

Note: Proposal 142 was accepted by the Board of Game as an Agenda Change Request for consideration at the Statewide Regulations Meeting in March 2016.

PROPOSAL 142 - 5AAC 92.108 Identified big game prey populations and objectives and 92.121. Intensive Management Plan V. Review and modify the Unit 13 predation control plan as follows:

5AAC 92.108. Identified big game prey populations and objectives.

Population	Finding	Population Objective	Harvest Objective
...			
Moose			
...			
GMU 13(A)	Positive	3,500 – 4,200	210 – 420
GMU 13(B)	Positive	5,300 – 6,300	310 – 620
GMU 13(C)	Positive	2,000 – 3,000	155 – 350
GMU 13(D)	Positive	1,200 – 1,900	75 – 190
GMU 13(E)	Positive	5,000 – 6,000	300 – 600
...			

5 AAC 92.121. Intensive Management Plan V. (a) is entirely deleted and replaced by the following.

- ...
- (a) **Plan established. The intensive management plan for the Unit 13 Wolf Predation Control Area is established in this section;**
 - (b) **Unit 13 Wolf Predation Control Area: the Unit 13 Predation Control Area is established and consists of all lands within Units 13(A), 13(B), 13(C), and that portion of Unit 13(E) east of the Alaska Railroad, except National Park Service and other federal lands where same-day-airborne take of wildlife is not allowed, encompassing approximately 15,413 square miles;**
 - (1) **This is a continuing control program that was first authorized by the board in 2000 for wolf control; it is currently designed to increase moose numbers and harvest by reducing predation on moose by wolves and is expected to make a contribution to achieving the intensive management (IM) objectives in Unit 13;**
 - (2) **Moose and wolf objectives are as follows:**
 - (A) **Moose IM objectives for Units 13(A), 13(B), 13(C), and 13(E) as established in 5 AAC 92.108 are 3,500 – 4,200, 5,300 – 6,300, 2,000 –**

3,000, and 5,000 – 6,000 moose respectively; these objectives are below the maximum moose numbers estimated in these areas between 1987 and 1989 and are likely attainable given the history of productivity and survival patterns in this area; the bull-to-cow objective is 25:100 for Unit 13;

(B) The moose harvest objectives for Units 13(A), 13(B), 13(C), and 13(E) as established in 5 AAC 92.108 are 210 – 420, 310 – 620, 155 – 350, and 300 – 600 moose respectively; with the harvest of bulls and cows, the current harvest objectives can be met in Unit 13(A) and are likely attainable in Units 13(B) and 13(C) given the history of harvest patterns in these areas; the harvest objectives for Unit 13(E) may not be attainable and will be re-evaluated; in the early 1990s;

(C) The department adopted a range of 135 – 165 wolves as the late winter objective. Maintaining this population size will allow for sustained yield of wolves and will ensure that wolves persist in the control area;

(3) Board findings concerning populations and human use are as follows:

(A) Moose harvest has been consistently below IM objectives in Units 13(B), 13(C), and 13(E);

(B) predation by wolves is an important cause of the failure to achieve population and harvest objectives;

(C) a reduction in wolf predation in Unit 13 can reasonably be expected to make progress toward achieving the Unit 13(A), 13(B), 13(C), and 13(E) IM objectives for moose;

(D) reducing predation is likely to be effective and feasible using recognized and prudent active management techniques and based on scientific information;

(E) reducing predation is likely to be effective given land ownership patterns, and;

(F) reducing predation is in the best interest of subsistence users; Unit 13 has long been an important hunting area for subsistence by local area residents and much of the state's population in Anchorage, the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, as well as Fairbanks and other communities around the state; it is recognized under the state's intensive management law as an area where moose are to be managed for high levels of human consumptive use.

(4) Authorized methods and means are as follows:

(A) hunting and trapping of wolves by the public in the Unit 13 Predation Control Area during the term of the program will occur as provided in the hunting and trapping regulations set out elsewhere in this title, including the use of motorized vehicles;

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may issue public aerial permits or public land and shoot permits as a method for wolf removal under AS 16.05.783;

(5) Time frame is as follows:

(A) through July 1, 2027, the commissioner may authorize the removal of wolves in the Unit 13 Predation Control Area;

(B) annually, the department shall, to the extent practicable, provide to the board a report of program activities conducted during the preceding 12 months, including implementation activities, the status of moose and wolf populations, and recommendations for changes, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of the plan;

6) The commissioner will review, modify or suspend program activities as follows:

(A) when the mid-point of the IM population and harvest objectives for the moose population are achieved;

(B) when wolf inventories or accumulated information from permittees indicate the need to avoid reducing wolf numbers below the management objective of 135 wolves specified in this subsection;

(C) if after 3 years, the harvest of wolves is not sufficient to make progress towards the intensive management population objectives for wolves;

(D) predation control activities may be suspended:

i. if after 3 years, there is no detectable increase in the total number of moose in the control area;

ii. if after three years, any measure consistent with significant levels of nutritional stress in the moose population are identified;

iii. when the moose population and harvest objectives within Unit 13 predation control area have been met.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Unit 13 Intensive Management Plan will expire on October 31, 2016. IM objectives for Unit 13 have not been achieved. To comply with protocol for intensive management plans, ADF&G is introducing new regulatory language for the intensive management plan for the Unit 13 predation control area and will present an operational plan to guide the implementation of the program during the March 2016 Board of Game meeting. These documents incorporate guidance the board gave to ADF&G after the board reviewed the intensive management plan for the Unit 13 predation control area during the February 2013 Board of Game meeting. This proposal also allows the board to modify the program's objectives and give further guidance to ADF&G if warranted.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-2016-ACR16)
