

PROPOSAL 159 – 5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
 Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20B as follows:

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| (18) | | |
| Unit 20(B), that portion within Creamer’s refuge | | |
| ... | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Manage- ment Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 (General hunt only) | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 |
| 1 antlerless moose by muzzle-loader by drawing permit only; up to 10 permits may be issued; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area | Dec. 1–Jan. 31 (General hunt only) | Dec. 1–Jan. 31 |
| Unit 20(B), remainder of the Fairbanks Management Area | | |
| ... | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 (General hunt only) | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 |

drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Management Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or

1 moose by targeted permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued

Season to be announced by emergency order (General hunt only)

No open season.

Unit 20(B), that portion within the Minto Flats Management Area

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

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1 antlerless moose by registration permit only

Oct. 15–Feb. 28 (Subsistence hunt only)

No open season.

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Unit 20(B), the drainage of the Middle Fork of the Chena River

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 300 permits may be issued; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Aug. 15–Nov. 15 (General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take

Oct. 1–Feb. 28 (General hunt only)

No open season.

a cow accompanied
by a calf; or

...

Unit 20(B), that
portion southeast
of the Moose
Creek dike within
one-half mile of
each side of the
Richardson highway

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1 moose by drawing
permit only; by crossbow,
bow and arrow, or
muzzleloader only;
up to 100 permits
may be issued; or

Sept. 16–Feb. 28
(General hunt only)

No open season.

1 moose by targeted
permit only; by crossbow,
shotgun, or bow and arrow
only; up to 100 permits may be
issued

Season to be announced
by emergency order
(General hunt only)

No open season.

Remainder of Unit 20(B)

1 antlerless moose by
drawing permit only; by
youth hunt only; up
to 200 permits may be issued;
or

Aug. 5–Aug. 14
(General hunt only)

No open season

...

1 antlerless moose by
drawing permit only;
up to 1,500 permits
may be issued in the
Remainder of Unit 20(B);
a person may not take
a cow accompanied
by a calf; or

Aug. 15–Nov. 15
(General hunt only)

No open season.

1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Oct. 1–Feb. 28
(General hunt only)

1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued

Season to be announced by emergency order
(General hunt only)

No open season.

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. Our goal is to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits, and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, help to meet Intensive Management (IM) objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios.

If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population may increase to unacceptable levels or may need reduction when new data is available and analyzed. Opportunity to hunt a harvestable surplus of cow moose will be lost, and our ability to meet intensive management harvest objectives will be compromised. Subsistence hunters in the portion of Unit 20B in the Minto Flats Management Area may not have a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses.

This reauthorization of antlerless moose hunts will likely improve or maintain the ability of moose habitat to support the current moose population. Hunting opportunity and harvest will increase and allow the Department of Fish and Game (department) to manage these moose populations at optimum levels. The additional harvest will help in meeting intensive management harvest objectives without reducing bull-to-cow ratios to low levels. Meat and subsistence hunters will benefit from the opportunity to harvest cow moose. Moose populations will benefit by having moose densities compatible with their habitat. Motorists and residents may benefit from reduced moose-vehicle collisions and moose-human conflicts.

Fairbanks Management Area (FMA)—The purpose of this antlerless hunt is to regulate population growth in the FMA and potentially reduce moose-vehicle collisions and nuisance moose problems.

The number of moose-vehicle collisions in the FMA are high and pose significant safety risks to motorists. In addition, moose nuisance issues continue to place significant demands on property owners. To increase hunting opportunity and harvest and reduce moose-vehicle collisions, the department incrementally increased the number of drawing permits for antlerless moose in the

FMA during RY99-RY10. Moose-vehicle collisions and moose nuisance problems declined during RY06-RY13, presumably, in part due to consistent antlerless moose harvests.

Minto Flats Management Area (MFMA)—The primary purpose of this antlerless hunt is to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses and to regulate the moose population in the MFMA.

The MFMA moose density was high in 2010 (4.1 moose/mi²). In order to reduce the moose population, harvest of antlerless moose during RY12 and RY13 was about 2.5% of the population. The fall 2013 estimate showed a more appropriate density of 2.6 moose/mi². Therefore, to stabilize this population, antlerless harvest will be reduced to approximately 1% of the total population to maintain the current population.

Targeted Hunt—The purpose of the targeted hunt is to allow the public to harvest moose that are causing a nuisance or public safety issue. These permits are used sparingly, but allow the public to harvest the moose instead of the department just dispatching them.

Unit 20B, drainage of the Middle Fork of the Chena River and the Remainder of Unit 20B—The antlerless moose harvest in this area is designed to regulate the moose population in this portion of Unit 20B and to help meet the Unit 20B IM harvest objective. Because the 2015 population estimate (11,064 moose, 90% CI 8,870–13,258) was below the IM population objective of 12,000–15,000 moose and no surveys were conducted in 2016, we suspended these hunts for the 2017 season. If a population estimate survey is can be conducted in November of 2017, then the department may reinstate these hunts; however at this time we will continue to manage this area conservatively until we have a population estimates and determine whether the moose population falls within the IM population objective.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F17-050)
