

*Note: Under state and federal laws, the general public cannot take wolves same day airborne unless permitted by the State of Alaska under an active predator control plan.*

## **PROPOSAL 88**

### **5 AAC 92.113. 113(1). Intensive Management Plans.**

Resume intensive management for wolves in a portion of Unit 12 and 20D as follows:

Re-implement same day airborne (SDA) wolf control within that portion of Unit 12 north of the Alaska Highway, that portion of Unit 20D within the Sand Creek and Billy Creek drainages and that portion of Unit 20E south and east of a line following the west divide of the South Fork of the Fortymile River drainage from the Unit 20D boundary to the confluence of the South Fork and North Fork of the Fortymile River, then east along the south bank of the Fortymile River to the Taylor Highway then north along the Taylor Highway to the Yukon River.

Allow same day airborne (SDA) shooting from private fixed wing aircraft and retrieval of wolves with private rotorcraft. In addition, the department may remove wolves using helicopters if necessary, to supplement private efforts to meet wolf removal objectives.

Current moose densities offer adequate hunter opportunity and are below the carrying capacity of the habitat. Rather than trying to continue to increase the population to a higher level closer to carrying capacity, we recommend the department manage for a level of wolf removal adequate to maintain this productive population near current levels, the bull:cow ratios above objectives, and moose harvest and success rates near current levels.

We worked with the department to identify this proposed control area, so wolf removal from this area will not interfere with their wolf study in western Unit 20E, within the Fortymile Caribou calving range.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Following the suspension of wolf control to benefit Fortymile caribou under the Upper Yukon–Tanana Predation Control Program (UYTPCP) in RY2018, we have concerns about being able to maintain moose numbers at an adequate level, in the southeast portion of the UYTPCP area (southern Unit 20E and northern Unit 12), to continue to meet bull:cow ratio objectives and maintain current harvest levels and success rates in this area. Wolf control was conducted in this area under the UYTPCP for 14 years (January 1, 2005 – April 30, 2018) and resulted in substantial progress toward Intensive Management moose population and harvest objectives and increased success rate among moose hunters in this Intensive Management area. Without continued wolf control in this heavily hunted area, we believe the wolf predation on moose will increase and the moose population size and bull:cow ratios will fall below objectives, requiring ADF&G to implement more restrictive moose hunting regulations.

In 2014, when the department removed moose from the existing UYTPCP we were told by department staff that it would be easy to put moose back into the control program if needed in the future. With the substantial increase in hunter use of this area in recent years, bull:cow ratios have declined to the minimum bull:cow ratio objective. Wolf control is needed in this area to maintain the moose population at or above the current size to ensure the bull:cow ratio remains above the

minimum objective to avert the need for additional moose harvest restrictions. More restrictive harvest regulations would result in reduced harvest levels and reverse the progress we have made toward the Intensive Management moose population and harvest objectives from the wolf control program over the last 14 years in this important Intensive Management area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Upper Tanana Fortymile Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-059)

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