

Middle Nenana River Advisory Committee

4 Feb 2015

Healy

I. Call to Order: 6:13, John Basile (Chair)

II. Roll Call:

Members Present: 9

Allan Mortenson – V. Chair (Clear/Anderson C)

Robert Kohlsdorf – (Clear A)

Myron Stokes (Clear/Anderson B)

Wayne Valcq(Ferry)

John Basile – Chair (Healy B)

Jacob Mattila (Healy D)

Nan Eagleson (McKinley Village)

Paul VanDyke (Alt. Clear/Anderson)

Matt Nustvold (Healy seat A)

John Carter (undesignated)

Excused: 3

Leroy Sutton (Alt.) – absent

Jason Reppert – Secretary (Healy E)

Members Absent: 2

Coke Wallace (Healy C)

Joseph Chattfield (Alt. Healy)

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 6

User Groups Present:

III. Approval of Agenda: approved

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Approved

V. Fish and Game Staff Present: Don Young, Trooper Dave Bump

VI. Guests Present:

VII. Old Business:

None

VIII. New Business:

Elections:

Terms are now 2.5 years.

Healy Seat A- Nominee Matt Nustvold

Vote

Approved 8

Opposed 0

Ferry Seat

Tyler choose not to run

Nominee Wayne Valcq

Vote

Approve 8

Oppose

Undesignated

Nominee John Carter

Vote

Approved 8

Opposed 0

Public Testimony

Wayne- Discussed the observation of small calve size. Looking back, seasons ended earlier and didn't go in to the rut. This disruption may be pushing back calving by one estrous cycle. Additionally the brow tine restriction may be taking out the breeding bulls causing disruption.

Nan- What is your recommendation?

Wayne-The longer season that have been implemented may have the breeding season disrupted. Looking back to the past, I recollect a lot of breeding groups in the Ferry area during the last part of September when the season was closed, It's not that way any longer.

Don- Agrees the calves have been smaller. During past studies June born calves have been a very low percentage. This suggests cows are being bred despite longer seasons. Genetics have been studied; results show that cows hold half of the brow tine genetics making it hard to harvest the genetics out of a population. Management has changed from trophy to high

yield management. Bulls are not reaching the age to get to reach their full antler potential. Poor browse is also a big contributor.

John C – What is the point of any bull permits if antler size is diminishing?

Don – They are issued to maximize harvest and manage bull to cow ratios.

Robert – What is the cause of small calves?

Don – Most likely poor browse.

Paul – Was the bull harvest adjusted due to high bull to cow ratios?

Don – Yes. There was an abundance of young bulls in the herd. Any bull permits helped this. Bulls that have been harvested over 10 yrs. have been a very low percentage. Likely the reason for smaller bulls being harvested.

John C. – Have the cow hunt effected the population.

Don.-We have intentionally decreased the population to increase browse quality. The dept. has studied the population crash of the late 70's and has done its best to see the signs of a struggling population before they crash.

Robert- Did fish and game do a moose survey this year?

Don- The population survey was not completed. We did complete a compilation survey.

Nan- How does this affect next season's harvest?

Don – No cow hunts. An increase in any bull permits.

Old Business

John – Where is the letter intended to go.

Robert- I think it needs to go to the legislature.

Predator Prey discussion

Wayne- Observed low predator populations.

Nan- Has the hare population changing.

Don- No, it has been similar. Except for a long high followed by an extended low.

Nan- Does the hare population involve tannins in willows?

Don- The jury is still out. There is a new furbearer biologist.

Board of game cycle change

John- Overviewed the changes in the three year cycle.

Nan- Are there any ways to address urgent issues despite the three year cycle?

Don- Yes an agenda change request form could be used. Expecting that conservative changes will be made due to the three year cycle.

Discussion regarding track vehicle permitting.

Wayne- Do you know about the vehicle permits through the DNR.

Dave- Explained the permit process regarding DNR authority.

Staff updates.

Don- 20A overview Population survey was not completed. Overviewed compilation survey results. Points out several indications that the harsh spring in 2013 is likely the cause of some of the population trends that are being seen. Gave a quick overview of 20B population and harvest results.

Don- Gave overview of the feasibility assessment for BOG review during the upcoming meeting. Mentioned predator control may be discussed for unit 20a.

Wayne- Expressed a strong dislike for predator control taking from trappers harvest opportunity.

Don- Evidence suggests that browse is still in poor health. Dept. is going to weigh calve in march for their study.

Nan- Why would predator control be considered?

Don- I am not pushing predator control it. The issue needs to be discussed.

Wayne- How long does it take a burn to become productive?

Don- 10-30 yrs. We are likely to see many improvements in the future due to the burns in the last decade.

Wayne- Why did they lengthen the 20C moose season?

Don- To meet harvest requirements.

Paul- Mentioned limited access to 20C, addressing the complaint of overcrowding.

Jacob- Would budget cuts have any effect on the implementation of aerial hunting?

Don- Unlikely

Proposal 138 Reauthorization **Approved***: 8 in favor. 1 abstain. 1 Oppose

****The AC chose to reauthorize the 20A portion of the proposal, but take no action on the 20B and 20D portion of the proposal.***

Don- Clarified the intent of the target hunt, explaining the reason behind his suggestion of approving the reauthorization proposal.

Robert- Opposed the wording regarding “up to 2000 permits may be issued”

Don- We will not issue drawing permits.

Proposal 139 Reauthorization of Tag Exemption Fee. **Approved:** 9 in favor 1 opposed

Allen- Will budget cuts affect this?

Nan- What is the reason for the exemption?

Don-This goes back to a situation in Tok, where increased harvest was wanted.

John C- Agrees that this exemption has a positive effect on bear harvest opportunity.

Allen- Is grizzly baiting going to affect predator control strategies?

Don – We are unsure what the harvest and participation will be. We are breaking new ground.

Allen- I’ve had bad luck for black bears due to grizzly problems.

Don- Grizzly baiting may likely become a tool.

John B- Likes the harvest opportunity.

John C- Is there an estimate of what has been lost in tag fees? Maybe a trophy fee could be used instead of needing to purchase a tag beforehand.

Dave- Explained the federal funded program that increases state tag fee dollars to the state.

Sheep Discussion

Proposal 114 **Approved** 9 in favor 0 opposed

Paul- suggests the wording could have been better.

John C- I think this is a good start.

Jacob- Presented the 20A harvest totals since 1990

Paul- We should have historical average specified more clearly for the meeting. Going back 10-15 years would be a good start.

Don – Is this for all of unit 20 or 20A?

Allen- All of unit 20

Wayne- Explained the sheep die off in 92’

Proposal 207 **Approved** 9 in favor 0 opposed

John- Suggests that enforcement may cause issues.

Dave – If it does pass they will do their best to enforce the issue.

John C. - Reported a violation last year. John suggests limiting the use of planes by drawing permits.

Dave- FAA is the proper authority to call to report aviation violations.

John B- Law abiding citizens will abide by the rules. Criminals will be criminals regardless.

Proposal 208 **Disapproved** 0 in favor 8 Disapproved

John B- Disliked the limiting of resident harvest.

Wayne- Nonresidents should be the first to be reduced.

John C- Why aren't the guides involved in the proposal process? Do they not see the impacts that have been affecting the hunt?

John B- Reviewed the Fairbanks meeting.

-If we go to a draw hunt it will always be that way. Not much chance of a harvest ever again.

-Possible harvest restriction. (1 ram every 3 yrs.)

-Sheep management studies need to be updated to have an accurate understanding of the population and hunting impacts.

- The sheep survey that was recently conducted was based off of gut feeling not fact.

John/Allen/Wayne- Agree that there are too many guides working in unit 20.

John C- Nonresident take needs to be reduced rather than limiting resident take and opportunity.

Proposal 201 in favor 8 approved 0

Allen- Discussed the intent of the proposal.

Jacob- would this help the troopers enforce regulation?

Dave- This is proposed by the Troopers.

Paul – What is reasonable to one person may not be reasonable to another. The interpretation of the work seems to be the issue.

Choose members to attend Wasilla meeting.

Jacob- I can attend.

Meeting Adjourned 9:45pm