

PROPOSAL 10

5 AAC 85.045(a)(16). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Liberalize the moose bag limit in Unit 18 Kuskokwim hunt area as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(16) ...		
Unit 18 Kuskokwim Area, that portion easterly of a line from the mouth of the Ishkowik River to the closest point of Dall Lake then to east bank of the Johnson River at its entrance into Nunavakanukakslak Lake (60 59.41' N. latitude, 162 22.14' W. longitude), continuing upriver along a line one-half mile south and east of, and paralleling a line along the southerly bank of the Johnson River to the confluence of the east bank of Crooked Creek, then continuing upriver along the east bank of Crooked Creek to the outlet at Arhymot lake, then following the south bank of Arhymont Lake easterly to the Unit 18 border and north of and including the Eek River drainage		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 bull, excluding male calves, by registration permit only; <u>or</u>	Sept. 1-Oct. 15	No open season.
<u>1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, up to xx permits may be issued</u>	<u>Sept. 1-Oct. 15</u>	<u>No open season.</u>

or

1 antlered bull by
drawing permit only, up to
XX permits may be issued

Dec.1-Jan.31

No open season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Kuskokwim River moose hunt area, commonly known as the RM615 hunt area has experienced rapid population growth and range expansion of over the last 20 years. The 2020 estimate for Zone 1 of this hunt area is 3,220 moose having increased from less than 100 estimated moose in 2,000. The browse removal rate estimated in 2019 for this hunt area was 23%. Bull to cow ratios have ranged from 25B:100C to 29B:100C (2020 – 2022). The department would like to use an antlerless hunt to start leveling off the population at or near its current levels. It is anticipated this hunt would start out slow with 100 or less antlerless drawing permits being issued. The number of permits given out would be closely monitored and adjusted as needed to meet population objectives.

In chronological order, total moose harvest in Zone 1 of the RM615 hunt area from RY18-RY22 was 141, 160, 239, 151 and 200 moose. While harvest for RY22 is still preliminary due to late reporting, a significant change to reported harvest is not expected.

Using discretionary authority, the department anticipates only announcing a winner hunt for Zone 2 of the RM615 hunt area. Historically the bull cow ratio in Zone 2 has been high. Zone 2 of this hunt area can support additional bull harvest in addition to the fall hunt. There is a federal hunt in Zone 2 that provides some additional opportunity, and this proposal would closely align state and federal seasons.

In chronological order, total moose harvest in Zone 2 of the RM615 hunt area from RY18-RY22 was 72, 70, 90, 76 and 66 moose. During this time the harvestable surplus has been about 110 moose per year.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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