

Alaska Adventures Unlimited

March 14, 2019 Meeting

The Alaska Board of Game

Dear Chairman and Members

Testimony

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My name is Tom Kirstein, I live in Fairbanks and I would like to speak to several of the proposals that concern unit 8, Kodiak Island.

I have professionally guided on Kodiak Island over 40 years in Deadman Bay which is within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

"Fair Chase"

Proposal 93, Deer Bag limit

Leave at the current level.

Proposal 95, Bag limits for Goat.

I agree with the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee to lengthen the Goat Season to March 31. I question the need for inspection or sending pictures however.

Other Solutions: Two Goats, only one which may be a Billy goat. No other restrictions apply.

Proposal 98, Hunting season for Brown Bear earlier opening

The opening of the Fall Season earlier would likely scare the harvest right out of the Departments management goals. Should consideration be given for any earlier Fall or later Spring Hunt opening I would suggest that skull size minimums be part of the conditions of the hunt to protect the harvest of female bears.

Proposal 100, Brown Bear Drawing Permits for Second Degree of Kindred

I support the separate draw as recommended by the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee. I would ask that the Board take action on this proposal.

Proposal 103, Brown Bear Drawing Permits

The current drawing program has been working well for years and with slight changes such as guide unique verifying codes, this process for non-resident hunters works very well. Resident hunters should in no way be able to apply for non-resident permits, at all!

This author's proposal is more about disrupting the current drawing process for the non-resident hunters and asking that those permits be available for resident hunter applicants if any particular area was undersubscribed.

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Kodiak Island is unique, it is the shining example in Alaska and one of the oldest permit allocations for a big game species that works well for resident and non-resident hunters alike. Guiding on Kodiak Island is special for sure, those guides who operate on Federal Refuge are restricted to those areas of operation. State Land areas don't have restricted concessions but the drawing process works the same as designed for the non-resident guided hunter.

I would ask that the Board take no action on this proposal.

Proposal 104, Brown Bear Permits for Resident Hunter

The author of this proposal would like to see all Resident Permits be available for use. I believe the harvest history should be maintained with input from the Department for the allocation of bear permits.

Proposal 130, Second Degree Kindred Drawing Permits

I agree with the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee for a solution measure to solve the allocation of second degree permits, to establish a separate draw as proposal 100 suggest.

Proposal 99, Allocation of Brown Bear Permits

This proposal wants the Board of Game to change the allocation of permits for resident hunters, taking the non-resident allocation. The guiding industry on Kodiak Island is very well established with a long history, that part of tourism we call hunting adventures. The economic value to Alaska, to Kodiak Island, to those of us that make our livings providing the big game adventures would be devastating to say the least.

It mentions that non-resident hunters success exceed residents harvest levels of bears, however it seems that guided hunters would naturally have higher success rates.

The allocation for resident, non-resident hunters has been in place over 40 years with the 60/40 percentages of allocation. At the time the permit system was established there was consideration given that would make the allocation 50/50, especially on those portions of the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. The conservative allocation of permits was decided upon back then and implemented to manage the bear harvest. This management program for Kodiak is both a State and Federal success. Both the guiding industry and resident hunters have benefited with a healthy growing brown bear population of today.

I would ask that the board not make changes to the current permit system from the 60/40 allocation management plan!

Board Members, thank you for serving on the Board of Game, it is very much appreciated!

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