

Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 1



Proposal 86

Submitted by: ADF&G

Effect of the proposal: Reauthorize the Intensive Management Plan in 92.113(a)(1) for predation control in Upper Yukon Tanana Predation Control Area through June 2026

ADF&G Position: Support

Upper Tanana–Fortymile AC: Supports

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Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 2

Current vs. Proposed comparison:

■ Current regulation: ■ An Intensive Management Plan exists for Upper Yukon/Tanana Predation Control Area and expires in June 2020	■ Proposed regulation: ■ Re-authorize the Upper Yukon/Tanana Intensive Management Plan (92.113) ■ Retain FCH and Wolves ■ For 6 years, expiring June 30, 2026
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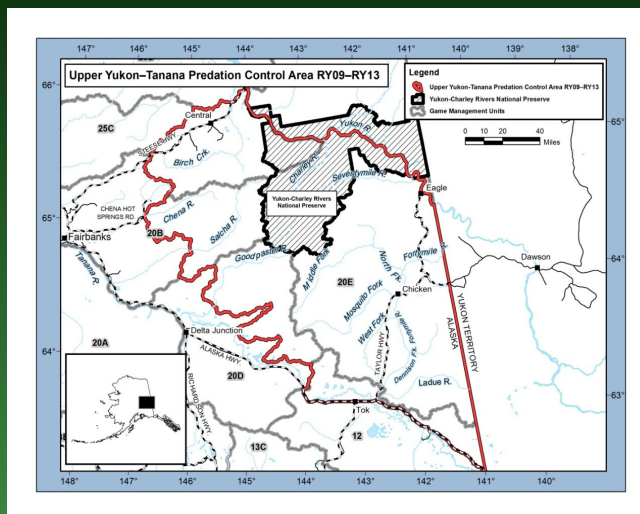
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History of program

- **2004** Program first authorized
- **2005–2009** Grizzly bear baiting included
- **2005–2014** Moose northern Unit 12 and 20E included
- **2005–2018** Public Aerial Wolf Control
- **2006** Expanded wolf control area to include FCH
- **2009–2018** Department Helicopter Wolf Control
- **2012–2018** Department Control focused in FCH calving range
- **May 1, 2018** Wolf Control suspended for evaluation

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Upper Yukon/Tanana Predation Control Area



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Fortymile Herd Size

- 2006 Pop Est. = **43,837** demographic model
- **Photocensus Counts** - Minimum Count from photographs
 - 2009 = 46,510
 - 2010 = 51,675
 - 2017 = 73,009
- 2017 Minimum Count adjusted for missing caribou (Rivest et al. 1998) = **83,659**
- 2019 Pop Est. = **82,000–85,000** demographic model

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COMPARISION OF FCH POPULATION ESTIMATES AND IM OBJECTIVE

FCH - Pop Estimate

2017 Census = 83,659

2019 ~ 82,000–85,000

FCH - IM Pop Obj

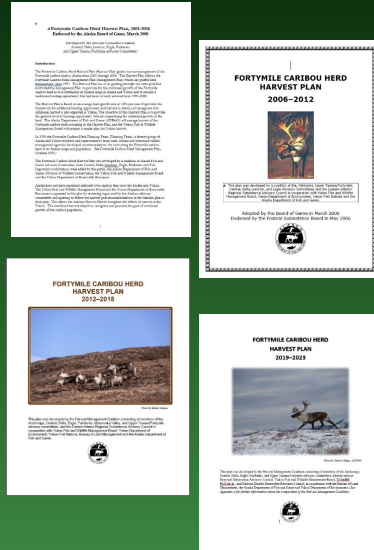
50,000–100,000



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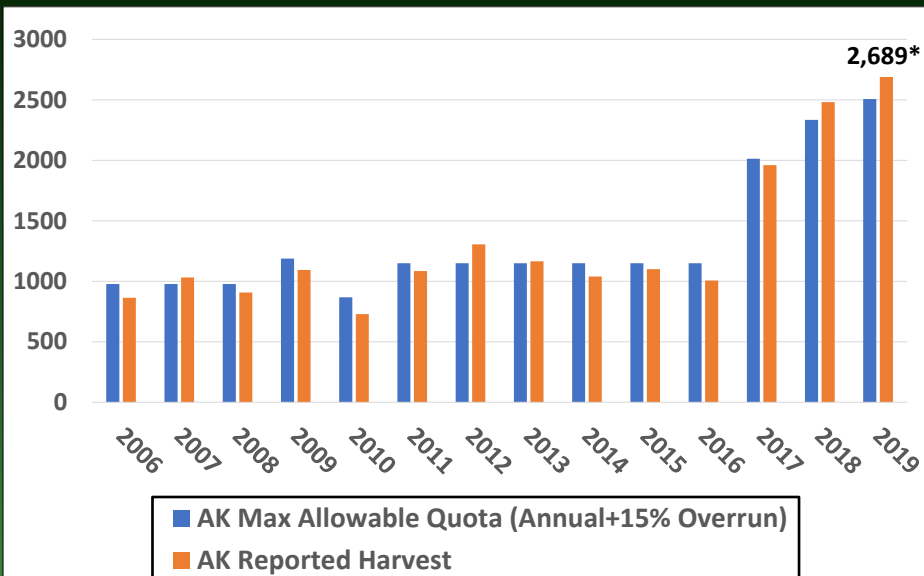
FCH Harvest Management Plan

- Guides Harvest Management
- Harvest Management Coalition
 - International Planning Team
- Goal:
 - Promote herd growth to restore herd to historic range in Alaska & Yukon
 - Without compromising herd health.



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FCH Harvest 2006 - 2019



* Preliminary harvest data

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Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 9

COMPARISION OF FCH HARVEST AND IM OBJECTIVE

<u>FCH-2019 Harvest</u>	<u>FCH-IM Harvest Obj</u>
Alaska Quota = 2,507* Alaska Harvest = 2,689	1,000 – 15,000




* Maximum quota, included 15% allowable over run of quota based on recommendations in 2012–2018 FCH Harvest Plan

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FCH Non-human Mortality Factors

Calf predation by wolves

- First 6 weeks of life
- Primary Factor Limiting Growth
 - Boertje and Gardner (1998, 2000)
 - Boertje et al. 2008

Other Predators - minor relative to wolf predation

- Boertje and Gardner (1998, 2000), Boertje et al. 2008

Disease – not limiting

- Zarnke 2001, 2012 Disease Survey

Weather – not identified as limiting

- Boertje and Gardner (1998, 2000), Boertje et al. 2008, Boertje et al. 2012

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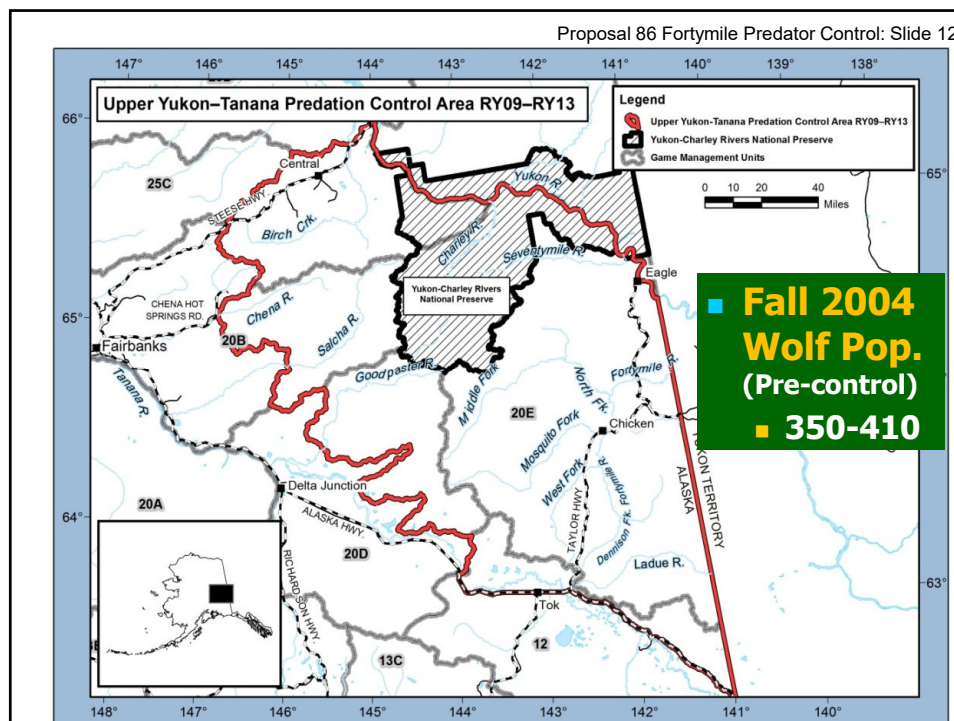
Research

Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 11

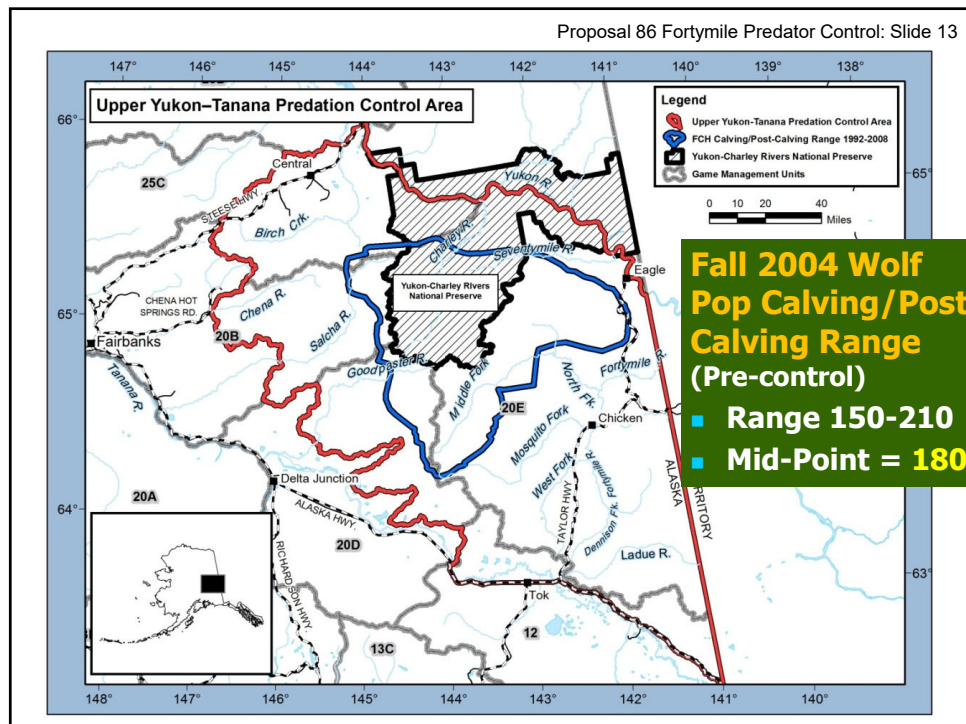
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Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 12



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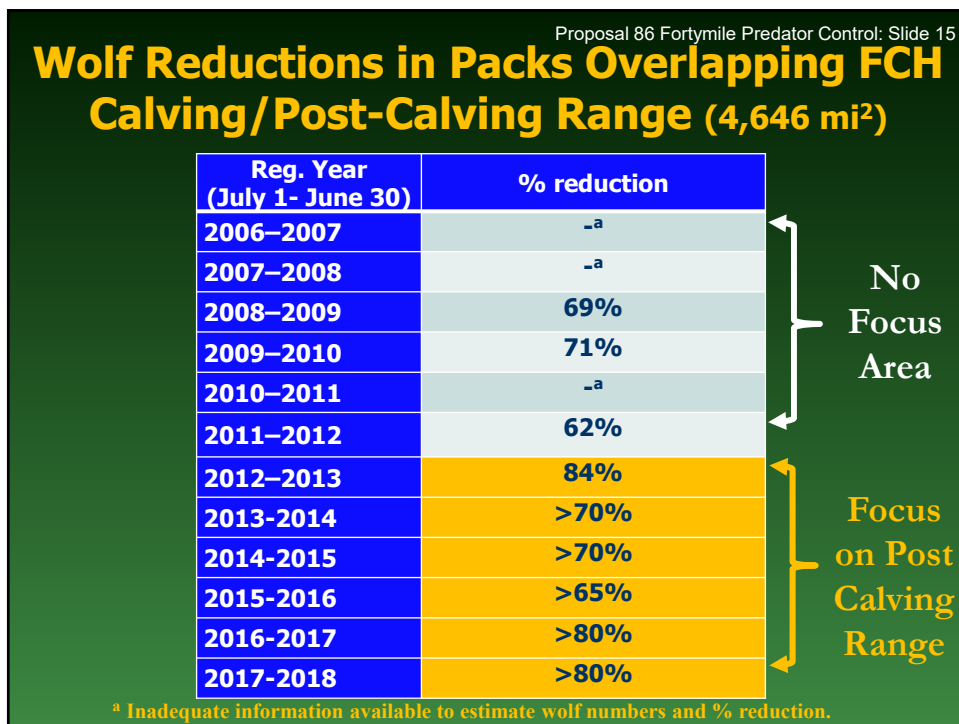
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Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 14

Wolf Removal/Reduction (Entire 18,750 mi² Control Area)

RY	Hunt Trap	Public control	Dept Control	Total removal	Spring abundance (range)	% reduction from pre-control
2006	73	23	N/A	96	259 (197-322)	32%
2007	57	27	N/A	84	284 (268-300)	25%
2008	82	49	84	215	146	62%
2009	31	10	15	56	175	54%
2010	26	25	0	51	212 (200-223)	44%
2011	62	8	56	126	184 (170-197)	52%
2012	41	78	40	159	215 (197-232)	43%
2013	54	31	31	116	240 (222-257)	37%
2014	48	24	33	105	269 (252-288)	29%
2015	69	29	19	117	291 (273-309)	23%
2016	130	18	88	236	215 (195-235)	42%
2017	71	19	50	140	251 (232-269)	34%
AVG	62	28	42	132	228	40%

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Proposal 86 Fortymile Predator Control: Slide 16

Wolf Objectives

- **Control Objective:** No fewer than 88 wolves by May 1 of each year
- **Department effort focus on:** Reducing wolves in packs with territories that overlap the calving/post calving range by **60-80%** of the pre-control levels

Area-wide wolf numbers currently near pre-control levels. Anticipated recovery in all areas in no more than 2 more years.

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Wolf Control

- **Retaining ability to reimplement wolf control important**
 - Rapid response to unexpected changes in population size or nutritional condition of the herd
- **Focused removal on calving range**
 - Target wolf predation on young calves (≤ 6 -weeks)
 - Primary Factor Limiting FCH growth
- **Removal in entire control area**
 - Adults and calves likely to benefit to some degree

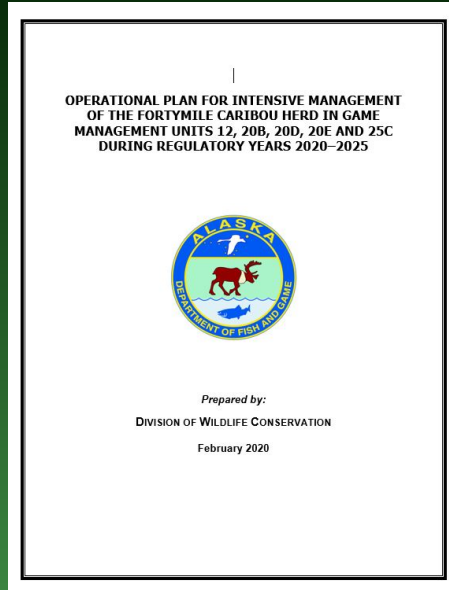
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Program Evaluation (2016–2023)

- **Evaluate impacts of wolf removal from calving and post-calving range (2016–2018)**
 - Early caribou calf survival (≤ 6 -weeks)
 - Annual calf and adult survival
- **Post-wolf control (2019–2023)**
 - Calf and adult survival - **without wolf control**
 - Wolf population recovery
- **FCH nutrition**
 - Parturition rates
 - Fall calf weights
 - Herd movements and range use

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Operational Plan 2020–2025



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Wolf Control Decision Framework

Triggers to activate Wolf Control:

1. Slow unexpected herd declines
 - Avoid falling below IM Population and Harvest Obj.
2. To grow the herd if nutritional condition allows
 - Maximize available harvest
 - Encourage range expansion

Control suspended until 2023 for Program Evaluation

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Wolf Control Decision Framework

Triggers to suspend Wolf Control if reactivated:

- 1. Herd nutrition is compromised, and herd stabilization or reduction is unsuccessful through harvest alone.**
- 2. The FCH exceeds 100,000 caribou and herd growth cannot be stabilized or reduced through harvest alone**

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Proposal 86

Submitted by: ADF&G

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ADF&G Position: Support

Upper Tanana–Fortymile AC: Supports

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Proposal 87 – Eliminate the Fortymile caribou registration hunt in Unit 20 and establish a drawing hunt for Fortymile caribou.

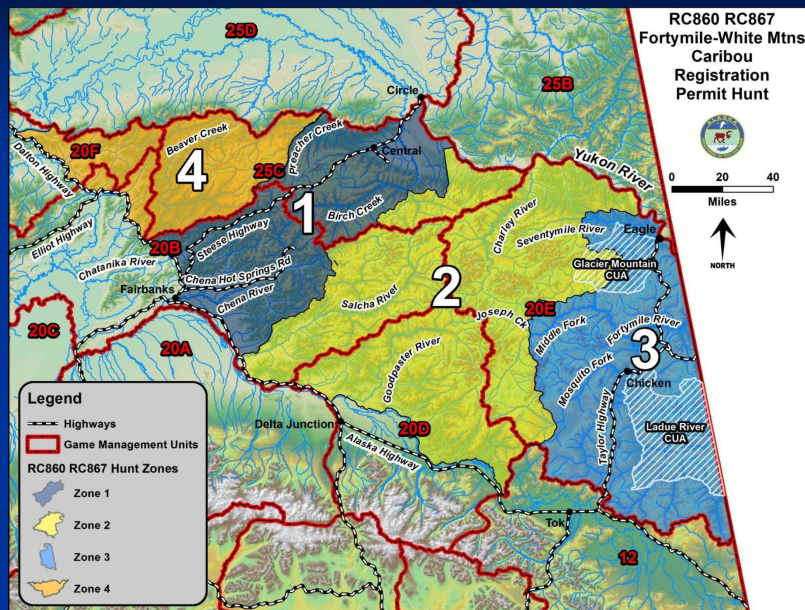
Submitted by: Public

- **Effect of Proposal:** Eliminate the Fall (RC860) and Winter (RC867) Fortymile caribou registration hunts in the portion of the Fortymile Hunt Area in Unit 20 and establish a drawing permit hunt for Fortymile caribou to provide for better hunter safety and hunt quality.

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral on allocation;
Opposed to reduced hunter opportunity

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Fortymile Caribou Hunt Area



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Proposal 87 – Safety and Hunt Quality Concerns

- **Current regulations:**
 - Registration Hunt (Zones 1-4)
 - Residents:
 - August 1–September 30, up to 3 caribou;
 - October 21–March 31, up to 3 caribou
 - Nonresidents:
 - August 10–September 30, one bull
- **Proposed regulation:**
 - Eliminate Registration Hunt
 - Establish a Drawing Hunt
 - No hunt details specified
 - Resident/Nonresident
 - Season Dates
 - Bag Limit

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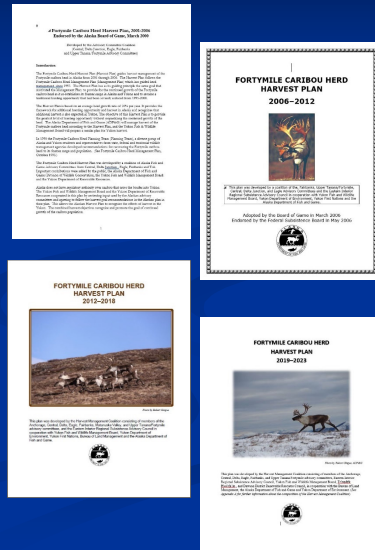
Fortymile Caribou Findings and Objectives

- C&T Fortymile caribou
- Herd ANS of 350-400
- Intensive Management Objectives
 - Population Objective = 50,000–100,000
 - Harvest Objective = 1,000-15,000
- Herd Status
 - ~82,000-85,000
 - Reduced nutritional status

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Fortymile Harvest Management Plan

- **Guides Harvest Management**
- **Harvest Management Coalition**
 - International Planning Team
- **Goal:**
 - Promote herd growth to restore herd to historic range in Alaska & Yukon
 - Without compromising herd health.



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Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Strategy

- **Management Goal**
 - Reduce herd to improve nutritional condition
- **Management Objectives**
 - Annual harvest quota set to stabilize/reduce herd growth
- **Risk Management**
 - Harvest objectives need to be met
- **Caribou harvest management**
 - Herd movements unpredictable

Hunters + Caribou = Harvest Objective Met

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Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Strategy

- **Current Registration Hunt**
 - Unlimited participation
 - Over the counter permit availability
 - Liberal seasons dates
 - Access to caribou when available
 - Closures by EO in 2-5 days normal once caribou become available
- **Hunter crowding issues have always been associated with caribou hunts near roads**

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Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Strategy

- **Drawing Hunt**
 - Unlimited drawing permits would be needed
 - Long seasons
 - Hunter Crowding and Safety issues will persist
 - Emergency Orders could still be used

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Fortymile Caribou Herd Management Strategy

➤ Other considerations:

- Apply for drawing permits
- Fee for Drawing permit
- Lost hunting opportunity
- Subsistence opportunity may not be adequate
- AWT –hunter orange

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Proposal 87 – Fortymile Caribou

- **Subsistence statute** (AS 16.05.258 (b)(2)(A) and (f):
 - The board “shall adopt regulations that provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses” defined as an opportunity that allows “a normally diligent person with a reasonable expectation of success”
- **Drawing permit hunts do not provide reasonable opportunity** for subsistence users under Alaska Statute 16.05.258(f).

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Proposal 87 Fortymile Caribou: Slide 33

Proposal 87 – Eliminate the Fortymile caribou registration hunt in Unit 20 and establish a drawing hunt for Fortymile caribou.

Submitted by: Public

- **Effect of Proposal:** Eliminate the Fall (RC860) and Winter (RC867) Fortymile caribou registration hunts in the portion of the Fortymile Hunt Area in Unit 20 and establish a drawing permit hunt for Fortymile caribou to provide for better hunter safety and hunt quality.

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral on allocation;
Opposed to reduced hunter opportunity

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E
Intensive Management – wolf control



Submitted by: Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC

Effect of the proposal: Implement wolf control under an Intensive Management (IM) program to benefit moose within portions of Units 12, 20D, and 20E

- Feasibility assessment

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral

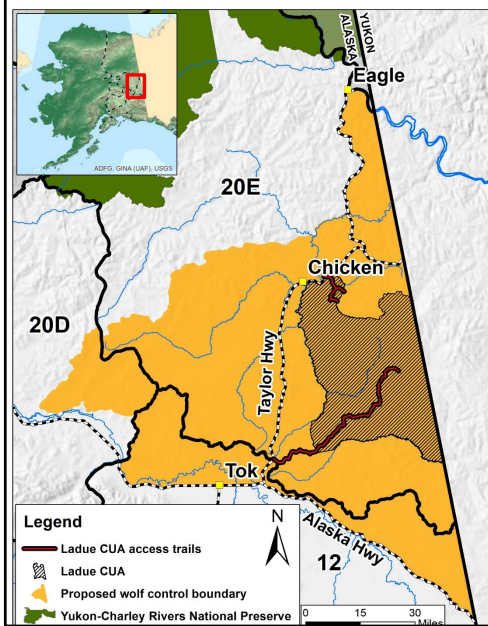
AC Recommendations:

- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Support
- Eagle AC:
- Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road AC:
- Delta AC:

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control



Proposed 6,710 mi² area

- 77% within Unit 20E
- 17% within Unit 12
- 6% within Unit 20D

Aerial wolf control by:

- Public permittees
 - Retrieval by rotocraft (permit)
- Department

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Proposal goals

Use wolf control to maintain moose:

1. Population at or above current levels
2. Bull-to-cow ratios above objectives
 - Avoid restrictive hunting regulations
3. Harvest/success rates near current levels

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Unit	IM population objective		IM harvest objective		ANS	Harvestable surplus exceeds ANS?
	Obj.	Met?	Obj.	Met?		
12	4,000-6,000	✓	250-450	✗	60-70	Yes
20D	8,000-10,000	✓	500-700	✗	5-15 (north)* 5 (south)*	Yes
20E	8,000-10,000	✓?	500-1,000	✗	50-75	Yes

*Outside of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area

ANS = Amount reasonably necessary for subsistence uses

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control**IM population objectives****Unit 12:**

- Objective = 4,000-6,000 moose
 - Current estimate = 6,394 (5,280-7,509)
 - 1.1 (0.9-1.3) moose/mi²

Unit 20E:

- Objective = 8,000-10,000 moose
 - Current estimate = 7,262 (6,207-8,318)
 - 0.7 (0.6-0.8) moose/mi²

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

IM harvest objectives

Unit 12:

- Objective = 250-450 moose
 - RY14-RY18 average = 154 (range 108-191)
 - Includes potlatch
 - Challenges = land ownership, access

Unit 20E:

- Objective = 500-1,000 moose
 - RY14-RY18 average = 224 (range 199-245)
 - Challenges = access

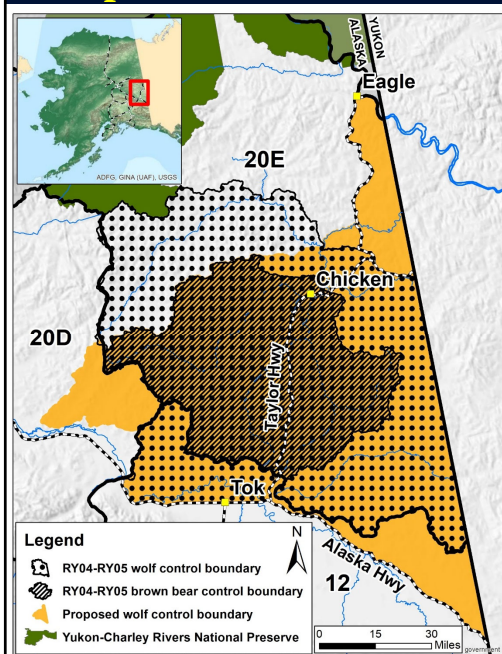
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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Background

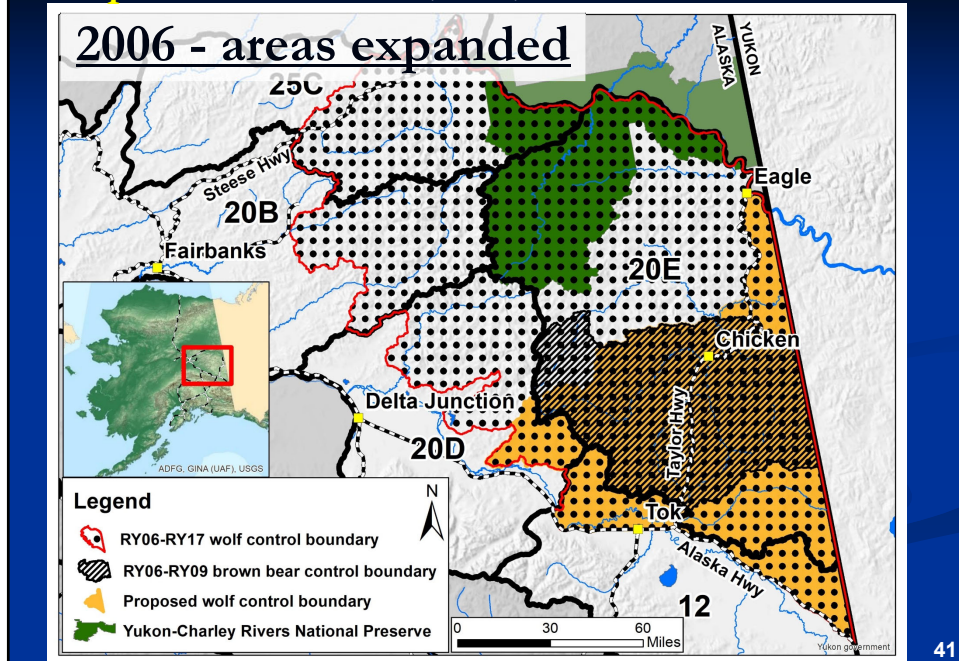
- Long history of predator management
- 2004: wolf and brown bear control



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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

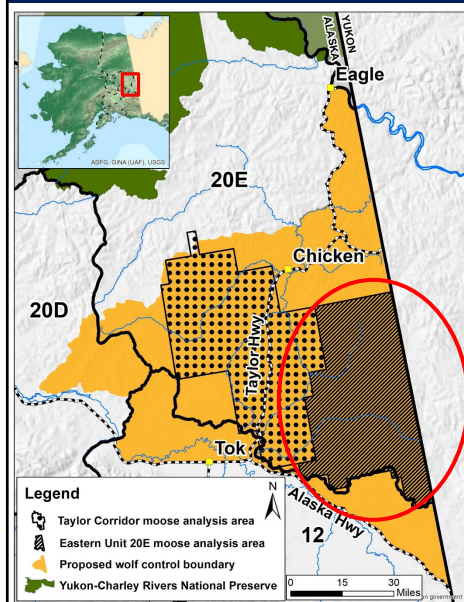


Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Background – 2006 to present

- **2009 – bear control stopped**
 - Removal objectives not met
- **2014 – moose removed from plan**
 - No focused wolf control
- **Wolf control for FCH through spring 2018**
 - Public permittees
 - Department: RY08-RY09, RY11-RY17
 - Calving/post-calving range
 - Moose benefit?

Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control Eastern Unit 20E moose population

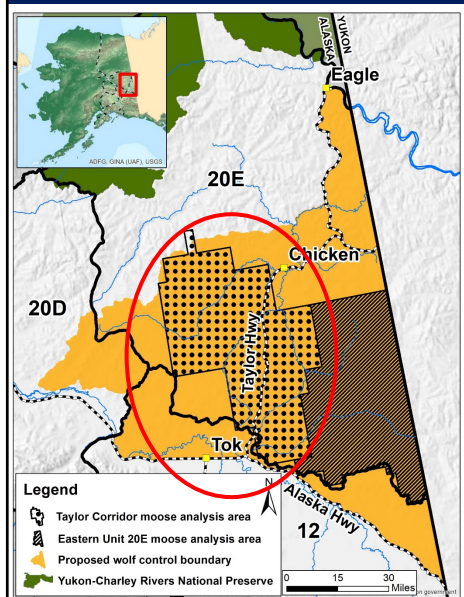


- **1,531 square miles**
 - 24% of area
- **Low density, stable**
 - 0.5 moose/mi² (2019)
 - Higher in 1990s
- **High bull:cow ratio**
 - Obj. = 40 bulls:100 cows
 - 51 bulls:100 cows (2019)
- **Limited hunter access**
 - Ladue CUA
 - Remote

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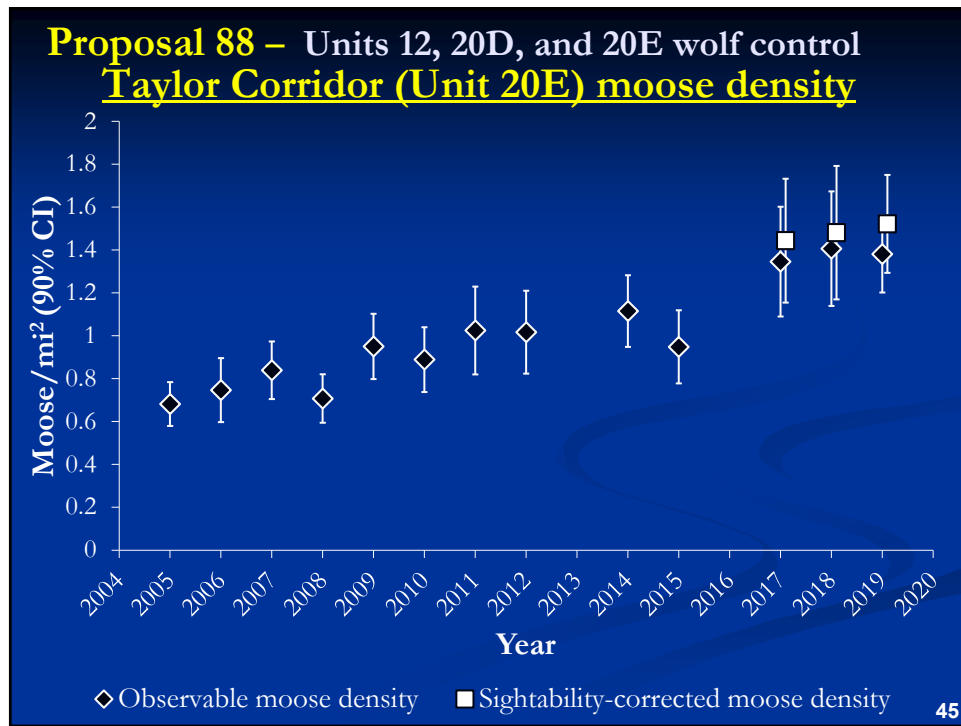
Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control Taylor Corridor (Unit 20E) moose population



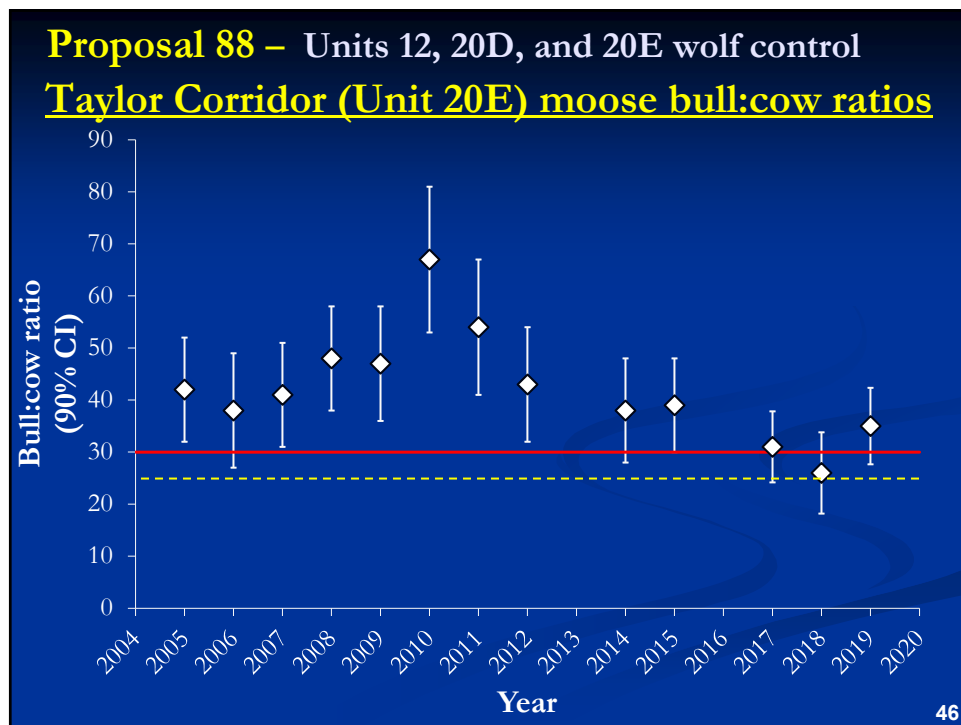
- **1,821 square miles**
 - 27% of area
- **Higher density, ↑ trend**
 - 1.5 moose/mi² (2019)
- **Lower bull:cow ratio**
 - Obj. = 30 bulls:100 cows
 - 35 bulls:100 cows (2019)
- **Good access**
 - Hwy and trails
- **High harvest**

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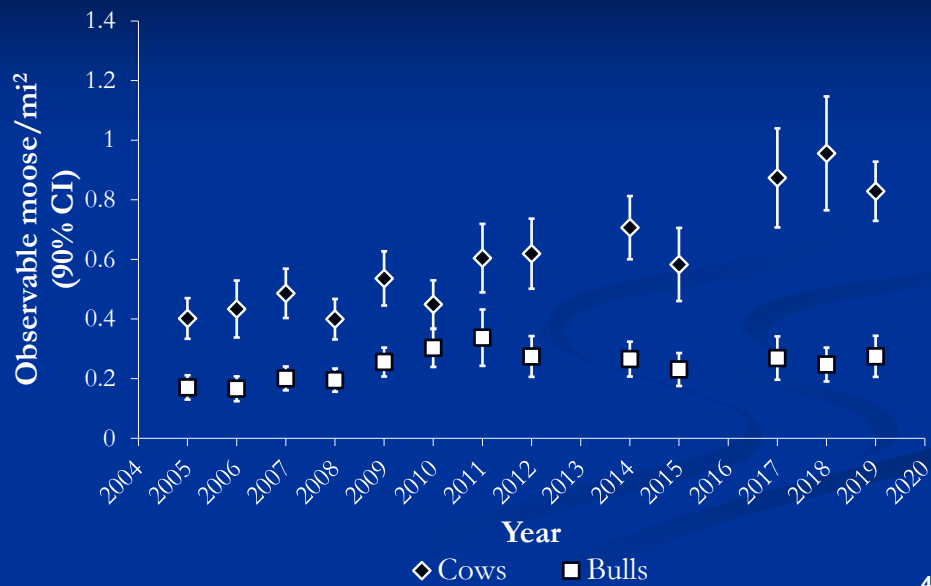


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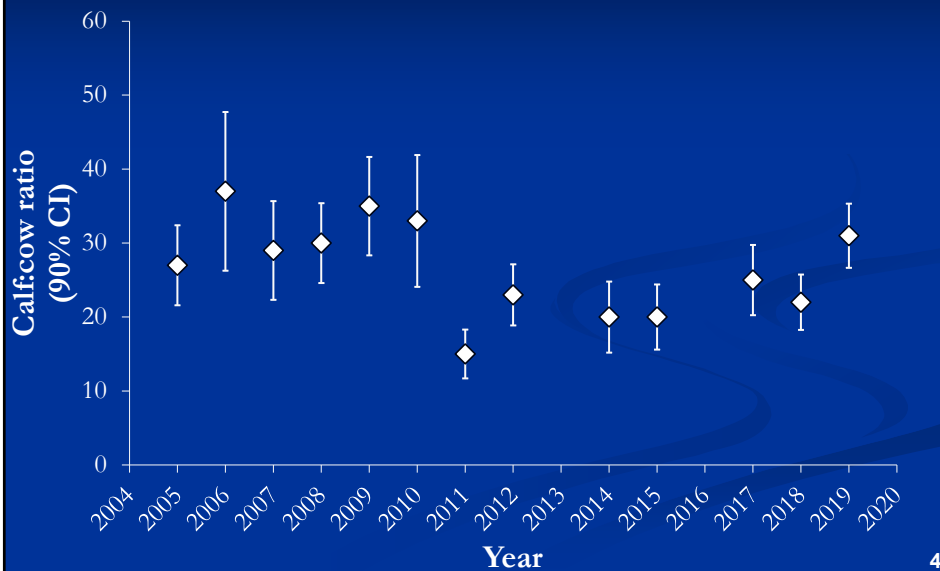
Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control
Taylor Corridor (Unit 20E) moose bull and cow estimates



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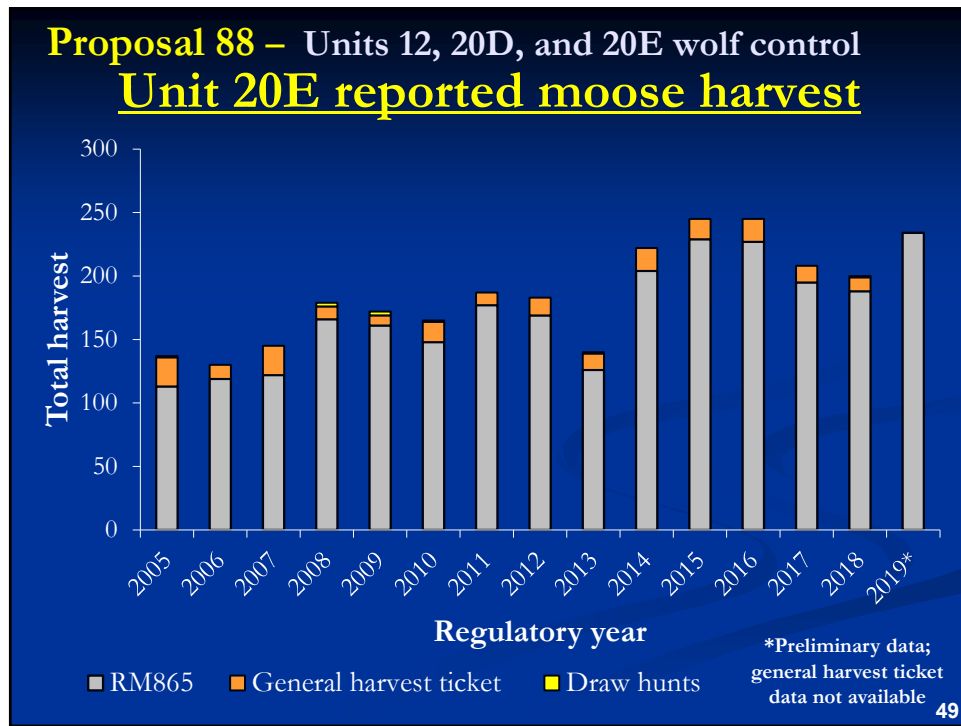
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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control
Taylor Corridor (Unit 20E) moose calf:cow ratios

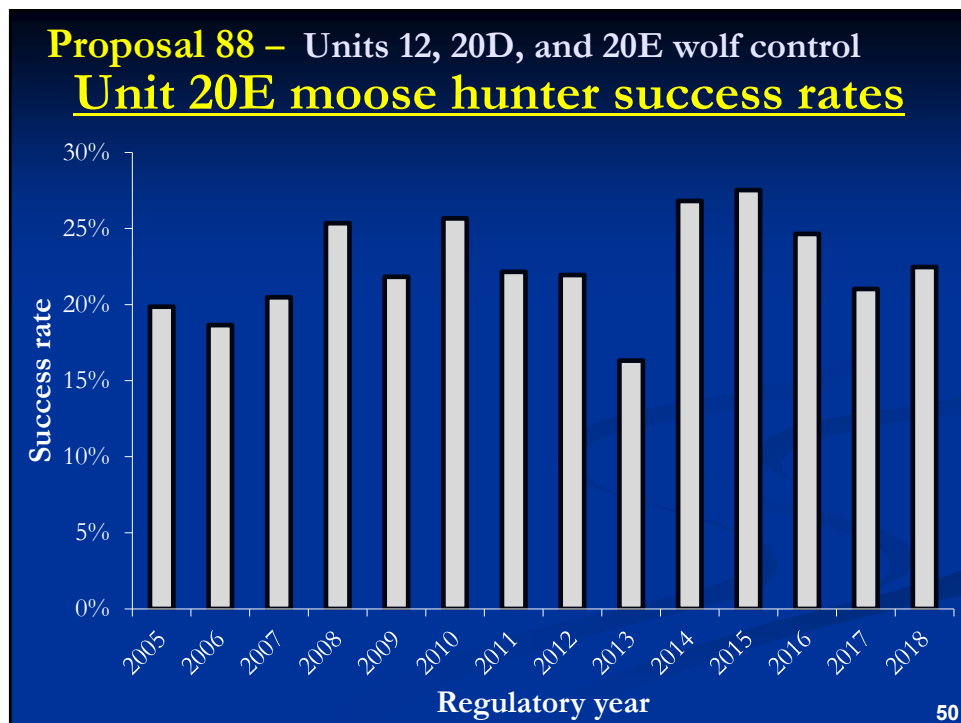


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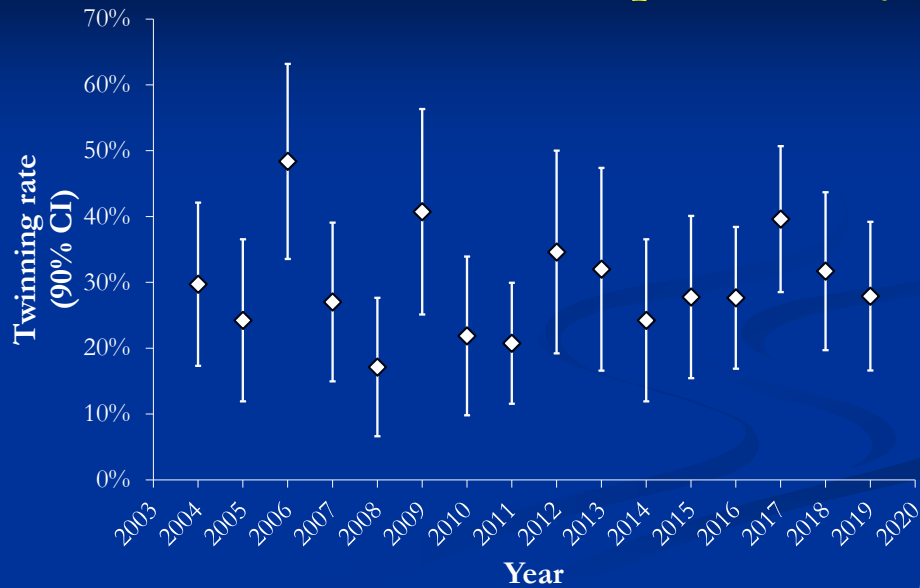
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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

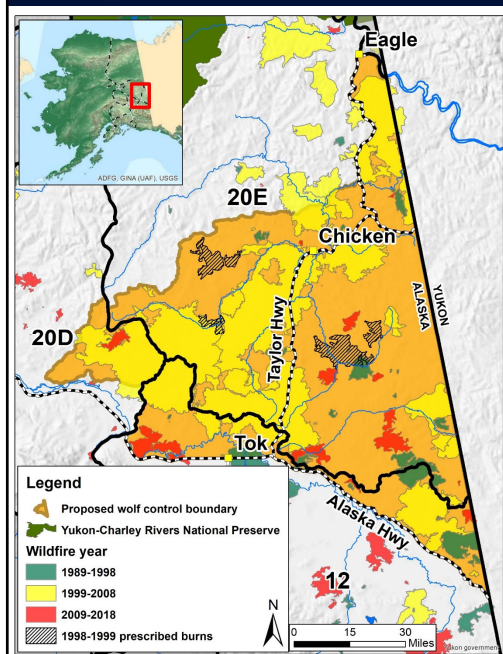
Southern Unit 20E moose productivity



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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control



Habitat

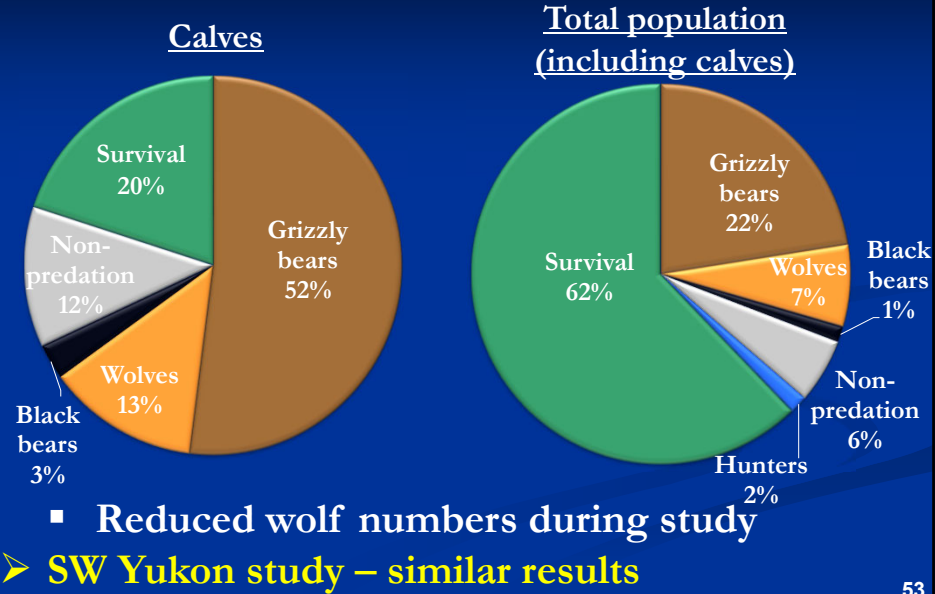
- **1989-2018 fires**
 - 44% of proposed area
 - Mostly 2004-2005 fires
- **Prescribed fire**
 - Maintain habitat
 - Accessible areas

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

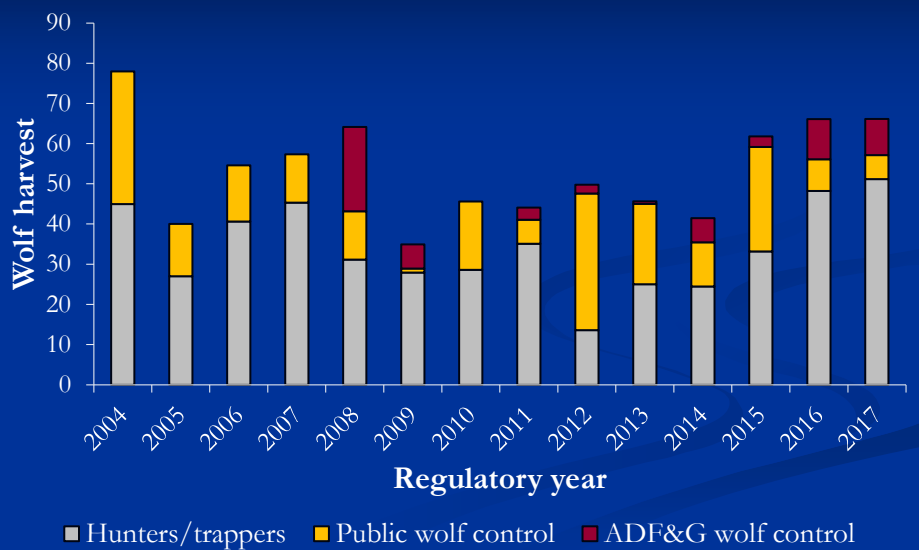
Moose mortality – 1980s Unit 20E



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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Wolf harvest within proposed area



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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Other considerations

- **Fortymile caribou herd**
- **Ongoing research projects**
 - Fortymile caribou calf mortality
 - Fortymile wolves

Feasibility assessment

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Summary

- 1. IM population objectives**
 - Close to or exceed minimum
- 2. IM harvest objectives**
 - Not being met
 - Land ownership, access
 - Current IM harvest objective
 - Unit 12 = 6.2-7.5%; Unit 20E = 6.3-10%
 - Change for Unit 12 and 20E?

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Summary (cont.)

3. Moose population

- Eastern portion – stable at low density
- Central portion (Taylor Corridor)
 - Increasing
 - Bull:cow ratio near objective



**Primary reasoning behind
proposed wolf control**

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E wolf control

Conclusions

1. ADF&G recommendation = NEUTRAL

- No biological concerns

2. Conflicting proposed goals

- Maintain moose:
 - Population
 - Bull:cow ratios > objectives
 - Harvest/success rates

3. Antlerless harvest – help meet goals

- IM harvest objectives

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Proposal 88 – Units 12, 20D, and 20E

Intensive Management – wolf control



Submitted by: Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC

Effect of the proposal: Implement wolf control under an Intensive Management (IM) program to benefit moose within portions of Units 12, 20D, and 20E

- Feasibility assessment

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral

AC Recommendations:

- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Support
- Eagle AC:
- Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road AC:
- Delta AC:

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E

Caribou and Moose Registration Permits



Submitted by: Public

Effect of the proposal: Allow hunters to simultaneously possess registration permits for both caribou (RC860) and moose (RM865) in Unit 20E

ADF&G Recommendation:

- Support – Additional opportunity
- Neutral – Allocation

AC Recommendations:

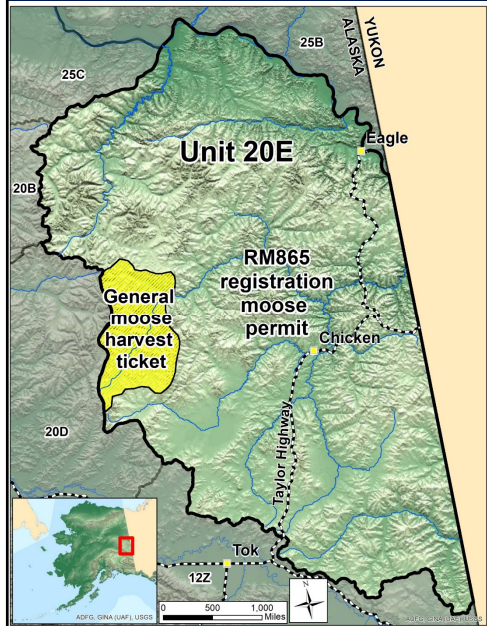
- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Oppose
- Eagle AC:

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Current moose regulations



Residents:

- Aug. 24-28 and Sept. 8-17
- Any-bull

Nonresidents:

- Sept. 8-17
- 50" or 4 BT

Permits:

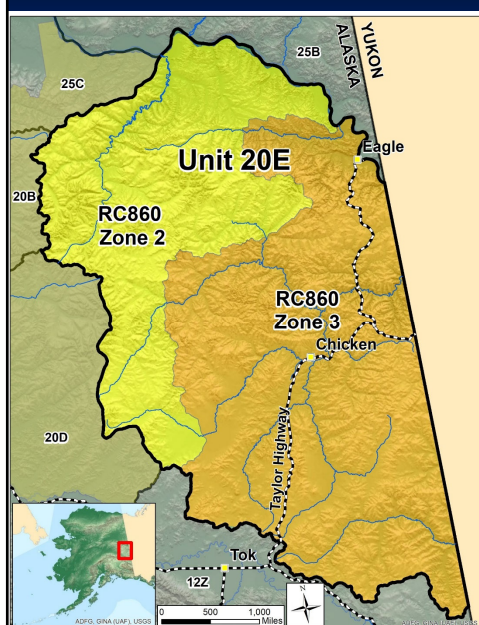
- RM865 – 94% of unit
- GM000 – 6% of unit

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Current caribou regulations



RC860 permit:

- Aug. 10-Sept. 30
 - Res: 1 caribou
 - Nonres: 1 bull
- Harvest quota by zone

Zone 2:

- Remote – rarely closes

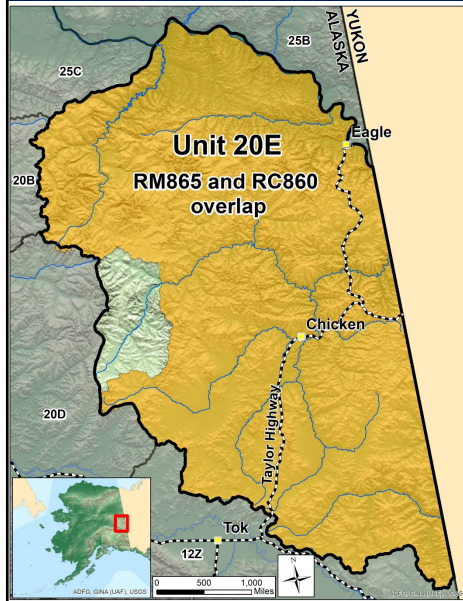
Zone 3:

- Accessible – Taylor Hwy
- Some years closed by EO

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou RM865 and RC860 permits



Currently:

- RM865 OR RC860 permit
 - Not both simultaneously
 - Applies to individuals
 - Hunting parties - both
 - Swap permits

Proposal:

- Allow individuals to simultaneously possess RM865 and RC860

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou Background

Permit restriction implemented in 2001

- Concerns with moose population
 - Low density (0.4-0.6 moose/mi²)
 - ↑ moose harvest
 - ↓ bull:cow ratio in accessible areas
 - ↑ # caribou hunters
 - Incidental moose harvest
- BOG proposal – discretionary permit authority

Purpose - reduce incidental moose harvest by caribou hunters

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Since 2001 – Unit 20E moose:

➤ Densities increased

- 0.6-0.8 moose/mi² unitwide
 - Southern Unit 20E 1.5 moose/mi²

➤ Hunting pressure increased

Average # Unit 20E moose hunters/harvest

	2001-2003	2016-2018
Hunters	779	955
Harvest	141	217

➤ Bull:cow ratio near objective in accessible areas

65

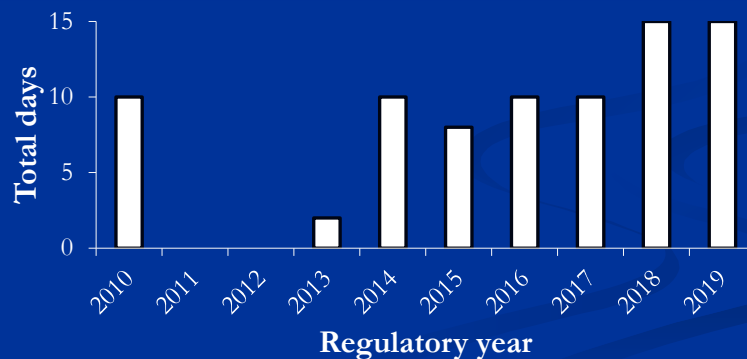
65

Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Effect of the proposal

➤ Opportunity to hunt caribou and moose simultaneously

RC860 (Zone 3 – Taylor Hwy) and RM865
days overlapping season dates



Overlapping seasons likely to continue

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Effect of the proposal

➤ Caribou/moose harvest

- Increase?
 - Hunting parties currently mix permits

➤ No biological concerns

- Fortymile caribou herd – harvest quota
- Unit 20E moose
 - Small harvest increase likely ok
 - Bull:cow ratios near objectives

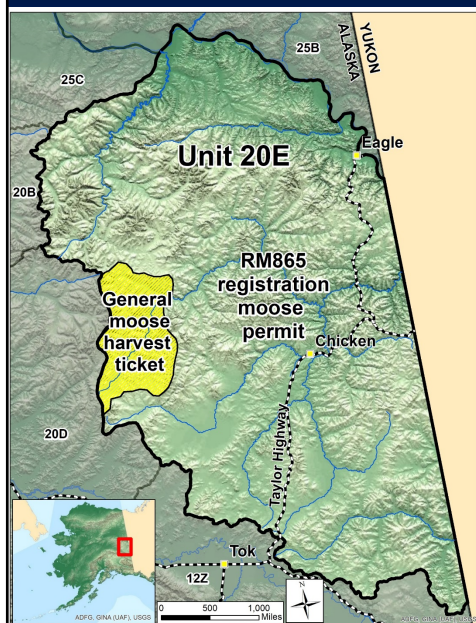
➤ Steese Hwy – currently hunt both species

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E moose and caribou

Additional considerations



If passed:

- Change to RM865 unitwide?

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Proposal 89 – Unit 20E

Caribou and Moose Registration Permits



Submitted by: Public

Effect of the proposal: Allow hunters to simultaneously possess registration permits for both caribou (RC860) and moose (RM865) in Unit 20E

ADF&G Recommendation:

- Support – Additional opportunity
- Neutral – Allocation

AC Recommendations:

- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Oppose
- Eagle AC:

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Proposal 90 – Sheep

Tok Management Area (TMA)



Submitted by:

Public

Effect of the proposal: Reduce the proportion of TMA sheep draw permits awarded to nonresidents hunting with relatives within second-degree of kindred (SDK)

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral - Allocation

AC Recommendations:

- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Oppose
- Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road:

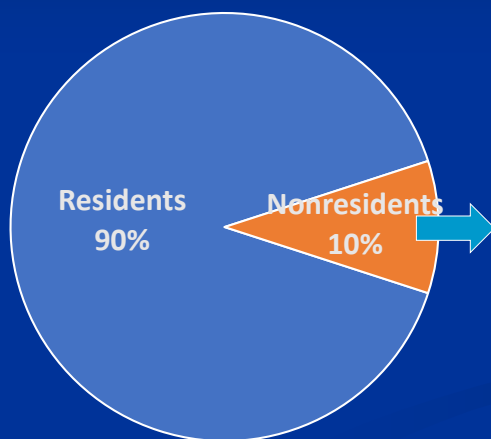
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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Current TMA permit (60-120 annually) allocation

Resident vs. nonresident permits



Nonresident permits (10% of total)

- Max of **50%** to hunters accompanied by SDK
- Remainder to guided nonresidents

Since 2009

Since 2007, altered 2014

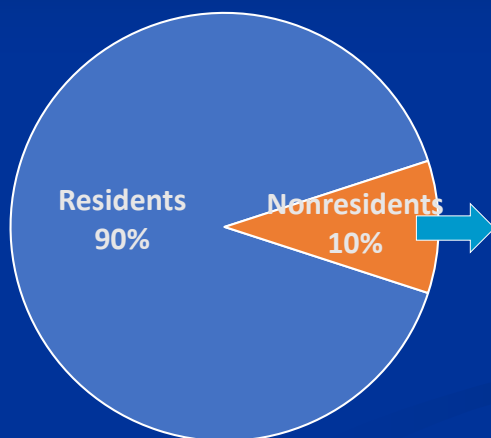
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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Proposed TMA permit (60-120 annually) allocation

Resident vs. nonresident permits



Nonresident permits (10% of total)

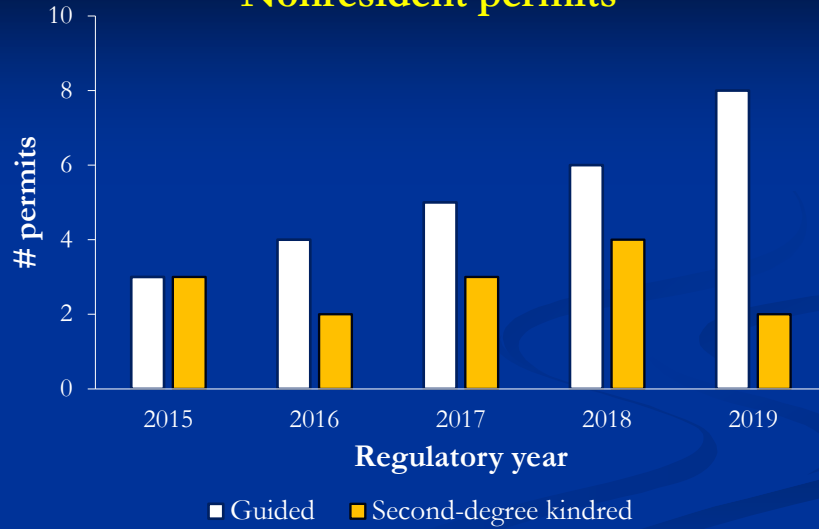
- Max of 50% **25%** to hunters accompanied by SDK
- Remainder to guided nonresidents

72

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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Nonresident permits



Guided – 65% Second-degree kindred – 35%

73

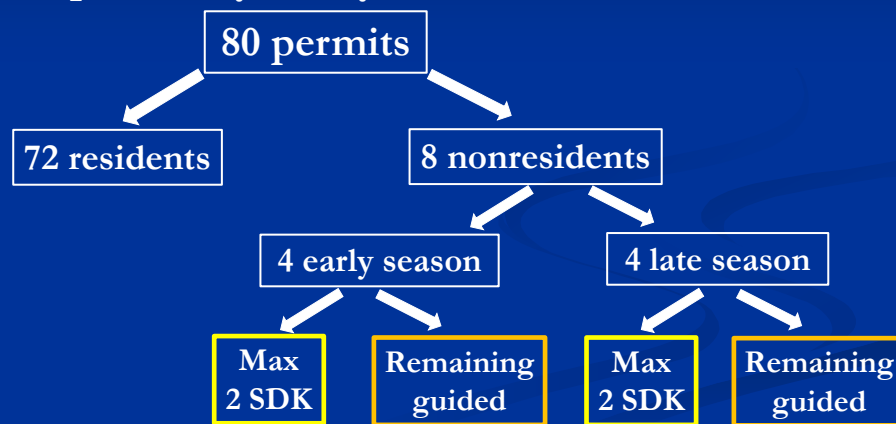
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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Guided/SDK allocation depends on # permits

➤ 60 to 120 permits annually

- Split evenly - early/late season



Max of 50% (4 of 8) to SDK

74

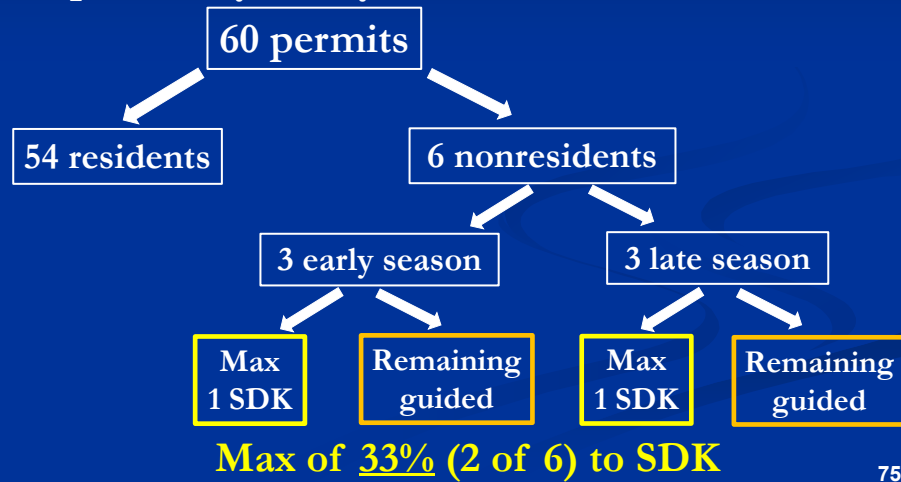
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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Guided/SDK allocation depends on # permits

➤ 60 to 120 permits annually

- Split evenly - early/late season



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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Current vs. proposed allocation

Total permits	Nonresident allocation (10%)	Maximum SDK allocation (%)	
		<u>Current (50%)</u>	<u>Proposed (25%)</u>
60	6	2 - (33%)	
80	8	4 - (50%)	
100	10	4 - (40%)	
120	12	6 - (50%)	

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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Current vs. proposed allocation

Total permits	Nonresident allocation (10%)	Maximum SDK allocation (%)	
		<u>Current (50%)</u>	<u>Proposed (25%)</u>
60	6	2 - (33%)	0 - (0%)
80	8	4 - (50%)	2 - (25%)
100	10	4 - (40%)	2 - (20%)
120	12	6 - (50%)	2 - (17%)

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Proposal 90 – Tok Management Area Sheep

Summary

- Currently – SDK $\leq$ 50% nonresident permits**
 - Received 35% during 2015-2019
- Proposal – reduce SDK allocation to $\leq$ 25%**
 - Actual % - depend on total # permits
 - No biological concerns
 - Guided success > SDK success
 - Small # permits – minimal impact
- ADF&G recommendation – NEUTRAL**
 - Allocation issue

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Proposal 90 – Sheep Tok Management Area (TMA)



Submitted by:

Public

Effect of the proposal: Reduce the proportion of TMA sheep draw permits awarded to nonresidents hunting with relatives within second-degree of kindred (SDK)

ADF&G Recommendation: Neutral - Allocation

AC Recommendations:

- Upper Tanana-Fortymile AC: Oppose
- Tok Cutoff/Nabesna Road:

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