

Change the **“General hunting restrictions for all game,”** by allowing for the use of snowmachines to track and pursue caribou, wolves and wolverines so that the prohibition against driving, herding, harassing, or molesting game with a snowmachine will not apply in GMU 23 while hunting these species.

What is the problem you would like the Board to address? Currently, the restrictions against driving, herding, harassing, or molesting game, in addition to the absence of GMU 23 in the excepted allowance for the use of snowmachines to position hunters to select individual wolves, and the absence of wolverines in the excepted allowance for snowmachine positioning, conflicts with the long standing local caribou, wolf and wolverine hunting practices, which is the only practical way to hunt caribou, wolves, and wolverines in GMU 23 during the winter. Also, the allowance for snowmachine use to position a hunter does not satisfactorily address this issue, as it does not clarify whether this includes actually tracking down caribou, wolves, or wolverine, including pursuing fleeing animals, until close enough to shoot. Since it is clear from a recent example in GMU 23 that wildlife protection officers intend to enforce the restrictions against driving, herding, harassing, or molesting game, then it is incumbent upon any changes intended to allow for pursuit of fleeing animals to be clearly elucidated in the regulations to prevent any confusion by all parties about what is allowable.

What will happen if this problem is not solved? Local people hunting these species with snowmachines will continue to live with the threat of prosecution for hunting with snowmachines in the only way practical, making people feel like criminals and interfering with the ability to freely pursue these animals for critical and irreplaceable food and fur products. These animals are critical to the local economy and way of life and enforcement of current regulations will be viewed as a direct attack on the culture, economy and food security in the region.

What solution do you prefer? Allowing for the use of snowmachines to pursue fleeing caribou, wolves, and wolverines in GMU 23.

Does your proposal address improving the quality of the resource harvested or the products produced? Yes, allowing for a hunter to use a snowmachine to get within range of fleeing caribou, wolves, and wolverines will allow for precise shot placement (head shot) which will minimize unnecessary waste of meat and fur and is the most humane method of killing an animal with a rifle.

Who is likely to benefit if your solution is adopted? All hunters in the region who pursue caribou, wolves, and wolverines with snowmachine. Wildlife enforcement officers who can have a clear understanding of the intent to allow for the pursuit of these species reducing unnecessary conflicts and increasing the cooperation of the people on other enforcement issues where local cooperation is necessary to the mission to protect all species in the area. The Board of Game and ADF&G who will be seen by local people as being responsive to the needs of the people and by correcting this issue will put integrity back in the system by getting rid of a longstanding conflict between regulatory prohibitions and common local practices that are the only practical way to pursue these species in winter. In addition, the future cooperative management strategies and goals will be more likely to succeed as the people will have increased faith that the system takes their needs into account and is responsive to them.

Who is likely to suffer if your solution is adopted? None.

List any other solutions you considered and why you rejected them.
None.

Proposed by: Kotzebue Sound Advisory Committee