

PROPOSAL 26

5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear

Reduce the permit allocation and bag limit for nonresident, nonguided black bear hunters on Kuiu and Kupreanof Islands in Unit 3 as follows:

DL029 - DL030

Nonresident hunters NOT using a registered guide, not accompanied by resident second-degree of kindred. Reduce nonresident, non-guided draw allocation from 75 to 35 annually.

Nonresident hunter NOT using a registered guide, not accompanied by a resident second-degree of kindred. One black bear every four (or set by Board of Game) regulatory years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reduce nonresident, non-guided draw from 75 to 35 annually due biological concerns for the black bear population on Kuiu and Kupreanof Island. As well as crowding, interactions and 'conflicts' in the field. Over the last 20 years, there has been a marked, steady, dramatic decline of population and age of bears on the island. Increased harvest and the lack of any substantive population study for the bear population is causing harm to the long-term viability of the island resource. The last population study regarding the black bear resource on Kuiu island was done in the early 2000s by a graduate student. The study, while possibly effective in the areas that it covered, was extrapolated over the entire island that most certainly does not provide equal quality habitat for bears, providing false data that has been relied on for harvest management by ADF&G. Habitat alteration, prolonged high harvest, and wolf predation have caused substantial reductions in the population that have not been addressed or even acknowledged by the managing agency.

At the last southeast Board of Game meeting ADF&G increased available draw limit from 50 to 75 with no new study of bear population. DL029 - DL030 has an extremely high field participation rate. Kuiu has around 18 huntable bays on the island. Kupreanof has six huntable bays. These islands also have around 14 guide outfitters with US Forest Service hunt permit allocation that vary in location of hunts. Over the years hunt draw application service companies and booking agents have been providing hunt services from maps, gear list and local service providers assisting in the hunt from outside of State of Alaska. Some application service company has been known to accompany their draw application clients successful in the draw on the hunt acting in the capacity of a "Hunt Advisor". This has increased hunters' interest and success in these areas in providing logistical service.

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