

PROPOSAL 70

5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk.

Modify the Unit 8, Raspberry Island hunting season and bag limit by changing the antlerless elk drawing hunt to an antlerless registration hunt as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
Unit 8, Raspberry Island 1 bull elk by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits will be issued	Oct. 1–Oct. 22 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1–Oct. 22
1 antlerless elk by registration [DRAWING] permit only; [UP TO 200 PERMITS WILL BE ISSUED]	Oct. 23–Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 23–Nov. 30

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What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Additional harvest opportunities for resident and nonresident hunters is available and the department recommends changing the drawing hunt to a registration hunt to increase hunter success. Historically, only a small percentage of Raspberry Island antlerless drawing permit winners show up to hunt. On average, over the last ten years (2011-2020) only 38% of the antlerless drawing winners participated in the hunt resulting in an average of 4.9 antlerless elk harvested annually. The population objective for Raspberry Island is 150-200 elk with a bull:cow ratio of 20-25 bulls:100 cows. Historically, when the total population of elk on Raspberry Island approaches 230-250 animals, the population suffers an abrupt decline. This abrupt reduction in the population has been documented multiple times since the 1960s’ (1965, 1987, 1996, 2018) with the most recent occurring in 2018. Interestingly, the estimated number of bulls on Raspberry Island has stayed relatively consistent over time with drastic fluctuations primarily observed within the cow population. Multiple attempts have been made to decrease the cow population (by increasing the number of antlerless drawing permits) with little to no results. Providing additional opportunities to harvest antlerless elk through a registration hunt will aid the department in achieving and maintaining the management objective of 150-200 elk with a 20-25:100 bull:cow ratio.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F22-061)
