the soonest.

9. The Board of Game endorses the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan, as modified by regulatory actions taken in the March 2004 meeting, as a general guide to moose management in Units 19(A) and 19(B). In particular, the Board endorses the mission of the plan to increase the moose population of the Central Kuskokwim region to provide for high levels of human consumptive uses of moose. The Board also endorses the strategy of

restoring hunting opportunities as soon the moose population can sustain additional harvest. The Board recognizes that the Central Kuskowkwim Moose Mangement Plan may require revisions in the future as additional information is obtained and implementation of the revised regulations is evaluated.

10. The Board requests that the Department provide a progress report on implementation of wolf predation control in Unit 19(A) and other aspects of the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan at its spring 2005 meeting. At that time, the Board will consider if the present authorization for airborne or same day airborne shooting of wolves is sufficient to achieve the objectives of the Central Kuskokwim Wolf Predation Control Implementation Plan and whether the authorization needs to be expanded to include Unit 19(B) or modified in any other way.

Vote: __6/1__
March 10, 2004
Fairbanks, Alaska

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Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2004-149-BOG

Resolution Encouraging Public Agencies Signage for Traplines on Public Lands
March 10, 2004

Whereas, A variety of seasonal uses occur on public lands and trails during the winter months,

Whereas, The general public often is not aware of when trapping seasons are open or how to recognize trapping activity on trails,

Whereas, Recreational trail users sometimes use the same trails that trappers use,

Whereas, Unleashed pets accompanying recreational trail users can come into contact with legal trapping activities,

Whereas, the Board of Game regularly receives proposals to limit trapping activity and gear, as a result of recreational users coming into conflict with traplines,

Whereas, Official land management agency signing is probably more effective and recognizable as a standard than the current practice of private signing of traplines,

Therefore be it resolved: That the Board of Game encourages land management agencies to erect signs at trailheads on public lands in areas where trapping is allowed to notify trail users that trapping may be occurring along the trails and suggest that domestic animals be harnessed or leashed to avoid conflicts,

And further be it resolved that: That trappers and recreational users take the initiative to encourage land managers to support mutual and respective winter trail use.

Vote: __7/0__
March 10, 2004
Fairbanks, Alaska

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Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2004-147-BOG

BOARD OF GAME BEAR CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY
MARCH 8, 2004

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 waviers.
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 that includes:

- A statement of the proposed action, including potential methods and means.
- Justification for the proposed action, including previous measures taken that failed to achieve bear and prey objectives and other alternatives considered.
- Geographical description of the area.
- Population and human use objectives.
- Relevant information about wildlife populations and human use, including bear and prey populations status and trend, harvest information, habitat, and estimates of the effects of all predators on prey populations.
- Estimate of the time and funding necessary to meet population and human use objectives.
- Schedule for update and reevaluation of the program.

If a bear control program is authorized by the Board, a specific predator control implementation plan will be prepared that includes:

- Justification
- Geographic area description
- Wildlife population and human-use information
- Bear and Prey population level and population objectives and the basis for those objectives
- Methods and means
- Anticipated time frame not to exceed five years unless the plan is re-adopted, and a schedule for update and reevaluation
- Other specifications or limitations the Board considers necessary.

Bear control will be implemented using the most humane, selective, acceptable and effective methods available. If methods that do not require killing bears are found to achieve the desired results in a reasonable time and with reasonable financial resources, they will be considered first. At no time will poisons be used for bear control.

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
- Diversionary feeding

Vote: __7/0__
March 8, 2004
Fairbanks, Alaska

_____
Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
#97-113-BOG

Relating to methods and means of harvesting furbearers and fur animals, including wolves.

WHEREAS, the Alaska Board of Game recognizes that the harvest and utilization of Alaska's furbearers and fur animals, including wolves, remains an important use by Alaska's residents, and that restriction of methods and means of harvest could lead to economic hardship for those dependent on trapping for their livelihood, and

WHEREAS, Alaska Board of Game resolution #90-48-BOG supports the harvest and use of fur for clothing and other purposes, including income, by Alaska Natives and other rural residents; and Alaska Board of Fish and Game resolution #75-4-GB endorses and encourages responsible trapping as a legitimate use of our renewable Alaska fur resources, and

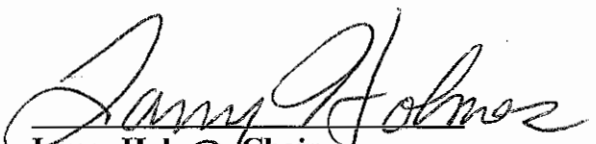
WHEREAS, the harvest of these furbearers and fur animals plays an important role in the management of other species, especially large game animals which are relied upon by residents for subsistence purposes, and

WHEREAS, Alaska's trappers use methods of harvesting fur, including the use of snares, which are the most cost-effective and efficient of harvest methods, and strive to find ways to reduce the take of non-target animals through refinement of techniques, such as "break-away" snares and other means, and

WHEREAS, American, and Alaskan, history is intimately tied to the fur trade and federal and state policies continue to encourage the harvest of fur, to the extent that the Alaska Board of Game and the Department of Fish and Game have historically recognized and promoted the use of traps and snares to harvest fur, as it is well known that snares have been used by indigenous peoples since long before the introduction of steel cable by early explorers.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Alaska Board of Game, supports and endorses the harvest of furbearers and fur animals, including wolves, by methods and means currently permitted by law, including traps and snares.

ADOPTED DATE: **October 30, 1997**
Nome, Alaska



Larry Holmes, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

VOTE: **6-0-1**

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Policy: #82-31-GB

ALASKA WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLANS
SPECIES MANAGEMENT POLICIES
WOLF MANAGEMENT POLICY
December 1980
Supplement on Wolf Population Control
December 1982

The purpose of this supplement is to amplify the Board's policy on wolf management, particularly in relation to population manipulation of wolves. In adopting "Species Management Policies on Wolves," the Board of Game recognized the need for ongoing responsible wolf management to maintain viable wolf populations and to help maintain viable ungulate populations upon which wolves are largely dependent. The Board also recognized that when substantial conflicts arise between humans and wolves over the use of prey, wolf populations may have to be managed more intensively and human use of prey further regulated to minimize such conflicts.

The "wolf management policy" noted the Department's management responsibilities when such circumstances arise.

Under some conditions, it may be necessary to virtually eliminate human use of prey species and greatly reduce wolf numbers to aid recovery of low prey populations or to arrest undesirable reductions in prey populations. Wolf population control programs are presently the most effective means to reduce wolf numbers, and have been implemented in several areas after Department and public review and approval.

Wolf/Human Use Conflicts

Substantial conflicts may exist between wolves and humans when priority human uses cannot be reasonably satisfied because of predation by wolves while maintaining prey populations on a sustained yield basis. In such situations, wolf population control may be contemplated. Specific circumstances where conflicts arise are:

1. the estimated prey population is not sufficient to support both the wolf predator population and the human use objectives;

2. prey populations are declining because of human use and predation by wolves;

3. prey population increase objectives are not being attained;

4. human use objectives are not being attained.

Wolf Population Control

The purpose of wolf population control is not to eradicate wolf populations.

Wolf control is the planned, systematic regulation of wolf numbers to achieve a stated lower population level using aerial shooting, trapping, or other methods which may not normally be allowed in conventional public hunting and trapping. Under no circumstances will wolf populations be eliminated or reduced to a level where they will not be able to recover when control is terminated.

The manipulation of wolf numbers as a result of conventional hunting and trapping seasons, techniques, and bag limits is not considered control. Conventional hunting and trapping are the preferred means of using harvestable surpluses of wolves and of reducing wolf numbers if necessary.

Wolf control should be done only where prey population objectives, human use objectives, and wolf population objectives have been established; where predation by wolves is in conflict with the priority human uses or other management objectives; and where conventional hunting and trapping cannot significantly alter wolf numbers.

Wolf management objectives may entail widely different levels of wolf population control. In the most extreme circumstances it may be necessary to temporarily remove a high percentage of a wolf population to allow rapid recovery of prey populations. In other situations it may be necessary to remove by control programs only a relatively small percentage of wolf populations to allow prey increases or meet human use objectives.

Current wolf population control work in GMU 20A has provided information on what responses can be expected from moose populations which are supporting different wolf population levels. If there are 20 or less moose per wolf, the moose population will decline. Between 20 and 30 moose per wolf, the moose population may decline if other adverse conditions occur, such as a severe winter. If there are 30 to 50 moose per wolf, the moose population will stabilize, and possibly increase if food and other factors are favorable. When there are 50 to 100 moose per wolf, the moose population will increase unless or until a very serious mortality factor, such as a very severe winter takes effect. These relationships are viewed only as guidelines, however, because ecological conditions vary considerably in different situations.

There are several general situations when the combination of circumstances described above suggest the possibility of wolf control:

1. hunting by people is the highest priority use of prey species in the area;

2. prey populations have been reduced to or are held at levels well below estimated carrying capacity of the habitat by predation;

3. prey populations are below levels that could reasonably satisfy priority human uses;

4. adequate control of predation cannot be attained by manipulation of hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits;

5. the human use objectives for prey populations approved by the Department and the Board of Game cannot be obtained because of predation by wolves.

Whenever wolf population control is necessary the Board will favor and promote an effective control effort by the public. Experience has shown that in most cases 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 made at least once a year in control areas to provide estimates of population sizes, productivity, mortality factors, and distribution of the respective populations.

Public Use of Wolves

Whenever wolf population control is necessary it shall be the Board's intent to allow the pub,ic maximum benefit from the taking of wolves.

A. Hunting and trapping seasons will be liberalized primarily within the season when wolf pelts are prime and the maximum economic benefit will accrue from the removal of wolves. Hunting and trapping will not be allowed from May through July.

B. The use of poisons to kill wolves is inhumane and potentially wasteful. It will not be allowed.

C. The shooting of wolves from a helicopter by the public will not be permitted.

D. The Commissioner may issue permits to shoot wolves from an airplane as part of a population control program authorized to address one or more of the general situations described earlier under "Wolf Population Control". The conditions for taking wolves under terms of such a permit are specified in the trapping regulations, Chapter 84 Article 1, 5 AAC 84.030(4). Taking wolves under terms of such a permit is not considered recreational or trophy hunting, and therefore permits will not be issued to nonresidents of the State of Alaska.

E. The pelts of wolves taken under predation control programs must be salvaged according to the existing laws and regulations covering the salvage and waste of game animals.

F. Methods and means will be liberalized where possible within the concepts of the humane taking of wolves and equity of allocation among the using public.

G. The mandates of the Constitution of the State of Alaska and the Alaska Statutes necessitiate that predator and prey populations be managed for maximum use consistent with the public interest.

Management Alternatives

Management practices affecting ecosystem elements other than wolf population control may help reduce or eliminate the need for predator control programs in some circumstances.

A. Enhance Habitat

Habitat can be managed to enhance carrying capacity for many species in many ecological situations. Substantially higher prey populations may support both wolf populations which are essentially unregulated and desired levels of human use.

Long-term habitat enhancement is preferred to wolf control in situations where improving the habitat of prey species will reduce or eliminate wolf/human conflicts.

B. Reduce Habitat Loss

For species like caribou, goat, and sheep, habitat improvement may be impractical or impossible. By reducing or precluding habitat deterioration or loss, populations may be able to maintain their maximum size within limits dictated by weather conditions, disease, accidents, or other uncontrollable factors. During periods of favorable conditions, prey populations may be sustained or grow without benefit of a predator control program if habitat quality, quantity, and accessibility are not impaired.

C. Restrict Human Use of Prey Species

If human use of prey species is effectively restricted, the fate of prey populations would then depend largely upon ecological events including the effects of development projects on habitat quality, quantity, or accessibility and on animal movements and susceptibility to accidents, pollution, or other mortality factors. However, given the extremely high value placed on human use of prey species, in most situations the option of dramatically reducing or eliminating human use of prey species for an extended period of time is not recommended.

D. Predation by Other Carnivores

Predation by carnivores other than wolves may contribute substantially to prey population problems and the apparent wolf/human conflicts. Brown/grizzly bears and black bears may have a major influence on prey populations in some areas. Black bears and grizzly bears are used as human food in many areas of the State; therefore, liberal regulations to allow their taking will be favored to ameliorate the conflicts between predation and the human use of prey species. In unusual circumstances, control of bear populations may be considered.

E. Wolf Transplants

Wolf transplants are generally not considered an effective population control technique. However, if a transplant will be beneficial in both the removal area and the receiving area, transplants may be undertaken or permitted.

F. Increase Trapping Take of Wolves

Extensive trapper education programs which emphasize wolf trapping and snaring should be instituted. In certain Canadian provinces where such a program has been instituted, the take of wolves by trappers has substantially increased. Trappers potentially benefit from the training by diversifying their catches, increasing their income, and stabilizing year-to-year variations in income which commonly occur when fur prices or species abundance fluctuate. A substantially increased take of wolves by trappers could reduce the need for Department funded wolf control programs.

G. Enhancement of Wolf Populations

Situations may arise that make it desirable to encourage or establish increased wolf populations. When prey populations increase beyond optimum population levels, or beyond that level needed for human use, the Board may take regulatory action to reduce human take of wolves. In some cases, the Board may encourage the establishment of wolves in areas where they are absent, when such establishment will be of benefit to human uses and to the prey populations.

Note: This replaces policies 76-5-GB, 76-6-GB, 76-11-GB, 78-18(A)-GB, and 81-28-GB.

ADOPTED: Anchorage, Alaska
December 5, 1982

VOTE: 6/1

Clint Buckmaster

Clint Buckmaster, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game