

Mr. Chairman, members of the Board and staff, thank you for coming out to the Copper Valley to take up this issue.

I have lived in the Copper Valley for 10 years now. I moved here from the lower 48 with my husband as we looked for a place to settle and lay down our own roots. We found that place here in the Copper Valley.

I love the outdoors and the many adventures you can have here. I hunt, trap, fish, and process the animals that we take. We cut fire wood, go berry picking, camping, hiking, floating, the list goes on and on. I am on the local Fish and Game Advisory Committee (for 7 years). I am a volunteer on our local ambulance crew, I am the Chair of the local Ducks Unlimited Chapter, I am a Hunter Ed and Bow Hunter Ed instructor, and I am a Ranger with the Bureau of Land Management in Glennallen.

I am here today to speak to you as a member of this community, as a local.

I support Proposal 2 that the local AC came up with, cancel the community hunt. There are a lot of people out in the "field". Just drive past Eureka, or north on the Richardson Highway, or along the Denali Highway. More people means more competition and less chance for success. The quality of the hunt experience has dropped. Some refer to the hunt as combat hunting or ping pong shooting gallery. If you stop at any pull off along the triangle of roads you can't walk a foot off into the brush without stepping in toilet paper, human waste and trash. Trail head parking lots are littered with campfire rings with remnants of burned trash including cans and glass.

There are a handful of enforcement personnel for the thousands of people out in the vast area of land in GMU 13.

I do believe people are gathering 25 "households" to make a group and many of those "households" would not normally come to this area to hunt. Since you can proxy for anyone within the group you have a few people going out and doing all the hunting. Perhaps getting in over their heads and wasting meat. You can watch loads of people leaving with whole animals on trailers with only guts out in the heat of the day in late August.

I also looked at proposal 33. To me it is confusing having so many hunt periods. Selecting one period in July is hard when you don't know what life may throw at you. Also caribou being caribou can change things up but generally speaking the Sept. and Oct. time frames are when they will be closer to road system areas so everyone will be trying for those dates.

Having each period as a separate registration hunt with a different number and if you are unsuccessful you could register for another period and "hunters will need to be held responsible for abiding by this condition". With the state budget cuts, who will check to see if hunters are abiding by the rules? I can see folks, notch one tag take the animal home then if not checked not report the kill on that one and register again and again.

A registration hunt getting rid of one per household will skyrocket the number of applicants, meaning more people out in the field. I get the concept that each period would limit the number of applicants in the field, but I can see a group of friends or a household registering each person

in a different period over 2 or 3 weeks and having just as many if not more people out in the field.

I was thinking that it would be nice to eliminate the moose requirement to hunt only in 13 if you get a caribou permit. But after speaking with past and present biologists for the area and listening to the staff reports I realize that that may be a disaster. Looking at the 1996 hunt with 50,000 permits scares me as population has risen since 1996. So I have changed my perspective on this and think a moose requirement is necessary.

I also have a concern that people have a hard time already managing the harvest tickets they have and reporting on them. 1 moose, 1 caribou, bear, maybe a federal caribou or moose. Some people bring wrong tags in the field. I think this will be more likely if you do multiple registrations with new numbers because it is confusing.

Proposal 43: I disagree with the corridor portion. Along the Tok cutoff most of the area is Ahtna private lands and other private that bump up to the highway. There are very few legal access points 17 B easements that get a person onto state lands. Ahtna does a great job posting their lands as private but the public is still confused what is what and where state lands start. Many of these trails are braided and torn up. I can only imagine the chaos and number of people who would end up on Ahtna lands if you do a any bull hunt in this corridor. These people will be in trespass on Ahtna lands.

If there is a hunt Nov 15-30, we generally have snow and trappers are out on trap lines. This could create user conflicts between hunters and trappers which could cause problems. Also bulls will be sitting ducks as leaves have fallen by then and it is easier to see moose cows and bulls with a white backdrop with no vegetative cover. There is a reason why biologists do counts at this time.

Other issues: Another thing that has been brought up is the "checkpoint". If you can't make people stop at a checkpoint why don't we make it a condition of the permit that if a check station is up you will stop and report your take. You are required to seal your sheep, some furs, bears in some units. Why not stop and report your caribou. The state, as budget allows, could set up random check (report) station. This would work especially well on either end of the Denali Highway for example. If the report station is not up folks would need to stop at the Glennallen Fish and Game office and report.

In conclusion: If the Board can require each community to show they meet the 8 criteria like Ahtna had to I would like to keep the community hunt. Also perhaps change the season to align with the general season hunt, this may make the hunt not as appealing to groups. If you can't do these things then I support canceling the Community hunt. The Tier 1 caribou will be left in place with the requirement to hunt moose in unit 13. I would also like to see that a condition of the permit be added to stop at a check/report station or the Glennallen Fish and Game Office to report. Keep the existing general season moose hunt, the drawing any bull moose and non resident moose draw. This allows hunting for all Alaskans for moose and caribou in unit 13 and a non resident moose hunt when the numbers allow.