

# Interior and Eastern Arctic Region

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**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME**  
**Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Meeting**  
**Pike's Waterfront Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska**  
**March 6-14, 2020**

**TENTATIVE AGENDA**

**Note: This Tentative Agenda is subject to change throughout the course of the meeting.** It is provided to give a general idea of the board's anticipated schedule. The board will attempt to hold to this schedule; however, the board is not constrained by this Tentative Agenda.

**Friday, March 6, 8:30 a.m.**

**OPENING BUSINESS**

Call to Order / Purpose of Meeting

Introductions of Board Members and Staff

Board Member Ethics Disclosures

**AGENCY AND OTHER REPORTS** (See List of Oral Reports)

**PUBLIC & ADVISORY COMMITTEE TESTIMONY** upon conclusion staff reports

**THE DEADLINE TO SIGN UP TO TESTIFY** will be announced prior to the meeting. Public testimony will continue until persons who have signed up before the deadline, and who are present when called by the Chair to testify, are heard.

**Saturday, March 7, 8:30 a.m.**

**PUBLIC AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ORAL TESTIMONY** continued

**Sunday, March 8, 9:00 a.m.**

**PUBLIC AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE ORAL TESTIMONY** continued/concluded

**BOARD DELIBERATIONS** upon conclusion of public testimony

**Monday, March 9 thru Friday, March 13, 8:30 a.m.**

**BOARD DELIBERATIONS** continued

**Saturday, March 14, 8:30 a.m.**

**BOARD DELIBERATIONS** continued/conclude

**MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**, including petitions, findings and policies, letters, and other business  
**ADJOURN**

**Agenda Notes**

- 1.Meeting materials, including a list of staff reports, a roadmap, and schedule updates, will be available prior to the meeting at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo) or by contacting ADF&G Boards Support Section in Juneau at 465-4110.
- 2.A live audio stream for the meeting is intended to be available at: [www.boardofgame.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.boardofgame.adfg.alaska.gov)
- 3.The State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Individuals with disabilities who may need auxiliary aids, services, and/or special modifications to participate in this hearing and public meeting should contact 465-4110 no later than two weeks prior to start of the meeting to make any necessary arrangements.

## **Regionwide & Multiple Units**

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### **PROPOSAL 44**

#### **5 AAC 99.025. Customary and traditional uses of game populations.**

Establish customary and traditional use findings for migratory birds and waterfowl in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 25, and modify regulations to provide reasonable opportunities as follows:

The Alaska Board of Game should determine that migratory birds and waterfowl in Units 12, 19, 20 outside the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area, 21, 24, and 25 are associated with customary and traditional subsistence uses and develop regulations that provide reasonable opportunities for subsistence uses of migratory birds and waterfowl in these Interior Region Game Management Units.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Alaska Board of Game has not yet determined whether migratory birds and waterfowl are associated with customary and traditional uses in Game Management Units 12, 19, 20 outside the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area, 21, 24, and 25. While the Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council provides spring and summer subsistence hunting of migratory birds and waterfowl, many Interior Region rural residents also pursue migratory birds and waterfowl during the fall season for subsistence uses.

**PROPOSED BY:** Darrell Vent Sr.

(EG-F19-099)

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### **PROPOSAL 45**

#### **5 AAC 92.080(15). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.**

Prohibit the use of moose, caribou and reindeer urine as scent lures in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region as follows:

The GASH AC would like to propose adding moose urine and caribou/reindeer urine to the list of banned scent lures used for hunting in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region (Region III). This should be a statewide proposal, but this is a Region III meeting. This may help prevent the introduction of Chronic Wasting Disease to Alaska.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Chronic wasting disease (CWD) is destroying cervid populations in the lower 48 and Canada. This is a disease we do not want in Alaska. The disease can be transmitted through urine which is commonly used as a scent lure. Commercial moose urine is available for sale in addition to other cervid urine lures.

**PROPOSED BY:** GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross ) Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-020)

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## **PROPOSAL 46**

### **5 AAC 92.115. Control of predation by bears.**

Establish intensive management programs for bear across the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region as follows:

Under intensive management, for other prey species harvested by hunters or in other area, the commissioner of ADF&G may authorize predation control to recover depleted prey populations under Alaska Statute 16.05.020 (2), and the Board of Game may adopt regulations for similar purpose under AS 16.05.255 either of these authorities are listed under other programs.

We, Alaskan residents that are concerned for the safety of our children, our food security, our wildlife, our resources, and sustainability for future uses, would like to recommend that the Alaska Board of Game adopt appropriate regulations that begin intensive bear management across the state for both brown and black bears.

I will leave it up to your legal teams, division staff, and board support team to work up the regulation language. I'm sure there will be modifications to add regulatory language appropriate to each Unit as this proposal circulates prior to Board of Game meeting.

I recommend that each Unit, give recommendations and modifications in assistance with the language to ensure that needs are being appropriately met throughout the state for predator control, "intensive management."

Areas of more intensive concern are the rural areas with higher subsistence economy.

We, would also like to request that you allow local residents to help with this management, because we know the demand for labor outweighs the number of employees. We are here to help at your discretion and volunteers.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The goal is to reduce predation bear rates, allowing humans to take more ungulates while also maintaining sustainable populations of predators. There has been an elevated issue heard throughout the state of bears becoming a problem, in specific the brown bear. This discussion has been brought about during multiple advisory committee meetings, Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council meetings, and the Federal Subsistence Board.

These programs are designed to reduce predation by wolves or bears and increase moose, caribou, or deer that are a need for source of Alaska. Another species that should be added to this is salmon, if possible.

In all areas where salmon use to be the main source diet for these ungulates are now in search of food, because of the decline of salmon in the spawning grounds. Bears are moving into urban and rural communities, putting human lives at risk and their personal harvests to wonton waste.

There is an ever-growing concern, humans witnessing brown bears harvesting caribou calves at an alarming rate. Not only eyewitnesses, but videos where the brown bears are ripping out newborns as the mothers are mid-point delivery.

Our caribou in the Western Region have flat lined and the population has not increased, which is a growing concern. Due to the decline in salmon, subsistence harvests have shifted on increasing the pressure on Caribou to fill the void. If there is not enough caribou to uphold the demand, caribou abundance is at risk to a plummeting decline.

In other regions of Alaska, folks have talked about the moose populations are also declining and they too are concerned about the brown bears hunting moose calves at an alarming rate as well. There is significant concerns about a need for intensive management control on bears.

I had offered to start a proposal through the Board of Game to address these concerns and issues. There are multiple people who are in support of this proposal across the state.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alissa Nadine Rogers

(EG-F19-072)

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#### **PROPOSAL 47**

**5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Prohibit nonresident hunting of any prey species under intensive management in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region until harvest or population objectives are met as follows:

**Nonresident hunting shall not be allowed in Region III (Interior and Eastern Arctic) for any moose or caribou population under a current active Intensive Management Predation Control Program until the minimum Intensive Management population or harvest objective for that population has been reached.**

So in areas where, for example, the population objective has been met for a prey population under an active Intensive Management (IM) predation control plan, but not the harvest objective (or vice versa), this would not apply and nonresident hunting would be allowed.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

**Nonresident hunting opportunity in areas within Region III  
(Interior and Eastern Arctic) under active IM Predation Control Programs.**

Intensive Management Predation Control Implementation Programs to restore the abundance of prey species as necessary to achieve human consumptive use goals are intended to benefit resident Alaskans.

Resident Hunters of Alaska supports IM efforts to achieve these goals.

We understand that nonresidents may benefit from IM programs once IM population or harvest objectives are met. That is why we support nonresidents as well as residents paying a fee for the state's intensive management programs. However, nonresidents are not entitled to benefit from IM programs while they are in progress until either the harvest or population objectives for specific moose or caribou populations have been achieved.

We would like to see the Board of Game adopt regulations that match the intent of our Intensive Management law. No nonresident hunting should be allowed in Region III in an area where a moose or caribou population is under a formal active IM Predation Control program to increase populations for the benefit of resident consumptive uses when the minimum IM population or harvest objectives for that prey species has not been reached.

Currently there are two active IM programs in place in Region III to increase moose populations, in Units 19A and 19D east. Both programs expire in June of 2020 and will be reevaluated at the March 2020 Region III meeting.

In Unit 19A, neither the moose population or harvest objective has been met, and there is currently no nonresident moose hunting allowed in Unit 19A. In Unit 19D East the latest data shows that the population objective has been met but not the harvest objective. There is one area in 19D where nonresident moose hunting is allowed, but it is outside the predation control area.

This proposal would thus not have any effect on current nonresident moose hunting opportunities in Region III that we can see at this time.

Intensive Management when necessary is first and foremost about putting food on the tables of Alaskans. That's the way Alaskans who support IM efforts understand it. In other areas of the state, like Unit 13, the board has passed similar regulations for caribou, saying that nonresident hunting of the Nelchina herd will only be allowed if the herd is above the population or harvest objective. There is no valid reason not to have a one-size-fits-all regulation across the state on this particular issue.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska (EG-F19-129)

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## **PROPOSAL 48**

### **5 AAC 85.056. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf**

Extend the season for taking wolves in Units 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C as follows:

I recommend wolf season to start August 1<sup>st</sup> instead on August 10<sup>th</sup>. The end date for the prospective area can stay the same.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like to address the wolf season dates for Units 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C. The season is currently August 10<sup>th</sup> - May 31<sup>st</sup> (April 15<sup>th</sup> for Unit 20C, April 20<sup>th</sup> for Unit 26) in these units. I would like to see an extension of these dates due to predation of sheep/caribou by wolves. Caribou season in these areas begins August 1<sup>st</sup>, and sheep season August 10<sup>th</sup>. I believe that caribou hunters would harvest a

wolf during that season at any time. Sheep hunters often go into the field prior to the opener of sheep season. I believe sheep hunters would harvest a wolf before opener if they are afield and see the wolf. They are less likely to take that same wolf during sheep season. The harvest of additional wolves would help declining sheep and caribou numbers in the Interior and Northeast Alaska.

**PROPOSED BY:** Brian Watkins

(EG-F19-078)

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## **PROPOSAL 49**

### **5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.**

For the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region, allow the use of crossbows in archery only hunt areas for hunters possessing permanent identification cards as follows:

To allow the use of crossbows in an archery/bow only area by anyone possessing an Alaska permanent identification card and who has completed the crossbow certification course by ADF&G in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Crossbows are an effective game management tool and are more likely to ensure an accurate shot and quick kill for elderly hunters. Alaska seniors may no longer be able to hold a draw on a traditional/compound bow or may have lost the strength over time to shoot one. Crossbows allow the older hunter to continue their pursuit of wild game for the freezer and can be used on a solid rest, like shooting sticks. By allowing this new regulation only for resident hunters who have obtained their permanent identification card we can expect experience in judgement to accompany these hunters afield. This new regulation could serve as a Board of Game test pilot program in all the Units of the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region and if successful could be expanded to the entire state when applicable.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jim Sackett

(EG-F19-082)

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## **PROPOSAL 50**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Establish registration archery only hunts for bull moose in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Units that have general moose seasons as follows:

Institute a new registration conventional bowhunting season for bull moose in all units and subunits that currently have a general moose season by harvest ticket. The season would extend for ten days immediately following the closure of the general moose season. The same bull and antler restrictions in effect in the general moose season in that unit or subunit would still apply.

The purpose of this new hunt being registration would be so that the Department of Fish and Game can monitor the participation and success rates more closely.

The purpose of this hunt being scheduled after the general moose hunt is to allow for less foliage and cooler weather to minimize potential loss or waste of meat.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Alaska has very few specific bowhunting seasons by comparison with most other states, which have long conventional bowhunting seasons. Conventional bowhunting seasons provide significant additional opportunity for hunters to be afield and minimal harvest of the resource. Additional bowhunting seasons could provide increased hunter interest and participation as well as possible additional Alaska state and guide revenue.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-F19-136)  
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## **PROPOSAL 51**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Remove the bag limit restriction of one sheep every four years for nonresidents over the age of 60 hunting in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region as follows:

For all Units in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region, the bag limit for Dall sheep for nonresidents over 60 years of age should be one ram of legal horn for that area every year and not every four years.

The nonresident should be 60 years or older at the time of harvest of the ram.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** At 60+ years of age a hunter most likely doesn't have many sheep hunts left and restricting nonresident participation is costly to the State of Alaska at \$160.00 per license and \$850.00 per sheep tag, not to mention the other expenditures the hunter incurs coming and going to Alaska.

The one sheep every four years for a nonresident hunter was a concession by the guide industry founded during the Sheep Working Sessions a few years back and of no biological necessity or consequence.

**PROPOSED BY:** Hunter and Gatherers Lives Matter (EG-F19-134)  
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## **PROPOSAL 52**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Change the nonresident general season sheep hunts in Units 20 Remainder and 19C to drawing permit hunts as follows:

**Put all nonresident sheep hunters on draw permits for Units 20 Remainder and 19C, with a limited allocation of up to 50 permits for each hunt.**

Unit 20 Remainder

Nonresidents

August 10 – September 20

One ram with full-curl horn or larger every four regulatory years **by permit**

Unit 19C

Nonresidents

August 10 – September 20

One ram with full-curl horn or larger every four regulatory years **by permit**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

**Unlimited Nonresident Sheep Hunting Opportunity in Units 20 Remainder and 19C.**

Unit 20 Remainder and Unit 19C general season sheep hunts place no limits on nonresident opportunity and consistently the nonresident sheep harvests in Unit 20 Remainder and 19C are at or near 60 – 80 percent respectively.

In 2017, the last year data is available at the time of this writing, nonresidents harvested 58 percent of the sheep in Unit 20 Remainder and 78 percent of the sheep in Unit 19C.

Resident hunters have been putting in proposals to limit nonresident sheep hunting opportunity in these areas, or to provide an earlier resident-only season, for over a decade, expressing that unlimited nonresident opportunity has led to a decrease in sheep populations, conflicts and crowding afield that negatively affect hunt quality, access issues, and lower resident success rates.

Ironically, the Board of Game has not disagreed with most of those complaints. In fact, the current Chairman of the board told the legislature in 2013: *“Another area the Board of Game is looking at, and I’m sure this is going to come up fairly soon, we’ve got a meeting in Fairbanks 2014 in the spring, and this is south of Fairbanks, 20A, there’s currently about 15 guides registered for this area. And from what I hear from other guides – I’m not a guide – but what I hear from other guides around the state is that the area can probably support about a third of that number and have some really quality hunting, so that’s another area we’re going to have to deal with, And here’s something else that I’m really concerned about. Is that, there’s a difference in having guides competing with guides, that’s one issue, but the way I look at it as a BOG member, and a real state’s rights sort of guy, is that this really puts a lot of competition on residents. Because guides are well equipped, they have large camps, wall tents, a string of horses, aircraft, they’re set up, I mean this is their business. For your average hunter that goes in there for a long weekend or a week or whatever, those guys, those residents have a tough time dealing and getting game in places where you have a lot of guide competition.”*

For over a decade, the Board of Game has implied that the problem is not too many nonresident sheep hunters (who are required to hire a guide), rather the problem is too many guides on state lands, and the Chairman’s testimony above was in support of a proposed program to limit guides on state lands. That program failed to get approval in the legislature and there is currently no funding to implement it outside legislative approval. It’s time for the board to use their authority to limit nonresident sheep hunters who are required to hire a guide.

We’d also point out that this same problem was brought up in 2008 by resident hunters regarding the unlimited nonresident sheep hunting opportunity in the Chugach Unit 13D and 14A hunts. The vast majority of the legal ram harvest was going to nonresident guided hunters. Residents had conservation and other concerns and were told by the Department of Fish and Game that the full-curl harvest regime was sustainable no matter how many legal rams were taken out of a population



each year. Don't worry, your general season opportunities will not go to draw only under this allocation scheme.

But then the department did have conservation concerns, and instead of first restricting nonresident hunters as the public had asked for, the board put all hunters on draw permits only which significantly reduced resident hunting opportunities, and to this day the Chugach hunts are still draw only for residents.

The department continues to say there are no conservation concerns for the Unit 20 Remainder and 19C sheep populations, but there is no doubt overall that the sheep population over time in these areas has declined. The current department data shows stable sheep populations at much lower levels than in the past.

The board wants to manage the Unit 20 Remainder and 19C sheep hunts for maximum opportunity, but that should not mean maximum opportunity for nonresidents. There has to be some limits, even if/when the department has no conservation concerns. Resident hunters should have a clear priority opportunity to hunt sheep, but the way it is now resident sheep hunters find themselves having to go around guides and their clients in the field, instead of the other way around, and having to compete with too many nonresident guided hunters for access and opportunities to harvest a sheep.

We want to ensure that the same thing that happened in the Chugach does not happen in the Interior, that before any restrictions are placed on residents that nonresidents are limited/restricted first.

The board recognizes these issues and it's time to stop kicking the can down the road hoping for some solution other than limiting nonresident sheep hunters.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska (EG-F19-132)

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## **PROPOSAL 53**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Establish an archery only registration permit hunt for Dall sheep in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region as follows:

In Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25 26B and 26C where there is a general sheep hunt by harvest ticket from August 10 through September 20, institute a registration conventional archery hunt for sheep, August 1 – August 9, with the same legal requirements for rams only full curl, double broomed or 8 years of age or older.

The purpose of requesting this to be a registration hunt is to allow assessment of the actual participation and success rates in this new hunt.

This would be limited to conventional archery gear only, so no crossbows or other primitive weapons. There is over thirty years of harvest data from archery sheep hunts in Unit 14C to support the very low success rate for conventional bowhunters on mature rams.

*Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Proposals*

This would be for both resident and nonresident hunters. It would give opportunity for guides to sell additional hunts if they chose to guide bowhunters.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Alaska has very few specific bowhunting seasons by comparison with most other states, which have long conventional bowhunting seasons. Conventional bowhunting seasons provide significant additional opportunity for hunters to be afield and minimal harvest of the resource. Additional bowhunting seasons could provide increased hunter interest and participation as well as possible additional Alaska State and guide revenue.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-F19-111)  
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### **PROPOSAL 54**

#### **5 AAC 92.015(a)(4). Brown bear tag fee exemptions.**

Reauthorize resident grizzly/brown bear tag fee exemptions throughout Interior and Northeast Alaska as follows:

- (a) A resident tag is not required for taking a brown bear in the following units:

...

- (4) Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26(B), and 26(C)

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Brown bear tag fee exemptions must be reauthorized annually. Reauthorizing the exemption allows residents who have not purchased the \$25 brown bear tag to take bears opportunistically. This reauthorization would assist with our objective of managing Region III (Interior and Eastern Arctic) brown bear populations for hunter opportunity and would continue to allow hunters to take brown bears opportunistically.

Region III brown bear populations are healthy, and harvest is monitored through the brown bear sealing requirement. Reauthorizing all resident brown bear tag fees throughout Region III maintains simpler regulations, high resident hunter opportunity, and is not likely to cause declines in these brown bear populations. This reauthorization includes tag fee exemptions for subsistence registration permit hunts in Units 19A and 19B (downstream of and including the Aniak River drainage), 21D, and 24.

The Department of Fish and Game estimates that brown bear harvest accounts for less than 6% of the bear population. Harvest is composed primarily of males and is sustainable. Where harvests are elevated (i.e., Units 20A, 20B, 20D, and portions of 26B), brown bear populations are managed by adjusting seasons and bag limits. The resident tag fees that were in place prior

to 2010 appeared to have little effect on harvest rates in these areas.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-153)

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### **PROPOSAL 55**

#### **5 AAC 92.085(5). Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.**

Allow the use of dogs for hunting for lynx in Units 12 and 20 as follows:

Implement a hound hunting season for lynx starting October 15 – December 31 in Units 12 and 20. Harvest to reflect the same as in trapping license. Open to resident and nonresident hunters alike.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Lack of hound hunting opportunity within the State of Alaska. I propose the implementation of a hound hunting season for the pursuit and harvest of lynx in the State of Alaska. Alaska is open to all walks of life willing to work hard and put in their time. I feel like legal law-abiding hunters should have that opportunity if they so choose to partake. I realize that with no road systems it will be difficult. But nothing up here is easy. With the implementation of this season there will be virtually no impact to the lynx population as there are virtually no hound hunters up here. And with no harvest limit with a trapping license hound harvests will be a drop in the bucket of the total population taken. I propose this season takes place starting October 15 and runs until the end of December. The snow will be deep by then and it will stop hounds from being able to successfully pursue their quarry. With this late fall and winter season there won't be any worry or dogs getting mixed up in brown or grizzly bears either.

**PROPOSED BY:** Tyler OBrien

(EG-F19-093)

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### **PROPOSAL 56**

#### **5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.**

Establish minimum distance requirements for trapping around dwellings in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region as follows:

No trapping within one mile of a house/cabin/dwelling/mailbox.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I want there to be regulation that prohibits a trapper from setting any traps within one mile from any house/cabin/dwelling. I'm tired of these road hunters that set traps and catch dogs/cats near our homestead and neighbors!

**PROPOSED BY:** Doug and Opal Welton

(EG-F19-040)

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## **Galena Area Proposals – Units 21B, 21C, 21D & 24**

### **PROPOSAL 57**

#### **5 AAC 92.080(4)(A). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.**

Allow residents to take game from a boat under power in Unit 21 as follows:

#### **5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions**

(4)(A) motor-driven boat may be used as follows:...

**(iv) for residents in Unit 21**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Middle Yukon Advisory Committee would like to allow residents to shoot from a boat under power in Unit 21. The AC believes that shooting while under power helps keep the boat stable, and is also a safety issue since turning a boat motor off completely while you are in a flowing river is dangerous. The AC believes harvest opportunities will be lost if they are not allowed to shoot from a boat under power.

**PROPOSED BY:** Middle Yukon Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-137)

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### **PROPOSAL 58**

#### **5 AAC 92.540(x). Controlled use areas.**

Establish a Controlled Use Area for the Kaiyuh Flats area in Unit 21D as follows:

Establish a Kaiyuh Flats Controlled Use Area to exclude the use of aircraft for moose hunting for that portion of Unit 21D that coincides with the boundaries of the RM833 registration hunt area.

Hunt Area: Unit 21D, that portion south of the south bank of the Yukon River, downstream of the up-river entrance of Kala Slough, and west of Kala Creek.

*Note: The Middle Yukon Advisory Committee submitted a map with this proposal, which is available on the Board of Game proposal book webpage at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook) or by contacting the ADF&G Boards Support Section at (907) 465-4046.*

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Local moose hunters accessing the Kaiyuh Flats portion of Unit 21D compete with hunters using boats and airplanes. With an increasing number of moose in the Kaiyuh Flats and low bull:cow ratios in the northern portion of Unit 21D, hunters will likely shift their demand toward the Kaiyuh Flats area. We would like the Board of Game to establish a controlled use area that prohibits the use of aircraft for moose hunters.

**PROPOSED BY:** Middle Yukon Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-107)

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## **PROPOSAL 59**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Change the winter, any-moose season for residents in Unit 21D as follows

#### **Unit 21D – Moose**

*Unit 21D, that portion south of the south bank of the Yukon River, downstream of the up-river entrance of Kala Slough and west of Kala Creek.*

*Residents – 1 bull by registration permit, OR*

*Residents - 1 bull by drawing permit only, up to 600 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 21D reminder (August 22-August 31, September 5-September 25); OR*

*Residents - 1 moose, by registration permit only, up to 15 days during **December**. **If the harvest quota is not met , then another 15 day season will be announced in March**, however, a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf . (Winter season to be announced)*

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council believes the current 15 day to be announced March moose season in Unit 21D, that portion south of the south bank of the Yukon River, downstream of the up-river entrance of Kala Slough and west of Kala Creek, is too late in the winter to use the meat before breakup. If an earlier season were available, the meat could be kept for a longer period of time and feed people during critical winter months. Changing the season may also give hunters safer access to the Yukon River and therefore an increased opportunity to get moose. The Council submitted a similar proposal to the Federal Subsistence Board to reduce regulatory confusion.

**PROPOSED BY:** Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EG-F19-061)

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## **PROPOSAL 60**

### **5 AAC 85.045(a)(19). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize a winter any-moose season during March in a portion of Unit 21D as follows.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident	Nonresident
	Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Open Season

(19)

...

(B) on or after July 1, 2018, the hunting seasons and bag limits for moose in Unit 21 are as follows:

...

Unit 21(D), that portion south of the South bank of the Yukon River, downstream of the up-river entrance of Kala Slough and west of Kala Creek

#### RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 moose, by registration permit only, up to 15 days during March; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

(Winter season to be announced)

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goal is to provide additional harvest opportunity and meet harvest objectives. This harvest opportunity of antlerless moose recently emerged because the moose population in the Kaiyuh Flats is increasing rapidly, especially the number of cows in the population. This reauthorization will likely improve or maintain hunting opportunity. If this antlerless moose hunt is not reauthorized, opportunity to utilize a harvestable surplus of cow moose would be lost, and the ability to meet intensive management (IM) harvest objectives could be compromised. In addition, rather than allow the population to go through dramatic rates of expansion and contraction, the Department of Fish and Game believes it is prudent to dampen the current accelerating rate of increase.

The IM harvest objective for Unit 21D is 450–1,000 moose. The 10-year average estimated harvest during 2008–2017 was 412 moose, which includes the reported and estimated unreported harvest. The annual estimated harvest has not met the harvest objective since 2003 when the estimated harvest was 489 moose. Additional harvest from this hunt will help make progress toward achieving the IM harvest objectives without reducing bull-to-cow ratios to low levels. Subsistence hunters will benefit from the opportunity to harvest cow moose.

Analysis of three Trend Count Areas (Squirrel Creek, Pilot Mountain, and Kaiyuh Slough TCAs) within the Kaiyuh Flats in this hunt area showed a significant increase in moose abundance among all age classes, and adult moose abundance increased 57% above the 16-year average by 2017. Geospatial Population Estimate data also showed a statistically significant increase from 1,897 ( $\pm 11\%$ ) moose in 2011 to 4,116 ( $\pm 10\%$ ) moose in 2017. Moose twinning data for the hunt area also showed high and stable twinning rates since 2004.

The portion of Unit 21D affected by this reauthorization is approximately 21% (2,559 mi<sup>2</sup>) of Unit 21D (12,093.6 mi<sup>2</sup>). Moose abundance in this area was estimated at 4,000–4,500 moose, which is approximately 39–44% of the total moose estimated in Unit 21D at 10,305 moose (±1,546) in 2017, the mid-point for the total Unit 21D moose population estimate was above the IM population objective for all of Unit 21D (12,093.6 mi<sup>2</sup>) of 9,000–10,000 moose.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

(HQ-F19-177)

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## **PROPOSAL 61**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Extend the resident moose season within the Kanuti Controlled Use Area of Unit 24B as follows:

Moose Unit 24B....Resident....HT....One bull September 1-25....OR

(new language)

**Within the Kanuti Controlled Use Area of GMU 24B....Resident only....One bull....Harvest Ticket....September 1- October 1....OR**

One antlered bull by permit online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person in Hughes, Allakaket, and Fairbanks beginning December 6....RM833....December 15-April 15.

Nonresident....One bull....HT....with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on at least one side....September 5-September 25.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** At the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee meeting in Allakaket on December 11, 2018, several moose hunters testified that only eight bull moose were taken that fall. In recent years moose are staying back in the hills for most of the current season. Moose hunters in Allakaket and Alatna have experienced low success rates with the current season. Moose are moving right at the close of the end of the current season.

Extend the current bull moose season from September 1 – 25, to a new season September 1 – October 1 only within the Kanuti Controlled Use Area (CUA) in Unit 24B.

The bull:cow ratio is more than adequate within the Kanuti CUA to support additional harvest opportunity.

A season extension to October 1 would allow hunters to hunt closer to the villages late in the season, as freeze-up is eminent. It is perceived that most bull moose that would be harvested would be traveling younger bulls that are not competitive with breeding aggregates. Large breeder bulls cannot be called away from their harem.

**PROPOSED BY:** Koyukuk River Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-046)

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## **PROPOSAL 62**

### **5 AAC 92.069(b)(3). Special provisions for moose drawing permit hunts.**

Allocate 90 percent of the Unit 21B, Upper Nowitna Corridor moose drawing permits to residents and award remaining available nonresident permits to residents as follows:

All draw hunts should have a 90/10 percent resident/nonresident allocation, and only the legislature should determine must-be-guided species.

5 AAC 92.069(E)(3) is amended to read;

in Unit 21(B), that portion within the Nowitna River drainage upstream from the Little Mud River drainage and within the corridor extending two miles on either side of and including the Nowitna River, the drawing permit hunt is allocated **90 percent** [50 PERCENT] to residents and up to **10 percent** [50 PERCENT] to nonresidents; [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ISSUE A MAXIMUM OF 75 PERCENT OF THE AVAILABLE NONRESIDENT DRAWING PERMITS TO GUIDED NONRESIDENTS, AND A MINIMUM OF 25 PERCENT OF THE AVAILABLE NONRESIDENT DRAWING PERMITS TO NON-GUIDED NONRESIDENTS; IF THE NUMBER OF NONRESIDENTS APPLYING FOR PERMITS FOR EITHER NONRESIDENT HUNT IS INSUFFICIENT TO AWARD THE REQUIRED PERCENTAGE, THE DEPARTMENT MAY AWARD THE REMAINING AVAILABLE NONRESIDENT DRAWING PERMITS TO THE OTHER NONRESIDENT HUNT;]

### **AT MINIMUM RESIDENTS SHOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE AT ANY UNAPPLIED FOR PERMITS**

5AAC 92.069 is amended to read;

(E)(3) in Unit 21(B), that portion within the Nowitna River drainage upstream from the Little Mud River drainage and within the corridor extending two miles on either side of and including the Nowitna River, the drawing permit hunt is allocated 50 percent to residents and 50 percent to nonresidents; the department shall issue a maximum of 75 percent of the available nonresident drawing permits to guided nonresidents, and a minimum of 25 percent of the available nonresident drawing permits to non-guided nonresidents; if the number of nonresidents applying for permits for either nonresident hunt is insufficient to award the required percentage, the **department shall award the remaining available nonresident drawing permits to the resident hunt;** [MAY AWARD THE REMAINING AVAILABLE NONRESIDENT DRAWING PERMITS TO THE OTHER NONRESIDENT HUNT]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

**DM 809/810/811 moose draw permit hunt allocation for Upper Nowitna corridor.**

Draw-only permit hunts for both residents and nonresidents reflect a need to limit the number of hunters afield for reasons that could be related to conservation, trophy-quality, hunt aesthetics, crowding etc.



Whatever the rationale for a draw-only hunt for all user groups, and whatever label is attached to a moose hunt (e.g. subsistence, sport, trophy), resident hunters should have a clear and substantial priority opportunity to participate in that hunt and put meat in their freezer and antlers on their wall.

However, that isn't the case with the Upper Nowitna moose draw permit hunt (DM 809/810/811) that allocates 50 percent of the permits to nonresidents. This allocation change happened in 2008 when the Board passed proposal 55, which was submitted by a guide with exclusive guiding privileges within the Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge.

The rationale used by the author of Proposal 55 was that when the Board of Game made this a draw only permit hunt (DM810 – both residents and nonresidents could equally apply) residents were receiving the vast majority of the permits and there was an “inability of local hunting guides, and other historical user groups, to obtain permits for the Upper Nowitna area.” The proposer further stated that “nonresident hunters now have difficulty in obtaining permits due to the sharp increase of applicants, and few of these awarded permits are actually utilized each season.”

It really should go without saying that if and when hunting guides are having difficulty obtaining clientele for moose draw permit hunts due to more residents applying for a draw permit hunt than nonresidents, that's exactly how it should work according to our state constitution.

We also don't believe that where we have draw permit hunts for both residents and nonresidents that allocation to nonresidents should ever be based on how many residents utilize their awarded draw permits. The Department of Fish and Game takes into account that some permits will not be utilized when determining the number of permits to offer.

The author of proposal 55 asked for two things:

1. Allocate 50 percent of the twenty DM810 permits to nonresidents
2. Require most nonresidents to hire a guide for that hunt

It wasn't enough to just increase the nonresident allocation because moose are not a must-be-guided species under AS 16.05.407. Most nonresidents don't hire a guide to hunt moose. By requiring most nonresidents must hire a guide, and jacking up the nonresident allocation, this guide would ostensibly be assured business every year, to the detriment of resident hunting opportunity.

Unbelievably, the Board of Game passed proposal 55 in 2008. The 20 original permits under DM810 were split in half, with ten permits going to residents (DM810), seven going to nonresidents who are required to hire a guide (DM811) and three permits going to nonresidents who are not required to be guided (DM809).

This kind of allocation scenario for a coveted moose draw permit hunt is unconscionable. In the years since the passage of proposal 55, resident hunters have seen their odds of drawing a permit tumble to around 15 percent on average. The DM811 must-be-guided permit is typically 100 percent chance of drawing in the years there are applicants.

During the 2017 draw permit period there were ZERO applications for the 2008 DM811 permit. Meanwhile, 28 nonresidents applied for the three DM809 permits for unguided nonresidents, and 65 Alaskan residents applied for the ten DM810 permits offered to residents. According to the regulation 5AAC 92.069(E)(3), “if the number of nonresidents applying for permits for either nonresident hunt is insufficient to award the required percentage, the department may award the remaining available nonresident drawing permits to the other nonresident hunt”

This implies that the seven DM811 permits not applied for during the permit process were reallocated to the DM809 pool. However, in talking with department staff, somehow similar to Kodiak Island where guides have exclusive guiding privileges, because the regulation in 92.069(E)(3) says “may” instead of “shall,” the department is using other criteria determining that there is no need to actually apply for the DM811 permit during the application period; permits are being given out to guided nonresident hunters who didn’t apply during the permit application period.

We cannot allow nonresidents in any shape or form to have special rights when it comes to draw permits. Alaskans don’t get a do-over if we don’t apply on time. If there are no applications during the draw permit application period, then that hunt (DM811) should be allocated to the resident pool of tags. Everyone should have to apply equally during the draw permit application period.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska

(EG-F19-128)

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## **PROPOSAL 63**

### **5 AAC 92.530(7). Management areas.**

Repeal the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area as follows:

Repeal 5 AAC 92.530(7) in total. Present language does not mirror all of the restrictions in Alaska Statute 19.40.210 causing confusion among hunters and enforcement. Present language in codified:

(7) the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area:

- (A) the area consists of those portions of Units 20 and 24-26 extending five miles from each side of the Dalton Highway, including the drivable surface of the Dalton Highway, from the Yukon River to the Arctic Ocean, and including the Prudhoe Bay Closed Area.
- (B) the area within the Prudhoe Bay Closed Area is closed hunting; however, big game, small game, and fur animals may be taken in the area by bow and arrow only, and small game may be taken by falconry;
- (C) no motorized vehicle may be used to transport hunters, hunting gear, or parts of game, within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, except that
  - (i) licensed highway vehicles may be used on the following designated roads:
    - (1) Dalton Highway,
    - (2) Bettles Winter Trail during periods when the Bureau of Land Management and the City of Bettles announce the trail is open for winter travel,
    - (3) Galbraith Lake Road from the Dalton Highway to the BLM campground at Galbraith Lake, including the gravel pit access road when the gate is open,

- (4) Toolik Lake Road, excluding the driveway to the Toolik Lake Research Facility,
- (5) the Sagavanirktok River access road two miles north of Pump Station 2, and any constructed roadway or gravel pit within one-quarter mile of the Dalton Highway;
- (ii) aircraft and boats may be used
- (iii) a snowmachine May be used to cross the Management area from land outside the management area to access land on the other side of the management area
- (D) any hunter traveling on the Dalton Highway must stop at any check station operated by the department within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** REPEAL (7) the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area. The restrictive regulations codified are unnecessary and confusing to the public and law enforcement. The guiding restrictions are clear in AS 19.40.210. Hunting regulations should refer to the statute. Conflicts arise from federal agency management for federally qualified rural Alaskans to the detriment of Alaskans who are subsistence hunting. The statutory limits prevail so let's use the instead of re-creating some of them.

**PROPOSED BY:** Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-116)  
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## **PROPOSAL 64**

### **5 AAC 92.530 Management areas.**

Clarify the legal use of highway vehicles, snow machines and off-road vehicles in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area (DHCMA) for hunting and trapping. Clarify the use of firearms, and transport of furbearers and trapping bait when trapping in the DHCMA:

- Do hunting restrictions in 5 AAC 92.530(7) allow travelers who exit the DHCMA (e.g. to travel by licensed highway vehicle or other motorized means to Nuiqsut, Anaktuvuk Pass, Bettles, Wiseman, Coldfoot airport, or by snow machine to a homestead outside the corridor) to hunt once they exit the DHCMA?
- Does the definition of “off-road vehicle,” in AS 19.40.210 affect use of a “licensed highway vehicle” and “snow machine” in 5 AAC 92.530(7)?
  - When it is operated off the highway, is a “licensed highway vehicle” in 5 AAC 92.530(7) an “off-road vehicle,” as defined by 19.40.210?
  - Is the prohibition in 5 AAC 92.530(7) on use of motorized vehicles, with exceptions for use of licensed highway vehicles, snow machines, aircraft and boats consistent with restrictions placed on off-road vehicles and snow machines in AS 19.40.210?
- Does the prohibition on hunting in 5 AAC 92.530(7)(B) also prohibit trapping?
  - If 5 AAC 92.530(7)(B) allows use of firearms for trapping in 5 AAC 92.530(7), is this consistent with the prohibition of hunting with firearms in AS 16.05.789?

- May a trapper or hunter crossing the DHCMA with a snow machine, stop to hunt or trap within the DHCMA, or become “parallel to the right-of-way of the highway” without violation of AS 19.40.210?
- May a trapper or hunter use a snow machine to enter the DHCMA from outside the area and trap or hunt within the DHCMA if the trapper does not travel all the way across the DHCMA?

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** This is a placeholder proposal, intended to solicit public and agency input regarding the interpretation of state statutes and regulations pertaining to the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area (DHCMA). Clarification is needed, as there is confusion within state government and the public regarding which activities and methods of access are legal within the DHCMA and what changes to 5 AAC 92.530(7) the Board of Game could legally undertake.

Although the above list is not a comprehensive list of issues associated with the DHCMA, the department recommends clarification of these issues in order to give the public the ability to correctly follow the restrictions set out in 5 AAC 92.530(7) and statutes AS 19.40.210 and AS 16.05.789, or to recommend changes to 5 AAC 92.530(7).

Federal access permits are also a consideration on federal lands within the DHCMA. For example, on federal lands in the DHCMA, federally-qualified users may use a snowmachine to trap, but cannot use a snowmachine to transport furbearers they catch or parts of game used as bait because of current language in 5 AAC 92.530(7). Additionally, nonfederally qualified users may obtain a permit to cross federal lands in the DHCMA by snowmachine in order to access property outside the DHCMA, but they may not use a snowmachine to trap in the DHCMA or transport game across the DHCMA. Federally-qualified trappers and nonfederally-qualified trappers who obtain such a permit can use snowmachines on federal land, but not state lands such as frozen rivers, and cannot transport game.

To aid the board in their decisions regarding 5 AAC 92.530(7) and possible conflicts this regulation may have with Alaska Statutes, we provide the relevant statutes below. Regulation 5 AAC 92.530(7) prior to the March 2019 Board of Game meeting is also included. The most recent board changes to 5 AAC 92.530(7) will be provided when they are available to the department.

**Regulation 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.** The following management areas are subject to special restrictions:

...

(7) the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area:

(A) the area consists of those portions of Units 20 and 24–26 extending five miles from each side of the Dalton Highway, including the drivable surface of the Dalton Highway, from the Yukon River to the Arctic Ocean, and including the Prudhoe Bay Closed Area;

(B) the area within the Prudhoe Bay Closed Area is closed to the taking of big game; the remainder of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area is closed to hunting;

however, big game, small game, and fur animals may be taken in the area by bow and arrow only, and small game may be taken by falconry;

(C) no motorized vehicle may be used to transport hunters, hunting gear, or parts of game, within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, except that

(i) licensed highway vehicles may be used on the following designated roads:

(1) Dalton Highway, (2) Bettles Winter Trail during periods when the Bureau of Land Management and the City of Bettles announce that the trail is open for winter travel, (3) Galbraith Lake Road from the Dalton Highway to the BLM campground at Galbraith Lake, including the gravel pit access road when the gate is open, (4) Toolik Lake Road, excluding the driveway to the Toolik Lake Research Facility, (5) the Sagavanirktok River access road two miles north of Pump Station 2, and (6) any constructed roadway or gravel pit within one-quarter mile of the Dalton Highway;

(ii) aircraft and boats may be used;

(iii) a snowmachine may be used to cross the management area from land outside the management area to access land on the other side of the management area;

(D) any hunter traveling on the Dalton Highway must stop at any check station operated by the department within the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area;

...

**Alaska Statute Sec. 16.05.789. Prohibition on hunting adjacent to highway between Yukon River and Arctic Ocean.**

(a) Hunting with firearms is prohibited north of the Yukon River in the area within five miles on either side of the highway between the Yukon River and the Arctic Ocean.

(b) A person who violates this section is guilty of a class A misdemeanor.

**Alaska Statute Sec. 19.40.210. Prohibition of off-road vehicles.**

(a) Off-road vehicles are prohibited on land within the highway corridor. However, this prohibition does not apply to

(1) off-road vehicles necessary for oil and gas exploration, development, production, or transportation;

(2) a person who holds a mining claim in the vicinity of the highway and who must use land in the highway corridor to gain access to the mining claim;

(3) the use of a snow machine to travel across the highway corridor from land outside the corridor to access land outside the other side of the corridor; this paragraph does not permit the use of a snow machine for any purpose within the corridor if the use begins or ends within the corridor or within the right-of-way of the highway or if the use is for travel within the corridor that is parallel to the right-of-way of the highway; or

(4) a person who must use land in the highway corridor to gain access to private property that

(A) is located outside the corridor; and

(B) has an established history of use as a homestead.

(b) Nothing in this section authorizes a person to access the land of another person unlawfully.

(c) In this section, “highway corridor” or “corridor” means land within five miles of the right-of-way of the highway.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-152)

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### **PROPOSAL 65**

#### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Establish a new resident, general season for caribou in Unit 20F as follows:

For Residents, the bag limit for Unit 20F caribou, North of the Yukon River (but excluding the Haul Road special use corridor and use areas) is two animals, only one of which may be taken before November 1st.

Residents:	Two caribou	One Caribou	August 10 – March 31
	Total	One Caribou	November 1 – March 31

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Ray Mountain Caribou herd rarely comes into the more accessible hills behind Tanana in winter. In summer and fall smaller bands seem to range there more. In the 1970’s and early 80’s winter ranging there seemed more common. Last winter for the first time since the 1980’s they did this for half the winter and it was a herd of approximately 100 animals. Three caribou were taken. Two of the people were not able to get a moose during the fall season and it would be nice to have a bag limit of two animals if this were to happen again.

We have contacted area managers and they mentioned a carefully thought out increase could be considered. We would be happy to limit this increase to north of the Yukon River in Unit 20F (not including the Haul Road special use corridor and use areas) and even to the dates of after November 1 to the seasons end. These are all things which would limit harvest to times when hunting in the area would likely be minimal and not likely to blossom into a big deal over time.

Currently area managers of this herd (Division of Wildlife Conservation Galena Area Office) consider it to be closely monitored in an effort to ensure they are not over-exploited. Below are selected (by the Tanana Rampart Manley AC) numbers from 63 department surveys taken from 1978 to 2018:

Average number counted for all surveys - 716

Average number for last 15 years - 686

Average number for last 2 years - 732

**PROPOSED BY:** Tanana Rampart Manley Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-104)

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### **PROPOSAL 66**

#### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Extend the resident caribou season and reduce the bag limit for Unit 24A Remainder as follows:

Unit 24A Caribou

Reduce the bag limit for caribou in Unit 24A Remainder to five caribou and change the season to July 1 - May 15 for resident hunters.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Currently the hunting regulations for Unit 24A remainder for caribou state for residents, ten caribou from July 1 - April 30. This has been in effect for the last two-three years. Previously the regulations were five caribou from July 1- May 15. I would like the Board of Game to consider changing the regulations back to five caribou from July 1 - May 15. If the board has concerns about the health or population of the herd, the limit could be dropped to two caribou. I don't think there are concerns about the size of the herd because currently the limit is ten caribou. After contacting fish and game many times, nobody was ever able to explain to me why the regulation changed to ten caribou from July 1 - April 30.

**PROPOSED BY:** Sean Timmons

(EG-F19-098)

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### **PROPOSAL 67**

#### **5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

#### **5 AAC 92.132. Bag limit for brown bears.**

Increase the bag limit for brown bear in Unit 21D as follows:

Residents      Unit 21D      **Two** [ONE] Bear      August 10- June 30

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Middle Yukon Advisory Committee would like an increased resident bag limit for grizzly bears in Unit 21D. We believe that there is a surplus of grizzly bears in this area and we would like to be allowed to harvest more. This will also help moose and caribou populations, which we also depend on.

**PROPOSED BY:** Middle Yukon Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-138)

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### **PROPOSAL 68**

#### **5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Open a fall bear baiting season in Unit 21C as follows:

Allow harvest of bears at registered bait stations in Unit 21C from 1 August – 30 September. Bear baiting is authorized by a permit and the dates are established through the discretionary authority

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of the Department of Fish and Game. I would like the Board of Game to direct the department to establish this proposed fall hunt.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Increase harvest opportunity and allow a bear baiting season in Unit 21C during the fall (August 1 – September 30th). Fall and spring bear baiting and the harvest of brown bears taken over registered bear bait stations is currently allowed in Units 21D, 24C, and 24D. However, black bear and brown bear baiting is currently allowed in Unit 21C only during the spring. I would like to align the fall bear baiting season in Unit 21C with the adjacent Units. Unit 21D has allowed bear brown bear baiting since 2012 and Units 24C and 24D were opened in 2015. Harvest of brown bears at bait sites in Unit 21C was first allowed beginning in 2018. The first fall black bear baiting season was allowed in Unit 21D (KCUA portion) in 2000. Bear baiting and the harvest of brown bears at bait stations is already allowed in the spring from 15 April - 30 June in Unit 21C, and an additional opportunity in the fall would align the seasons with neighboring Units 21D, 24C and 24D.

ADF&G reports that only two brown bears (one in Unit 24D, one in Unit 21C) have been harvested at bear bait sites in the Galena Management area since they were first allowed in 2012, so harvest is not expected to increase above what the black or brown bear populations can support. ADF&G also reports that the total harvest of brown bears is low and continually below the sustainable harvest level for Units 21B, C, and D, so additional harvest opportunity is available in this area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Craig Hill

(EG-F19-005)

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## **PROPOSAL 69**

### **5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Allow brown bears to be taken over bait in Unit 21C as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 92.044(1), (13) to include Unit 21C, to allow the opportunity to take grizzly with the use of bait or scent by permit.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** To allow the taking of grizzly bears over bait. Unit 21C is mostly bounded by Units 21D, 24D, and 24C which allow the use of bait to taking grizzly bears by permit. We would like to align Unit 21C, with most of the other units for uniformity and have an opportunity besides spot and stalk. Unit 21C has a lot of vegetation not suitable for spot and stalk. Allowing an opportunity to take grizzly bears over bait would help in achieving meeting subsistence needs, amount necessary for subsistence (ANS) of 20-25 bears. Current harvest of grizzly bears (6-10 bears annually for Unit 21) for subsistence is well below the ANS of 20-25 bears. We see no biological issues if this were passed.

Re: ADF&G Brown Bear Management report from 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2014 (current report we have access to): *“For Units 21B, 21C, and 21D we achieved the management objective to manage for a brown bear population that will sustain a 3-year mean annual harvest of at least 25 bears, with at least 50% males in the reported harvest. The 3-year (RY11–RY13) mean annual reported and unreported harvest of 17.3 bears was below the harvest objective of 25 bears, and the population was probably increasing. With the current conservative population estimate of 350–400 bears, a*



*sustainable annual harvest of at least 18–24 brown bears can probably be supported (5–6% of the population). Because males continued to be harvested at more than twice the rate of females and the average age of harvested bears was relatively high, the population was most likely maintaining a high level of reproductive potential with a gradually maturing age-class structure”*

Harper, P., and L. A. McCarthy, editors. 2015. Brown bear management report of survey-inventory activities 1 July 2012–30 June 2014. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Species Management Report ADF&G/DWC/SMR-2015-1, Juneau.

**PROPOSED BY:** Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-118)

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## **PROPOSAL 70**

### **5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

Change the season start date for taking brown bear in Unit 24A to align with Unit 25A as follows:

Nonresident and resident grizzly bear season in Unit 24A, July 25 - June 30

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Align the grizzly bear season start date in Unit 24A with the season start date in Unit 25A.

- The current start date is August 10.
- It is common for hunters hiking in from the Dalton Highway to hunt both units in the same hunt or even the same day.
- Many sheep hunters hike in several days before sheep season and encounter grizzly bears and the season is open in one unit and not the other.
- If someone was to drive the highway and pursue a bear with archery equipment, they could potentially cross the line and harvest a bear out of season.
- Aligning the start dates would eliminate confusion, entice the otherwise illegal harvest of grizzly bears prior to August 10<sup>th</sup> and reduce predation on the ungulate population in that area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jonah Stewart, Rudy Martinez and Nicholas Muche (EG-F19-008, 009 & 012)

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## **PROPOSAL 71**

### **5 AAC 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Allow brown bear to be taken over bait in Unit 24A as follows:

Add Unit 24A to the list of units where brown/grizzly bears may be taken on pages 25, 26, and 27 of the hunting regulations.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Brown/Grizzly bear hunting is not allowed over bait stations in Unit 24A. Black bear baiting is allowed in this unit already, there are many brown/grizzly bears in this unit, the area is remote, and there is no apparent reason why baiting for brown/grizzly bears is prohibited. The additional harvest opportunity for taking brown/grizzly bears with bait is sustainable and would be beneficial to the struggling moose

population. Brown/grizzly bear harvest over bait will also help stabilize the declining black bear populations in the unit.

**PROPOSED BY:** Adam Owen (EG-F19-004)

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## **PROPOSAL 72**

**5 AAC 85.020 Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

**5 AAC 92.132. Bag limit for brown bear.**

Increase the resident bag limit for brown bear in Unit 24B as follows:

Resident hunters in Anaktuvuk Pass and Unit 24B feel the brown bear population is continuing to grow. The harvest of brown bears in Unit 24B is far below sustained yield. Resident hunters that do take brown bears are low in number and should be afforded additional harvest opportunity with a two brown bear limit. (Companion proposal for Unit 26A)

Suggested: Brown/Grizzly bear, Unit 24B Resident, two bears every regulatory year, August 10 - June 30, but a no closed season would be warranted.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Increase the resident bag limit from one brown bear per regulatory year to two brown bears per regulatory year in Unit 24B.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gates of the Arctic Subsistence Resource Commission (EG-F19-088)

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## **PROPOSAL 73**

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

**5 AAC 92.165. Sealing of bear skins and skulls.**

**5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides.**

Eliminate the RB601 brown bear subsistence registration permit for Unit 21D and Unit 24A, B, C, & D as follows.

	<b>Resident Open Season</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
<b>5 AAC 85.020 (a)</b>		
...		
(19)		
Unit 21(D)		
[1 BEAR EVERY REGULATORY YEAR BY REGISTRATION PERMIT]	[AUG. 10—JUNE 30 (SUBSISTENCE HUNT ONLY)]	[NO OPEN SEASON]
1 bear every regulatory year	Aug. 10—June 30	Aug. 10—June 30

....

(22)

Unit 24

[1 BEAR EVERY REGULATORY	[AUG. 10—JUNE 30	[NO OPEN SEASON]
YEAR BY REGISTRATION PERMIT]	(SUBSISTENCE HUNT ONLY)]	

1 bear every regulatory year	Aug. 10—June 30	Aug. 10—June 30
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**5AAC 92.165(a)(3) Sealing of bear skins and skulls.**

(a)

...

(3) in Unit 9(B), all drainages in Unit 9(E) that drain into the Pacific Ocean between Cape Kumliun and the border of Unit 9(D) and Unit 9(E), Unit 17, Unit 18, that portion of Units 19(A) and 19(B) downstream of and including the Aniak River drainage, [UNIT 21(D),] Unit 22, Unit 23, [UNIT 24,] and Unit 26(A), brown bear taken by a resident hunter under a subsistence registration permit is not required to be sealed unless removed from the area described in the permit or presented for commercial tanning within that area; before a brown bear skin or skull is removed from the area described in the permit or presented for commercial tanning within that area, the skin or skull must first be sealed by an ADF&G representative.

**5AAC 92.220(a)(5) Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides.**

(a)

...

(5) all meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters, hindquarters, and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters of a brown bear taken under a subsistence registration permit in Unit 9(B), all drainages in Unit 9(E) that drain into the Pacific Ocean between Cape Kumliun and the border of Unit 9(D) and Unit 9(E), Unit 17, Unit 18, that portion of Units 19(A) and 19(B) downstream of and including the Aniak River drainage, [UNIT 21(D),] Unit 22, Unit 23, [UNIT 24,] and Unit 26(A) shall be salvaged for human consumption; salvage of the hide or skull is optional; all edible meat of a brown bear taken under a permit issued under 5AAC 92.044 in Units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14(B), 15, 16, 20(A), 20(B), 20(C), 20(E), 21(D), 24(C), 24(D), and 25(D) shall be salvaged.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Eliminate the RB601 brown bear subsistence registration permit for Unit 21D and Unit 24A, B, C, & D.

Because the brown bear tag fee exemption exists in these areas under the general hunt, there is no longer a need for the RB601 subsistence permit. The RB601 permit is no longer used, it inconveniently requires subsistence hunters to obtain the permit in advance, it requires salvage of the meat, and it requires destruction of the hide. The only benefit it potentially provided was the sealing exemption, but the area biologist has always accommodated getting hides and skull sealed.

In order to make sure bears sealing was convenient, the Galena area biologist has traveled to remote villages, had hides shipped to him (freight collect), had local sealers do the sealing, or sent temporary sealing forms to the hunter. Regardless, of those accommodations, most hunters chose to hunt under the general hunt conditions and the last bear harvested under the RB601 permit was in 2010.

According to ADF&G reports, the RB601 subsistence brown bear season is no longer utilized by residents of Units 21D and 24 and creates confusion in the regulations. Although bag limits, salvage, and sealing requirements were important distinctions between the RB601 subsistence hunt and the general season brown bear hunts originally, the elimination of the tag fee requirement appears to be the most important factor for local and non-local resident hunters choosing the general season hunt. Only one bear was harvested during regulatory years 2009 through 2018 on the RB601 permit by local residents (in RY10), but 226 bears were harvested under the general season hunt during that period. Only five bears have been harvested on the RB601 permit since it was created in RY04. ADF&G reports that 96 hunters obtained the RB601 during RY09–RY19 due to confusion over the permit requirement, with the intent of hunting under the general harvest regulations. Current general hunt regulations accommodate subsistence harvest.

The RB601 permit was created in RY04 when the Northwest Brown Bear Management Area was repealed. ADF&G has provided broad flexibility for sealing hides for all hunters in order to accommodate limited access to sealers in rural communities.

<b>Brown Bear Regulation</b>	<b>Required for General Hunt</b>	<b>Required for RB601</b>
<b>Sealing</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No (unless leaves GMU or Commercial Tanning)</b>
<b>Hide Salvage</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No (unless sealed)</b>
<b>Skull Salvage</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No (unless sealed)</b>
<b>Meat Salvage</b>	<b>No (unless baited)</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Permit</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Tag Fee</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Trophy Destruction</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes (if leaves GMU or Commercial Tanning)</b>
<b>Aircraft</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Season</b>	<b>Aug 10–June 30</b>	<b>Aug 10–June 30</b>
<b>Bag limit</b>	<b>1 bear per Regulatory Year</b>	<b>1 bear per Regulatory Year</b>

**PROPOSED BY:** Jack Reakoff

(EG-F19-036)

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Western Arctic/Western Region meeting as Proposal 31.*

## **PROPOSAL 74**

### **5 AAC 85.050. Hunting seasons and bag limits for muskoxen.**

Establish a registration permit hunt for muskox in Units 21D, 22A, and 24D as follows:

Establish a limited quota muskoxen season; Unit's 21D, 22A, 24D; up to 5 bulls; February 1 – April 30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Muskoxen have occurred in Units 21D, 22A, and 24D for many years, but there is no open season in these units.

Muskoxen are frequently observed in the Nulato Hills during the winter and during spring bear hunting and have been observed near the villages of Galena, Ruby, Nulato, Kaltag, and Huslia. Dispersing muskoxen have had to be killed under defense of life and property (DLP) conditions and near Ruby, Galena, Nulato and the Kateel River during the fall moose season. Muskoxen in the Nulato Hills would provide an additional hunting opportunity that is not being utilized and could provide an additional source of meat for Alaskan hunters.

**PROPOSED BY:** Middle Yukon Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-108)

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## **PROPOSAL 75**

### **5 AAC 92.111. Control of predation by wolves.**

### **5 AAC 92.115. Control of predation by bears.**

Develop a feasibility assessment for intensive management of wolves and bears in Units 21D and 24 as follows:

Establish an intensive management plan to control predation by wolves and bears in Unit 21D and Unit 24. Local residents are concerned about the high numbers of wolves and bears in Units 21D and 24 and their impact on the availability of moose for local customary and traditional subsistence uses and ceremonial uses for certain Alaska Native religious ceremonies.

In the absence of state predator control plan development, the Board of Game should develop regulations that assist local hunters in better managing wolf and bear populations in Units 21D and 24 in order to support continued sustainable moose populations and to decrease human-animals conflicts as a human safety concern.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Because of public concerns about the impact of high wolf and bear numbers on moose in Units 21D and 24, the board should direct ADF&G to develop an intensive management feasibility assessment to evaluate the benefits

of a predation control plan for wolves and bears to increase the moose population for high levels of human used in these areas and to decrease negative human-predator interactions.

**PROPOSED BY:** Darrell Vent Sr.

(HQ-F19-181)

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## **PROPOSAL 76**

### **5 AAC 92.126. Non-Intensive Management Predator Control Plans.**

Establish a non-intensive management predator control plan in Unit 21 for bears and wolves as follows:

Establish a non-intensive management predator control plan (5AAC 92.126) to address the conservation concerns for the Galena Mountain (GMH) and Wolf Mountain (WMH) caribou herds.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The GMH and WMH are very low, they have declined in recent years, and their low abundance represents a conservation concern. ADF&G estimates less than 150 caribou remain in the GMH and only 300-500 caribou remain in the WMH. A minimum count of 313 caribou was reported for the GMH in 1998 and a minimum count of 595 caribou was reported for the WMH in 1992. Alaska's State Constitution Article VIII, Section 4 Sustained Yield, requires ADF&G to manage populations (herds) on a sustainable basis. The GMH and WMH are identified as distinct populations in 5 AAC 92.108 and 5AAC 99.025, therefore the state has a responsibility to manage these distinct herds for sustainability. A non-intensive management predator control plan (5 AAC 92.126), should be established for these two herds that encompasses the Kokrine Hills in Units 21B north of the Yukon River, all of 21C, and the eastern portion of 21D. At a minimum, the plan should have three components: 1) department predator control; 2) habitat enhancement, and 3) public predator control.

The abundance of these two herds has been in decline and predators (black bears, grizzly bears and wolves) are likely the primary limiting factors. Although the GMH and WMH do not have a positive finding for intensive management, they are managed to provide hunting opportunities. ADF&G is not meeting these management objectives. All seasons were closed in the area of the Galena Mountain caribou herd beginning in 2004, and harvest from the WMH has never achieved the management harvest objective of up to 35 caribou.

Habitat enhancement along with predator control should be included in a non-intensive predator control plan. The habitat that the caribou travel through on their way to calving grounds, has been encroached by dense spruce and birch forest which provides cover for predators. Fire suppression and the elevational advancement of spruce and birch vegetation in these travel corridors, has reduced visibility for caribou cows and increased risk of predation for them and their newborn calves. In addition, reducing the number of bears and wolves and reducing the cover in these important travel corridors would improve caribou survival, and result in an increase of these populations.

I believe that conservation of these herds should not be contingent upon the biological issue of whether the GMH and WMH are or are not part of Alaska's caribou metapopulation, because these two herds have already been designated in regulation as distinct manageable populations by the Board of Game and ADF&G. The state must not neglect its responsibility to manage these herds by making the metapopulation claim [Native Village of Elim vs. State of Alaska (1999); Koyukuk River Basin Moose Co-Management Team vs. Board of Game (2003); West vs. State of Alaska (2010)].

**PROPOSED BY:** Craig Hill

(EG-F19-006)

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# **Northeast Alaska Area Proposals - Units 25A, 25B, 25D, 26B & 26C**

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## **PROPOSAL 77**

### **5 AAC 85.050. Hunting seasons and bag limits for muskoxen.**

Open a resident permit hunt for muskox in Unit 26B as follows:

Reauthorize registration or drawing muskox permits to residents only for Unit 26B.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Reauthorize registration or drawing muskox permits to residents only for Unit 26B.

**PROPOSED BY:** Nicholas Muche

(EG-F19-090)

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Western Arctic/Western Region meeting as Proposal 28.*

## **PROPOSAL 78**

### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Eliminate the registration caribou permit RC907 and general season caribou harvest ticket requirement for North Slope residents as follows:

We would like the Board of Game to rescind RC907 and harvest ticket requirements for North Slope resident hunters because residents of Unit 23 (Point Hope), Unit 24B (Anaktuvuk Pass), and Unit 26A, B, and C currently already report their caribou harvest to the North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management. Most people on the North Slope are very hesitant to report their harvest to agencies that are outside of their region. Because of this, the data that the department receives is poor and of little use for management purposes.

Possible language could include a sentence similar to one in the 2016-2017 Hunting Regulations on page 14. This language would read something like: “If you reside in the North Slope Borough and hunt caribou in Unit 23 north of including Singoalik River drainage or in Unit 24B including Contact Creek south to the confluence of the Ekokpuk drainage with the John River, or in Unit 26 A, B, or C neither a harvest ticket nor registration permit is required.”

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** RC907 and harvest ticket requirements for residents of portions of Unit 23 (Point Hope) and Unit 24B (Anaktuvuk Pass) and Unit 26 A, B, and C are not resulting in the collection of good caribou harvest data. The North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife Management (DWM) already successfully collects that information. The DWM traveled to all of the communities on the North Slope and held public meetings during which the residents overwhelmingly supported the DWM to continue to collect harvest data rather than using state harvest tickets or registration permits.



**PROPOSAL 79**

**5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

In Unit 26B Remainder, modify the resident season and bag limit for caribou and open a registration permit hunt as follows:

**Increase resident opportunity in Unit 26B Remainder:** Allow a higher (four) bull-only bag limit; lengthen season from **July 1** [AUGUST 1] – April 30; consider some limited (registration) cow harvests after August 15.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** During the last Interior/NE Alaska Region cycle, due to a sudden decline of the Central Arctic caribou herd (CAH) from ~50,000 animals to ~22,000 animals, ADF&G recommended reducing seasons and bag limits to allow the herd to recover the CAH is an identified big game prey population under our Intensive Management statutes and was now well below the low end of the population objectives of 28,000 – 32,000 animals.

The Board of Game drastically reduced seasons and bag limits for all hunters, and since that time the resident take has gone from 403 in 2016 to 71 in 2018. This is the last general season caribou hunt along the road system in the state, and participation is severely dropping. The CAH is designated as important for high levels of consumption by Alaskans, but the onerous regulations have reduced resident participation far below what was needed. In fact, for two years now, nonresidents have taken more Central Arctic caribou than Alaskans.

This area, even with the low herd numbers, has an allowable harvest of 680 bulls. Allowable harvest is NOT being met. There were 230 total bulls taken in 2017 and only 149 in 2018. This is leaving much opportunity of the tables of Alaskans.

**PROPOSAL 80**

**5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

In Unit 26B Remainder, modify the resident season and bag limit for caribou; open a resident registration permit hunt; and change the nonresident general season hunt to a registration permit as follows:

**Increase resident opportunity in Unit 26B Remainder:**

Residents **5 bulls** [2 BULLS] **July 1 – April 30** [AUG. 1 – APRIL 30]

Allocate a certain limited resident only cow harvest after August 15<sup>th</sup> with a defined quota based on Department of Fish and Game (department) analysis:

**Residents 1 cow by registration permit Aug 15 -March 30, report within 5 days of harvest, no more than 5 caribou total may be taken**

What we are trying to accomplish with this proposal is what should have happened at the last Region III (Interior and Eastern Arctic Region) meeting, and what we believe would have happened if the new language in Alaska Statute 16.05.256 was in place; ensuring that resident opportunity for the allowable harvest is fully realized.

The department will have to look at these new proposed bag limits and season dates, along with lost caribou hunting opportunity for the Nelchina herd, to come up with a projection of what the resident participation and harvest rates may be. We don't want to go over the current allowable harvest; we want the herd to recover. But we want residents to have increased opportunity to achieve the allowable harvest.

In conjunction with this expansion of resident opportunity, we want to decrease the nonresident opportunity in Unit 26B Remainder so that nonresidents harvest no more than 10% of the total harvest.

**Set a quota for nonresident harvests based on department projections of resident harvests, so nonresidents take no more than 10 percent of the total harvest, and close hunt when quota is met:**

Nonresidents: 1 bull **by registration permit available online August 1- September 15, report within 5 days of harvest**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?**

**Resident Hunting Opportunities for the Central Arctic Caribou herd.**

At the last Region III Board of Game (board) meeting, due to a severe decline in the Central Arctic Caribou Herd (CAH) – an identified big game prey population under our Intensive Management (IM) Law important for high levels of human harvest by Alaskans – the board voted to significantly reduce seasons and bag limits for both resident and nonresident hunters.

The CAH population had suddenly and sharply declined to about 23,000 animals, which was below the IM population objective of 28,000 to 32,000 animals. The department recommended a maximum allowable harvest of 580 bulls (no cows) from Unit 26B Remainder, south of 69°30' North, west and east of the haul road and including the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area. The board, during deliberations approved the following changes for Unit 26B Remainder:

Residents **2 bulls** [5 CARIBOU] **Aug 1 – April 30** [JULY 1 – APRIL 30]

Nonresidents **1 bull** [5 CARIBOU] **Aug. 1 – Sept. 15** [JULY 1 – APRIL 30]

The board approved these changes based on department projections that 43 percent of the harvest would be taken by nonresident hunters. Since these changes, however, nonresidents now take the majority of the CAH harvest in Unit 26B Remainder.

This does not at all comply with AS 16.05.255(d) that states “*Regulations adopted under (a) of this section must provide that, consistent with the provisions of AS 16.05.258, the taking of moose, deer, elk, and caribou by residents for personal or family consumption has preference over taking by nonresidents.*”

Neither did the board conform to AS 16.05.255(e) or AS 16.05.255(f) that speak to when the board significantly reduces seasons and bag limits for residents and when an intensive management program would be instituted for an identified big game prey population whose highest and best use is to feed Alaskans.

This decision by the board to significantly reduce resident opportunities while at the same time allocating such a high percentage of the harvest to nonresidents is what sparked the introduction of Senate Bill 87 in the 31<sup>st</sup> Legislature that would change the language of AS 16.05.256 to require the board when restricting resident hunting opportunities to put nonresidents on some kind of a permit system. SB 87 reads:

**Sec. 16.05.256. Nonresident and nonresident alien permits.**

*Whenever it is necessary to restrict the taking of big game so that the opportunity for state residents to take big game can be reasonably satisfied in accordance with sustained yield principles, the Board of Game shall [MAY], through a permit system, limit the taking of big game by nonresidents and nonresident aliens to accomplish that purpose.*

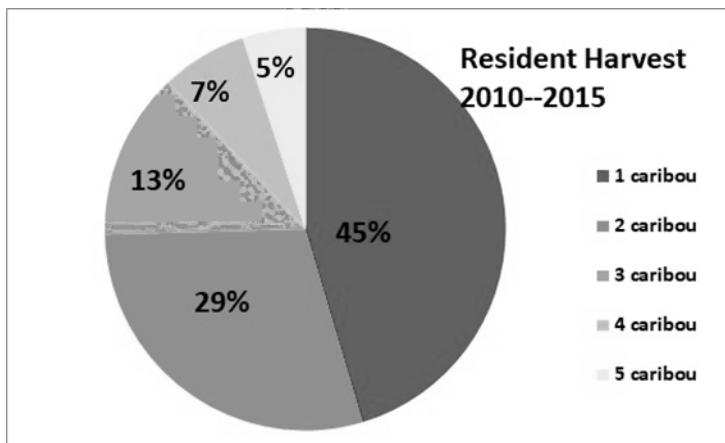
Had this change been in place we believe we would not have the situation we have now where resident hunting opportunities were significantly reduced and it led to nonresidents taking the majority of the harvest of this diminished caribou herd.

Below is harvest data from the department. As it turned out, even though nonresidents now take the majority of the CAH in Unit 26B Remainder, the combined harvests since the reduced seasons and bag limits are under the allowable harvest of 580 caribou for Unit 26B Remainder.

Year	males	females	Total harvest	Total hunters
2010	978	234	1238	1622
2011	814	346	1172	1401
2012	726	275	1007	1430
2013	729	135	868	1462
2014	720	196	916	1433
2015	530	225	756	1256
2016	316	268	585	1063
2017	223	7	230	619
2018Prelim	146	3	149	317

Year	Resident hunters	<b>Resident harvest</b>	Nonresident hunters	<b>Nonresident harvest</b>
2010	1201	953	371	280
2011	1045	935	264	228
2012	1126	773	295	235
2013	1014	530	441	331
2014	987	555	442	358
2015	807	414	449	342
2016	705	403	358	183
2017	348	109	268	118
2018Prelim	181	71	136	78

The graph below illustrates that residents lost 25 percent of their harvest opportunity with the reduction in bag limits from five to two caribou.



Harvest opportunity for residents was also significantly reduced with the reduced season and elimination of any cow harvests.

Essentially, the board reduced resident opportunity so much that for many it was no longer worth the time and expense to drive north and participate in this hunt. We see this in the resident participation rate dropping so much. And the caribou simply are not as prevalent as they were in the past along a certain migration pattern.

It's important in conjunction with this proposal to point out that resident hunters recently lost 4,500 permits available for the Nelchina caribou hunt. Due to a decline in that herd, the 5,000 permits formerly available to resident hunters was reduced to 500 permits. This is the only remaining general season caribou hunt along the road system, and with the significant decline in available Nelchina caribou hunting opportunities, we anticipate many of those 4,500 residents will be looking north to this hunt to put meat in their freezers if residents are given more harvest opportunity.

In these circumstances, where an identified prey population under our 5AAC 92.108 Intensive Management regulations has declined to the point the population is under the minimum population objective, and seasons and bag limits need to be reduced, nonresident hunters should bear the brunt of any restrictions. Nonresidents should not end up taking more than ten percent of the harvest in these situations, regardless of whether the total harvest is under the allowable harvest. Nonresidents should be placed on a permit system that significantly reduces their harvest opportunity until the population has recovered.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska (EG-F19-131)

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Western Arctic/Western Region meeting as Proposal 27.*

## **PROPOSAL 81**

### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Increase the nonresident bag limit for caribou in Unit 26 as follows:

I propose reinstating the caribou harvest limit for nonresident hunters in the Game Management Unit 26A, B, and C of the North Slope, from the current harvest limit of one bull to two bulls, as it was prior to 2016.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** As one of the predominant air-taxi operators conducting in these units consistently for over ten years, flying an average of 150 flight hours during the month of August, we have not observed a substantial fluctuation in the caribou numbers. Arrowhead Outfitters, LLC (AOLLC) has observed a drastic decline in the general hunter participation on the Dalton Highway Corridor. Along with a dramatic drop in hunter inquiries and bookings after the harvest limit was decreased to one bull caribou in 2016.

By using the data from the ADF&G area biologist, provided in the table below, the harvest numbers are WELL BELOW ALLOWABLE HARVEST and the current caribou population is stable.

CAH HARVEST Reported harvest from the general harvest ticket:

	males	females	Total harvest	Total hunters
2010	978	234	1238	1622
2011	814	346	1172	1401
2012	726	275	1007	1430
2013	729	135	868	1462
2014	720	196	916	1433
2015	530	225	756	1256
2016	316	268	585	1063
2017	223	7	230	619
2018Prelim	146	3	149	317

	Resident hunters	<u>Resident harvest</u>	Nonresident hunters	<u>Nonresident harvest</u>
2010	1201	953	371	280
2011	1045	935	264	228
2012	1126	773	295	235
2013	1014	530	441	331
2014	987	555	442	358
2015	807	414	449	342
2016	705	403	358	183
2017	348	109	268	118
2018Prelim	181	71	136	78

Prior to 2016, when nonresident hunters were allowed to purchase the second caribou tag, according to ADF&G only 17 percent used the tag. All the nonresident hunters AOLLC has had contact with, would prefer to at LEAST have the option to PURCHASE a second caribou tag. Using ADFG estimated 17 percent additional harvest, THE TOTAL ESTIMATED HARVEST WOULD ONLY BE APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ALLOWABLE HARVEST OF 680 CARIBOU.

In conclusion the total harvest by resident and nonresident hunters was 149 caribou for 317 hunters. With a native local harvest estimated at 100 animals for a total harvest of 249 caribou. This is far below the ADF&G allowable harvest of 680 caribou, set by the 2016 population estimate of 22,630 caribou. Please refer to data above. I see no biological data to keep the nonresident hunters in Unit 26 to the one caribou limit, and respectfully request that the ADF&G to reinstate the possibility of nonresident hunters to purchase two bull caribou licenses in the 2020 hunting season.

Thank you for your consideration to this important matter

**PROPOSED BY:** Howard Tieden (HQ-F19-146)  
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## **PROPOSAL 82**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

#### **5 AAC 92.530(X). Management areas.**

Establish the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area in Unit 25A, open a new resident and nonresident drawing hunt for sheep within the area, and change the bag limit for the resident registration permit, RS595 as follows;

Establish a new hunt area akin to the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area (State AVSMA) as described in Federal Subsistence Regulations: The Arctic Village Sheep Management Area consists of that portion of Unit 25A north and west of Arctic Village, which is bounded on the east by the East Fork Chandalar River beginning at the confluence of Red Sheep Creek and proceeding southwesterly downstream past Arctic Village to the confluence with Crow Nest Creek, continuing

up Crow Nest Creek, through Portage Lake, to its confluence with the Junjik River; then down the Junjik River past Timber Lake and a larger tributary, to a major, unnamed tributary, northwesterly, for approximately six miles where the stream forks into two roughly equal drainages; the boundary follows the easternmost fork, proceeding almost due north to the headwaters and intersects the Continental Divide; the boundary then follows the Continental Divide easterly, through Carter Pass, then easterly and northeasterly approximately 62 miles along the divide to the headwaters of the most northerly tributary of Red Sheep Creek then follows southerly along the divide designating the eastern extreme of the Red Sheep Creek drainage then to the confluence of Red Sheep Creek and the East Fork Chandalar River.

Change the harvest limit for the winter season in the Chandalar River hunt area from three sheep to one ram with full-curl horn or larger by permit. Establish a draw permit hunt for residents and nonresidents within the newly established hunt area, State AVSMA. Proposed harvest limits within the state AVSMA are one ram with full-curl horn or larger every four regulatory years. (See regulatory language below).

Unit 25A – Sheep				
R	East of Middle Fort of Chandalar River, <b><u>excluding the AVSMA</u></b>	One ram with full-curl horn or larger. Youth hunt only.	HT	Aug 1 – Aug 5
R		One ram with full-curl horn or larger.	HT	Aug 10 – Sept 20
R		[THREE SHEEP] <b><u>One ram with full-curl horn or larger by permit.</u></b>	RS595	Oct 1 – Apr 30
N		One ram with full-curl horn or larger every 4 regulatory years.	HT	Aug 10 – Sept 20
<b><u>R</u></b>	<b><u>Arctic Village Sheep Management Area</u></b>	<b><u>One ram with full-curl horn or larger. Youth hunt only.</u></b>	<b><u>HT</u></b>	<b><u>Aug 1 – Aug 5</u></b>
<b><u>R</u></b>		<b><u>One ram with full-curl horn or larger every 4 regulatory years by permit.</u></b>	<b><u>DSXXX</u></b>	<b><u>Aug 10 – Sept 20</u></b>
<b><u>R</u></b>		<b><u>One ram with full-curl horn or larger every 4 regulatory years by permit.</u></b>	<b><u>RS595</u></b>	<b><u>Oct 1 – Apr 30</u></b>
<b><u>N</u></b>		<b><u>One ram with full-curl horn or larger every 4 regulatory years by permit.</u></b>	<b><u>DSXXX</u></b>	<b><u>Aug 10 – Sept 20</u></b>

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) would like to address sheep hunting in Unit 25A, specifically in the Arctic Village Sheep Management Area (AVSMA). The Council intends for this proposal to become a joint effort between the State Board of Game, the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) and Arctic Village residents to find a workable solution to a historically contentious issue and build mutual respect between parties. The Council views this as a placeholder proposal and will further discuss this proposal at their fall 2019 meeting and will submit additional comments to the Alaska Board of Game by the February 21, 2020, deadline. Below is a brief

history of the AVSMA, including recent events at the 2018 Federal Subsistence Board meeting, which led to the development of this proposal.

In 1991, the FSB established the AVSMA in Unit 25A in response to local hunter (residents of Arctic Village, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Kaktovik, and Chalkyitsik) concerns that sport hunters interfered with sheep hunting by federally qualified subsistence users and because of low sheep densities in the area. Generally, the AVSMA included the area between Crow Nest and Cane Creeks, west of the East Fork Chandalar River to the Continental Divide and is entirely within Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). The effect of the AVSMA was a closure to sheep hunting within its boundaries except by federally qualified subsistence users. In 1995, the FSB expanded the northeast portion of the AVSMA to include the entire drainages of Cane Creek and Red Sheep Creek.

In 2006, the FSB approved a special action to open the Red Sheep and Cane Creek drainages within the AVSMA to non-federally qualified users for the 2006/07 regulatory year from August 10 through September 20, 2006 because a survey conducted in June 2006 by ANWR personnel indicated no conservation concerns for the area and that sheep abundance could support increased harvest. In 2007, the FSB permanently lifted the closure under federal regulations from August 10 through September 20. These actions resulted in state regulations once again being applicable in the Cane and Red Sheep Creek drainages of the AVSMA, allowing non-federally qualified users to hunt sheep in this area.

In 2012, the Eastern Interior Council requested that the FSB close Cane Creek and Red Sheep Creek drainages to the harvest of sheep by non-federally qualified users from August 10 through September 20. The Council said the proposal enhanced the ability of the residents of Arctic Village to pursue subsistence opportunities and might reduce incidents of trespass and resource damage. The Council said it was compelled by extensive and detailed public testimony and that subsistence users were concerned that non-federally qualified users were interfering with subsistence hunts. The FSB then re-closed the entire drainages of Cane Creek and Red Sheep Creek, and they have remained closed along with the remainder of the AVSMA.

The FSB considered Proposal WP18-56 to reopen the AVSMA at its April 2018 meeting. FSB members considered deferring the proposal to work with ADF&G on submitting an agenda change request in November 2018 to the Alaska Board of Game to modify the state's hunt structure for sheep in Unit 25A. FSB members expressed concern that current state regulations for sheep in Unit 25A are fairly aggressive (three sheep harvest limit and harvest ticket hunts that do not limit hunter numbers). FSB members considered other options such as a state draw permit hunt that could limit hunter numbers, which could make opening the AVSMA to non-federally qualified users more acceptable to Arctic Village residents and other federally qualified subsistence users.

While the FSB ended up opposing WP18-56 for the continuation of subsistence uses in 2018, the intention of this proposal is to start the process of making state regulations more acceptable to federally qualified subsistence users by averting a large influx of hunters into the AVSMA if the federal closure is lifted in the future. This could facilitate the opening of the AVSMA to all users. The Council believes removing the three sheep harvest limit and establishing a draw hunt would limit the sheep harvest and number of hunters in the AVSMA if the federal closure was lifted.



The Alaska Board of Game has previously addressed this issue by requiring sheep hunters in this area to complete a department approved hunter ethics and orientation course, including land status and trespass information (5 AAC 92.003(i)). This provision has not been implemented; however, because the area has not been open to hunting under state regulations. The Council hopes this proposal will encourage the Alaska Board of Game to develop this hunter ethics and orientation course.

The FSB and ADF&G representatives expressed willingness to work together on this issue at the April 2018 FSB meeting. ADF&G representatives reiterated their willingness to work with the FSB at the Council's 2019 winter meeting. The Council also plans to engage Arctic Village residents to make this a truly cooperative effort.

#### **Other Alternatives Considered:**

The Council discussed requiring horn destruction to promote subsistence rather than sport/trophy hunting in the area.

The Council discussed and passed a motion to write a letter to Arctic Village to engage residents in the conversation and in developing an acceptable solution. The Council's Chair is considering a visit to Arctic Village to start a dialog with the residents.

The Council formed a working group at its winter 2019 meeting to work on this proposal. The working group discussed removing the youth hunt from the proposed AVSMA regulations as it has potential for abuse and overharvest.

The Council is currently working on a hunter ethics and education initiative, and the working group considered coordinating the AVSMA hunter orientation course with the Council's hunter ethics initiative.

The working group also thought of eliminating the winter hunts completely as no other area in the state has a state winter sheep hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EG-F19-139)  
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#### **PROPOSAL 83**

##### **5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Modify the bag limit for sheep in the RS595 hunt in Unit 26C as follows:

##### **Change the RS595 hunt stipulations to match the RS380 language for rams.**

RS595 Three sheep by permit available online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person in Fairbanks and Kaktovik beginning September 13, **however rams must be 3/4 curl horn or smaller, excluding rams with both horn tips broken.** The use of aircraft for access to hunt sheep and to transport harvested sheep is prohibited in this hunt except into and out of Arctic Village and Kaktovik airports. No motorized access from the Dalton Highway.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** RS595 subsistence sheep hunt, Unit 26C. In recent years, this hunt is being taken advantage of by those looking for a trophy ram, who can fly to Kaktovik and rent snow machines to access sheep country. It is legal also for a hunter who harvests a ram in the fall hunt to participate in this subsistence hunt.

Many don't believe it was the Board of Game's intent to allow this; there is a similar subsistence hunt in Unit 19 (RS380) with the same season dates October 1 – April 30, and for that hunt the board has stipulated that any rams must be  $\frac{3}{4}$  curl horn or smaller. The rationale for this  $\frac{3}{4}$  curl or smaller when the RS380 hunt was passed by the board was that we did not want to take legal rams out of the population that would otherwise be available for the fall general hunt. The same rationale should apply for the RS595 hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Leonard Jewkes (EG-F19-123)  
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## **PROPOSAL 84**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Extend the sheep season in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area within Units 24A, 25A, and 26B as follows:

Extending the season from September 20 – October 5 would provide additional opportunity for residents and nonresidents to hunt in a bow only area. This hunt would not help meet harvest objectives, this special opportunity would be an allocative issue, and it would provide additional opportunity to residents and nonresidents by extending their season (guides would be able to book additional hunts). Under full curl regulations the populations of legal rams could handle the additional harvest, with less than 1% (according to the department on the success rate of archers over the past ten years in general season Dall sheep hunts) archery success rate for all sheep in general areas, archers will not affect the breeding populations of sheep. Overharvest would not be an issue with limited success rate, and the regulation would be for the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area only.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Provide more special opportunities for Dall sheep hunters in the State of Alaska. There is continued user conflicts with user groups who prefer different weapons. Rifle/ muzzleloader hunters are out shooting/competing archers in general season Dall sheep hunts. Extending the Dall sheep general season in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, an archery only area, would alleviate some user conflict and give more opportunity to residents and nonresidents. There are always legal rams that are not harvested in every range every year. This can be seen in the sealing data as there are always sheep over the age of eight that are harvested. Overharvest with limited success of archery equipment, and with current archery only area regulation in effect for these units, would not occur.

**PROPOSED BY:** Austin Manelick (EG-F19-065)  
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## **PROPOSAL 85**

### **5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Open an archery only registration sheep hunt in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area in Units 24A, 25A, and 26B as follows:

Open an archery only registration hunt September 20 – October 5, managed by ADF&G by emergency order. Or open the archery only registration hunt September 25 – October 5, managed by ADF&G by emergency order. This would provide additional opportunity for residents and nonresidents to hunt in a bow only area. This hunt would not help meet harvest objectives, this special opportunity would be an allocative issue, and it would provide additional opportunity to residents and nonresidents by extending their season (guides would be able to book additional hunts). Under full curl regulations the populations of legal rams could handle the additional harvest, with less than 1% (according to ADF&G on the success rate of archers over the past ten years in general season Dall sheep hunts) archery success rate for all sheep in general areas, archers will not affect the breeding populations of sheep. Overharvest would not be an issue with limited success rate, and the regulation would be for the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area only. This proposal would simply give hunters another opportunity to hunt sheep after the season elsewhere around the state have closed. With very limited success with archery equipment, this hunt would not affect the herd population at all.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Provide more special opportunities for Dall sheep hunters in the State of Alaska. There is continued user conflicts with user groups who prefer different weapons. Rifle/muzzleloader hunters are out shooting/competing archers in general season Dall sheep hunts. Opening a registration Dall sheep hunt in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, an archery only area, would alleviate some user conflict and give more opportunity to residents and nonresidents. This hunt would open up more time for archers to choose when they can go on the hunt and give guides more opportunity to book clients. There are always legal rams that are not harvested in every range every year. This can be seen in the sealing data as there are always sheep over the age of eight that are harvested every. Overharvest, with limited success of archery equipment and with current archery only area regulation in effect for these Units, would not occur.

**PROPOSED BY:** Austin Manelick

(EG-F19-066)

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## **Tok Area Proposals – Units 12 and 20E**

### **PROPOSAL 86**

#### **5AAC 92.113(a). Intensive Management Plans III.**

Reauthorize the Upper Yukon–Tanana Predation Control Program as follows:

#### **5AAC 92.113. Intensive Management Plans III.** Section (a) is amended as follows:

(a) Plans established. Intensive management plans for the following area is established in this section:

(1) Upper **Yukon–Tanana** [YUKON/TANANA] Predation Control Area in Units 12, 20(B), 20(D), 20(E), and 25(C);

(b) Upper **Yukon–Tanana** [YUKON/TANANA] Predation Control Area in Units 12, 20(B), 20(D), 20(E), and 25(C): the Upper **Yukon–Tanana** [YUKON/TANANA] Predation Control Area (UYTPCA) is established to increase the Fortymile Caribou Herd (FCH) throughout its range to aid in achieving intensive management (IM) objectives; the control area includes that portion of Unit 12 north of the Alaska Highway, that portion of Unit 20(D) within the Goodpaster River drainage upstream from and including the South Fork Goodpaster River drainage, and within the Healy River, Billy Creek, and Sand Creek drainages, that portion of Unit 20(B) within the Salcha River drainage upstream from and including the Goose Creek drainage, and within the Middle Fork of the Chena River drainage, all of Unit 20(E), and that portion of Unit 25(C) within the Birch Creek drainage upstream from the Steese Highway Bridge, and within the area draining into the south and west bank of the Yukon River upstream from the community of Circle, encompassing approximately 18,750 square miles; this predation control program does not apply to any National Park Service or National Wildlife Refuge lands unless approved by the federal agencies; notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, and based on the following information contained in this section, the commissioner or the commissioner's designee may conduct a wolf population reduction or wolf population regulation program in the UYTPCA in Units 12, 20(B), 20(D), 20(E), and 25(C):

(1) this is a continuing control program that was first authorized by the Board of Game in 2004 for wolf and brown bear control to increase the moose population and harvest in northern Unit 12 and in Unit 20(E); in 2006 wolf control was expanded by the board to increase the FCH population and harvest in its entire range; in 2009 bear control was deleted from the program because control methods available at the time were ineffective; **it is currently designed to increase FCH caribou numbers and harvest by reducing predation on the FCH by wolves and is expected to make contributions to achieving the intensive management (IM) objectives for the FCH;**

(2) caribou and wolf objectives are as follows:

**(A) The IM population objective established by the board for the FCH is for a population of 50,000–100,000 caribou; the annual IM harvest objective**

**established by the board for the FCH is 1,000–15,000 caribou;** [THE FCH-IM POPULATION OBJECTIVES ESTABLISHED BY THE BOARD ARE FOR A POPULATION OF 50,000–100,000 CARIBOU AND AN ANNUAL HARVEST OF 1,000–15,000 CARIBOU;]

(B) the wolf population [CONTROL] objective for the wolf control area is 88–103 **wolves**; the pre-control wolf population in the wolf control area was estimated in fall of 2004 at 350–410 wolves; a minimum population of 88 wolves is approximately a 75 percent reduction from the pre-control population and will ensure that wolves persist in the plan area;

(3) the board's findings concerning FCH populations and human use are as follows:

(A) the FCH population and harvest are within the [LOWER] range of IM objectives;

(B) continued recovery of the FCH to a higher population and harvest within the range of the IM objectives is needed to provide for high levels of human consumptive use of the herd;

(C) predation by wolves is an important cause of a failure to achieve FCH population and harvest objectives;

(D) a reduction of predation by wolves can reasonably be expected to aid in achieving prey population objectives;

(E) reducing predation by wolves is likely to be effective and feasible utilizing recognized and prudent active management techniques and **is** based on scientific information;

(F) reducing predation by wolves is likely to be effective given land ownership patterns;

(4) authorized methods and means are as follows:

(A) hunting and trapping of wolves by the public in the UYTPCA during the term of this program may occur as provided in the hunting and trapping regulations set out elsewhere in this title;

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may:

(i) allow department employees to conduct aerial, land and shoot, or ground-based lethal removal of wolves, using state-owned, privately-owned, or chartered equipment, including helicopters, under [AS 16.05.783](#);

(ii) issue public aerial shooting permits or public land and shoot permits using fixed-wing aircraft as a method of wolf removal under [AS 16.05.783](#);

**(iii) issue public permits to allow the use of privately-owned helicopters to trap and snare wolves, and retrieve wolves trapped, snared or shot under this program; including using a helicopter to land and dispatch wolves on the ground that have been trapped, snared or wounded by fixed-wing permittees as a method of wolf removal under [AS 16.05.783](#);**

(5) time frame is as follows:

(A) **during July 1, 2020–June 30, 2026** [THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020] the commissioner may authorize removal of wolves in the UYTPCA;

(B) annually, the department shall, to the extent practicable, provide to the board a report of program activities conducted during the preceding 12 months, including implementation activities, the status of the FCH and wolf populations, and recommendations for changes, if necessary to achieve objectives of the plan;

(6) the commissioner will review, modify or suspend wolf control activities when wolf surveys or accumulated information from department personnel, hunters, trappers, and permittees indicate the need to avoid reducing wolf numbers in the UYTPCA below the control objective of 88–103 wolves specified in this subsection.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Upper Yukon–Tanana Intensive Management Plan will expire on June 30, 2020. The program was first authorized by the Board of Game in 2004 to benefit moose in southern Unit 20E. Wolf and bear control began in 2005. The wolf control portion of the program was expanded to include the Fortymile caribou herd (FCH) in 2006. The bear control portion of the program was suspended in 2009 because it was ineffective at removing bears from the control area due to a combination of ineffective methods and a lack of incentive to program participants. Reauthorization of the plan is recommended to continue recovery of the Fortymile caribou herd to a higher population and harvest within the range of the Intensive Management (IM) objectives established by the Board of Game.

This proposal will reauthorize the program for a six-year period from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2026. It includes options for aerial wolf control conducted by public permittees and the department.

Although predation control is currently suspended in the Upper Yukon–Tanana predation control area so that the department can conduct studies of predator–prey interactions as the wolf population rebounds, retaining the ability to resume wolf control is important. Scenarios under which wolf control could be resumed during 2020–2026 include a combination of completion of the predator–prey studies in 2023; stable or increasing caribou nutritional status; and continued demand by the public to reallocate additional caribou from wolves to harvest by humans, as indicated in the Fortymile Harvest Management Coalition’s Harvest Management Plan and in the Operational Plan for Intensive Management of the Fortymile caribou herd in Game Management

Units 12, 20B, 20D, 20E and 25C. As indicated in the Harvest Management plan, the Alaska public and our partners in Canada support continued use of predation control, when it is appropriate.

As part of this reauthorization, helicopter use to retrieve wolves and to tend traplines is added in 5AAC 92.113 to make this long-standing use more transparent. Since 2010, permittees have been allowed under regulation 92.110 to use helicopters to trap wolves and to retrieve wolves trapped, snared or shot under this program; including using a helicopter to land and dispatch wolves on the ground that have been trapped, snared or wounded by fixed-wing predator control permittees. This use is small, as helicopter operation is expensive. However, it is useful to retrieve wolves taken under this program because of the difficulty of landing fixed-wing aircraft due to heavy vegetative cover and rough terrain and the remoteness of this predation control area.

Additional details will also be made available for public review in an updated IM operational plan prior to the board meeting.

The minimum population estimate of the FCH in July 2017 was 73,009 and the FCH harvest during regulatory years 2014–2015 through 2016–2017 ranged 1,007–1,039 and was 1,960 during regulatory year 2017–2018 and 2,421 during regulatory year 2018–2019. Public wolf control has been conducted in the majority of the FCH range since 2006 and department wolf control was conducted in the same area during winters 2008–2009, 2009–2010, and 2011–2012 through 2017–2018. The FCH population is near the mid-point of the IM population objective and harvest is within the lower end of the range of IM objectives; however, continued increase in FCH harvest within the range of the IM objectives is needed to provide for high levels of human consumptive use of the herd.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-149)  
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## **PROPOSAL 87**

### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Change for the Fortymile caribou registration hunt in Unit 20 to a drawing hunt with a longer season as follows:

Change the registration hunt to a drawing hunt with a longer season. You'll get your quota and hunters will have a much higher quality and safer experience

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Change the Fortymile caribou herd registration hunt to a drawing hunt before someone gets shot. This is the worst, most dangerous hunt in the hunt in the state because of its current status as a registration hunt with early closures.

**PROPOSED BY:** Janner Morgan (EG-F19-062)  
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*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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## **PROPOSAL 89**

### **5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures.**

Allow hunters to possess registration permits for both caribou (RC860) and moose (RM865) while hunting in Unit 20E as follows:

Change the regulation to read you may possess both the RC860 and RM865 at the same time.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Why hunters may not possess both RC860 caribou and RM865 moose tags at the same time. If a hunter is in the field and possesses a great RM865 moose tag and should come upon a herd of caribou, in order to change his tag he must return from the field back into town and change his tag and return to the field. Possibly costing 12-15 hours in which time the herd might not be anywhere to be found. Many of us see no reason not to be able to possess both tags and hunt both animals at the same time.

**PROPOSED BY:** Joel Mitchell (EG-F19-068)  
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## **PROPOSAL 90**

### **5 AAC 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts.**

Allocate up to 25% of nonresident drawing tags for sheep in the Tok Management Area to second degree kindred relatives as follows:

Limit second degree of kindred to "up to 25%" of the possible nonresident Tok sheep tags that they can draw.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The number of second degree of kindred (2DK) that are drawing the very few nonresident sheep tags within the Tok Management Area. Over the last couple of years, the 2DK are drawing almost 50% of the nonresident sheep tags.

**PROPOSED BY:** Lance Kronberger (EG-F19-063)  
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## Delta Area Proposals – Unit 20D

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### PROPOSAL 91

#### **5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.**

Reduce the bag and possession limits for grouse in a portion of Unit 20D as follows:

The Hunting Regulations Booklet would read:

**Unit 20D**, that portion lying west of the east bank of the Johnson River and south of the north bank of the Tanana River:

**Five per day, fifteen in possession, provided that not more than ten in possession may be ruffed grouse or sharp-tailed grouse.....**Aug 25 - Mar 31

**By falconry only, five per day, ten in possession, provided that not more than two per day and two in possession may be ruffed grouse or sharp-tailed grouse.....**Aug 10 - Aug 24

Change 5 AAC 85.065 to read:

Unit 20D, that portion lying west of the east bank of the Johnson River and south of the north bank of the Tanana River

<b>5</b> [10] per day, of which not more than 2 may be <b><u>ruffed grouse or</u></b> sharp-tailed grouse, by falconry only; 10 in possession, of which not more than 2 may be <b><u>ruffed grouse or</u></b> sharp-tailed grouse, by falconry only	Aug. 10 - Aug. 24	Aug. 10 - Aug. 24
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<b>5</b> [15] per day, <b><u>15 in possession</u></b> , of which not more than <b><u>10</u></b> [5] may be <b><u>ruffed grouse or</u></b> sharp-tailed grouse [30 IN POSSESSION, OF WHICH NOT MORE THAN 10 MAY BE SHARP-TAILED GROUSE;] however, a season may be announced by emergency order during which the bag limit is less than <b>5</b> [15] grouse per day, <b><u>15</u></b> [30] in possession, and less than <b><u>10</u></b> [5] <b><u>ruffed grouse or</u></b> sharp-tailed grouse [PER DAY, 10] in possession	Aug. 25 - Mar. 31	Aug. 25 - Mar. 31
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**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Grouse hunting opportunity and harvest allocation in Unit 20D. Grouse populations, while naturally cyclic, are notoriously slow to recover from greater than normal population declines caused by weather, habitat loss, and over harvest. Unit 20D enjoys a reputation as the epicenter of quality grouse hunting in Alaska, due to huntable populations of all three species of grouse found in interior Alaska, and a road and trail network that provides easy access to large areas of prime grouse habitat. That reputation, buoyed by outdoor TV show coverage, articles in hunting periodicals, and books on grouse hunting in Alaska, draws many hunters from around the state, as well as nonresidents. Hunters from

Alaskan urban centers and nonresidents far outnumber local hunters and are more likely to continue to harvest birds up to the limit, even when populations are noticeably down. This is natural since they have invested time and money to get to Unit 20D and want to maximize their return. Because of the consistently increasing pressure from these hunters, local hunters often choose to forego hunting and harvesting grouse when populations are down.

In addition, with the increasing number of hunters, more each year come earlier in the season to try and beat other hunters and take advantage of higher grouse numbers early on, before grouse numbers have been substantially reduced. This has resulted in a disproportionate share of available grouse being harvested during the first two weeks of the fall season, leaving few grouse for hunters choosing to wait until the later part of the fall season (mid-September and later) when grouse are more mature, cooler/drier conditions are available for working dogs, and hunters can enjoy a more traditional mid to late fall upland hunting experience. Another factor contributing to the high early pressure is the “two-fer” opportunity that allows hunters to get in a week of grouse hunting in August, then switch to hunting waterfowl and/or moose - two other hunting opportunities for which the area is well-known, and which draw non-local hunters.

To more equitably allocate the pre-season grouse population to hunters throughout the fall season, harvest during the early part of the season needs to be reduced by lowering the daily bag and possession limits. This will more equally allocate the portion of the grouse population available for harvest annually to all grouse hunters regardless of when they decide to hunt in the fall. Thus, rather than incentivizing grouse hunters to concentrate their efforts earlier and earlier, they can have similar harvest opportunities longer in the season. As the trend toward high pressure early in the season increases, and the accessible areas become crowded, the quality of the hunting experience is degraded.

A daily bag limit that matches species limits also removes potential for accidentally exceeding a species limit. A very common grouse hunting technique, especially for hunters without dogs, is to shoot sitting grouse from the ground or from trees. Especially with a rim fire rifle, it is possible to harvest all or most of the birds in a flock, since they often don't spook and fly at the shot, or go very far when they do. These hunters are more likely to shoot birds before the species is identified, as identification is more difficult when the tail is not readily visible prior to the decision to shoot. In these situations, with a daily limit of 15, it is easily possible that a hunter could exceed a species-specific limit of five birds without even realizing it.

The Delta Advisory Committee originally conceived a proposal to limit ruffed grouse to five per day, to match the current sharp-tailed grouse limit, and leave the total daily bag (15) and possession (30) limits unchanged. We decided to modify that into a five bird per day total limit to increase opportunity, maintain sustainable harvest levels for all species, simplify the regulation, and to reduce the complexity of shoot/don't shoot decisions in the field.

In addition to helping stabilize populations of our various grouse to normal cyclic variations, the five-bird daily limit will maximize opportunity for all hunters throughout the season and eliminate the possibility of accidentally exceeding a species specific limit. While this proposal reduces the daily bag limit by two thirds, it only reduces the possession limit by one half, to reduce the overall impact of the new bag limit on hunters who have limited time in the area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Delta Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-067)

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*Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires the State of Alaska to make reasonable modifications when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or activity.*

## **PROPOSAL 92**

### **5 AAC 92.104. Authorization for methods and means disability exemptions.**

Allow methods and means disability exemptions within the Delta Controlled Use Area as follows:

(f) The department will not deny applicants who are otherwise qualified under (a) and (b) of this section, an exemption to participate in hunt RC835 within the Delta Controlled Use Area based on a determination that motorized access on the last two days of the hunt provides meaningful access.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Specifically allow methods and means disability exemptions in the Delta Controlled Use Area (DCUA) for registration caribou hunt RC835 for hunters who are permanently wheelchair bound or similarly disabled.

The Delta Advisory Committee disagrees with the Department of Fish and Game's current position that allowing motorized vehicles on the last two days of this hunt provides meaningful access. These two days are not guaranteed as this is a registration hunt and may be closed prior if harvest goals are met. These two days represent less than 12% of the total season for this hunt. A person applying for this exemption may not have the time or ability for short notice. The "last two days" are unlikely to allow for a quality hunt, as there is extreme competition and overcrowding in a concentrated area during this time. The Delta AC request the department review the current statistics within DCUA with regards to current and past applicants/awardees of this application before considering the condemnation of ALL applicants.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Delta Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-109)

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## **PROPOSAL 93**

### **5 AAC 92.044 Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Expand the area in Unit 20D where brown bears can be taken over bait as follows:

In units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14A, 14B, 15, 16, 18, 19A, 19D, 20A, 20B, 20C, 20D north of the Tanana River **and between the Gerstle River and the Robertson River on the South side of the Tanana River,** 20E, 20F, 21C, 21D, 23, 24C, 24D, and 25D brown/grizzly bears may be taken at bear bait stations. Hunters must comply with seasons, bag limits, salvage, and sealing requirements for brown/grizzly bears (registration permits and locking-tags may be required in some areas, contact ADF&G for details)

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Currently in Unit 20D south of the Tanana River you are only allowed to take black bear over bait. The remainder of Unit 20D

and the areas that border Unit 20D allow the take of grizzly bears over a registered bait. The grizzly population in the portion of Unit 20D not open to the take of grizzly bears over bait appears to be high. The numbers of grizzly bears on active baits sites in this area far outnumber any black bear. There is not a valid management reason to not allow the take of grizzly bears over bait in this area. The population of people in this area is far less than other areas of the state that already allow the baiting of grizzly bears. A registration hunt for grizzly bear over bait is one option (if the population of grizzly is of concern) and has been a success in places like the Kenai Peninsula, however, since the area is already is a general hunt without a quota a registration hunt is probably not necessary. Another option is the entire area south of the Tanana River could be opened to the baiting of grizzly bears, this is a viable option but does include both Delta Junction and Ft. Greeley. If nothing is changed there will be practically no affective management of grizzly bears in the southern portion of Unit 20D.

**PROPOSED BY:** Ryan Johnson (EG-F19-074)  
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**PROPOSAL 94**

**5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 20D as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(18)		
...		
Unit 20(D), that portion lying west of the west bank of the Johnson River and south of the north bank of the Tanana River, except the Delta Junction Management Area and the Bison Range <b><u>Controlled Use Area</u></b> [YOUTH HUNT MANAGEMENT AREA]		

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 1,000 permits may be issued in combination with that portion in the Delta Junction Management Area; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Oct. 10–Nov. 25

1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf

Oct. 10–Nov. 25

...

Unit 20(D), that portion within the Bison Range Controlled Use Area

...

1 antlerless moose, per lifetime of a hunter, by youth hunt drawing permit only; up to 10 permits may be issued; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf;

Sept. 1–Sept. 30

Sept. 1–Sept. 30

Unit 20(D), that portion within the Delta Junction Management Area

#### RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 moose every four regulatory years by drawing permit only, a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Sept. 1–Sept. 15

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 1,000 permits may be issued in combination with that portion lying west of the west bank of the Johnson River and south of the north bank of the Tanana River; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Oct. 10–Nov. 25

1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf

Oct. 10–Nov. 25

#### NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 moose every four regulatory years by drawing permit only, a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Sept. 1–Sept. 15

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The objectives of the Unit 20D antlerless moose hunts are to 1) stabilize population growth of this high-density moose population; 2) address concerns about range degradation, reduced nutritional condition, and reduced reproductive success; 3) make progress toward meeting the Unit 20D intensive management (IM) harvest objective of 500–700 moose; and 4) provide youth and disabled veteran hunting opportunity. These objectives are being met.

If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population could quickly increase to levels beyond the ability of the habitat to support the moose population. Opportunity to hunt a harvestable surplus of cow moose would be lost, and the ability to meet IM harvest objectives could be compromised. Additionally, the population may need to be reduced dramatically when new data are available and analyzed.

Antlerless moose hunts are offered in southwest Unit 20D, which has the highest moose density in the unit. This area has great potential for population growth due to an abundance of high-quality moose habitat created from extensive land clearing for agricultural use and multiple wildfires over the past 30 years. Total moose harvest in all of Unit 20D averaged 280 moose (an average of 263 bulls and 16 antlerless moose) during regulatory years 2016 and 2017.

Antlerless hunting opportunity is limited at present because this small opportunity helps to maintain the moose population within the ability of habitat to support the population. The largest antlerless harvest (n=113) that occurred recently in Unit 20D was in 2009 when antlerless hunts

were newly authorized. The southwest Unit 20D population estimate (approximately 4,000–4,500 moose, with a sightability correction factor applied) and bull harvest in southwestern Unit 20D (226–282) have been stable since 2011. The 2017 population estimate for southwest Unit 20D was 4,553 moose (corrected for sightability) with a density of 3.4 moose per square mile, 40 calves:100 cows and 22 bulls:100 cows.

Antlerless harvest will likely be needed to maintain the population at the optimal density and will help make progress toward the IM harvest objective of 500–700 moose without reducing bull:cow ratios below the management objectives. The population trend and harvest rate suggest the low, consistent antlerless harvest provided by the drawing permit hunts in Unit 20D, in conjunction with other mortality factors (including ceremonial harvest, vehicle collision, accidents, and predation), is an appropriate rate of antlerless moose mortality that contributes to stability in the southwest Unit 20D moose population.

The Department of Fish and Game will continue to evaluate antlerless moose hunts and their effect on moose density and population growth. Future antlerless moose hunts will be implemented as needed based on evaluation of three indices of density-dependent moose nutritional conditions in relation to changes in moose density: biomass removal of current annual growth on winter browse, proportion of females with twin calves, and late-winter calf weights.

Additional drawing or registration permits will be issued only if more harvest is needed in specific areas to maintain optimal moose densities.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-176)  
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## **McGrath Area Proposals – Units 19, 21A and 21E**

### **PROPOSAL 95**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Establish a resident winter moose hunt in Unit 19D East as follows:

The McGrath Advisory Committee would like to propose a winter moose hunt in Unit 19D East. Hunt conditions include the following:

1. Season: February 1<sup>st</sup> – February 28<sup>th</sup>.
2. Registration permit available in the hunt area in January to the end of the season.
3. Residents only.
4. Any moose except cows with calves.
5. Quota will be set by the Department of Fish and Game.
6. No aircraft except between publicly owned airports including McGrath, Takotna, Medfra, Nikolai and Telida.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Moose densities in the McGrath area have approximately doubled since surveys began in 2001. Recently twinning rates have begun to decline, and it is time to slow the growth of the herd. There is additional harvest opportunity available and we would like to propose a winter moose hunt. This will help spread hunter effort out throughout the year, maintain strong bull:cow ratios, and allow the harvest of cow moose. Increased fall bull harvest is not warranted because bull:cow ratios are declining along the river. Additionally, a winter hunt will allow for more access and help us achieve our harvest objectives.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-023)

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### **PROPOSAL 96**

#### **5 AAC 92.123(a)(2). Intensive Management Plans VII.**

Reauthorize the Unit 19D-East predation control program as follows:

(a) **Plans established.** Intensive management plans for the following areas are established in this section:

...

(2) Unit 19(D)-East Predation Control Area:

...

(c) **Unit 19(D)-East Predation Control Area:** the Unit 19(D)-East Predation Control Area is established and consists of those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage within Unit 19(D) upstream from the Selatna River drainage, **and** [BUT EXCLUDING] the Black River drainage, encompassing approximately **8,569** [8,513] square miles; this predation control program does not apply to any National Park Service or National Wildlife Refuge lands unless approved by the

federal agencies; notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, and based on the following information contained in this section, the commissioner or the commissioner's designee may conduct a wolf and a black bear and a brown bear population reduction or a wolf and black bear and brown bear population regulation program in Unit 19(D)-East to benefit moose:

(1) the following Wolf and Bear Control Focus Areas are established in the Unit 19(D)-East Predation Control Area; the areas do not delineate a moose, wolf, or bear population and are not intended to distinguish animals within the focus areas from populations in Unit 19(D)-East; the purpose is to focus wolf and bear control in a relatively small area where moose numbers can be better estimated, where moose are accessible to hunters, and where harvest can be closely monitored;

(A) the Wolf Control Focus Area (WCFA) encompasses approximately **5,579 square miles within that portion of Unit 19(D) upstream of the Selatna River drainage, but excluding the Black River drainage, and downstream of but not including, Fourth of July Creek, the Swift Fork, or the Slow Fork and Tonzona River drainages east of 153° 10'; wolf control will be conducted only within the WCFA; the department will have the discretion to adjust its size and shape to include up to approximately 6,000 square miles of Unit 19(D)-East;** [4,500 SQUARE MILES WITHIN THAT PORTION OF UNIT 19(D) UPSTREAM OF, BUT NOT INCLUDING, THE BLACK RIVER DRAINING AND UPSTREAM OF AND INCLUDING THE LITTLE SELATNA RIVER DRAINAGE AND DOWNSTREAM OF, BUT NOT INCLUDING, FOURTH OF JULY CREEK, SODA CREEK, SLOW FORK, AND TONZONA RIVER DRAINAGES,] SURROUNDING THE VILLAGES OF MCGRATH, TAKOTNA, MEDFRA AND NIKOLAI; WOLF CONTROL WILL BE CONDUCTED ONLY WITHIN THE WCFA; THE DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE THE DISCRETION TO ADJUST THE WCFA'S SIZE AND SHAPE TO INCLUDE UP TO APPROXIMATELY 5,100 SQUARE MILES OF UNIT 19(D)-EAST;]

(B) the Black Bear and Brown Bear Control Focus Area (BCFA) encompasses approximately 528 square miles consisting of those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage enclosed by a line starting northwest of McGrath at 63° 04.00' N. lat., 155° 50.00' W. long., then east to 63° 04.00' N. lat., 154° 50.00' W. long., then south to 62° 54.00' N. lat., 154° 50.00' W. long., then west to 62° 54.00' N. lat., 155° 25.00' W. long., then south to 62° 50.00' N. lat., 155° 25.00' W. long., then west to 62° 50.00' N. lat., 155° 30.00' W. long., then south to 62° 48.00' N. lat., 155° 30.00' W. long., then west to 62° 48.00' N. lat., 155° 35.00' W. long., then south to 62° 42.00' N. lat., 155° 35.00' W. long., then west to 62° 42.00' N. lat., 155° 55.00' W. long., then north to 62° 50.00' N. lat., 155° 55.00' W. long., then east to 62° 50.00' N. lat., 155° 50.00' W. long., then north to the point of beginning at 63° 04.00' N. lat., 155° 50.00' W. long., surrounding the village of McGrath; bear control will be conducted only within the BCFA; the department will have the discretion to adjust its size and shape up to approximately 680 square miles of Unit 19(D)-East; the BCFA is within the WCFA;

(2) this is a continuing control program that was first authorized by the board in 1995; wolf control began in winter 2003–2004 and bear control began with nonlethal removal of bears in the BCFA during May 2003 and May 2004; the control program is currently designed to increase moose numbers and harvest in the WCFA and BCFA by reducing predation on moose and is expected to make a contribution to achieving the intensive management (IM) objectives in Unit 19(D)-East;

(3) moose, wolf, black bear, and brown bear objectives are as follows:

(A) moose IM objectives established by the board for Unit 19(D)-East are for a population of 6,000–8,000 moose and an annual harvest of 400–600 moose;

(B) the density objective for moose in the WCFA is 1.0 moose per square mile (corrected for sightability) in fall surveys; the annual harvest objective for the WCFA is 225 moose; [BCFA IS 2.0 PER SQUARE MILE (CORRECTED FOR SIGHTABILITY) IN FALL SURVEYS; THE ANNUAL HARVEST OBJECTIVE FOR THE WCFA IS 180 MOOSE;]

(C) the wolf control objective in the WCFA is to reduce wolf numbers by at least 60–80 percent; the pre-control wolf population in Unit 19(D)-East was estimated in February 2001 at 198 wolves; the 2001 pre-control estimate within the WCFA is 130 wolves; only removing wolves from the WCFA will ensure that wolves persist in Unit 19(D)-East; [THE POST-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION OBJECTIVE FOR UNIT 19(D)-EAST IS 40 WOLVES REMAINING; THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION IN UNIT 19(D)-EAST WAS ESTIMATED IN FEBRUARY 2001 AT 198 WOLVES; A MINIMUM POPULATION OF 40 WOLVES IS APPROXIMATELY AN 80 PERCENT REDUCTION FROM THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION AND WILL ENSURE THAT WOLVES PERSIST IN THE PLAN AREA;]

(D) the black bear control objective in the BCFA is to reduce black bear numbers to the lowest level possible; the pre-control black bear population in Unit 19(D)-East was estimated at 1,700; the pre-control black bear population estimate within the BCFA was approximately 130; because the BCFA is a relatively small geographic area, removing black bears from within the BCFA will have only a minor effect on the black bear population in Unit 19(D)-East; [THE WOLF CONTROL POPULATION OBJECTIVE IN THE WCFA IS TO REDUCE WOLF NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE WCFA IN 2001 WAS 68 WOLVES;]

(E) the brown bear control objective in the BCFA is to reduce brown bear numbers to the lowest level possible; the pre-control brown bear population in Unit 19(D)-East was 128; the pre-control brown bear population estimate within the BCFA was 9; because the BCFA is a relatively small geographic area, removing brown bears from within the BCFA will have only a minor effect on the brown bear population in Unit 19(D)-East; [THE BLACK BEAR CONTROL

POPULATION OBJECTIVE IN THE BCFA IS TO REDUCE BLACK BEAR NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(D)-EAST WAS ESTIMATED AT 1,700 BLACK BEARS; THE PRE-CONTROL BLACK BEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE BCFA WAS APPROXIMATELY 130 BLACK BEARS; BECAUSE THE BCFA IS A RELATIVELY SMALL GEOGRAPHIC AREA, REMOVING BLACK BEARS FROM WITHIN THE BCFA WILL HAVE ONLY A MINOR EFFECT ON THE BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(D)-EAST;]

[(F) THE BROWN BEAR POPULATION CONTROL OBJECTIVE IN THE BCFA IS TO REDUCE BROWN BEAR NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL BROWN BEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE BCFA WAS NINE BROWN BEARS; BECAUSE THE BCFA IS A RELATIVELY SMALL GEOGRAPHIC AREA, REMOVING BROWN BEARS FROM WITHIN THE BCFA WILL HAVE ONLY A MINOR EFFECT ON THE BROWN BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(D)-EAST;]

(4) board findings concerning populations and human use are as follows:

(A) **the Unit 19(D)-East moose harvest objective has not been achieved;** [THE UNIT 19(D)-EAST MOOSE POPULATION AND HARVEST OBJECTIVES HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED;]

(B) **the WCFA objective for moose harvest has not been achieved;** THE BCFA OBJECTIVES FOR MOOSE DENSITY AND MOOSE HARVEST HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED;]

(C) predation by wolves and bears is an important cause of the failure to achieve [POPULATION AND] harvest objectives;

(D) a reduction of wolf and bear predation within the WCFA and BCFA can reasonably be expected to make progress towards achieving the Unit 19(D)-East intensive management harvest objectives;

(E) reducing predation is likely to be effective and feasible using recognized and prudent active management techniques and **is** based on scientific information;

(F) reducing predation is likely to be effective given land ownership patterns;

(5) authorized methods and means are as follows:

(A) hunting and trapping of wolves and hunting of black bears and brown bears by the public in Unit 19(D)-East during the term of this program may occur as provided in the hunting and trapping regulations set out elsewhere in this title, including use of motorized vehicles;

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may allow department employees to conduct aerial, land and shoot, or ground-based lethal removal of wolves and black bears and brown bears using state-owned, privately-owned, or chartered equipment, including helicopters, under AS 16.05.783;

(C) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may issue public aerial shooting permits or public land and shoot permits using fixed-wing aircraft as a method of wolf removal under AS 16.05.783;

(6) time frame is as follows:

(A) through **June 30, 2026**, [JUNE 30, 2020,] the commissioner may authorize removal of wolves and black bears and brown bears in Unit 19(D)-East;

(B) annually, the department shall, to the extent practicable, provide to the board a report of program activities conducted during the preceding 12 months, including implementation activities, the status of the moose, wolf, and bear populations, and recommendations for changes, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of the plan;

(7) the commissioner will review, modify or suspend program activities **as follows:** [WHEN:]

(A) **when the moose density and harvest objectives specified in this subsection are achieved within the WCFA.** [THE WOLF SURVEYS OR ACCUMULATED INFORMATION FROM DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL, HUNTERS, TRAPPERS, AND PERMITTEES INDICATE THE NEED TO AVOID REDUCING WOLF NUMBERS IN UNIT 19(D)-EAST BELOW THE CONTROL OBJECTIVE OF 40 WOLVES SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBSECTION;]

(B) **when any measure consistent with signs of nutritional stress in the moose population are identified.** [THE MOOSE DENSITY AND HARVEST OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE BCFA SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBSECTION ARE ACHIEVED.]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Unit 19D-East Intensive Management Plan will expire on June 30, 2020. The program was first authorized by the Board of Game (board) in 1995 and wolf control began in 2003. Bear control began with nonlethal removal of bears by the Department of Fish and Game (department) during May 2003 and 2004 and continued with lethal removal by the public starting in 2010. Population objectives for moose in the WCFA have been met, but not harvest objectives. The department recommends reauthorization of the plan to continue progress towards achieving the harvest objectives established for this area.

This proposal will reauthorize the program for six years, from 1 July 2020 through 30 June 2026. It includes options for aerial wolf control conducted by public permittees and the department, and aerial black and brown bear control conducted by the department only. Additional details will also be made available for public review in a separate intensive management operational plan prior to the board meeting.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-151)

*Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Proposals*

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## **PROPOSAL 97**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Change the Tier II permit hunt for moose in Unit 19A to a registration permit hunt as follows:

Based on the allowable harvest we recommend moving from a Tier II hunt to a registration permit hunt. Permits only available in Unit 18 and 19 before the hunt.

### **5AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose:**

Unit 19(A), that portion downstream from and including the George River drainage, and downstream from and excluding the Downey River drainage.

#### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

One antlered bull by **registration permit** Sept. 1 - Sept. 20  
[TIER II] permit only; [UP TO 300 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED].

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** We would like the Board of Game to replace the TM680 Tier II, Unit 19A moose hunt with a registration hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Bethel Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-033)

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## **PROPOSAL 98**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose**

Change the Tier II permit hunt for moose in Unit 19A to a registration permit hunt as follows:

I recommend moving from a Tier II hunt to a registration permit hunt. Permits only available in Units 18 and 19 before the hunt. The allowable harvest is and has been above the upper range of the ANS (amount reasonably necessary for subsistence) for a few years and it time to move into a registration hunt.

#### **CURRENT LANGUAGE:**

### **5AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose:**

Unit 19A, that portion downstream from and including the George River drainage, and downstream from and excluding the Downey River drainage

#### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

One antlered bull by **registration permit** Sept. 1 - Sept. 20  
[TIER II] permit only; [UP TO 300 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED.]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like the Board of Game to replace the TM680 Tier II, Unit 19A hunt with a registration permit hunt. Unit 19A moose have long been a regional resource and the Tier II limits hunters based on household and age. I would like to see younger people participating in the hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Sam Hancock (EG-F19-045)  
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### **PROPOSAL 99**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Change the Tier II moose permit hunt (TM680) in Unit 19A to a household permit as follows:

People in the same household can hunt together. There is currently another area in the state where this occurs. Please use that language.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The TM680 permit be modified from an individual permit to that of a “household permit”. We would like to modify the permit in order to reflect our traditional way of hunting as a group. It is important for elders to pass on knowledge to the younger generation and currently within the Tier II permit system that our area has, mentoring and hunting together is not allowed. We are not requesting an increase in number only that when hunting the permit issued contains each member of the household’s name on it. The licensed hunter needs to have the permit with them at the time of the hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Central Kuskokwim Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-102)  
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### **PROPOSAL 100**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Extend the resident season dates for moose hunting in Unit 19A Remainder as follows:

For Unit 19A Remainder moose hunt area:  
Registration permit season dates: September 1 - 30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Extend the moose hunting season on the Unit 19A Eastern hunt area in and around the Holitna River from September 1 - 5 to September 1 - 30.

It is a limited registration hunt with only 30 permits given out so having a short season is not necessary. There are a lot of other restrictions on this permit making it hard to use and this might be the only chance at getting a moose if people are not allowed to have any other Kuskokwim moose permits for the year.

1) One per household; 2) no proxy hunting; 3) only moose permit for Kuskokwim; 4) Holitna control use are with 40hp restrictions, 5) very short season, and 6) permit is first come, first serve in the hunt area in July only.

Collectively these six restrictions make it difficult and stressful for hunters to put meat in the freezer. Especially if the Department of Fish and Game is only issuing a limited number of registration permits every year within the hunt area. I think some of these restrictions can be reduced and the actual hunting season can be extended because the department is in no danger of overharvesting. Another bonus to this is that hunters would not have to hunt early September when it can be very hot and buggy.

Other considerations would be to allow people to get other Kuskokwim permits after they turn in this permit (if unsuccessful) and to allow proxy hunting. Being able to put a moose in the freezer is really important for a lot of families along the Kuskokwim River and life happens so being able to have a proxy or hunt a different moose permit later if unsuccessful would really help people.

**PROPOSED BY:** Sam Hancock (EG-F19-057)  
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### **PROPOSAL 101**

#### **5 AAC 92.540. Controlled use areas.**

Remove the horsepower restriction in the Holitna-Hoholitna Controlled Use Area in Unit 19A as follows:

The Unit 19A registration hunt gives the Department of Fish and Game many tools to limit the number of hunters and/or keep harvest at sustainable levels without the 40-horsepower restriction on big game hunters. Because the 40-horsepower economically discriminates against hunters and serves no other purpose, I recommend it be removed. If the department has concerns about the number of hunters on the Holitna and Hoholitna Rivers they can limit the number of registration permits issued.

#### **CURRENT LANGUAGE:**

##### **5AAC 92.540(7)(B)**

[(B) the Holitna-Hoholitna Controlled Use Area

- (i) the area consists of water of the Holitna River downstream from Kashegelo, the Titnuk River downstream from Fuller Mountain and the Hoholitna River downstream from the confluence of the South Fork and main Hoholitna River.
- (ii) the area is closed to the use of any boat equipped with an inboard or outboard motor with an aggregate horsepower in excess of the manufacturer's rating of 40 horsepower for hunting big game, including the transportation of big game hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of big game, from August 1 through November 1; however this provision does not prohibit the transportation into the area of game meat that has been processed for human consumption;]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like to remove the 40-horsepower restriction on big game hunters in Unit 19A.

**PROPOSED BY:** Sam Hancock (EG-F19-044)  
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## **PROPOSAL 102**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Shift the season dates for the Tier II moose permit hunt in Unit 19A as follows:

I suggest that the season dates be changed to help address the warm and wet weather that occurs the first part of September.

### **5AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Unit 19(A), that portion downstream from and including the George River drainage, and downstream from and excluding the Downey River drainage

#### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

One antlered bull by Tier II permit only; up to 300 permits may be issued.

**Sept. 5-Sept. 25** [SEPT. 1 – SEPT. 20]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Tier II moose season in Unit 19A is currently from September 1-20. In recent years, warmer weather, increased gas prices, and expensive camping supplies have made it difficult to successfully hunt within that time frame. Warm wet weather in the early part of September may cause moose meat to start spoiling before hunters are able to get it safely home to finish processing and preserving the meat.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gregory Thomas Hoffman Sr.

(EG-F19-035)

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## **PROPOSAL 103**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Establish a Tier II permit hunt for moose in Unit 19A Remainder as follows:

For the Unit 19A Remainder moose hunt area, have a Tier II hunt if the harvestable portion drops below the lower range of the ANS.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Unit 19A Remainder (Eastern hunt area in and around the Holitna River). If the harvestable portion drops below the lower range of the ANS (amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence) the hunt should transition into a Tier II hunt.

Moose meat is an incredible valuable commodity for people on the Kuskokwim River. Most people along the river self-identify as a substance user. When bull moose are available for harvest, we should harvest them not leave them on the landscape to die of old age. By not allowing a Tier II hunt in this area the state is wasting meat people could really use. We cannot save bulls for later, that's just not how that would work. Use them or lose them. I understand that some people in the area don't like Tier II hunts but if we are in a situation where we drop below the lower range of

the ANS again we should have a Tier II hunt. It's the only way to make the best of a bad situation. If people only harvest bull moose it will not negatively affect the population. I don't like that a regulation was passed that would remove this subsistence option in the future just for this hunt area where subsistence is a way of life for most people.

**PROPOSED BY:** Sam Hancock

(EG-F19-056)

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## **PROPOSAL 104**

### **5 AAC 92.123(a)(1). Intensive Management Plans VII.**

Reauthorize the Unit 19A predation control program as follows:

(a) **Plans established.** Intensive management plans for the following areas are established in this section:

(1) Unit 19(A) Predation Control Area;

...

(b) Unit 19(A) Predation Control Area: the Unit 19(A) Predation Control Area is established and consists of those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage within Unit 19(A), encompassing approximately 9,972 [10,048] square miles; this predation control program does not apply within National Park Service or National Wildlife Refuge lands unless approved by the federal agencies; notwithstanding any other provision in this title, and based on the following information contained in this section, the commissioner or the commissioner's designee may conduct a wolf and black bear and brown bear population reduction or a wolf and black bear and brown bear population regulation program in Unit 19(A) to benefit moose:

(1) the following Wolf and Bear Predation Control Focus Areas are established in the Unit 19(A) Predation Control Area; the areas do not delineate a moose, wolf, or bear population and are not intended to distinguish animals within the areas from populations in Unit 19(A); the purpose is to focus wolf and bear control in a relatively small area where moose numbers can be better estimated, where moose are accessible to hunters, and where harvest can be closely monitored;

(A) the Wolf Predation Control Focus Area (WCFA) encompasses approximately 3,905 square miles within all Unit 19(A) drainages of the Kuskokwim River upstream from and including the Holitna River Drainage; wolf control will be conducted only within the WCFA; the department has the discretion to adjust the area's size and shape to include up to approximately 4,400 [4,000] square miles of Unit 19(A);

(B) the Black Bear and Brown Bear Predation Control Focus Area (BCFA) encompasses approximately 534 square miles consisting of those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage within the area enclosed by a line starting at Sleetmute at 61° 42.00' N. lat., 157° 10.00' W. long., then east to 61° 42.00' N. lat., 157° 00.00' W. long., then north to 61° 44.00' N. lat., 157° 00.00' W. long., then east to 61° 44.00' N. lat., 156° 55.00' W. long., then north to 61° 46.00' N. lat., 156° 55.00' W. long., then

east to 61° 46.00' N. lat., 156° 50.00' W. long., then north to 61° 48.00' N. lat., 156° 50.00' W. long., then east to 61° 48.00' N. lat., 156° 45.00' W. long., then north to 61° 50.00' N. lat., 156° 45.00' W. long., then east to 61° 50.00' N. lat., 156° 30.00' W. long., then south to 61° 40.00' N. lat., 156° 30.00' W. long., then west to 61° 40.00' N. lat., 156° 45.00' W. long., then south to 61° 18.00' N. lat., 156° 45.00' W. long., then west to 61° 18.00' N. lat., 157° 15.00' W. long., then north to 61° 24.00' N. lat., 157° 15.00' W. long., then east to 61° 24.00' N. lat., 157° 10.00' W. long., then north to 61° 42.00' N. lat., 157° 10.00' W. long.; bear control will be conducted only within the BCFA; the department has the discretion to adjust the area's size and shape to include up to approximately 800 square miles of Unit 19(A);

(2) this is a continuing control program that was first authorized by the board in 2004 for wolf control, with bear control added by the board in 2012; it is currently designed to increase moose numbers and harvest in the WCFA and BCFA by reducing predation on moose and is expected to make a contribution toward achieving the intensive management (IM) objectives in Unit 19(A);

(3) moose, wolf, black bear, and brown bear objectives are as follows:

(A) the IM population objective established by the board for Units 19(A) and 19(B) is 13,500–16,500 moose; based on the relative sizes of the two units, the proportional population objective for Unit 19(A) alone is 7,600–9,300 moose; the IM moose harvest objective for Units 19(A) and 19(B) is 750–950 moose annually; the proportional harvest objective for Unit 19(A) alone is 400–550 moose annually;

(B) the density objective for moose in the **WCFA is 1.0 moose**[BCFA is 2.0] per square mile (corrected for sightability) during late winter surveys; the annual moose harvest objective for the WCFA is **155** [120] moose;

(C) **the wolf control population objective in the WCFA is to reduce wolf numbers by at least 60–80 percent; the pre-control estimate within the WCFA is 75 wolves; the pre-control wolf population in Unit 19(A) is estimated at 150; only removing wolves from the WCFA will ensure that wolves persist in Unit 19(A);** [THE POST-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION OBJECTIVE FOR UNIT 19(A) IS 25–30 WOLVES; THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION IN UNIT 19(A) WAS ESTIMATED IN WINTER 2006–2007 AT 125–150 WOLVES; A MINIMUM WOLF POPULATION OF 25 WOLVES IS APPROXIMATELY AN 80 PERCENT REDUCTION FROM THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION AND WILL ENSURE THAT WOLVES PERSIST IN THE PLAN AREA;]

(D) **the black bear control objective in the BCFA is to reduce black bear numbers to the lowest level possible; the pre-control black bear population in Unit 19(A) is estimated at 2,500–3,000; the pre-control estimate within the BCFA is 92-102; because the BCFA is a relatively small geographic area, removing black bears from within the BCFA will have only a minor effect on the black bear population in Unit 19(A);** [THE WOLF CONTROL POPULATION OBJECTIVE IN THE WCFA IS TO

REDUCE WOLF NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL WOLF POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE WCFA IN WINTER 2006–2007 WAS 75–100 WOLVES;]

(E) the brown bear control objective in the BCFA is to reduce brown bear numbers to the lowest level possible; the pre-control brown bear population in Unit 19(A) is estimated at 180–210; the pre-control estimate within the BCFA is 10–15; because the BCFA is a relatively small geographic area, removing brown bears from within the BCFA will have only a minor effect on the brown bear population in Unit 19(A); [THE BLACK BEAR CONTROL POPULATION OBJECTIVE IN THE BCFA IS TO REDUCE BLACK BEAR NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(A) WAS ESTIMATED AT 2,500–3,000 BLACK BEARS; THE PRE-CONTROL BLACK BEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE BCFA WAS 135–160 BLACK BEARS; BECAUSE THE BCFA IS A RELATIVELY SMALL GEOGRAPHIC AREA, REMOVING BLACK BEARS FROM WITHIN THE BCFA WILL HAVE ONLY A MINOR EFFECT ON THE BLACK BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(A);]

[(F) THE BROWN BEAR POPULATION CONTROL OBJECTIVE IN THE BCFA IS TO REDUCE BROWN BEAR NUMBERS TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE; THE PRE-CONTROL BROWN BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(A) WAS ESTIMATED AT 180–200 BROWN BEARS; THE PRE-CONTROL BROWN BEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE WITHIN THE BCFA WAS 10–15 BROWN BEARS; BECAUSE THE BCFA IS A RELATIVELY SMALL GEOGRAPHIC AREA, REMOVING BROWN BEARS FROM WITHIN THE BCFA WILL HAVE ONLY A MINOR EFFECT ON THE BROWN BEAR POPULATION IN UNIT 19(A);]

(4) board findings concerning populations and human use are as follows:

(A) the Unit 19(A) **IM** moose population and harvest objectives have not been achieved;

(B) the WCFA objectives for moose density and moose harvest have not been achieved; [THE BCFA OBJECTIVES FOR MOOSE DENSITY AND MOOSE HARVEST HAVE NOT BEEN ACHIEVED;]

(C) predation by wolves and bears is an important cause of the failure to achieve **moose** population and harvest objectives;

(D) a reduction of wolf and bear predation within the WCFA and BCFA can reasonably be expected to make progress towards achieving the Unit 19(A) IM objectives;

(E) reducing predation is likely to be effective and feasible using recognized and prudent active management techniques and **are** based on scientific information;

(F) reducing predation is likely to be effective given land ownership patterns;

(5) authorized methods and means are as follows:

(A) hunting and trapping of wolves and hunting of black bears and brown bears by the public in Unit 19(A) during the term of this program may occur as provided in the hunting and trapping regulations set out elsewhere in this title, including use of motorized vehicles;

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may allow department employees to conduct aerial, land and shoot, or ground-based lethal removal of wolves and black bears and brown bears using state-owned, privately-owned, or chartered equipment, including helicopters, under AS 16.05.783;

(C) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may issue public aerial shooting permits or public land and shoot permits using fixed-wing aircraft as a method of wolf removal under AS 16.05.783;

(6) time frame is as follows:

(A) through **June 30, 2026**, [JUNE 30, 2020,] the commissioner may authorize removal of wolves and black bears and brown bears in Unit 19(A);

(B) annually, the department shall, to the extent practicable, provide to the board a report of program activities conducted during the preceding 12 months, including implementation activities, the status of the moose, wolf and bear populations, and recommendations for changes, if necessary, to achieve the objectives of the plan;

(7) the commissioner will review, modify or suspend program activities **as follows:** [WHEN:]

(A) **when the moose density and harvest objectives specified in this subsection are achieved within the WCFA.** [WOLF SURVEYS OR ACCUMULATED INFORMATION FROM DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL, HUNTERS, TRAPPERS, AND PERMITTEES INDICATE THE NEED TO AVOID REDUCING WOLF NUMBERS IN UNIT 19(A) BELOW THE CONTROL OBJECTIVE OF 25–30 WOLVES SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBSECTION;]

(B) **when any measure consistent with signs of nutritional stress in the moose population are identified.** [ THE MOOSE DENSITY AND HARVEST OBJECTIVES WITHIN THE BCFA SPECIFIED IN THIS SUBSECTION ARE ACHIEVED.]

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Unit 19A Intensive Management Plan expires on June 30, 2020. Public wolf control began in 2004 and the Department of Fish and Game implemented bear control in 2013 and 2014. Moose densities have been slow to respond to these treatments; however, some improvements are now being documented in the moose

population. Reauthorization of this plan will give the department the tools necessary to continue to work towards meeting the population and harvest objectives established by the plan.

This proposal will reauthorize the program for a six-year period from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2026. It includes options for aerial wolf control conducted by public permittees and the department, and aerial black and brown bear control conducted by the department only. Additional details will also be made available for public review in a separate IM operational plan prior to the board meeting.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-150)

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### **PROPOSAL 105**

**5 AAC 92.123. Intensive Management Plans VII.** Authorize predator control for wolf and bear in Unit 19A as follows:

Enact predator control for both wolf and bear within Unit 19A. Please substitute appropriate language or words.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** We would like predator control, bear and wolf, authorized for all of Unit 19A. We are still rebuilding our moose population and local area residents have expressed a desire to participate in this program in order to stabilize the predator population.

**PROPOSED BY:** Central Kuskokwim Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-103)

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### **PROPOSAL 106**

**5 AAC 92.123. Intensive Management Plans VII.**

Expand the predation control area for bear in Unit 19A as follows:

- Expand the bear predator control area that exists in Unit 19A to an area within the Lime Village Management Area, (LVMA), along the Stony River, between the mouth of Can Creek and the mouth of Stink Creek.
- The current bear predator control program in Unit 19A authorizes its application to 800 square miles. So far, and at this time it is being applied to 540 square miles. The program allows for bear predator control on another 260 square miles.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** There are too many bears in the LVMA, including the village itself. The effects include:

- There have been multiple incidents of both black and brown bears within Lime Village. These incidents have been increasing in number during recent years.

- Destruction of nets and smokehouses, loss of fish, and danger to humans have become common in the village.
- Local residents have had limited success harvesting these bears, due to bears becoming savvy to the sounds of people walking and ATVs.

**PROPOSED BY:** Stony Holitna Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-016)

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## **PROPOSAL 107**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose**

Establish a resident winter moose hunt in Unit 21E as follows:

The GASH Advisory Committee would like to propose a winter moose hunt in Unit 21E. Hunt conditions include the following:

1. Season: February 15<sup>th</sup> – March 15<sup>th</sup>
2. Registration permits available in the hunt area and online.
3. Residents only.
4. Any moose except cows with calves.
5. Quota will be set by the Department of Fish and Game.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Moose densities in the Grayling Anvik Shageluk Holy Cross (GASH) area have increased since surveys began in 2000 and are currently high. Recently twinning rates have begun to decline, browse utilization is high and it is time to slow the growth of the herd. There is additional harvest opportunity available and we would like to propose a winter moose hunt. This will help spread hunter effort out throughout the year, maintain strong bull:cow ratios, and allow the harvest of cow moose. We traditionally had a winter hunt and with the increase of moose it is time to put it back on the books. Additionally, a winter hunt will allow for more access and help us achieve our harvest objectives.

**PROPOSED BY:** GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross ) Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-017)

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## **PROPOSAL 108**

### **5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures.**

Require trophy destruction of moose antlers taken from Unit 21E under RM836 permits, and establish check stations as follows:

"Pursuant to the discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures outlined in 5 AAC 92.052(5), we propose to require the destruction of the trophy value of antlers from moose taken in Game Management Unit 21E subsistence registration RM836 moose hunts."

Trophy destruction can be required under 5 AAC 92.052 Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures: "(5) a permittee who takes an animal under a permit shall deliver specified

biological specimens (teeth and antlers) to a check station or to the nearest department office within a time set by the department; the trophy value of an animal taken under a subsistence permit may be nullified by the department or in the field by the hunter cutting one side antler in half upon take;" (5 AAC 92.052(5)).

There will be four check stations established in Unit 21E in the GASH area villages, and ensure all edible meat is left on the bone as required and trophy value of antlers destroyed. These check stations can be manned by volunteers from each of the four communities of GASH (Grayling Anvik Shageluk Holy Cross) and may be vendors of the community at the city offices who serve the State of Alaska selling licenses and tags. If the GASH Advisory Committee agrees, we request ADF&G establish these four check stations to obtain necessary biological or compliance information.

All edible meat of the front quarters, hindquarters, and ribs from moose harvested in Unit 21E prior to October 1 must remain on the bone until the meat is removed from the field and presented in one of the GASH area check stations or is processed for human consumption.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Local moose hunters accessing the Paradise Controlled Use Area portion of Unit 21E compete with nonresident hunters using boats that are causing a hardship to subsistence hunters using the RM836 permit. With an estimated stable number of moose in the Paradise CUA and low bull:cow ratios in the northern portion of Unit 21E, hunters will likely shift their demand toward the local Innoko River basin area. Local hunters are not meeting ANS (amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence) and the current moose hunt is unsustainable. We would like the Board of Game to establish check stations in all the GASH area villages and establish discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures to devalue trophy value of antlers.

**PROPOSED BY:** Eugene Paul

(EG-F19-120)

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## **PROPOSAL 109**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Replace the moose general season hunts for residents and nonresidents in Unit 21A with registration permit hunts as follows:

The McGrath and GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, and Holy Cross) Advisory Committees would like to propose a registration permit to replace the harvest ticket which will improve harvest reporting. The permit will be widely available on the internet and at Department of Fish and Game offices. The seasons and bag limits would otherwise remain the same and this registration permit would simply replace the harvest ticket required for both residents and nonresidents.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The harvest of moose in Unit 21A has increased substantially in recent years. In addition, harvest reporting appears to be poor based on information from hunters and the Alaska Wildlife Troopers. This means that actual harvest numbers are likely even higher than what is being reported. Accurate harvest reporting is essential for proper management of the moose population in Unit 21A.



**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish and Game Advisory Committee and  
GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross) Fish and Game Advisory  
Committee

(EG-F19-018)

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### **PROPOSAL 110**

#### **5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.**

Allow proxy hunting for moose in Unit 19D as follows:

Amend 5AAC 92.011 to allow proxy hunting for any antlered bull moose in Unit 19D.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** An interpretation has been made that proxy hunting is not allowed for moose in areas with an any antlered bull bag limit. Unit 19D currently has an any antlered bull bag limit so with this new interpretation proxy hunting would not be allowed in our area. However, proxy hunting is an important traditional practice in the McGrath area.

The McGrath AC was not able to meet on this issue before the proposal deadline to submit a proposal. Therefore, if they are not supportive of this proposal when they meet next fall, I will request it be withdrawn.

**PROPOSED BY:** Roger Seavoy, McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-052)

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### **PROPOSAL 111**

#### **5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.**

Allow proxy hunting for moose in Unit 21A and 21E as follows:

The GASH Advisory Committee would like to propose amending 92.011 to add Unit 21A and 21E to the list of areas in which proxy hunting is permitted for moose.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** An interpretation has been made that proxy hunting is not allowed for moose in areas with an any antlered bull bag limit. Proxy hunting is an important traditional practice and we would like to ensure that we are able to continue to proxy hunt for moose in Unit 21A and 21E.

**PROPOSED BY:** GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, and Holy Cross) Fish & Game Advisory  
Committee

(EG-F19-021)

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## **PROPOSAL 112**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Open a registration permit hunt for moose in a portion of Unit 19C and eliminate the general season hunt as follows:

The McGrath Advisory Committee would like to propose a registration permit to replace the harvest ticket hunt which will improve harvest reporting. The permit will be available on the internet and at Department of Fish and Game offices. The new registration permit would be required in that portion of Unit 19C between the east bank of the Windy Fork and the west bank of South Fork, from the mountains north to the Unit 19C/19D boundary. The seasons and bag limits would otherwise remain the same. The remainder of Unit 19C would also remain open using a harvest ticket as is currently in place.

*Note: The McGrath Advisory Committee submitted a map with this proposal, which is available on the Board of Game proposal book webpage at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook) or by contacting the ADF&G Boards Support Section at (907) 465-4046.*

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Harvest reporting for moose in the Farewell area appears to be poor based on information from hunters and Alaska Wildlife Troopers. As harvest is high in this small area it is essential to have good harvest reporting for proper management of the moose population.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-022)  
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## **PROPOSAL 113**

### **5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements.**

Require hunter orientation for nonresident moose hunters in Unit 21A and 21E as follows:

The GASH and McGrath Advisory Committees would like to propose a required nonresident orientation for moose hunters in Units 21A and 21E. This would be exactly the same as what is required in Unit 19B. Nonresident hunters who are not guided, or with a resident family member within the second degree of kindred, would be required to watch “Is This Moose Legal” and “Field Care of Big Game”. These videos are available on the Department of Fish and Game webpage and hunters can print out their certificates on the internet making it very easy.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Local residents have concern over meat care from moose harvested by nonresidents who are not guided. A moose is a big animal and most nonresident hunters have no idea what they are getting into when they shoot a moose. It is likely by far the biggest animal they have ever shot. There are excellent educational tools available from the department that would help these hunters to take better care of their meat.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish and Game Advisory Committee and  
GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross) Fish and Game Advisory  
Committee

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## **PROPOSAL 114**

### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Establish a winter registration hunt for antlerless caribou in Units 19D and 21A and remove the winter harvest ticket hunt in Unit 19D Remainder as follows:

Current winter caribou season:

Unit 19D Remainder: November 1 – January 31

Bag limit: One caribou by harvest ticket

(Unit 21A currently has no open winter season)

Proposed winter caribou seasons:

Units 19D and 21A: November 1 – February 28 (29 during leap year)

One antlerless caribou by registration permit

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Winter caribou hunts for Beaver Mountains and Sunshine Mountains caribou herds have not been held for decades. Recent surveys suggest that caribou numbers have increased (perhaps in response to wolf reductions) but fall harvest is light. There is also a question whether adequate opportunity is being provided for subsistence solely with a fall season. This question can be laid to rest with the proposed registration permit caribou hunt. It also simplifies Unit 19D winter regulations and provides opportunity to tap into an underutilized harvestable surplus.

The Department of Fish and Game will need to limit harvest especially during the early years of this hunt. The proposed bag limit of one antlerless caribou should reduce the risk of taking cows, a quota will prevent overharvest, and a restriction on aircraft will help keep harvest within the quota. Additional discretionary permit hunt conditions are available if the department needs them.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-048)

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## **PROPOSAL 115**

### **5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides.**

Require meat to be left on the bone for caribou, moose and bison in Units 19, 21A, and 21E as follows:

The McGrath area advisory committees would like to propose making meat on the bone required for all of Units 19, 21A and 21E. This would include caribou, moose, and bison, and meat would be required to be left on the front quarters, hindquarters and ribs.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Meat on the bone requirements vary throughout the McGrath management area and we would like to make them consistent. This

will help reduce confusion and help users know what is expected of them. Meat on the bone requirements will also help with meat care in the area.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee,  
Stony Holitna Fish & Game Advisory Committee,  
Central Kuskokwim Fish & Game Advisory Committee, and  
GASH (Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk & Holy Cross) Fish & Game Advisory  
Committee

(EG-F19-050)

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## **PROPOSAL 116**

### **#2020-XXX-BOG Finding**

Adopt a Board of Game finding for the Unit 19A Portage Mountain Muskoxen Herd Strategy as follows:

The new Board of Game finding would state:

Unit 19A Portage Mountain Muskoxen Herd Strategy  
4-16-2019  
- DRAFT

Purpose: The people of the Portage Mountain Central Kuskokwim River communities desire a sustainable muskoxen population in order to facilitate subsistence harvest on the herd. This document is drafted by the Central Kuskokwim Advisory Committee (CKAC) describing our strategies to achieve our objective. It is a goal of this document to become a finding of the Board of Game 2019-2020 meeting cycle.

- 1) This strategy applies to the Unit 19A portion of the Kuskokwim River drainage Portage Mountain Muskox Herd territory as outlined in the Map 1, including the buffer zone surrounding the Portage Mountains;
- 2) Whereas, the Muskox season in this area will remain closed for four years beginning in the year 2020;
- 3) Whereas, the season will be opened in a limited number of permits only after 4 years of no hunting or there is a minimum muskox population in the Portage Mountains of 150;
- 4) Whereas, we recognize the importance of cow muskox to future muskox populations. We understand that there will be no cow hunts unless habitat degradation occurs from excessive browsing;
- 5) Whereas, it is understood that a large muskox population will serve (but not completely) the subsistence needs of the residents of this area. We fully expect, however, that as limited subsistence hunting begins on this herd, the number of muskox harvested locally will be a priority;
- 6) Whereas, enforcement has a role in this strategy that needs to be developed in a cooperative fashion;

- 7) Whereas, the CKAC desires to collaborate with the local communities in the drafting of the Portage Mountain Muskoxen Management Plan; and,
- 8) Therefore, the reward this strategy promises is substantial, and the State of Alaska Department of Fish & Game are committed to achieving the goal of at least 150 muskoxen in the Portage Mountain Muskoxen count area.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Central Kuskokwim Advisory Committee desires a sustainable Portage Mountain Muskoxen herd and requests the Board of Game to accept our strategies listed above as strategies towards achieving this goal while the draft development of a Portage Mountain Muskoxen Management Plan is underway and issue an official finding.

**PROPOSED BY:** Central Kuskokwim Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-100)  
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#### **PROPOSAL 117**

##### **5 AAC 99.025. Customary and traditional uses of game populations.**

Determine a customary and traditional use finding for grouse in Unit 19 and modify regulations to provide reasonable opportunity for subsistence take as follows:

The Alaska Board of Game should determine that Unit 19 grouses are associated with customary and traditional subsistence uses and develop regulations that provide reasonable opportunities for subsistence use of grouses in Unit 19.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Alaska Board of Game has not yet determined whether grouses are associated with customary and traditional uses in Unit 19.

**PROPOSED BY:** Anna Frank (EG-F19-117)  
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#### **PROPOSAL 118**

##### **5 AAC 99.025. Customary and traditional uses of game populations.**

Determine a customary and traditional use finding for ptarmigan in Unit 19 and modify regulations for provide reasonable opportunity for subsistence take as follows:

The Alaska Board of Game should determine that Unit 19 ptarmigans are associated with customary and traditional subsistence uses and develop regulations that provide reasonable opportunities for subsistence uses of ptarmigan in Unit 19.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Alaska Board of Game has not yet determined whether ptarmigans are associated with customary traditional uses in Game Management Unit 19.

**PROPOSED BY:** Anna Frank

(EG-F19-121)

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**PROPOSAL 119**

**5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.**

Extend the lynx trapping season in Units 19C, 19D, and 21A as follows:

Current seasons: November 1 – March 15

Proposed seasons: November 1 – March 31

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Lynx trapping pressure in Units 19C, 19D, and 21A is a fraction of what it was in the 1980s and 1990s and harvest of lynx is lower than what the population could support so there is no biological reason to object to this proposal. Lynx trapping does not drive trapper effort in these units; marten drives effort between November and February and wolf and wolverine drive this effort between November and the end of March. Lynx are occasionally caught incidentally in wolverine and wolf traps during this time and this take will continue whether or not this proposal passes so very few additional lynx will be harvested if this proposal passes. Fur quality is variable during the proposed additional season with most hides being quite good and certainly adequate for home uses. The meat is always good. If this proposal passes, the trapper will be able to retain these lynx; there will be a reduced burden on the Department of Fish and Game and Alaska Wildlife Troopers to deal with late caught lynx; and additional opportunity will be afforded trappers with little additional lynx harvest.

The McGrath AC considered submitting this proposal for all of the McGrath area office units, but we did not because the affected committees should comment on their own preferences.

**PROPOSED BY:** McGrath Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-049)

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## **Fairbanks Area Proposals – Units 20A, 20B, 20C, 20F & 25C**

### **PROPOSAL 120**

#### **5 AAC 5AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Shorten the season for the any bull moose drawing permit hunt in Unit 20A as follows:

5AAC 85.045

Shorten the season for the any bull permits as follows:

Unit 20A	Residents	Nonresidents
	Open Season	Open Season
<b>Any Bull Drawing Permits:</b>	<b>Sept 1.-Sept. 10</b>	<b>Sept. 1-Sept. 10</b>

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Unit 20A, any bull moose drawing permit season length, September 1-September 25.

The current length of season is excessive. Proof is shown when the general season harvest numbers are less than the any bull permit harvest, which is the current condition in Unit 20A. Additionally these any bulls (mid-range bull moose) are the future 50-inch breeding stock that are being diminished, and having a negative effect on herd genetics, as the harvest numbers indicate.

Other solutions considered was elimination of the any bull drawing permit hunts in Unit 20A. Rejected as Department of Fish and Game supports these hunts as part of population control.

**PROPOSED BY:** Leroy Sutton

(EG-F19-054)

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### **PROPOSAL 121**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Establish hunt areas for moose drawing permit DM770 in Unit 20A as follows:

DM770 hunt be divided up to six areas (same as antlerless draw hunt areas for same area)

DM770A Western Tanana Flats Central

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A bounded on the south by the south side of the Rex Trail, on the west by the Totatlanika River, on the north by the north bank of the Tanana River, and on the east by Tatlanika Creek

DM770B Ferry Trail Management Area East

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A bounded on the north by the south side of the Rex Trail, on the east by the east bank of the Totatlanika River and Dexter Creek, on the south by the divide separating the Totatlanika River/California Creek drainage from the Healy Creek and Lignite Creek drainages, and on the west by the western side of the Golden Valley Electric Association's Northern Intertie.

DM770C Healy-Lignite Management Area

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A within the Healy-Lignite Management Area (Archery only) east of the west side of the Golden Valley Electric Association's Northern Intertie

DM770D Healy Creek

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A drained by Healy Creek, upstream of Coal Creek (at N 63° 52.833' W 148° 40.90').

DM770E Moody Creek

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A drained by Moody Creek.

DM770F Wood River Controlled Use Area west

~Hunt Area: that portion of Unit 20A bounded on the north by the south side of the Rex Trail, on the east by the east bank of Tatlanika and Sheep Creeks, on the south by the divide separating the Tatlanika Creek drainage from the Healy Creek drainage, and on the west by Dexter Creek and the east bank of the Totatlanika River.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like to see draw hunt DM770 be divided up more like the antlerless hunts in the same area. Over the last 28 years I've been hunting the middle western part Unit 20A I've seen declines in bull moose numbers in the areas that are easily accessed. Leaving the people without any bull tags very few bulls to hunt or having to find other areas to hunt. There are few bulls that reach the 50-inch or that have the four brow tines. Spreading out the any bulls taken might open up some legal bulls left in the areas easier accessed and spread the area of harvested moose over a larger more controllable area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Paul Nyberg

(EG-F19-076)

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**PROPOSAL 122**

**5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20A as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident	Nonresident
	Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts	Open Season

(18)

Unit 20(A), the Ferry Trail Management Area, Wood River Controlled Use Area, and the Yanert Controlled Use Area

RESIDENT HUNTERS:



<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
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...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 permits may be issued in combination with the Remainder of Unit 20(A); a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Aug. 15–Nov. 15
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1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Oct. 1–last day of Feb.
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...

1 moose by targeted permit only; by shotgun, crossbow, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued	Season to be announced by emergency order
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...

Remainder of Unit 20(A)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 20(A), the Ferry Trail Management Area, Wood River Controlled Use Area, and the Yanert Controlled Use Area; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Aug. 15–Nov. 15
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Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts	Nonresident Open Season
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1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or

...

1 moose by targeted permit only; by shotgun, crossbow, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued

...

Aug. 25– last day of Feb.

Season to be announced by emergency order

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goal is to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits, and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, help to meet Intensive Management (IM) objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios.

If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population could quickly increase to levels beyond the ability of the habitat to support the moose population. Opportunity to hunt a harvestable surplus of cow moose would be lost, and the ability to meet IM harvest objectives could be compromised. Subsistence hunters in the portion of Unit 20A outside the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (part of the western Tanana Flats) may not have a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses. Additionally, the population may need to be reduced dramatically when new data are available and analyzed.

This reauthorization of antlerless moose hunts will likely improve or maintain the ability of moose habitat to support the current moose population. Hunting opportunity and harvest will increase and allow the Department of Fish and Game to manage these moose populations at optimum levels. The additional harvest will help in meeting IM harvest objectives without reducing bull-to-cow ratios to low levels. Meat and subsistence hunters will benefit from the opportunity to harvest cow moose. Moose populations will benefit by maintaining moose densities at a level compatible with their habitat. Motorists and residents may benefit from reduced moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts.

The current objective is to maintain moose numbers within the IM population objective of 10,000–15,000 moose, while monitoring indicators of moose and habitat condition for positive

density-dependent responses. The Unit 20A population was estimated at 10,622–14,009 moose (90% confidence interval) in 2015. Because this estimate falls within the IM population objective and the department has not detected any indicators that the nutrition is not limiting this population, the intention is to harvest moose at a rate of 1% of the population which has been shown to stabilize the moose population at its current level. Antlerless harvest will be by drawing permits for a majority of Unit 20A and a registration permit outside the nonsubsistence area in northwest Unit 20A near Nenana. The harvest objective will be based on the most recent survey results.

The number of moose in Unit 20A was estimated at 17,768 in 2003. Research indicated this high-density moose population was experiencing density-dependent effects, including low productivity, relatively light calf weights, and high removal rates of winter forage. The objective beginning in regulatory year 2004–2005 (RY04) was to reduce moose numbers to the population objective of 10,000–12,000 unless indicators of moose condition showed signs of improvement at higher densities. The Unit 20A population was estimated at 10,622–14,009 moose (90% confidence interval) in 2015. In 2016, the board adopted the IM population objective of 10,000–15,000 moose.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game. (HQ-F19-174)  
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## **PROPOSAL 123**

### **5 AAC 92.530 (13). Management areas.**

Expand the Healy-Lignite Management Area in Unit 20A as follows:

#### 13 Healy-Lignite Management area

- (A) The area consists of that portion of Unit 20A that includes the entire Lignite Creek drainage, and that portion of the Nenana River drainage south of the Lignite Creek drainage and north of a boundary beginning at the confluence of the Nenana River and Healy Creek, then easterly along the south bank of Healy Creek to its confluence with Coal Creek, then northeasterly to the headwaters of Sanderson Creek at Usibelli Peak, **from headwaters of Lignite creek northwesterly to the headwaters of Winter creek including the entire drainages of Winter creek and Bonanza Creek to the confluence at Marguerite Creek, the entire upper Marguerite creek drainage to the confluence at Emma creek on the western bank and then northerly to the confluence of Bonanza Creek on the Eastern bank of Marguerite creek;**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I would like to see the Healy-Lignite Management Area expanded to the north. It is my understanding that the bow and arrow area was set up many ago to for the safety of the workers at Usibelli coal mine. Now that the active coal mine area has expanded, I believe it's time for the bow and arrow area to follow.

**PROPOSED BY:** Paul Nyberg (EG-F19-075)  
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## **PROPOSAL 124**

### **5 AAC 92.530(13). Management areas.**

Allow shotguns for hunting within the Healy-Lignite Management Area in Unit 20A as follows:

**Healy-Lignite Management Area**– Unit 20A that includes the entire Lignite Creek drainage, and that portion of the Nenana River drainage south of the Lignite Creek drainage and north of a boundary beginning at the confluence of the Nenana River and Healy Creek, then easterly along the south bank of Healy Creek to its confluence with Coal Creek, then northeasterly to the headwaters of Sanderson Creek at Usibelli Peak. Open to hunting by bow and arrow **and shotgun.** Small game may also be taken by falconry.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** To change the Healy-Lignite management area weapons restriction to include the use of shotgun use also. This would allow more opportunity for hunters to use the management area, especially for the taking of small game and game birds.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jonathan Talerico

(EG-F19-094)

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## **PROPOSAL 125**

### **5 AAC 92.530(13). Management areas.**

Allow shotguns for hunting small game, within the Healy-Lignite Management Area in Unit 20A as follows:

Healy-Lignite Management Area – Unit 20A that includes the entire Lignite Creek drainage, and that portion of the Nenana River drainage south of the Lignite Creek drainage and north of a boundary beginning at the confluence of the Nenana River and Healy Creek, then easterly along the south bank of Healy Creek to its confluence with Coal Creek, then northeasterly to the headwaters of Sanderson Creek at Usibelli Peak. Open to hunting by bow and arrow **and shotgun.** **Shotgun may only be used for the taking of small game.** Small game may also be taken by falconry.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** To change the Healy-Lignite management area weapons restriction to include the use of shotgun for the taking of small game. This would allow more opportunity for hunters to use the management area, especially for the taking of upland birds and waterfowl.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jonathan Talerico

(EG-F19-095)

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## **PROPOSAL 126**

### **5 AAC 92.530(13). Management areas.**

Allow shotguns and rimfire weapons for hunting small game within the Healy-Lignite Management Area in Unit 20A as follows:

Healy-Lignite Management Area – Unit 20A that includes the entire Lignite Creek drainage, and that portion of the Nenana River drainage south of the Lignite Creek drainage and north of a boundary beginning at the confluence of the Nenana River and Healy Creek, then easterly along the south bank of Healy Creek to its confluence with Coal Creek, then northeasterly to the headwaters of Sanderson Creek at Usibelli Peak. Open to hunting by bow and arrow only. Small game may also be taken by falconry, **shotgun, and rimfire firearms.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** To change the weapons restrictions of the Healy-Lignite Management area for bow and arrow only to include the use of shotguns and rimfire firearms for the taking of small game. This would allow many more hunters to be able to use the area for the harvesting of small game.

**PROPOSED BY:** Zachary Cizmowski

(EG-F19-097)

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## **PROPOSAL 127**

### **5 AAC 92.540(3)(F). Controlled use areas.**

Modify the boundary of the Wood River Controlled Use Area in Unit 20A as follows:

(F) the Wood River Controlled Use Area:

- (i) the area consists of that portion of Unit 20(A) starting at the point where Snow Mountain Gulch Creek meets the Wood River, then bounded on West by the East bank of the Wood River, following the Wood River upstream to its headwaters, then following the Glacier East to the divide separating drainages flowing East (such as the West Fork Little Delta River) and those flowing west (such as: Virginia Creek, Kansas Creek, Chute Creek, Rodgers Creek, Sheep Creek, Glacier Creek, and Three mile Creek), then following the divide North to the South bank of Snow Mountain Gulch Creek drainage, then following west down Snow Mountain Gulch Creek drainage to its intersection with the Wood River.
- (ii) the area is closed to the use of any motorized vehicle, except aircraft, for big game hunting, including the transportation of big game hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of big game, from August 1 through September 30; however, this provision does not prohibit motorized access via, or transportation of game on, the Parks Highway, or the transportation into the area of game meat that has been processed for human consumption;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I ask the Alaska Board Game to change the boundary of the Wood River Controlled Use Area to allow the use of motorized vehicles in a larger area of Unit 20A. Currently there is a tremendous amount of motorized

(ATV/UTV) hunting pressure in the Rex Dome and Rex Trail area, which is condensed and localized by the current controlled use boundaries. Opening more of this area would alleviate some pressure in the front end of this zone, and disperse the harvest deeper into Unit 20A. I propose the current non-motorized controlled use area boundary be pushed back to east/south of the Wood River.

**PROPOSED BY:** Erik Haugen

(EG-F19-079)

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## **PROPOSAL 128**

### **5 AAC 92.540(3)(F). Controlled use areas.**

Modify the boundary of the Wood River Controlled Use Area in Unit 20A as follows:

10 Wood River Controlled Use Area – Unit 20A bounded on the north by the south side of the Rex Trail beginning at its intersection with the east bank of the Tatlanika Creek, then easterly along the Rex Trail to Gold King airstrip, then from Gold King airstrip along the trail's extension along the north side of Japan Hills to the Wood River; bounded on the east by the east bank of the Wood River, including the Wood River drainage upstream from and including the Snow Mountain Gulch Creek drainage; bounded on the south by the divide separating the Yanert River drainage from the drainages of the Healy Creek, Moody Creek, Montana Creek, and the Wood River; and bounded on the west by the east bank of the Nenana River from the divide separating the drainage of the Yanert River and Montana Creek north to Healy Creek, then easterly along the south bank of Healy Creek to the north fork of Healy Creek, then along the north fork of Healy Creek to its headwaters, then along a straight line to the headwaters of Last Chance Creek, then along the east bank of Last Chance Creek to the confluence of Last Chance Creek and Moose Creek, then along the east bank of Moose Creek to the confluence of Moose Creek and the Tatlanika Creek, and then along the east bank of the Tatlanika creek to the Rex Trail.

The area is closed to the use of any motorized vehicle, except aircraft for big game hunting including the transportation of any big game hunters, their hunting gear, and/or parts of big game, August 1-September 30; however, this does not prohibit motorized access via, or transportation of game on, the Parks Highway or the transportation into the area of game meat that has been processed for human consumption.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Access through motorized area is very limited and in some instances/areas not possible to navigate through without crossing over into and through the Wood River Controlled Use Area. Opening this area up would allow for access to more motorized area for the general public with ease, by use of existing mining/hunting trails and roads that are already in place, so as to not be held out by a border and kept from accessing these lands, and giving the public ease of access to these lands.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jonathan and Andrew Talerico

(EG-F19-091 & 092)

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## **PROPOSAL 129**

### **5 AAC 92.540(3)(H)(ii). Controlled use areas.**

Change the closure dates for the Yanert Controlled Use Area (CUA) in Unit 20A to align with the Wood River CUA, and clarify whether horse feed is considered “hunting gear” as follows:

Align the Wood River CUA and Yanert Controlled Use Area closure dates.

Amend 5AAC 92.540(H)(ii) to read:

*The area is closed to the use of any motorized vehicle, except aircraft, for big game hunting, including the transportation of big game hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of big game, from Aug. 1 – Sept. 30; however, this provision does not prohibit motorized access, or transportation of game, on the Parks Highway, or the transportation into the area of game meat that has been processed for human consumption;*

Whether or not the Board of Game agrees with the above solution, we would ask the board to clarify for the Alaska Wildlife Troopers whether hay and grain to feed horses falls under the category of hunting “gear.”

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Yanert Controlled Use Area  
– No defined closure dates to motorized access.

When the Yanert Controlled Use Area (CUA) was instituted, unlike the Wood River and other CUAs that mandate a specific time frame for closure for certain types of motorized access, there was no specific closure dates to the Yanert CUA.

While there may have been reasons originally for making the Yanert CUA closed year-round to motorized access other than aircraft for hunting purposes, we can see no reason now to keep the area closed year-round to ATVs and snowmachines in terms of transporting hunters and their hunting gear, or hay and grain to feed horses at hunting camps with the CUA.

There is currently one moose hunt offered in Unit 20A Yanert CUA by harvest ticket for both residents and nonresidents and the season runs September 1 – September 25. There is one caribou hunt by draw permit DC827 with a season from August 10 – September 20. And there is a general season sheep hunt August 10 – September 20.

So why exactly is the Yanert CUA closed year-round for ATVs and snowmachines for the transportation of hunters and their hunting gear? The Alaska Wildlife Troopers interpret the Yanert CUA to be closed to motorized access other than aircraft year-round for the purpose of hunting or transportation of hunting gear. Some troopers also take the position that hay and grain used to feed horses is hunting “gear” and some residents have been prevented from transporting hay and grain into camps within the Yanert during the winter months by snowmachine. This is causing logistical/economic issues for those with camps within the Yanert CUA who wish to travel to their camps during the winter months via snowmachine or ATV and may be transporting hunting “gear”. We see no reason why anyone should not be allowed to transport hay and grain and tents and other

hunting “gear” into the CUA during the winter months via snowmachine or ATV, and avoid the prohibitive cost of having to hire an air-taxi.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska

(EG-F19-133)

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*Note: The Americans with Disabilities Act requires the State of Alaska to make reasonable modifications when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or activity.*

### **PROPOSAL 130**

**5 AAC 5 AAC 92.104. Authorization for methods and means disability exemptions.**

**5 AAC 92.540(3)(h). Controlled use areas.**

Disallow the issuance of methods and means disability exemption permits for the Yanert Controlled Use Area in Unit 20A as follows:

Change the regulation to prohibit the issuance of methods and means exemption permits within the Yanert Controlled Use Area. If left unaddressed, this situation is sure to grow. There are many hunters who would take advantage of this opportunity at the expense of all the other hunters who value highly these special limited access hunts.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Issue: Methods and means exemption permits in the Yanert Controlled Use Area. The State of Alaska has allowed motorized access into the Yanert Controlled Use Area which is a non-motorized hunt area.

I want to make my personal thoughts and experience concerning the methods and means exemptions permit given in the Yanert known to those who make the decisions concerning these matters in hopes of preventing this permit from ever being issued again. My family and I have been hunting in the Yanert for more than 20 years and I’m hoping to preserve this very special type of hunt that we have so enjoyed-for my children and grandchildren.

My son and I took a friend of ours horseback hunting in the Yanert in 2014 and 2015, he had been hurt a year earlier and was now handicapped. Because of his lifelong experience as a horseback hunter he proved that he was capable of handling himself in the saddle again as he always had!

At the end of our hunt last year 2018, my daughter two sons and I were riding out on the trail and were shocked as we came upon an ATV driven by someone, my handicap friend was in the passenger’s seat, he also had another ATV in the parking lot where other members of his family were. A few weeks later I went to visit him, I wanted to express my thoughts about him using an ATV in the Yanert. As we spoke, I reminded him how precious this area was to my family and I and how we felt that it was a big deal to share it with him as well. I explained that by getting the special permit he was creating a situation that will change the way we hunt in the Yanert because there will be many to follow. He told me his reason for getting the permit was because he had gotten rid of his horses.



This special access permit has been done to help disabled persons but is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of the access restriction in the first place. It has created a conflict in the field between those with special access permits and other hunters in the field who historically and currently choose these restricted areas where they can hunt without the presence of motorized vehicles and the factors they introduce. For many, the hunting season provides a very special time to escape the modern, mechanized world. Considerable effort and care is given to planning, preparation, and performance of backcountry hunts. The reward is both in finding oneself in an

area free of noisy, smelly, trail ripping machinery and in the harvesting of game that is not being disturbed by these vehicles.

**PROPOSED BY:** Tom Malapanis (EG-F19-126)  
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### **PROPOSAL 131**

#### **5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.**

Limit the use of off-road vehicles for moose hunting in Unit 20A as follows:

Change regulations to read: In Unit 20A it is against the law to hunt moose until after 3:00 am the day following the day you operated or were conveyed by any off-road vehicle (ORV) in Unit 20A.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) in Unit 20A. This change will help eliminate the unethical pursuit of moose by ORVs. Additionally, it will reduce habitat and trail deterioration being caused by ORVs. This will also enhance the overall outdoor experience for hunters.

If nothing is done the unethical use of ORVs and deterioration of the environment will continue to accelerate.

No other solution was found.

**PROPOSED BY:** Leroy Sutton (EG-F19-053)  
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### **PROPOSAL 132**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Shorten the moose hunting season in Units 20A and 20C as follows:

Having the moose season end five days earlier would give the moose time to calm down and most cows would be bred, and the calves would be larger going into winter.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Moose season that runs from September 1 to September 25 gets lots of pressure the last five days when moose are getting ready to breed, this also happens the last part of October and November if the cows don't get bred in September, they get push back a whole month or two which makes the calf that much smaller going into winter.

*Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Proposals*

**PROPOSED BY:** Wayne Valcq

(EG-F19-069)

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**PROPOSAL 133**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

**5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.**

Establish the Stampede Trail Management Area in Unit 20C for archery and muzzleloader hunting only as follows:

Unit 20C

(X) the Stampede Trail Management Area:

- A. the area consists of that portion of Unit 20(C) that includes the Stampede Trail, with a boundary of Denali National Park land on the South, West, and North sides, with the North boundary line (which travels from West to East) extending from the existing Park boundary line heading straight East to the Parks Highway.
- B. The area is open to hunting by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Stampede Trail corridor in Unit 20C has seen a dramatic increase in hunting pressure over the last ten years. A direct contributor to this increased pressure is easy access from the highway, and the “any bull” harvest. We ask the Alaska Board of Game to create a Stampeded Trail Management area to make this an archery and muzzleloader only zone.

**PROPOSED BY:** Middle Nenana River Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-080)

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**PROPOSAL 134**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Open a resident youth hunt for moose in Unit 20C as follows:

In Unit 20C, add a line in for another resident hunt, one bull, youth hunt only with dates August 25 to August 31.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Add a youth hunt to Unit 20C. Unit 20C is a great place with easy access to introduce youth hunters before the chaos of general season.

**PROPOSED BY:** Paul Nyberg

(EG-F19-077)

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## **PROPOSAL 135**

### **5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Shorten the moose season five days in a portion of Unit 20B as follows.

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
<b>(18)</b>		
...		
Unit 20(B), that portion of the Salcha River drainage downstream Of Goose Creek and upstream from And including Butte Creek		
1 bull, or	<b><u>Sept. 1–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 1–SEPT. 20]	<b><u>Sept. 5–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 5–SEPT. 20]
...		
Unit 20(B), that portion southeast of the Moose Creek dike within one-half mile of each side of the Richardson Highway		
1 bull, or	<b><u>Sept. 1–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 1–SEPT. 20]	<b><u>Sept. 5–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 5–SEPT. 20]
...		
Remainder of Unit 20(B)		
1 bull, or	<b><u>Sept. 1–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 1–SEPT. 20]	<b><u>Sept. 5–Sept. 15</u></b> [SEPT. 5–SEPT. 20]
...		

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Game Management Unit 20B has a management objective to maintain a bull-to-cow ratio of 30 bulls per 100 cows. This ratio has been declining in the more accessible portions of Unit 20B since 2015. The 2017 survey showed 17 bulls per 100 cows, an indication that the harvest of bull moose is likely too high.

After providing this information to, and gaining support from the local advisory committees, an emergency order was issued in July 2018 to shorten the season to the dates that are proposed. An

emergency order will also be issued for the 2019 season, to continue to improve the bull-to-cow ratio in these portions of Unit 20B.

Prior to 2011, these portions of Unit 20B had a September 1–15 moose season for residents and a September 5–15 moose season for nonresidents. The Board of Game lengthened the season in 2011 to September 1–20 for residents and September 5–20 for nonresidents because the moose population was above the Intensive Management (IM) population objective of 12,000–15,000 moose and the harvestable surplus of bulls was high. The moose population has decreased to 12,871 moose, which is a more appropriate level for the available habitat. Returning the moose season to the pre-2011 dates during the coming regulatory year is likely to alleviate the low bull:cow ratio and allow it to return to the objective of 30 bull per 100 cows.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-160)  
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### **PROPOSAL 136**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Extend the nonresident hunting season for moose in Unit 20B Remainder as follows:

Nonresident moose season in Unit 20B Remainder: One Bull, September 1-September 15 (season to coincide with resident season).

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Nonresident moose season dates in Unit 20B, specifically in 20B remainder. The fees for nonresident tags and license in Alaska have doubled this past year. It now costs \$960 for a hunting license and moose tag, a significant sum. In addition, the season was shortened by five days in Unit 20B. I understand the reasons for both shortening the season and doubling the cost. The cost increase, while dramatic, puts Alaska roughly on par with out of state fees in other west coast states for hunting. However, virtually all of the out of state seasons and bag limits in other states are the same for residents and nonresidents once the nonresident pays the out of state fees. When the season was longer, and the costs lower it may have made some sense for the nonresident season to start five days later than the resident season. However, with the shorter season and doubling of cost this now unduly burdens out of state hunters. Alaska should make the season dates the same for residents and nonresidents in the spirit of fairness, and to ensure that out of state hunters continue to support Alaska financially by coming to hunt your great state.

**PROPOSED BY:** Ken Wegner (EG-F19-003)  
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## **PROPOSAL 137**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Eliminate the muzzleloader registration moose permit hunt RM782, in Unit 20B as follows:

Eliminate hunt RM782.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Elimination of Unit 20B special muzzleloader moose hunt RM782. This hunt started out in 2011 as drawing hunt DM782 and remained that way through 2014. In 2015 it was changed to registration hunt RM782 and remains so today. This hunt takes place in a relatively inaccessible area. From 2011-2014 only two moose were harvested in this muzzleloader moose hunt and zero moose were harvested since the hunt became a registration hunt in 2015. It is costing the Department of Fish and Game unnecessary funds to keep this hunt going, considering the low participation and low harvest success. We propose the Board of Game eliminate this hunt from the books and save the department the funds it expends to continue this hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F19-105)

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## **PROPOSAL 138**

### **5 AAC 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Create a fall archery and muzzleloader hunt for moose in Unit 20B Remainder as follows:

Option one:

Unit 20B Remainder; residents only; one bull by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only by harvest ticket; season dates September 16 – September 20.

Option two:

Unit 20B Remainder; residents only; one bull by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only by registration permit of which applications available in Fairbanks beginning July 20; season dates September 16 – September 20.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Add a weapons restricted hunting option for Unit 20B remainder for September 16 - 20 for residents allowing bow and arrow and muzzleloader. This would allow residents additional moose hunting opportunities during the most productive time of the season.

Potential opposition: This would increase the number of moose harvested in a year where the population is less than average years. However, by making it a short weapons restricted hunt the harvest would be lower than a non-weapon restricted hunt.

To further control the number of moose harvested, this could be a registration hunt in order to keep harvest number within management goals.

**PROPOSED BY:** Dane Happ

(EG-F19-087)

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*Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Proposals*

## **PROPOSAL 139**

### **5 AAC 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Allow muzzleloader hunting in addition to the archery hunt in the drainage of the Middle Fork of the Chena River in Unit 20B as follows:

For Unit 20B drainage of the Middle (East) Fork of the Chena River: One bull by bow and arrow, or muzzleloader only. Harvest Ticket. September 26-30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Change the hunt in Unit 20B, drainage of the Middle (East) Fork of the Chena River to allow muzzleloader in addition to bow and arrow only for the September 26 – September 30 season.

The current muzzleloader season (RM782) for the drainage has difficult access as there is often inadequate snow coverage and open crossings for winter transportation. Similarly, the conditions are generally too cold for boat access. By allowing muzzleloaders from September 26 – September 30, it would provide a good opportunity for moose hunters later in the fall season.

Potential opposition: bowhunters may not wish to see an increase in hunters or wish not to compete with muzzleloader hunters. Although there would be an increase in competition, I do not think that allowing muzzleloader hunters would greatly encroach on bowhunters for such a large hunt area. It would certainly be less competition than allowing non-weapons restricted hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Dane Happ

(EG-F19-086)

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## **PROPOSAL 140**

### **5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20B as follows:

	<b>Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
<b>Units and Bag Limits</b> (18)		
...		
Unit 20(B), that portion within Creamer's refuge		
...		

**Units and Bag Limits**

1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Management Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or

1 antlerless moose by muzzle-loader by drawing permit only; up to 10 permits may be issued; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area

Unit 20(B), remainder of the Fairbanks Management Area

...

1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Management Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or

1 moose by targeted permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued

Unit 20(B), that portion within the Minto Flats Management Area

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by registration permit only

**Resident  
Open Season  
Subsistence and  
General Hunts**  
Sept. 1–Nov. 27

Dec. 1–Jan. 31

Sept. 1–Nov. 27

Season to be announced  
by emergency order

Oct. 15–Feb. 28

**Nonresident  
Open Season**  
Sept. 1–Nov. 27

Dec. 1–Jan. 31

Sept. 1–Nov. 27

No open season.

No open season.

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
...		
Unit 20(B), the drainage of the Middle Fork of the Chena River		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 300 permits may be issued; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Aug. 15–Nov. 15	
1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Oct. 1–Feb. 28	No open season.
...		
Unit 20(B), that portion southeast of the Moose Creek dike within one-half mile of each side of the Richardson highway		
...		
1 moose by drawing permit only; by crossbow, bow and arrow, or muzzleloader only; up to 100 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 16–Last day of Feb.	No open season.
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued	Season to be announced by emergency order	No open season.
Remainder of Unit 20(B)		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth hunt only; up to 200 permits may be issued; or	Aug. 5–Aug. 14	No open season
...		



<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 1,500 permits may be issued in the remainder of Unit 20(B); a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Aug. 15–Nov. 15	No open season.
1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or	Oct. 1– Last day of Feb.	
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued	Season to be announced by emergency order	No open season.

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goal is to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits, and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, help to meet Intensive Management (IM) objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios.

If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population may exceed population objectives causing habitat degradation and a loss of opportunity to hunt a surplus of antlerless moose. Furthermore, subsistence hunters in the portion of Unit 20B in the Minto Flats Management Area may not have a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses.

The reauthorization of antlerless moose hunts in Unit 20B will allow Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to manage the moose population within the population objectives of 12,000 to 15,000 moose. Hunting opportunity and harvest will increase and allow ADF&G to manage this moose population at optimum levels. The additional harvest is necessary to meet intensive management harvest objectives while maintaining bull-to-cow ratios within objectives. Subsistence hunters will have reasonable opportunity to harvest cow moose. Moose populations will benefit by maintaining moose densities at levels compatible with their habitat. Motorists and residents may benefit from reduced moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts.

The moose population level in Unit 20B is currently within the population objective of 12,000–15,000 moose. The population declined from an estimated 20,173 moose in 2009 to 11,064 in 2015, due in large part to antlerless moose hunts designed to lower the population to those objectives. The population increased slightly to 12,871 moose in 2017. To maintain the current

population level, because the population estimate is within objectives, the department recommends limited antlerless hunts in the Minto Flats Management Area (MFMA) and the Fairbanks Management Area (FMA). The department will continue to monitor the moose population and may implement additional antlerless hunts if the population continues to trend upward.

*Fairbanks Management Area (FMA)*—The purpose of this antlerless hunt is to regulate population growth in the FMA and potentially reduce moose–vehicle collisions and nuisance moose problems.

The number of moose–vehicle collisions in the FMA is high and pose significant safety risks to motorists. In addition, moose nuisance issues continue to place significant demands on property owners. To increase hunting opportunity and harvest and reduce moose–vehicle collisions, the department incrementally increased the number of drawing permits for antlerless moose in the FMA during RY99–RY10. Moose–vehicle collisions and moose nuisance problems declined during RY06–RY13, presumably, in part due to consistent antlerless moose harvests.

*Minto Flats Management Area (MFMA)*—The primary purpose of this antlerless hunt is to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses and to regulate the moose population in the MFMA.

The MFMA moose density was high in 2010 (4.4 moose/mi<sup>2</sup>). To reduce the moose population, the harvest of antlerless moose during RY12 and RY13 was about 2.5% of the population. The fall 2015 and 2017 estimates showed more appropriate densities of 1.6 and 1.7 moose/mi<sup>2</sup>, respectively. Because the population level has been stable and within the population objectives, the antlerless harvest has been reduced to approximately 1% of the total population to maintain the current population level.

*Targeted Hunt*—The purpose of the targeted hunt is to allow the public to harvest moose that are causing nuisance or public safety issues. These permits are used sparingly, but allow the public to harvest the moose instead of the department just dispatching them.

*Unit 20B, drainage of the Middle Fork of the Chena River and the Remainder of Unit 20B*— The antlerless moose harvest in this area is designed to regulate the moose population in this portion of Unit 20B and help meet the IM harvest objectives for Unit 20B.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game. (HQ-F19-175)  
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## **PROPOSAL 141**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Eliminate registration moose permit hunt RM785, in the Minto Flats Management Area in Unit 20B as follows:

We believe that the antlerless hunt that occurs in the Minto Flats Management Area, RM785, not continue at this time.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** As stewards of the area in the communities of Tanana, Rampart and Manley and in support of the residents of the neighboring Minto Flats Management Area, we express our concerns with the continuation of the cow hunts in light of the increased wolf population. Our logic is to pause current regulations prohibiting cow hunts in the Minto Flats Management Unit until further evaluation occurs.

Local observations and real time hunting success in my area are demonstrating that moose are not as plentiful in our area as they once were. We are having difficulty meeting our needs during the traditional hunting season.

**PROPOSED BY:** Tanana Rampart Manley Fish & Game Advisory Committee (EG-F19-127)

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## **PROPOSAL 142**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Eliminate registration moose permit hunt RM785, in the Minto Flats Management Area in Unit 20B as follows:

RM785 antlerless moose hunt would be repealed. While proponents recognize that elimination of this hunt will represent a restriction to subsistence opportunity, elimination of this cow moose hunt is necessary to assist ADF&G in appropriately managing moose for ceremonial uses, which is of higher priority than the Unit 20B drawing permit cow hunts that ADF&G has stated is threatened by ceremonial uses of cow moose in the greater Fairbanks Area. It is also important to ensure that the moose population respond to recent years of intensive management and excessive cow harvests given the ongoing increasing demand for moose in the Minto Flats.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Eliminate the antlerless moose hunt (RM785) in Minto Flats Management Area. The winter antlerless moose hunt no longer has the support of local residents who have observed declines in local moose populations and feel that all hunting of cow moose should be prohibited in order to better provide for future sustainable harvests of moose for regular general hunting, subsistence hunting, and constitutionally-protected ceremonial hunting.

**PROPOSED BY:** Anna Frank

(EG-F19-122)

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## **PROPOSAL 143**

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Eliminate all antlerless moose drawing hunts in Unit 20B except for the Minto Flats Management Area as follows:

All Unit 20B antlerless moose hunts would be repealed including: DM698, DM699, DM700, DM701, DM702, DM703, DM704, DM705, DM706, DM707, DM708, DM709, DM710, DM711, DM712, DM713, DM714, DM715, DM716, DM717, DM718, DM719, DM720, DM721, DM722, DM723, DM724, DM725, DM726, DM727, DM728, DM729, DM730, DM731, DM732, DM733, DM734, DM735, DM736, DM737, DM738, DM739, DM740, DM741, DM742, DM743, DM744, DM745, DM783, DM786, DM788, DM789, AM751, YM601, YM602, YM603, YM604, YM605, YM606, YM607, YM608, YM609, YM610, YM611, YM612, YM613, YM614, YM615, YM616, YM617, YM618, YM619, YM620, YM621, YM622, YM623, YM624.

While proponents recognize that elimination of these hunts will represent a loss of general hunting opportunity, elimination of this cow moose hunt is necessary to assist ADF&G in appropriately managing moose for ceremonial uses, which is of higher priority than the Unit 20B drawing permit cow hunts that ADF&G has stated is threatened by ceremonial uses of cow moose in the greater Fairbanks Area. It is also important to ensure that the moose population respond to recent years of intensive management and excessive cow harvests given the ongoing and increasing demand for moose in the Minto Flats. If cow moose hunts remain necessary for ADF&G management, then ceremonial uses of cow moose should be prioritized above drawing permit hunts for weapons restricted recreational hunts in the greater Fairbanks area and ADF&G should stop recording ceremonial harvests as illegal harvests in Fairbanks Area moose management reports

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Eliminate all antlerless moose hunts in Unit 20B, except the Minto Flats Management Area. Antlerless moose hunts no longer have the support of local residents who have been stopped from taking cow moose for certain religious ceremonies. Proponents wish to prohibit all hunting of cow moose in order to better provide for future sustainable harvests of moose for regular general hunting, subsistence hunting, and constitutionally protected ceremonial hunting.

**PROPOSED BY:** Anna Frank

(EG-F19-124)

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## **PROPOSAL 144**

### **5 AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Shorten the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20A and 20B as follows:

Close this season on November 30th.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The harvesting of antlerless moose in December, January and February. You are causing additional stress on moose that are going into the winter. It also allows bulls that have dropped antlers to be harvested in areas with antler restrictions.

**PROPOSED BY:** Leonard Jewkes

(EG-F19-115)

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### **PROPOSAL 145**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Modify the nonresident bag limit for moose in Unit 25C as follows:

**Nonresident hunters, Unit 25C: One bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with four or more brow tines on at least one side, Sept. 5 - Sept. 15.**

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS, UNIT 25C:ONE BULL SEPT. 5 - SEPT. 15.]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In Unit 25C nonresident hunters can harvest ONE BULL. Due to the low moose density in Unit 25C, Alaska residents should take priority over nonresidents in harvesting the small bulls. The primary intention is to benefit resident Alaskans so that they can put food on their tables.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jormah Pope

(EG-F19-031)

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### **PROPOSAL 146**

#### **5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Allocate up to ten percent of the caribou drawing permits DC827 in Unit 20A, to nonresidents as follows:

**Allocate no more than 10 percent of DC827 permits to nonresidents,**

Amend 5AAC 85.025 to read:

Unit 20(A) August 10 – September 20, one bull by drawing permit only; up to 200 permits may be issued. **Nonresidents may receive up to 10 percent of the total permits awarded.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** DC827 draw permit allocation. According to data from the Department of Fish and Game when the Board of Game doubled the

number of draw permits one could submit to six, instead of three, there was a huge influx of nonresident applications submitted by hunt booking agents such as World Wide Trophy Adventures and Huntin' Fool for the DC827 caribou permit for Unit 20A. Resident permit applications also increased, but not near the quadrupling of nonresident applications.

In 2018, for example, based on raw data from the department, there were ~1448 nonresident applications for the DC827 hunt, compared to ~379 in 2016 prior to the doubling of permit applications. This also led to nonresidents winning 23% of the permits in 2018, compared to 6% in 2016.

Resident Hunters of Alaska has remained constant in advocating for a 90/10 percent resident/nonresident allocation of all draw permits. Draw permits mean there isn't enough game

for everyone to be able to hunt and in those cases, residents should have a clear priority opportunity.

For draw permits that allow equal opportunity to draw among both residents and nonresidents, the increase in the number of permits one can apply for has led and will continue to lead to the kind of situations we see with this permit whereby hunt booking companies flood the state with nonresident applications and nonresidents then gain a higher percentage of permits.

There should be limits on nonresident opportunity.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska (EG-F19-125)

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### **PROPOSAL 147**

#### **5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear**

Extend the hunting season for brown bear in Units 20A and 20B Remainder as follows:

Brown/grizzly Bear 5 AAC 85.020.

Unit 20A / 20B Remainder: Sept 1 - [MAY 31] **June 30.**

One Bear every regulatory year.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Lengthen the brown/grizzly bear season in Unit 20A/20B Remainder from September 1 – May 31 to September 1 – June 30. This will better align with bear baiting season which is April 15 – June 30. Currently hunters can take black bear over bait until June 30 but you can only take a brown/grizzly bear until May 31. This change will allow hunters to take brown/grizzly bears until the end of baiting season on June 30.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jeff Lucas (EG-F19-110)

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### **PROPOSAL 148**

#### **5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

Extend the hunting season for brown bear in Unit 20B Remainder as follows:

Unit 20B Remainder: September 1 – June 30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** I propose that the brown/grizzly bear season in Unit 20B Remainder be extended until June 30th. In 2018, the moose season in much of Unit 20B was shortened by several days and now ends on September 15. Common sense would say the season was shortened due to a lack of resource, therefore extending the brown/grizzly bear season within Unit 20B Remainder would be a prudent management strategy in order to increase the resource to a more sustainable number.

**PROPOSED BY:** Nicholas Muche (EG-F19-051)

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## **PROPOSAL 149**

### **5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Allow brown bears to be taken over bait in Unit 25C as follows:

In Units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14A, 14B, 15, 16, 18, 19A, 19D, 20A, 20B, 20C, 20D north of the Tanana River, 20E, 20F, 21C, 21D, 23, 24C, 24D, **25C** and 25D brown/ grizzly bears may be taken at bear bait stations. Hunters must comply with seasons, bag limits, salvage, and sealing requirements for brown/grizzly bears (registration permits and locking-tags may be required in some areas, contact ADF&G for details).

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Align brown bear baiting regulation with neighboring game management units. Allow brown/grizzly bears to be taken at bear bait stations in Unit 25C.

Currently hunters mostly take grizzly bears incidental to their pursuit of caribou and moose in Unit 25C. Units 20B and 25C have been identified for intensive management of moose and caribou; harvesting grizzly bear populations at the higher range of sustainable harvest would be consistent with the mandate to increase moose and caribou populations.

**PROPOSED BY:** Michael Hajworonsky

(EG-F19-027)

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## **PROPOSAL 150**

### **5 AAC 92.113. Intensive Management Plans III.**

Establish an intensive management plan for wolves and bear in the Minto Flats Management Area in Unit 20B as follows:

The intent of Alaska Board of Game moose hunting regulations in Minto Flats Management Area (MFMA) is to provide for all uses of moose for general resident and nonresident moose hunting, subsistence moose hunting by Alaska residents, and ceremonial harvests by Alaska residents for Alaska Native funerary and memorial potlatch ceremonies. Because of public concerns about the impact of high wolf numbers on moose in the MFMA, the Alaska Board of Game should direct the ADF&G to develop an Intensive Management feasibility assessment to evaluate the benefits of a predation control plan for wolves (and/or bears?) to increase the moose population for high levels of all human uses in the Minto Flats Management Area, including ceremonial uses of cow moose.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Establish an Intensive Management plan to control predation by wolves in Unit 20B, MFMA. Local residents are concerned about the high numbers of wolves in the MFMA and their impact on the availability of moose for local customary and traditional subsistence uses and ceremonial uses for certain Alaska Native religious ceremonies. This area is all state-managed refuge lands, Alaska Native allotments, and Alaska Native corporation lands, as well as limited amounts of other private land, which currently falls under the jurisdiction of the Alaska Board of Game and the ADF&G.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alexander Hanna

(EG-F19-119)

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### **PROPOSAL 151**

#### **5 AAC 85.056. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf.**

Change the season dates for hunting wolves in a portion of Unit 20C as follows:

Realign the wolf season in a portion of Unit 20C to the rest of the unit:

#### **5 AAC 85.056. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf**

[UNIT 20(C), THAT PORTION WEST OF A LINE BEGINNING AT 63\_ 48.146' N. LAT., 148\_ 59.934' W. LONG., NORTH TO 63\_ 49.445' N. LAT., 148\_ 59.935' W. LONG., THEN WEST TO 63\_ 49.445' N. LAT., 149\_ 12.699' W. LONG., THEN NORTH TO 63\_ 54.642' N. LAT., 149\_ 12.699' W. LONG., AND BOUNDED ON THE SOUTH, WEST, AND NORTH BY DENALI NATIONAL PARK

AUG. 10 - APR. 15 AUG. 10 - APR. 15]

Unit 20 [REMAINDER] 10 wolves **Aug 10 - May 31**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Realigning the season to its historical alignment with the rest of Unit 20. The restriction on the season was a knee jerk reaction to a National Park Service collared wolf harvested at a commercially operated illegal bait site. The realignment has had no biological impact. The only impact has been lost opportunity for hunters. Simplification of the regs is good for everyone and the rare fleeting opportunities to harvest wolves is insignificant biologically.

**PROPOSED BY:** Hunter and Gatherers Lives Matter

(EG-F19-135)

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### **PROPOSAL 152**

#### **5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting.**

#### **5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping.**

Establish closed areas for the taking of wolves near Denali National Park in Unit 20C as follows:

We propose two closure options to meet the objectives of this proposal. Proposal 1 represents the most effective closure in terms of limiting harvest of wolves that primarily reside within the boundaries of the park and provide the majority of wolf sightings. Additionally, the extent of the closure will facilitate interpretation of the effects of the closure on wolf sightings. Proposal 2 represents a closure with a reduced spatial extent and may limit the ability to assess the closures impact on wolf sighting dynamics.

Proposed Closure 1: Within Game Management Unit 20C; those portions of UCU (Uniform Coding Units) 0607, 0605, and 0502 west of George Parks Highway and bounded by Denali National Park on three sides, is closed to the taking of wolves by hunting from February 1 to July 31 and by trapping from February 1 to October 31 (Figure 1).



Proposed Closure 2: Within Game Management Unit 20C; those portions of UCU 0607 and 0605 west of George Parks Highway and bounded by Denali National Park on three sides, is closed to the taking of wolves by hunting from February 1 to July 31 and by trapping from February 1 to October 31 (Figure 1).

*Note: The maps, figures and references submitted with this proposal are available on the Board of Game proposal book website at: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook).*

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In Alaska, wolves are among the most desired species for viewing (Shea & Tankersley 1991), and state wildlife management includes mandates to provide for multiple uses, including non-consumptive uses such as wildlife viewing (Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2006). Wildlife viewing also brings an important socio-economic benefit to the state of Alaska, with wildlife viewing activities in Alaska supporting over \$2.7 billion dollars in economic activity in 2011. Forty percent of visitors to Alaska reported hoping to view wild wolves during their visit. (ECONorthwest 2012).

More than anywhere else in Alaska, wolves in the eastern region of Denali National Park (Denali), provide significant wolf viewing opportunities as visitors travel along the Park Road. Denali is recognized as one of the best places in the world for people to see wolves in the wild and several thousand park visitors may see wolves in a given year. In addition, viewing large carnivores, particularly wolves and grizzly bears, is a main indicator of a satisfying visitor experience in Denali National Park (Manning & Hallo 2010).

Wolf viewing opportunities in Denali are primarily provided by one to three packs of wolves that center their activity near the Park Road during the summer months (Figure 2). Analysis of 14 years of data from the National Park Service GPS radio collars shows that these same wolf packs that provide the majority of wolf sightings during the visitor season also show a pattern of use of areas just outside of the boundary of the park during the winter and spring (Figure 3). Wolves that frequent the Park Road are accustomed to the presence of humans and may be particularly vulnerable to harvest and even older breeding wolves are more susceptible to being trapped or shot. Harvest of wolves, particularly breeding wolves, has the potential to decrease wolf numbers, alter wolf behavior, and decrease opportunities for wolf viewing by park visitors. Borg et al. (2016) documented that the probability for wolf sighting during the period a buffer was in place was twice that of the periods when the buffer was absent. While wolf harvest just outside the northeastern boundary of the park may have little effect on regional scale wolf populations, it can have significant effects on wolf packs whose territories intersect the Park Road and on the experience of Denali's visitors.

From 2000 to 2010, the Alaska Board of Game (BOG) approved the closure of certain areas adjacent in the Stampede Corridor to the park boundary to wolf hunting and trapping year-round in order to protect wolf viewing opportunities in the park (Figure 1). In 2010, members of the BOG requested more information and research into the relationship between harvest of wolves in the Stampede corridor and wolf sightings within Denali National Park Service and Preserve (DNPP) ("Unit 20C Wolf Closure Proposals" 2010). In September 2010, the National Park Service, with collaboration from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game embarked on a 5-year

study of the relationship of wolf harvest adjacent to the park boundaries on wolf population and pack dynamics and on wolf viewing opportunities (Borg 2015).

Based on this research, we found that the presence of the trapping and hunting buffer zone during 2000-2010 was associated with increased wolf sightings in Denali National Park compared to 2011-2013 and 1997-2000 (Borg et al 2016). Both the wolf population size and an index measuring the number of wolves denning near the park road, which were strongly associated with increased wolf sightings, were also greater during the period when the buffer zone was in place. Thus, the presence of the buffer may have increased local population size and the likelihood that wolves would den near the park road. Alternatively, the increase in sightings may have been a result of coincidental peaks in population size or the number of wolves denning near the park road as a result of variables not measured or explicitly included in our analysis.

However, we note that the two natural variables generally considered to be strong drivers of wolf population dynamics (prey density and snow conditions, which influence prey vulnerability to wolf predation (Mech et al. 1998) were relatively consistent during the period of our study with no statistically significant differences (Adams & Roffler 2010; Owen & Meier 2009; Schmidt & Rattenbury 2013; Western Regional Climate Center 2015).

It should also be noted that the presence of the buffer did not decrease the average annual number of wolves harvested in UCUs overlapping the Stampede Corridor (UCUs 502, 605, 607), in fact harvest was higher during the years the buffer was in place (Alaska Department of Fish & Game 2013); note that these UCUs extend beyond the buffer area. During the presence of the buffer zone, harvest of wolves adjacent to DNPP ( $7 \pm 11.25$  SE) was on average greater than during the period without the presence of the buffer zone ( $2.6 \pm 4.3$ ). Simultaneously the buffer was associated with substantially increased wolf sightings (Borg et al 2016). Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that closure of wolf hunting and trapping in an area within the Wolf Townships would present the optimal solution in meeting both consumptive and non-consumptive objectives of state and federal management agencies, and benefit about 400,000 visitors to Denali NPP with potentially a greater likelihood of observing wild wolves.

We recognize that it is possible that the higher wolf population size, higher harvest levels and increased sightings during the buffer years were coincidental and not related to the buffer itself but some other unknown factor(s). Resolving this uncertainty would require additional years of monitoring the response of the system with a new buffer zone in place. The NPS will continue to monitor the wolf population and wolf viewing index to assess several factors (including the efficacy of the buffer, if enacted) that may affect wolf viewing opportunities in the park.

It has been suggested that given the large number of Alaska's visitors that view wildlife along the Denali Park Road and the relatively small number of wolf trappers and hunters active in the Stampede Corridor, that the seasonal closure of the Corridor to wolf harvest is a negative impact for a few with a positive outcome for many (Mowry 2013). Indeed, annually well over 400,000 people visit DNPP (Fix, Ackerman & Fay 2012), while the numbers of active trappers in the Stampede Corridor is between 1-3 in any given year (Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2013). However, the NPS recognizes the impact of the closure to the lifestyle and livelihood of these trappers may represent a significant trade-off.

What will happen if nothing is done? Wolves from the most commonly viewed packs will continue to be trapped and hunted just outside of park boundaries, in places as close as four miles from the park road. This may result in continued disruption of wolf packs in the areas where wolves are seen by Alaska's visitors, a decrease in wolf numbers along the park road, possible loss of packs that frequent the park road (Borg 2015, Borg et al 2016) and decreased opportunities for wolf viewing.

Will the quality or the resource harvested or the products produced be improved? This proposal would help to protect and improve the opportunities for Alaskans and others to see wolves along the Denali Park Road. It would have a small effect on the number of wolves harvested in a portion of Unit 20C.

Who is likely to benefit?

- Visitors who come to Alaska to see a diversity of wildlife (about 400,000 annually).
- Tour operators and the Alaska tourism industry that promote and provide wildlife viewing tour products.
- People who value the concept of conservation areas for wildlife.

Who is likely to suffer? Trappers and hunters who wish to harvest wolves in the 152 square mile area that we are proposing to close within the Stampede Corridor. Over the last 20 years, the average number of individuals harvesting a wolf from this area is less than two people per year. This proposed change may impact the lifestyle or livelihood of a few trappers who use the area.

Within the proposed closed area, under this proposal, wolf hunting would be open from August 10 to January 31, and wolf trapping would be open from November 1 to January 31. Within the proposed buffer, this proposal curtails the wolf hunting season by 29% and the wolf trapping season by 50% of the days.

Other solutions considered? Including UCU-502 in Unit 20C was considered. Limiting harvest in a larger area that included the western most UCU within the Stampede Corridor, which has a much lower density of use by wolves than in UCUs 605 and 607 (over the last 12 years) was considered. This would have limited harvest opportunity with only a moderate reduction in risk to wolves.

Closing the entire wolf hunting and trapping season within the buffer was also considered. Wolves' reproductive capacity and pack structure is most vulnerable to disruption during the breeding season (Borg et al 2015). Packs that lose breeders during the breeding season are more likely to disband. Therefore, we chose to submit a proposal where the buffer is implemented during the proestrus and the breeding season. Wolves in DNPP typically come into oestrus in March (Mech et al. 1998) and give birth in early May following a two-month gestation (Hayssen & van Tienhoven 1993). There is a prolonged period of proestrus in grey wolves of about 6 weeks (Asa & Valdespino 1998) during which the mated pair spends time together coordinating their activity, and this period appears important for the formation and maintenance of the pair bond (Mech & Knick 1978; Rothman & Mech 1979). We therefore define the breeding season and spring as February–April.

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### **PROPOSAL 153**

#### **5 AAC 5 AAC: 84.270. Fur bearer trapping.**

Extend the trapping season for wolverine in Unit 20F as follows:

Change the wolverine trapping season to read:

Units 12, 20E and 20F.....Nov. 1 – Mar. 15.....No limit

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The wolverine trapping season in Unit 20F ends February 28, this is 15 days prior to the end of the lynx season (March 15). The topography and geography of Unit 20F is similar to surrounding Units 20C, 21B, 21C, 24A 24B, 25D; the lynx season in all these units end prior to the close of wolverine.

Incidental catch of wolverine can occur in lynx sets. Closing the wolverine season in Unit 20F on March 15, would coincide with lynx thereby eliminating incidental catches. Lengthening the season 15 days would not significantly increase the harvest of wolverine and there would be no biological impact to the resource.

Current Alaska trapping regulations state that “If you take an animal during a closed season or for which there is no open season, it is the property of the state. Transport it immediately to the nearest ADF&G or Alaska Wildlife Trooper office and surrender it.

Remote trappers in Unit 20F currently face great difficulty, expense and travel long distances getting to town. This would reduce the travel and financial burden on remote trappers who trap a wolverine out of season.

**PROPOSED BY:** Fairbanks Fish & Game Advisory Committee & Russel Wood (EG-F19-047)

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### **PROPOSAL 154**

#### **5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.**

Restrict the taking of waterfowl in the Badger Slough area in Unit 20B to falconry and archery with flu-flu arrows to as follows:

From April 15 through October 1, hunting of waterfowl on the Badger Slough will be restricted to archery with flu-flu arrows and falconry. This protected region would extend from where the slough begins on the northern bank of the Tanana River to where the slough ends on the southern bank of the Chena River. This regulation in no way changes the waterfowl hunting regulations on the Tanana River or the Chena River.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Duck hunting is legal on the Badger slough. The slough is heavily populated as both banks are lined with residential areas as well as businesses and parks. The slough is a spawning zone for grayling. The slough is a nesting area for migratory fowl such as ducks and swans. The slough is an area where cow moose shelter

their new-born calves. Responsible hunting regulations protect both the public and the wildlife. At the present, all a hunter is required to do is to step off the road before discharging a firearm. It is only a matter of time until someone accidentally shoots something other than a duck.

**PROPOSED BY:** Debra Vance

(EG-F19-101)

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# Antlerless Moose Hunts & Brown Bear Tag Fee Reauthorizations for other Regions

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## **PROPOSAL 155**

### **5 AAC 85.045(a)(1). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 1C as follows:

### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
Unit 1C, Berners Bay drainages  1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued  ...	Sept. 15 – Oct. 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15 – Oct. 15
Unit 1C, that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage  1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:  ...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued	Nov. 10 – Dec. 10 (General hunt only)	Nov. 10 – Dec. 10

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized for the Berners Bay and Gustavus moose populations in Unit 1C for over a decade. Those hunts were instituted as tools that could be used to manage both populations to within carrying capacity of the limited habitat in each area and to offer additional harvest opportunity as warranted. Antlerless hunts have been periodically and successfully used in both areas but must be reauthorized each year.

**Berners Bay:** The Berners Bay (Unit 1C) strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt population of 90 moose based on the area's estimated carrying capacity. The Department of Fish

and Game (department) has been successful at maintaining the Berners Bay population close to the post-hunt population objective by implementing both bull and cow hunts.

From 1998–2006 the number of drawing permits for Berners Bay moose ranged from ten bull and ten antlerless permits to seven bull permits and no antlerless permits. The average annual harvest of bulls during that period was seven moose, and in years when antlerless permits were issued, the annual harvest averaged four cow moose. Although the department has authorization to issue a total of 30 permits each year, no more than 20 total permits have been issued during a single year. Several severe winters from 2006 – 2009 resulted in overwinter mortality and population declines. No Berners Bay moose permits were issued from 2007–2013.

The number of drawing permits issued annually for Berners Bay is based on the number of moose observed during winter aerial surveys. The mean number of moose seen during aerial surveys conducted from 1990–2006 was 77 (range: 59–108). The number of moose seen on surveys declined during consecutive severe winters from 2006–2009 and with only 33–62 moose seen during surveys from 2007–2009. Since 2010 most winters have been moderate to mild and the population has recovered. Under ideal survey conditions in 2012, 102 moose were observed, including 21 bulls, 81 cows, and 14 calves. Adjusted for sightability based on collared moose, the 2012 population was estimated at 113 +/- 11 moose. During the most recent survey in February 2019 a total of 106 moose were observed, including two bulls, 26 cows, 13 calves, and 65 adult moose of unknown sex. Based on that survey and sightability of collared moose, the population was estimated to be 137 +/- 23 moose. The survival of radiocollared moose has been high the last two years and we believe the population continues to slowly grow. The Berners Bay population now exceeds the population and bull:cow objectives in the management plan. However, more recent habitat data suggests habitat in Berners Bay can support a higher post-hunt population than previously thought.

The department plans to manage the population by harvesting bulls. Five bull permits were issued in 2014 and 2015, and in response to growing population estimates, seven bull permits were issued in 2016 and 2017. However, the department would like to retain the ability to implement an antlerless moose hunt should the population or habitat conditions warrant that type of management.

**Gustavus:** The Gustavus moose population (Unit 1C) rapidly expanded from just a few animals in the 1980s and early 1990s to a peak of about 400 animals in 2003. In 2002 the department estimated the density of moose on the Gustavus Forelands winter range exceeded five moose per km<sup>2</sup> despite only a small proportion of the area consisting of productive (abundant willow) winter habitat. In response to concerns about moose damaging the winter habitat, the department initiated spring browse surveys in 1999 and determined that an unsustainable level (85% - 95%) of the current annual growth of willow twigs had been consumed by moose.

To conserve winter habitat the department requested the board authorize an antlerless moose hunt, and the first antlerless hunt was held in the fall of 2000. From 2002– 2008 hunters harvested between 11 and 67 antlerless moose annually, depending on the number of permits issued. No hunt was held in fall 2007 due to high moose mortality during the severe winter of 2006–2007, and no antlerless hunts have been held since 2009.

The objective of antlerless moose hunts in Gustavus is to maintain the moose population using the winter range to levels commensurate with habitat capability. Based on aerial surveys corrected for sightability and annual browse surveys, management of the population using antlerless hunts has been successful. In 2013, under favorable survey conditions 186 moose (25 bulls, 121 cows, and 40 calves) were observed. The population estimate corrected for sightability was 323 +/- 87 moose. Under poor late winter survey conditions in March 2014, 91 (24 cows, 12 calves, and 55 unknown) moose were seen yielding a sightability corrected population estimate of 244 +/- 98 moose. Due to exceptionally mild winter weather, at the time of this survey, a number of radiocollared moose had already transitioned to forested summer range outside the survey area. There was little snow cover during the winter of 2014–15, so no survey was attempted. The most recent survey under moderate conditions in March 2018 resulted in a population estimate of 218 ± 22 moose. The full survey area was not covered on this survey and so we expected this estimate to be a little low.

Severe winters from 2006 through 2009 reduced calf survival, but since then calf survival has improved. Even during severe winters survival of adult females remained high at about 89%. Given the improved survival rate of calves during successive mild winters and stable cow survival, the potential exists for the Gustavus moose population to rapidly increase.

The Gustavus moose population is currently at a level the department believes is appropriate for the available winter habitat. However, we believe it is important to retain the ability to implement antlerless hunts should the population increase to a level that is detrimental to the habitat.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-162)

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### **PROPOSAL 156**

#### **5 AAC 85.045(a)(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 5A, Nunatak Bench as follows.

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(3)		
Unit 5(A), that portion south of Wrangell - Saint Elias National Park, north and east of Russell and Nunatak Fiords, and east of the east side of East Nunatak Glacier to the Canadian Border (Nunatak Bench)	Nov. 15 - Feb. 15	Nov. 15 - Feb. 15



1 moose by registration  
permit only; up to 5  
moose may be taken

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Nunatak Bench (Unit 5A) hunt area is managed as a separate population because it is generally isolated from other moose populations by fiords and glaciers. The area is subject to severe winters and has low capability to support moose relative to other moose habitat in Unit 5A. The purposes of this hunt are to provide opportunity as the population allows and to maintain the number of moose within a level the limited habitat can support. This hunt opens after other moose hunts in the unit have closed, and it is a popular alternative for hunters who were unsuccessful during those hunts. Because much of the open season for this hunt takes place after bulls have dropped their antlers, either sex may be harvested.

The Nunatak Bench strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt population of no more than 50 moose. During an aerial survey in 2001 52 moose were seen. From 2005 through 2012 only 11 – 14 moose with one or two calves were seen during surveys. The decline in moose numbers following the 2001 survey may be related to the 68-foot rise of Russel Fiord flooding and damaging habitat when it was blocked by the surging Hubbard Glacier during 2003. Due to poor weather and the remoteness of the location this area was not surveyed again until December 2015 when a total of 14 moose (three bulls, two cows, three calves, and six unknown) were seen. A series of severe winters from 2006 through 2012 may have inhibited recovery of the population. Anecdotal reports from hunters indicate that wolves in the area may also be inhibiting recovery of this small population. Once again we were not able to survey this area during the 2018-19 winter due to poor survey conditions throughout the winter.

From 1997 through 2004 an average of 12 either sex permits were issued annually with an average of 4 people hunting each year. During that period a total of 15 moose (nine bulls, six cows) were harvested for an average of about two moose per year. No permits have been issued and no moose have been harvested in this area since 2004.

The Department of Fish and Game (department) believes it is important to retain the ability to implement an antlerless hunt in this area to prevent habitat damage should the population increase. The department will continue to monitor this population as conditions allow, but we do not plan to issue hunt permits until the population reaches at least 25 moose.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-163)  
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**PROPOSAL 157**

**5 AAC 085.045(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 6C as follows.

<b>Seasons and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(4)		
...		
Unit 6(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 40 permits for bulls and up to 20 permits for antlerless moose may be issued	Sept. 1-Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season.
or		
1 moose by registration permit only;	Nov. 1-Dec. 31	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. The Department of Fish and Game recommends reauthorizing the state antlerless hunt in Unit 6C to achieve the harvest objectives when the federal subsistence hunt is not able to achieve the desired level of harvest. The population objective in Unit 6C is 600–800 moose. A population estimate completed during March 2018 yielded an estimate of 677 moose, 32% of which were calves. Because the available antlerless harvest quota in Unit 6C is currently harvested under a federal subsistence season administered by the U. S. Forest Service, we have not held the antlerless hunt since RY99. Continuation of the antlerless hunts will be necessary to manage population growth and keep it within the limits of what the habitat can support.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-164)

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## **PROPOSAL 158**

### **5 AAC 085.045(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 13 as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits (11)</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
Unit 13 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:  ...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 200 permits may be issued; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf  ...	Oct. 1–Oct. 31 Mar. 1–Mar. 31 (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. The current regulation allows hunters to take a limited number of cows in specific areas to keep the population within objectives.

This Unit 13 antlerless hunt was initially adopted in March 2011, and the first Unit 13 antlerless hunt under this regulation took place in September 2012. The hunt was modified when the Board of Game adopted an October and March season during the February 2013 board meeting.

Since the inception of this hunt, the department has issued 10 permits annually for a hunt in Unit 13A. The department intentionally limited the number of permits issued annually to gain public support for the hunt, even though a higher rate of cow harvest was desirable to regulate the moose population within objectives. After considering a proposal during the 2015 Board of Game meeting, which was submitted by the public to increase the number of cow permits issued annually, the board directed the department to issue a sufficient number of permits to allow the harvest of up to one percent of the cow population, when the moose population is above the midpoint of the population objective for the subunit.

Moose have generally increased at an average rate of 2% per year in the intensive wolf management area over the past 10 years. The current population objective for Unit 13A is 3,500–4,200, and the population was estimated to be above objective in 2015–2016, and within objectives in 2017–2018. The antlerless hunt in western Unit 13A is necessary to maintain the population

within the intensive management objectives. The additional harvest provided by the hunt will also assist in achieving the harvest objectives for the population. If antlerless moose hunting opportunities are not reauthorized in Unit 13, the intensive management program and objectives will likely need to be restructured to maintain the moose population within a population size range that does not result in nutritional limitations for the moose and to achieve the harvest objectives recommended by the public, advisory committees, and the board.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-165)  
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## **PROPOSAL 159**

### **5 AAC 85.045(a)(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(12)		
Unit 14(A)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 antlerless moose permits may be issued.	Aug. 20—Sept. 25 (General hunt only) Nov. 1—Dec. 25 (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 2019 yielded an estimate of 7,800 moose in Unit 14A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 6,000–6,500 moose but less than the 2017 survey estimate of 8,700 moose. The November 2018 composition survey indicated sex ratio of 34 bulls:100 cows and a calf ratio of 31 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 and again in spring 2018 from 1,000 to 2,000. Increased harvest based on the increased permit levels is expected to bring the population back to within the objective for the unit of 6,000–6,500.

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 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. ADF&G 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-F19-166)

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## **PROPOSAL 160**

### **5 AAC 85.045(5). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14C.

<b>Seasons and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
-------------------------------	---	------------------------------------

(5)

...

Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage

#### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with nonresident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued

Aug. 20—Oct. 10  
(General hunt only)

#### **NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with resident hunts

Aug. 20—Oct. 10

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually, and the Department of Fish and Game recommends reauthorizing the antlerless hunt in Units 7 and 14C. The moose population in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area has a history of rapid increase following mild winters and sharp reductions during severe winters. In 2009, antlerless permits were issued for the first time since 2004. The number of permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality. A December 2016 aerial composition count of moose in the Twentymile, Portage, and

Placer river drainages found 153 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 30 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 18 calves per 100 cows. In 2017 and 2018, there was not enough snow in early winter to conduct surveys.

The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area at a population level low enough to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. The moose population will be healthier and more productive due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages. This hunt has been successful in creating additional moose hunting opportunity with little or no controversy.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-167)  
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### **PROPOSAL 161**

#### **5 AAC 85.045(5). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14C as follows.

<b>Seasons and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(12)		
...		
Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area	Sept. 1—Mar 31 (General hunt only)	Sept 1. —Mar 31
1 moose by regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood Management Area	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept 1.—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Nov. 30
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 10 permits may be issued	Oct. 20—Nov. 15	No open season
...		

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually, and the department recommends reauthorizing the antlerless moose hunts in Unit 14C. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the Department of Fish and Game (department) with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in Unit 14C at the desired population objective (1,500 moose). This population size has been demonstrated to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, moose-human conflicts in urban areas, and



starvation during severe winters. These hunts have also been successful in providing additional moose hunting opportunities in the state's human population center with little controversy.

Moose in Unit 14C are managed intensively for a population objective of 1,500–1,800 moose and an annual harvest objective of 90–270 moose (5AAC 92.108). The number of antlerless permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality. In 2013, the department estimated that the moose population contained approximately 1,533 moose in Unit 14C from a combination of population census, composition surveys and extrapolation to unsurveyed areas. Since 2013, a lack of snow has limited the department's ability to conduct surveys, but there has been no indication from either harvest or roadkill numbers that the moose population has changed significantly. It is likely that moose survival has been good during recent mild winters.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-168)  
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### **PROPOSAL 162**

#### **5 AAC 085.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season on Kalgin Island in Unit 15B as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(13)		
...		
Unit 15(B), Kalgin Island		
1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only	Aug. 20—Sept. 20	Aug. 20—Sept. 20
...		

**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. The current regulation for hunting moose on Kalgin Island in Unit 15B allows hunters to harvest antlerless moose with the goal of reducing the population to the management objective.

In response to concerns that the moose population on Kalgin Island had exceeded the island's carrying capacity and due to deteriorating habitat conditions, the board established a drawing permit hunt for antlerless moose in 1995. In a further attempt to reduce the number of moose on the island, the board established a registration hunt for any moose in 1999. Despite these measures to reduce moose numbers, moose remain abundant on the island and continue to exceed the management objective.

During the most recent moose survey (March 2018), department staff counted 85 moose on Kalgin Island. This count exceeded the population objective of 20–40 moose. In the last 10 years, an average of 126 permits were issued for this hunt; of which 86 permittees hunted, with an annual harvest of 29 moose.

The "any moose" registration hunt is a management tool the Department of Fish and Game uses to maintain moose abundance within management objectives on the island. In addition, the registration hunt provides a mechanism to the department to continue gathering biological information from specimens provided by successful hunters. The difficult hunting conditions and limited access reduces concerns with over-harvest.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-169)

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### **PROPOSAL 163**

#### **5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 15C as follows:

This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt for the Homer bench land (DM549) and the targeted hunt (AM550).

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(13)		
...		
Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay		

#### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompa- nied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in	Oct. 20—Nov. 20

combination with the nonresident  
drawing hunt: or

1 moose by targeted permit only, Oct. 15—Mar. 31

#### NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow  
tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt Oct. 20—Nov. 20

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually, and the Department of Fish and Game (department) recommends reauthorization of the Homer bench land hunt (DM549) and the targeted hunt (AM550) along the Sterling Highway in 15C for the 2020-2021 hunting season.

In February 2017, a GSPE census was conducted in the northern portion of Unit 15C (north of Kachemak Bay) and resulted in a population estimate of 3,529 moose (95% CI: range 2,769–4,289), of which 19% (95% CI: 14–24) were calves. This equates to a density of approximately 3 moose/mi<sup>2</sup> in the census area. Density estimates for the winter are difficult to determine because the areas available to moose vary depending on snowfall, but winter density is consistently higher. Fall composition counts in core count areas during December 2018 indicated a bull ratio of 40 bulls:100 cows.

The Homer bench land in Unit 15C, which encompasses the hunt boundary of DM549, contains high densities of moose in deep snow winters as moose move into human populated areas. Even without deep snow, some moose die due to malnutrition and negative interactions with humans occur as moose become more aggressive in their search for food around residences. Fifty permits were issued in each of the last ten years resulting in an average harvest of 24 cows annually.

The purpose of AM550 is to allow for the harvest of antlerless moose along the Sterling Highway in Unit 15C during deep snow winters if moose pose a threat to highway vehicles. On average, 62 animals are killed each year in vehicle collisions in Unit 15C. The department will decide when and where permits will be issued during the hunt period. Targeted hunts are administered through a registration permit and up to 100 moose may be taken. The number of permits issued each year will depend on conditions, and it is possible no permits will be issued in some years based on snow conditions.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-170)

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**PROPOSAL 164**

**5 AAC 85.045(a)(14). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 16A as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(14)		
Unit 16(A)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 200 antlerless moose permits may be issued.	Aug. 20—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	No open season
...		

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Although antlerless hunts may not be offered every year, antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The Board of Game passed a proposal to add up to 200 antlerless draw permits at the 2019 Southcentral Region Meeting.

Moose surveys conducted in March 2019 yielded an estimate of 4,200 moose in Unit 16A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 3,500–4,000 moose but less than the 2017 survey estimate of almost 8,700 moose. Previous information support that this population is growing.

Densities of moose in excess of the population objective can have a negative impact on the habitat thereby creating a condition that leads to starvation in heavy snow winters. Reducing the population through antlerless permits can alleviate over-browsing of vegetation and help sustain the moose population within the unit.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-171)

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**PROPOSAL 165**

**5 AAC 85.045(a)(15). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

*Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Proposals*

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 17A as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(15)		
Unit 17(A)		
Up to 2 moose per regulatory year only as follows:		
<b>RESIDENT HUNTERS:</b>		
1 moose by registration permit only; or	Aug. 25–Sept. 25 (Subsistence hunt only)	
1 antlered bull by registration permit; during the period Dec. 1 – Last day of Feb. a season of up to 31 days may be announced by emergency order; or	Winter Season to be Announced by Emergency Order (Subsistence hunt only)	
1 antlerless moose by registration permit; during the period Dec. 1 –Last day of Feb. a season of up to 31 days may be announced by emergency order;	Winter Season to be Announced by Emergency Order (Subsistence hunt only)	
...		

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the board. The Board of Game adopted an antlerless winter moose hunt (beginning in December of 2013) in Unit 17A in support of the Unit 17A Moose Management Plan. The planning group consists of entities interested in the management of this moose population and includes representatives from the Bristol Bay Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Nushagak and Togiak Fish and Game Advisory Committees, the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the ADF&G Unit 17 management office.

According to the third goal of the revised Unit 17A Moose Management plan, antlerless moose hunting opportunity can be offered when the population is above 600 moose and increasing. The revised plan also recommends that when the population exceeds 1,200 moose a bag limit of up to two moose is established. Based on the most recent survey with good conditions in March 2017, both of these conditions have been met with a population estimate of 2,369 moose  $\pm$  564. Due to this high moose abundance, the board adopted a fall antlerless hunt in Unit 17A at their spring

2018 meeting, to allow additional antlerless harvest. The bag limit of two moose and antlerless harvest opportunities in both fall and winter provides a mechanism to limit population growth and allows hunters to harvest surplus animals.

The moose population in subunit 17A is growing and can sustain additional harvest; however, the objectives for this population include allowing it to expand into neighboring areas as well as provide for additional harvest opportunity. The population is currently contributing to the growth of moose populations elsewhere, especially to the north and west.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-172)

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### **PROPOSAL 166**

#### **5 AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption.**

Reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions for the Central/Southwest Region as follows:

#### **5AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption**

(a) A resident tag is not required for taking a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 11;
- (2) Units 13 and 16(A);
- (3) Unit 16(B) and 17;

...

(11) Unit 9, within the following areas, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit:

(A) Unit 9(B), within five miles of the communities of Port Alsworth, Nondalton, Iliamna, Newhalen, Pile Bay, Pedro Bay, Pope Vanoy Landing, Kakhonak, Igiugig, and Levelock;

(B) Unit 9(C), within five miles of the communities of King Salmon, Naknek, and South Naknek;

(C) Unit 9(D), within five miles of the communities of Cold Bay, King Cove, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon;

(D) Unit 9(E), within five miles of the communities of Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, Port Heiden, Port Moller, Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Bay, Perryville, and Ivanof Bay;

(12) Unit 10, within three miles of the community of False Pass, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit.

(b) In addition to the units as specified in (a) of this section, if a hunter obtains a subsistence registration permit before hunting, that hunter is not required to obtain a resident tag to take a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 9(B);

(2) Unit 9(E), that portion including all drainages that drain into the Pacific Ocean between Cape Kumliun and the border of Unit 9(D) and Unit 9(E);

(3) Unit 17;

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Brown bear tag fee exemptions must be reauthorized annually or the fee will be automatically reinstated.

General Season Hunts: The board liberalized brown bear hunting regulations including the tag fee exemption to increase the harvest of brown bears in Units 11, 13, and 16 during the March 2003 Board of Game meeting and in Unit 17 during the March 2011 Board of Game meeting. The tag fee exemption in these units provides greater opportunity to harvest of brown bears by allowing opportunistic harvest.

The board also exempted brown bear tag fees for bear hunts near communities in Unit 9 to address public safety concerns in communities during the board meeting in March 2011. Brown bears are abundant in Unit 9 and are managed as a trophy species. Brown bears are frequently observed in communities where they destroy property in search of food or garbage and occasionally kill pets. The liberalized bear seasons and bag limits adopted along with the elimination of the tag fee were intended to allow people to take bears before they destroy property, to promote a greater acceptance of the unit's bear population, and to resolve some of the compliance issues associated with the take of bears in defense of life or property.

Subsistence Brown Bear Hunts: The Board of Game waived the brown bear tag fee requirement for subsistence brown bear hunts in Unit 17 and portions of Unit 9. Subsistence brown bear harvest rates are low and well within sustainable limits. Exempting the resident tag fee has not caused an increase in subsistence harvest in these units. Continuation of the exemption accommodates cultural and traditional uses of brown bears in these units and provides an alternative for hunters who take brown bears primarily for their meat.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-154)

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