

**PROPOSAL 77 – 5 AAC 85.045(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.** Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B and increase permit levels in Unit 14A as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12)		
Unit 14(A) 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to <b>1,500</b> [1000] antlerless moose permits may be issued.	Aug. 20–Sept. 25 (General hunt only) Nov. 1–Dec. 15 (General hunt only)	No open season
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; and by shotgun or archery only; up to 200 permits may be issued.	Winter season to be announced (General hunt only)	No open season
Unit 14(B)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; and by shotgun or archery only; up to 100 permits may be issued.	Winter season to be announced (General hunt only)	No open season

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board of Game. There are two types of antlerless moose hunts in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley—a drawing permit hunt used to regulate growth of the moose

population in Unit 14A and targeted hunts used to mitigate public safety concerns in Units 14A and 14B.

Moose surveys conducted in February 2017 yielded an estimate of 8,700 moose in Unit 14A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 6,000–6,500 moose and greater than the 2013 survey estimate of 8,500 moose with a bull ratio of 21 bulls:100 cows and a calf ratio of 45 calves:100 cows.

Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized in Unit 14A since 2001 in order to regulate the growth of the population. The permit level was increased from 450 to 1,000 in 2013 to account for the continued increase in the population. Despite increased permit levels and increased harvest, the population has remained above the post-hunt population objective. Based upon the current population estimate, the decreasing trend in the calf twinning rate, and the impact on the available habitat as observed in a recent browse removal study, further increases in the permit allocation may be warranted in order to reduce the population to a sustainable level.

The current increases in the harvest have seemingly slowed the population growth; however it has not reduced the moose population to within objectives. If the density of moose is allowed to increase, we anticipate an increase in the number of moose-human conflicts, and moose may experience nutritional stress as the population nears carrying capacity. Cow harvests are warranted to control the moose population's growth and recommended as a way to provide additional moose hunting opportunity in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

The targeted moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B are an effective tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collision and nuisance management issues. Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of 266 moose per year were killed in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley area during the last few years of average snowfall and substantially more were killed during higher snowfall years. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F17-035)

\*\*\*\*\*