

PROPOSAL 22

5 AAC 92.530(23). Management areas.

Eliminate the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C as follows:

Remove the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C from regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal would remove the Unit 1C Douglas Island Management Area from current regulation. There is no science or data that suggests this management area is necessary or effective, particularly as it applies to wolf management. While wolves certainly play an important part in the ecosystem, they are apex predators and must be managed as such. Wolves are transient to and from Douglas by either swimming the channel at high tide or crossing overland at low tide. It is very hard to manage and set a quota for a population of any species, especially one that is very wide-ranging. Wolf predation has reduced the deer population on the island which is solely estimated using the Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) annual deer pellet survey at two locations on the north end of the island. Douglas Island is specifically used by deer hunters who don't have a boat and is a commonly used area where youth and new hunters have relatively easy access to deer hunting areas. The current data shows that the deer pellet survey samples increased when wolves were actively trapped. Removing this management area from regulation will allow for wolf management using hunters and trappers during the allowed seasons without a quota system while creating less of a burden to ADF&G staff and will increase deer populations for sport hunting and wildlife viewing. This is how the rest of the state manages wolf numbers, with the exception of Prince of Wales Island. Wolves will continue to be wolves and travel back and forth between the mainland and Douglas as they have for many years. If no change is made, wolves will continue to suppress the deer population on Douglas Island and further decrease the sport hunting and wildlife viewing opportunities.

PROPOSED BY: Jesse Ross

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