

**Alaska Board of Game**  
**2013-200-BOG**  
**Board Direction Concerning the Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Strategy**  
**January 15, 2013**

The Board of Game finds as follows, based on information provided by Department of Fish and Game staff, Alaska residents and other wildlife users:

The Board directed the department to clarify the strategy with the following changes during the January 2013 meeting in Sitka:

- Base the bear population estimate on NE Chichagof Island on the most recent research data.
- Obtain a population estimate on South Admiralty Island.
- Wounding loss will not be included in the harvest mortality guidelines or calculations.
- Defense of Life and Property kills will be included in the estimate of total mortality and an effort to minimize these losses will be maintained.
- The department will develop minimum skull size for harvested females for use as a future tool to restrict guided hunter harvest of female brown bears, if and when necessary. The board intends for the department to inform the board of the department's intent to implement skull size guidelines before implementing them.

The Board acknowledges that the direction provided concerning these changes is the purview of the department under its discretionary and fiscal authority. The department will attempt to make the changes as directed, but may choose to exercise its authority in the future and make changes necessary to provide additional opportunity and cost savings.

The Board recognizes the need to have full cooperation by the USFS and private land owners in order for skull minimums to be successfully implemented. The Board will therefore send a letter to the USFS and private land owner leadership describing its intent and desire for the agency and NGOs to cooperate and work with the department.

Vote: 6-1  
January 15, 2013  
Sitka, Alaska

  
Ted Spraker, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Game

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME  
2005-156-BOG**

WHEREAS deer management and use in GMU 2 has generated a great deal of controversy and concern; and

WHEREAS a multi-interest subcommittee of the Southeast Regional Advisory Council was established to review and offer recommendations on Unit 2 deer issues; and

WHEREAS improved harvest reporting for deer was among the needs identified by the subcommittee and council; and

WHEREAS the subcommittee and council have developed a joint federal state deer harvest reporting protocol; and

WHEREAS the U.S Forest Service has agreed to provide funding to assist with the implementation of a joint federal and state deer harvest reporting protocol;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Alaska Board of Game that the board fully supports this joint deer harvest reporting protocol and strongly urges the Division of Wildlife Conservation to implement the joint deer harvest reporting protocol for GMU 2.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Alaska Board of Game on this 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2005.

Vote: 6 - 0 - 1 member absent  
Board of Game 2005 Spring Meeting, Anchorage

  
Mike Fleagle, Chair

**Alaska Board of Game  
2002-136A-BOG  
Unit 1D Brown Bear Drawing Hunt Finding**

The Board of Game (Board) took public and advisory committee testimony on (Unit 1D) brown bears, received biological information from the Department of Fish and Game, and deliberated a proposal (Proposal 7) dealing with a drawing permit hunt for brown bears. As a result, the Board finds the following:

1. Harvest of brown bears in Unit 1D has met or exceeded harvest goals during the 1991-2001 period. This is due to an increase in Defense of Life and Property (DLP) by expanding human populations into brown bear habitat and to increasing nonresident harvest.
2. Specific details of over harvest of brown bears are noted: harvest of brown bears exceeds the harvest goal in Unit 1D during 1991-2001. The harvest goal for brown bears in Unit 1D is 16 bears (4% of the estimated population of 396) with the female portion of the harvest not to exceed 1.5% of the estimated population. Mean annual harvest during 1991-2001 is 17 bears/year.
3. Harvest of female brown bears exceeds the goal of 1.5% including a harvest of 5 sows in one season by the nonresident clients of one big game commercial service provider.
4. A greater number of guides are operating in Unit 1D due to recent restrictions that the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) imposed on brown bear guiding on federal lands in Unit 4 and in the remainder of Unit 1. Because of restrictions on federal land, guiding on state land in Unit 1D has become very attractive to guides not permitted to hunt brown bears on federal lands in southeast Alaska. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does not have an effective means in which to limit or distribute the intensity of big game commercial service provider effort.
5. The Board finds that a lack of a Big Game Commercial Services Board and the inability to limit the scope of operation pertaining to individual big game commercial service providers has detrimentally affected guided hunter allocation. The state has no way to restrict the number of guides who can operate in a particular area since the Owsichek decision in 1988. If additional guides begin targeting Unit 1D this will put additional hunting pressure on the brown bear population.
6. The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADFG) and DNR hope to work together with brown bear guides to address big game commercial guiding in the Haines State Forest (HSF) Plan. A permitting system enacted by DNR would allow them to potentially limit the number of

guides operating on HSF land if ADFG believed this would help solve the resource concern with brown bears or other wildlife species.

7. Regulatory options available to ADFG included managing the hunt through Emergency closures. However, because of the low reproductive potential of brown bears, the Board realized that this strategy would likely result in continued over harvest.
8. In order to address conservation concerns, ADFG proposed the option of establishing a drawing permit hunt for nonresidents for brown bears in Unit 1D (Proposal 7) similar to the hunt established for brown bears in 26B (5AAC 85.025).
9. Alaskan residents and advisory committees were divided on the drawing permit issue. The Juneau Advisory Committee supported the department proposal with the amendment that the Board approve 20 permits for the drawing permit hunt. The Upper Lynn Canal AC opposed the idea of a drawing permit hunt. All respondents agreed that harvest has met or exceeded ADFG harvest goals and that there is an increasing trend in harvest of brown bears in Unit 1D.
10. Given that the human population continues to grow and expand in Unit 1D and given that there is no way to allocate hunting opportunity for brown bears among a continually growing population of guides, it is evident that the brown bear population would continue to be threatened as the annual harvest exceeds harvest goals.
11. Given that harvest of brown bear sows has been increasing during the previous decade and that sows comprised 50% of the harvest in some years, it is evident that the brown bear population would continue to be threatened as the annual harvest exceeds harvest goals.
12. The Board adopted a nonresident drawing permit hunt for brown bears in Unit 1D to be held each year between the dates of Sept. 15 through Dec. 31 and March 15 through May 31. Up to 20 permits are authorized.
13. By this action, the Board's intent is to provide desired sustained hunting opportunities for resident and nonresident hunters and to support a viable guiding industry in Unit 1D.

Vote: \_\_\_\_\_  
November 7, 2002  
Juneau, Alaska

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Ben Grussendorf, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game



**Alaska Board of Game  
2002-137-BOG  
Unit 1C Douglas Island Management Area Findings**

The Board of Game (Board) took public and advisory committee testimony on Douglas Island (Unit 1C) wolves, received biological information from the Department of Fish and Game, and deliberated a proposal (Proposal 3) dealing with management of wolves and deer on the island. As a result, the Board finds the following:

1. There have been occasional sightings of wolves and wolf tracks on Douglas Island over the past 20 years, and especially over the past 3-4 years. The only confirmed records of wolves being harvested on Douglas Island are seven (7) animals taken in January 2002. A single juvenile wolf was found dead near Eagle Crest ski area in September 2001.
2. The pack removed in January 2002 likely represented all the wolves present at that time.
3. Wolves may re-colonize the island but when this will occur is unpredictable.
4. Douglas Island and its wildlife are in close proximity to the third largest human population center in Alaska, and many residents have an interest in viewing, hunting, and otherwise experiencing wildlife, including wolves, on the island.
5. Sitka black-tailed deer occur on the island and provide a large fraction of the deer harvest in Unit 1C. In recent years (1995-2001) deer harvests have ranged between about 200 and 350 annually.
6. Under 5 AAC 92.106 (the intensive management regulation) the deer population in Unit 1C is identified as being important for high levels of human consumption. The harvest objective is 450 deer per year.
7. If wolves re-colonize Douglas Island and increase to high densities, there is potential for wolf predation on deer to decrease deer numbers and deer harvests.
8. It is likely that low to moderate numbers of wolves on Douglas Island can coexist with a deer population that can continue to provide a reasonable number of deer for human consumption.
9. In order to provide for sustained numbers of both wolves and deer on Douglas Island after wolves re-colonize, a management area (the Douglas Island Management Area) shall be created. This area will consist of Douglas Island in its entirety.
10. Within the management area, hunting and trapping of wolves is prohibited until at least seven (7) wolves are present. Subsequently, annual harvests may not exceed 30 percent of fall wolf numbers.

11. When wolves are present, if the island deer harvest declines more than 35 percent below the average harvest over the preceding 10 years (with approximately equal hunting effort), wolf hunting and trapping will be reopened as necessary to maintain both wolf and deer populations.
12. In order to more closely monitor the harvest, trappers shall register with the department and receive a permit prior to entering the field. Specific conditions of the permit will include attending a trapper orientation course, obtaining a trapper registration number, and providing information on trapping locations. Restrictions on methods and means and registration requirements, and other aspects shall occur as needed.
13. By this action, the Board's intent is to provide desired sustained opportunities for a broad diversity of user groups concerned with wolves and deer on Douglas Island. This is compatible with the desires of virtually all those who expressed their views to the Board.

Vote: \_\_\_\_\_  
November 7, 2002  
Juneau, Alaska

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Ben Grussendorf, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game

**Alaska Board of Game**  
**Findings 2000 -134 BOG**  
**Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Strategy**

At its meeting in Juneau, Alaska, November 1-7, 2000, the Board of Game (Board) received the Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Strategy (Strategy), heard a summary of the Strategy presented by the Unit 4 Brown Bear Planning Team (Team), and considered public testimony on the subject. Based on this information, and in consideration of the Board's statutory authorities and requirements, the Board supports the Strategy as indicated by the endorsement of these Findings.

The Board reached the following conclusions:

1. The planning process used by the Team involved a wide range of public and agency interests in formulating comprehensive management recommendations for Unit 4 brown bears.
2. The recommendations in the Strategy are a comprehensive compromise package. To maintain the integrity of the compromise embodied in the Strategy, all essential elements must be implemented in a timely and reasonable manner.
3. Recommendations in the Strategy are both within and outside the jurisdiction of the Board. Recommendations within the jurisdiction of the Board include setting mortality guidelines, prioritizing options for hunting regulation changes should the mortality guidelines be exceeded, and adjusting regulations as needed to assist management of bear hunting/viewing areas.
4. As previously determined by the Board, brown bears in Unit 4 are customarily and traditionally used for subsistence and the amount necessary for subsistence uses is 5-10 bears. Recently, the Federal Subsistence Board, in response to a proposal by the Southeast Regional Federal Subsistence Council, authorized five federal registration permits annually for educational purposes of teaching customary and traditional subsistence harvest and use practices. The Board supports this action as long as the risk of overharvest is minimized.
5. The existing codified regulations governing the taking of Unit 4 brown bears (5 AAC 85.020) provide a framework within which the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (Department) can administer hunts consistent with the harvest recommendations in the Strategy through exercise of discretionary authority vested in the Department under 5 AAC 92.052. Therefore, no changes are necessary in the codified regulations to implement the recommendations of the Strategy with respect to harvest.

Based on these findings, the Board:

1. Supports the package of recommendations from the Team and urges other agencies and entities with the power to implement these recommendations to do so.

2. Requests the Department to manage hunting of Unit 4 brown bears to maintain a total 3-year average human-caused mortality guideline that does not exceed 4% of each island (Admiralty, Baranof, Chichagof, Northeast Chichagof) population, and a total 3-year average human-caused female mortality guideline that does not exceed 1.5% of each island population.
3. Requests that the Department follow the recommended priority for hunting regulation changes should the mortality guidelines be exceeded. They are:
  - In the event that human-caused mortality guidelines are exceeded for one season or year, the Department will attempt to change the next year's outcome by obtaining voluntary harvest adjustment from guides and hunters.
  - In the event that documented human-caused mortality calculated on a 3-year average is exceeded, the following options will be evaluated and implemented if appropriate.
    - 1) Mandatory adjustment of number of guided hunters by US Forest Service (USFS).
    - 2) Season adjustments.
    - 3) Establish drawing permits for nonresidents on a Guide Use Area basis.
    - 4) Establish drawing permits for residents only after above management alternatives have been employed.
  - All non-subsistence hunting by residents will, when necessary, be by registration permit, until the resident harvest exceeds 70% of the harvest guideline for a given population. If resident harvest exceeds 70% of the harvest guideline, institute a resident drawing permit hunt.
  - Consider all proposed regulatory actions or steps in the context of their effect on bear harvest in the entire Southeast Alaska region, not just Unit 4.
  - Cooperate with the USFS in management of habitat and access.
4. Will strive to bring State regulations into harmony with Federal subsistence regulations that provide additional opportunity to take brown bears under an educational permit for the purposes of teaching customary and traditional subsistence harvest and use practices.
5. Supports the concept of Brown Bear Special Use Zone (SUZ) management that accommodates both hunting and viewing and will consider seasons, methods and means, limited area closures and other regulations as necessary on a case-by-case basis to implement SUZ's in appropriate areas in Unit 4. Will consider use of this model for viewing area proposals elsewhere in Alaska.
6. Supports the concept of Human/Bear High Use Zone management that aims to keep key riparian and shore habitat available to bears and requests the Department cooperate with the USFS in the identification of such zones, and will consider regulations as necessary on a case-by-case basis to implement appropriate management in these zones.

7. Encourages the USFS to incorporate the team's recommendations in its Saltwater Shoreline-based Outfitter/Guide Analysis and Environmental Impact Statement for the northern Tongass National Forest.
6. Supports the USFS moratoria on guides and hunts in Units 1 and 4, pending the outcome of the ongoing USFS planning process.
7. Requests the Department to Prepare and distribute educational materials on hunter ethics and other information to help minimize wounding loss and the harvest of females.

Vote: 7 - 0  
November 9, 2000

*Lori Quakenbush*

Lori Quakenbush, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game

**Alaska Board of Game**  
**98-128-BOG**  
**Findings on Elk Management in Region 1**

At its October 1998 meeting in Ketchikan, the Board of Game reviewed information on the history of elk in Southeast Alaska, their present status, and their prognosis. The board reached the following conclusions:

- Elk, an introduced, exotic species to Alaska, are now thriving at the transplant site on Etolin Island and have established a population on nearby Zarembo Island in Southeast Alaska.
- Scientific literature from elk research conducted elsewhere, supported by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's own research on Etolin Island, indicates that the diet of elk broadly overlaps that of deer, and that this overlap includes forage critical to the winter survival of deer.
- Elk are larger than deer, with a greater rumen capacity. Elk can reach higher for forage and can subsist on coarser forage than deer. Where the two species coexist, especially in restricted areas (i.e. islands) elk may out-compete deer.
- Introduced populations of elk with few predators can severely trample and overbrowse their range. In Southeast Alaska, this potential may be great, especially on islands without wolves and in localities difficult for hunters to access. Severe reduction in browse has broad implications for other species dependent on the understory for food, shelter or cover.
- Elk are presently emigrating to locations other than Etolin and Zarembo Islands, and once established on an island in Southeast Alaska, elk will be very difficult to eradicate if it becomes desirable to do so.
- Deer are the most important ungulate for human consumption in Southeast Alaska, and are a designated subsistence species. The board determined most deer populations in Southeast Alaska as important for high levels of human consumptive use as required by the Intensive Management Law. On the other hand, elk do not qualify for customary and traditional use or intensive management.
- Ungulate experts from within and outside the department predict declines in deer populations that are in competition with elk.
- Elk are not likely to become a preferred subsistence replacement for deer, because elk are likely to lower the region's overall carrying capacity for meat production, and elk are more difficult to pack out of areas without vehicular access.

Therefore, given the potential for elk to negatively affect deer populations and the general carrying capacity of Region 1, the board recommends that the department take the following actions:

1. Inform the public of the problems that may occur where elk and deer overlap, and that the overall capacity of the region to support deer may decrease.

2. Reaffirm the initial post-transplant policy of restricting elk to islands where populations are now established until:
  - the effects of elk in Southeast Alaska have been fully evaluated, and
  - the public has been fully informed and has provided guidance to the board and the department.
3. In one year, report to the board the options for containing the elk population on the islands where populations have become established.

Resolution 93-67-BOG indicates that the board had similar concerns several years ago, and came to the same conclusion regarding confinement of the elk population to Etolin and Zarembo Islands.

DATE: October 26, 1998  
Ketchikan, Alaska

Lori Quakenbush  
Lori Quakenbush, Chairman

VOTE: 7-0