

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Policies and Resolutions

2011

#2011-184-BOG Game Management Unit 13 Caribou and Moose Subsistence Uses
(*Supplement findings to 2006-170-BOG*)

2010

#2010-183-BOG Harvest of Game for Customary and Traditional Alaska Native Funerary
and Mortuary Religious Ceremonies.

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#2009-182-BOG Units 12, 20B, 20D, 20E, and 25C Intensive Management Supplemental
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#2009-181-BOG Unit 19D-East Intensive Management Supplemental Findings
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#2008-178-BOG Finding of Emergency: Predator Control Implementation Plans
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2005

- #2005-160-BOG Finding of Emergency: Methods of Harvest for Hunting Small Game in the Skilak Loop Special Management Area of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge
- #2005-159-BOG Resolution in Support of Allowing Guides to Take Wolves while Under Contract to Clients
- #2005-158-BOG Resolution in Support of Public Education Program on Predator Control
- #2005-157-BOG Reauthorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
- #2005-156-BOG Supporting Joint Federal and State Deer Harvest Reporting
- #2005-155-BOG Supporting Governor's Lawsuit Against Federal Government; Extent and Reach of Subsistence Regulations in State Navigable Waters

2004

- #2004-154-BOG Supporting Increasing Resident and Non-Resident Hunting License and Tag Fees
- #2004-153-BOG Increase FY06 Budget for Boards of Fisheries and Game and State Advisory Committees
- #2004-152-BOG Predator Control in Portions of Upper Yukon/Tanana Predator Control Area
- #2004-151-BOG Bear Baiting Allocation
- #2004-150-BOG Authorizing Predator Control in Central Kuskokwim Area, Unit 19A
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- #2004-147-BOG Bear Conservation and Management Policy
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2003

- #2003-145-BOG Authorization of Airborne Shooting in Unit 19D East Predation Control Program
- #2003-144-BOG Authorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
- #2003-143-BOG Authorizing Wolf Control in Portions of Unit 13
- #2003-142-BOG Resolution of the Alaska Board of Game Concerning a Statewide Bear Baiting Ballot Initiative
- #2003-141-BOG Request for Commissioner's Finding Regarding Same-Day-Airborne Wolf Hunting in Game Management Unit 13
- #2003-140-BOG Guidelines for a Unit 19D East Predation Control Program
- #2003-139-BOG A resolution of the Alaska Board of Game Concerning Management of Kenai Peninsula Brown Bear Mortality

2002

- #2002-138-BOG Request to US Forest Service re: Management of Guided Brown Bear Hunting in Unit 4
- #2002-137-BOG Unit 1C Douglas Island Management Area Findings
- #2002-136A-BOG Unit 1D Brown Bear Drawing Hunt Finding
- #2002-136-BOG Government to Government Relations with Tribes in Alaska

2001

#2001-135-BOG Resolution concerning Unit 19D-East Adaptive Management Team Work

2000

#2000-134-BOG Unit 4 Brown Bear Management Team Findings

#2000-133-BOG Habituation of Wildlife (unsigned – left in draft)

#2000-132-BOG Reaffirm Resolution re: Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources/Ballot Initiative Process

#2000-131-BOG Finding of Emergency: Unit 19D-East (Wolf Control Implementation Plan)

#2000-130-BOG Resolution re: Support of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999

1999

#99-129-BOG Snow Machine Use in the Taking of Caribou

1998

#98-128-BOG Findings on Elk Management in Region I

#98-127-BOG Findings on Commercial Guiding Activities in Alaska

#98-126-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 25B and Unit 25D

#98-125-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 21D

#98-124-BOG Emergency Findings – Moose in Unit 18

#98-123-BOG Emergency Findings – Caribou in Unit 9

#98-122-BOG 1998 Intensive Management Findings: Interior Region

#98-121-BOG Findings: HB 168, Traditional Access

#98-120-BOG Resolution re: Ballot Initiative Banning Use of Snares

#98-119-BOG Trapping and Snaring of Wolves in Alaska

#98-118-BOG Customary and Traditional Use of Musk Ox in Northwest Unit 23

1997

#97-117-BOG Customary and Traditional Use of Musk Ox on the Seward Peninsula

#97-116-BOG Dall Sheep Management in the Western Brooks Range

#97-115-BOG Resolution supporting Co-management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources

#97-114-BOG Resolution re: Dual Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources

#97-113-BOG Resolution re: Methods and Means of Harvesting Furbearers and Fur Animals Including Wolves

#97-112-BOG Resolution re: Management of Alaska’s Fish and Game Resources/Ballot Initiative Process

#97-111-BOG Finding to Include Unit 22 (except 22C) in the Northwest Alaska Brown Bear Management Area

#97-110-BOG Finding of Emergency re: Stranded Musk Oxen

#97-109-BOG Findings re: Unit 16B-South Moose

#97-108-BOG Resolution re: Subsistence Division Budget

#97-107-BOG Findings re: Wanton Waste on the Holitna and Hoholitna Rivers

1996

#96-106-BOG Delegation of Authority re: Issuing Permits to Take Game for Public Safety Purposes
#96-105-BOG Delegation of Authority to Implement Ballot Measure #3
#96-104-BOG Finding of Emergency re: Western Arctic Caribou Herd
#96-103-BOG Findings – Antlerless Moose in Unit 20A
#96-102-BOG Findings – Nelchina Caribou Herd Management
#96-101-BOG Findings – Intensive Management for GMU 19D East
#96-100-BOG Establishment of the Nenana Controlled Use Area
#96-99-BOG Moose Populations in Unit 26A
#96-98-BOG Taking Big Game for Certain Religious Ceremonies
#96-97-BOG Forty Mile Caribou Herd Management Plan
#96-96-BOG Finding of Emergency – Moose in Remainder of Unit 16B

1995

#95-95-BOG Resolution – Wildlife Diversity Initiative
#95-94-BOG Resolution – Change Name of McNeil River State Game Refuge to Paint River State Game Refuge
#95-93-BOG Requiring License Purchase in advance
#95-92-BOG *Open Number*
#95-91-BOG Delegation of Authority – Comply with Alaska Supreme Court Opinion in Kenaitze vs. State
#95-90-BOG Board Travel Policy
#95-89-BOG Findings – Noatak Controlled Use Area
#95-88-BOG Delegation of Authority to Increase Bag Limits in Unit 18 for Mulchatna and Western Arctic Caribou Herds
#95-87-BOG Subsistence Needs for Moose in Unit 16B
#95-86-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 19D
#95-85-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 20D
#95-84-BOG Findings on Intensive Management in Unit 13
#95-83-BOG Resolution: Subsistence Use on National Park Lands
#95-82-BOG “No Net Loss” Policy for Hunting and Trapping Opportunities
#95-81-BOG Resolution: Remove Federal Management of F&W on Public Lands and Waters
#95-80-BOG Resolution to Legislature to Define Subsistence

1994

#94-80A-BOG Wolf Predation Control Program in Unit 20A
#94-79-BOG Delegation to Commissioner to Adopt Regulations Resulting from Kenaitze Decision which Invalidates Nonsubsistence Areas
#94-78-BOG Addendum to Findings on Unit 16B Moose
#94-77-BOG Resolution on SB325 (Repeal Antlerless Moose Statute)

1993

#93-76-BOG Findings on McNeil River Refuge Bears
#93-75-BOG Resolution on Adak Caribou

#93-74-BOG Delegation of Authority for Permits to Take Furbearers with Game Meat
 #93-73-BOG Delegation of Authority to Make Emergency Regulations Permanent, Moose in Unit 19D
 #93-72-BOG Wolf Control Findings – Delta Area
 #93-71-BOG Resolution on Round Island Walrus Hunt
 #93-70-BOG Findings on Unit 16B Moose Seasons and Bag Limits
 #93-69-BOG Resolution on Popof Island Bison
 #93-68-BOG Resolution on Commercialization of Moose
 #93-67-BOG Resolution on Elk Transplants in Southeast
 #93-66-BOG Resolution on Clear-cut Management in the Tongass National Forest

1992

#92-65-BOG Findings in Units 12, 20B, D, and E on Wolves
 #92-64-BOG Findings in Unit 20A Wolves
 #92-63-BOG Findings in Unit 13 Wolves
 #92-62-BOG Findings Wolf Area Specific Management Plans for Southcentral and Interior
 #92-61-BOG Resolution on Unit 13 Moose
 #92-60-BOG Findings Unit 13 Moose Seasons and Bag Limits
 #92-59-BOG Findings Unit 19 A&B Moose – Holitna and Hoholitna Controlled Use Area
 #92-58-BOG Findings on Kilbuck Caribou re Fall Hunt
 #92-57-BOG Report of the Board of Game, Area Specific Management Plans for Wolves
 #92-56-BOG Relating to Moose in GMUs 19A and 19B per Superior Court order in Sleetmute vs. State
 #92-55-BOG Relating to Endorsement of State Closure of Deer Hunting in GMU 4 and Requesting Federal Closure

1991

#91-54-BOG Findings on Strategic Wolf Management Plan
 #91-54a-BOG Relating to Kilbuck Caribou Management Plan
 #91-53-BOG Relating to Taking of Walrus from Round Island by Residents of Togiak
 #91-53a-BOG Board Direction to Committee for Strategic Wolf Plan
 #91-52-BOG Findings on Unit 13 Moose Season and Bag Limits

1990

#90-51-BOG Delegation of Authority
 #90-50-BOG Relating to the Reporting of Hunter Usage of Air Taxi Operations
 #90-49-BOG Findings on Kwethluk Emergency Caribou Hunt Petition
 #90-48-BOG Relating to the Use of Furbearers by Rural Alaskans, Including Alaska Natives
 #90-47-BOG Relating to the Commercialization of Moose and other Wildlife
 #90-46-BOG Relating to Destruction of Moose by the Alaska Railroad

1989

#89-45-BG Delegation of Authority to Adopt Waterfowl Regulations

1988

#88-44-BG Delegation of Authority for March 1988 Meeting
#88-43-BG Resolution Supporting Funding for Division of Game

1987

#87-42d-BG Procedures for Delegations of Authority (Replacing #75-2-GB)
#87-42c-BG Delegation of Authority to Correct Technical Errors
#87-42b-BG Delegation of Authority to Correct Technical Errors Before Filing
Regulations
#87-42a-BG Delegation of Authority to Adopt Emergency Regulations (Replacing #75-3-GB)

1986

#86-41-BG Finding of Emergency: New State Subsistence Law
#86-40-BG Delegation of Authority

1985

#85-39-GB Resolution on Resources v/s Logging
#85-38-GB Findings: Madison vs. State Requirements
#85-37-GB Lime Village Management Area Findings
#85-36-GB Findings: Waterfowl hunting in and near Palmer Hayflats

1984

#84-35-GB Resolution on Waterfowl Stamp
#84-34-GB Transplant of Musk Ox to Nunivak Island

1983

#83-33-GB Resolution on Guide Board
#83-32-GB Findings on Moose in GMU 16B

1982

#82-31-GB Supplement to Wolf Population Control

1981

#81-30-GB Findings and Policy Regarding Nelchina Caribou
#81-29-GB Finding and Policy for Future Management of the Western Arctic Caribou
Herd
#81-28-GB Letter of Intent: Wolf Reduction in Alaska

1980

#80-27-GB Letter of Intent Regarding Use of Alaska's Game for Religious Ceremony
#80-26-GB Findings and Policy Regarding Bowhunting
#80-25-GB Standing Committee II on Deer
#80-24-GB Regarding Advisory Committee Coordinators

1979

#79-23-GB Authorization to Export Animals from Alaska
#79-22-GB Staff Directive to Subsistence Section
#79-21-GB Relating to Brown Bear in GMU 4
#79-20-GB Relating to Brown Bear in GMU 4
#79-19-GB Brown Bear, GMU 4
#79-18-GB Relating to Muskoxen

1978

#78-18-GB Statement of Direction: Use of Airplanes in Controlling Predation by Wolves
#78-17-GB Relating to (d)(2) Legislation, State's ability to Manage Fish & Wildlife Resources
#78-16-GB Relating to (d)(2) Legislation, State's ability to Manage Fish & Wildlife Resources

1977

#77-15-GB Delegation of Authority to Commissioner to Address Petitions
#77-14-GB Repeal of Regulations Relating to Registration of Camps by Guides for Hunting Bears
#77-13-GB Regarding Closed Season for Caribou (rescinded November 30, 1977)
#77-12-GB Regarding the 17(d)(2) Land Settlement

1976

#76-11-GB Trapping Wolves by ADF&G
#76-10-GB Request for Public Safety Involvement in Enforcement of Caribou Regulations
#76-9-GB Management Goal: Western Arctic Caribou
#76-8-GB Export of Live Game Animals Outside of Alaska
#76-7-GB Musk Ox to Anchorage Children's Zoo (rescinded November 30, 1977)
#76-6-GB Taking of Wolves by Helicopter
#76-5-GB Regarding the Taking of Wolves in Units 23 and 26A

1975

#75-4-GB Endorsement of Trapping as a Legitimate Use of Renewable Resources
#75-3-GB Delegation of Authority to Adopt Emergency Regulations (See #87-42a-GB)
#75-2-GB Procedures for Delegations of Authority (See #87-42d-GB)
#75-1-GB Effectuating Delegation of Authority

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
2010-183-BOG**

**Harvest of Game for Customary and Traditional
Alaska Native Funerary and Mortuary Religious Ceremonies
February, 2010**

1. Throughout the State of Alaska, Alaska Native cultures continue to rely on many species of fish, game, and other wild resources as important components of customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies.
2. Although customs and traditions vary across the state and from culture to culture, the Board has been able to determine that a few principles appear to be consistent in all such ceremonies.
3. One consistent principle is that each ceremony is associated with a particular village, clan, or other group recognized as a cohesive unit by Alaska Native people. A ceremony is not a “customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary or mortuary religious ceremony” unless it is associated with a particular village, clan or other Alaska Native group and performed in accordance with their self-defined customs and traditions.
4. Another consistent principle is that these ceremonies involve consumption of, ideally, a wide variety of wild foods that are customarily and traditionally consumed by members of the village, clan, or other Alaska Native group in their particular locality. While store-bought foods are also often important, hunters for these ceremonies tend to focus their efforts on obtaining species that are viewed as customary and traditional foods with spiritual and cultural meaning, rather than introduced species. The species listed with “positive” findings in 5 AAC 99.125 are a comprehensive list of species that are more or less important for customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies outside of non-subsistence areas where such findings are not made. A similar range of species are traditionally harvested for these ceremonies in non-subsistence areas, however.
5. A third consistent principle is that participants where hunting to provide food for these ceremonies participate because of relationships they have to the deceased and the deceased’s family, clan, or community through birth, marriage, adoption, or other social processes recognized by Alaska Native groups.
6. Although traditions vary by community and cultural groups, throughout Alaska, traditional laws govern the initiation and organization of customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies. For example, these traditional laws stipulate who may initiate and organize these ceremonies based upon genealogical or other social relationships with the deceased.
7. The Board of Game recognizes that customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies are constitutionally protected activities that must be

accommodated, absent a contrary and compelling state interest that may not otherwise be served. When presented with requests to accommodate specific ceremonies, the Board will attempt to develop regulations specific to those ceremonies. 5 AAC 92.019 is the Board's effort to accommodate customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies that have not yet been specifically provided for.

Vote: 7-0
February 1, 2010
Anchorage, Alaska



Cliff Judkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Finding for the Alaska Board of Game
2007-173-BOG

Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy
March 12, 2007

At the March 2007, Southcentral/Southwest Region meeting in Anchorage, the Board of Game modified the Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy, #2006-162-BOG, by adding item #4 to the guidelines that shall be applied when determining the allocation percentage for drawing permits to nonresidents:

1. Allocations will be determined on a case by case basis and will be based upon the historical data of nonresident and resident permit allocation over the past ten years.
2. Each client shall provide proof of having a signed guide-client agreement when applying for permits.
3. Contracting guides shall be registered in the area prior to the drawing.
4. When a guide signs a guide-client agreement, the guide is providing guiding services and therefore must be registered for the use area at that time.


Cliff Jenkins, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

Vote: 7-0
Amended: March 12, 2007
Anchorage, Alaska

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2006-164-BOG**

**BOARD OF GAME BEAR CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT POLICY
MAY 14, 2006**

GENERAL BEAR MANAGEMENT

Purposes of Policy

1. To assure all management actions provide for the conservation of Alaska's bear species, their habitat and food sources, and are consistent with the Alaska Constitution, and applicable statutes.
2. To encourage review and comment and interagency coordination for bear management activities.

Goals

1. To ensure the long-term conservation of bears throughout their historic range in Alaska.
2. To increase public awareness and understanding of the uses, conservation, and management of bears and their habitat in Alaska.

Background

Brown/grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos*) are large omnivores found throughout most of Alaska. Although they are considered the same species, brown and grizzly bears occupy different habitats and have somewhat different lifestyles and body configurations. Grizzlies are typically found in interior and northern areas. They are generally smaller than brown bears and more predatory. Brown bears live in coastal areas of southern Alaska where they have access to productive salmon streams.

Brown/grizzly bears are found throughout their historic range in Alaska, and unlike populations in the contiguous 48 states, they are not considered a threatened or endangered species. Estimating precise population numbers is difficult because of the bears' secretive habits and often densely vegetated habitat, but in most places in the state, populations are considered stable or increasing. Throughout most coastal habitats where salmon are abundant, bear densities typically exceed 175 bears/1,000 km² (450 bears/1,000 mi²). A population in Katmai National Park on the Alaska Peninsula was measured at 550 bears/1,000 km² (1,420 bears/1,000 mi²). In most interior and northern coastal areas, densities do not exceed 40 bears/1,000 km² (100 bears/1,000 mi²).

Densities as low as 7 bears/1,000 km² (20 bears/1,000 mi²) have been measured in the eastern Brooks Range. Extrapolations from existing density estimates yielded an estimate

of 31,700 brown bears in 1993. All indications are that the population has increased in the past decade.

American black bears (*Ursus americanus*) are generally found in forested habitats throughout the state. Black bears also occupy their historic range in Alaska, often overlapping distribution with brown/grizzly bears. Because they live in forested habitats it is very difficult to estimate population size or density. Where estimates have been conducted in interior Alaska, densities ranged from 67 bears/1,000 km² (175 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Yukon Flats to 289 bears/1,000 km² (750 bears/1,000 mi²) on the Kenai Peninsula. In coastal forest habitats of Southeast Alaska's Alexander Archipelago black bear densities are considered high. A 2000 estimate for Kuiu Island was 1,560 black bears/1,000 km² (4,000 black bears/1,000 mi²). A statewide black bear population estimate is not available because, unlike the many brown/grizzly bear and wolf estimates that are available across the state, very few black bear population estimates have been conducted.

Brown/grizzly bears have relatively low reproductive rates and require abundant resources. Black bears exhibit higher reproductive rates than brown/grizzly bears; however, rates are still lower than for other big game animals with the exception of brown/grizzly bears. Population stability can be threatened by human-caused mortality and from fragmentation or destruction of habitat. This combination is present to a sufficient extent on the Kenai Peninsula that brown/grizzly bears there have been designated by the State as a "population of special concern". To address situations where bear populations have declined because of human activities, the Department has implemented remedial management actions. In the Kenai situation, a conservation strategy has been developed through a public stakeholder process.

In most areas of the state black bear populations are healthy and can sustain current or increased harvest levels. However, in some areas such as Unit 20B and 20D in the interior, the Kenai Peninsula, and Southeast Alaska, hunter demand for black bears is high, harvest is high, and these populations require closer monitoring. Bears are intelligent animals that learn to adapt to new situations. This ability, coupled with their enduring drive to rebuild fat reserves prior to denning, makes bears experts in finding ways to get a meal. Garbage is often a source of food from people. If this happens, bears learn to exploit human-related food resources and lose their natural tendencies to avoid people. Frequently, such bears become classified as "nuisance" bears and often are killed in defense of life or property (DLP).

Respected by most, and feared by many, bears can pose a threat in certain situations. Statewide, there are an average of about six encounters a year in which a human is injured. About half of those involve hunters in search of other quarry. About every two or three years, one of the attacks results in a human fatality.

Whenever bears and people interact with each other there are potential benefits and dangers. Displacing bears from feeding sites has serious consequences for them. Human behavior around bears not only impacts their own personal safety and viewing experience,

it also impacts the health and safety of the bears and the people who come to the area later. When bears and people meet, it is important that bears never get food from them and that people are trained how to react to bear encounters. Comprehensive education is recognized as a vital component in all aspects of any bear viewing program.

Public interest in bears has increased dramatically in Alaska during the past decade. Some of this interest is incidental to other pursuits such as sport fishing, hiking, flight seeing, eco-tours, or marine water cruises but some of it is specifically targeted at bear viewing. Bear viewing is a rapidly growing industry in selected areas of the state. The interest exceeds the opportunities provided now by such established and controlled sites as McNeil River, Pack Creek, Anan Creek, Wolverine Creek and Brooks Camp. As a result, private entrepreneur businesses are providing viewing opportunities in some high-density bear areas. Many of these sites and programs involve highly habituated bears that most frequently result in mutually exclusive conflicts with other uses of bears. Habituation of bears should be discouraged and maximum public benefits pursued by providing management programs designed to provide for public viewing opportunities in areas where other uses are already excluded or to carefully integrate uses on a time and area basis.

Alaska is world-renowned as a brown/grizzly bear hunting area. Alaska is the only place in the United States where they are hunted in large numbers, and the vast majority of record book bears come from the state. An average of about 1,500 brown/grizzly bears are harvested each year. The trend has been increasing. Many of the hunters are nonresidents and their economic impact is significant to Alaska. Hunters have traditionally been the strongest advocates for bears and their habitat, providing consistent financial and political support for research and management programs.

Because bears can be both prey and predator, their relationship with people is complex. In areas where a population of large ungulates has been reduced to low levels, bears may have a significant influence on the decline of species such as moose, caribou and deer. This is especially true when bears are found in combination with thriving wolf populations. Alaskan studies of bear interactions with moose, for instance, indicate that bears may contribute significantly to calf mortality. Coupled with wolf predation, the combined mortality rates can far exceed human induced mortality and contribute to major moose population declines, depressed populations and delayed recoveries. The role of bears in these situations greatly exacerbates the debate over predator control and complicates evaluation of potential and initiated management actions.

Guiding Principles

1. Manage bear populations to allow a wide range of human uses, while providing for long-term bear population sustainability.
2. Establish minimum population goals that ensure the long-term viability of bears recognizing the reproductive capacity of each bear species.
3. Manage bears at the scale of subunits or units to achieve appropriate overall predator-prey relationships rather than pursue single species management.
4. Protect the genetic diversity of bears.
5. Continue and, if appropriate, accelerate research for the management of bears.

6. Consider short-term and long-term effects of habitat loss and fragmentation on bear populations.
7. Provide for consumptive and non-consumptive uses of bears in management plans and encourage economic benefit to the state and its citizens while maintaining sustainable bear populations.
8. Do not allow identified prey populations to decline to a point where predation keeps them at low levels.
9. Avoid, where possible, activities that encourage the habituation of bears and manage bear viewing opportunities that are not mutually exclusive of other uses.
10. Encourage wildlife viewing of bears and other species in their natural settings as part of a broader outdoor experience.
11. Implement this policy in such a manner that the Department and the Board can respond promptly to unforeseen situations.
12. Pursue informational and educational efforts to help the public understand more about bears and their management.
13. Work with enforcement agencies to identify priorities and to assist with and encourage adequate enforcement activities.
14. Review and recommend revision to this policy as needed.

Conservation and Management

A. Management Strategies

The Department will manage both bear species differently according to their population and human use characteristics in different parts of the state. In some areas, such as the Kodiak Archipelago, portions of Southeast Alaska and the Alaska Peninsula, bears are managed for trophy-hunting and viewing opportunities. In many other areas of the state, bear populations are largely unaffected by human harvest. Bears are an important big game species sought by resident and nonresident hunters and are managed for a variety of objectives.

Generally, bear hunting will be conducted on a sustained yield basis, except in areas where a bear predation control program is authorized. Harvests will not be allowed to threaten the long-term population survival of bears. In most areas of the state, sustained brown/grizzly bear harvests will generally be 4-8 percent of the estimated total population and up to 12 percent for black bears. Some bear populations may be able to sustain a harvest above these guidelines and these will be evaluated for more liberal harvest programs. Lacking precise population data, managers will continue applying indirect parameter to assess the status of bear populations.

All brown/grizzly bears harvested under the general hunting regulations must be inspected and sealed by a Department representative. Black bears must be sealed in some units but not all. Non-resident hunters of brown/grizzly bears must be accompanied in the field by a registered big game guide or a resident relative. For both species, sows accompanied by cubs, and the cubs, are protected, but cubs are defined as bears in their first year of life for

black bears and for the first two years of life for brown/grizzly bears. The Department will continue to maintain these strategies and regulations for most of the state, unless it is necessary to consider methods to increase bear harvests as part of a bear predator control program.

The effect of management actions on the economic contribution of bears to Alaska's users of bears should be considered. Maintaining a regulatory structure that assures reasonable standards of data integrity with responsible management strategies and population sustainability will help avoid threats of international sanctions. Large areas of the state have subsistence brown/grizzly bear hunts with liberal seasons and bag limits, mandatory meat salvage, and relaxed sealing requirements. The Department will continue to accommodate subsistence needs and will consider the impacts on subsistence activities.

Bear viewing and bear/human interactions are also important aspects of bear management in Alaska. Increasing interest in watching bears at concentrated feeding areas such as salmon streams and sedge flats is challenging managers to find appropriate levels and types of human and bear interactions without jeopardizing human safety or bears or other legitimate uses of bears. Bear hunting and viewing are compatible in many situations. However, there are areas where the two uses are potentially mutually exclusive. Land and wildlife managers are faced with tough decisions that could either minimize those conflicts or promote single use regulations at the expense of other uses. For instance, federal withdrawals totaling over 40 million acres are managed to protect large segments of Alaska's big game resources habitat and major portions of these areas provide park-like observation opportunities. Logically these areas could first be utilized for habituated wildlife viewing opportunities before traditional uses of bears and other wildlife are unnecessarily impacted in other areas. Bear management programs on state and private lands should be designed to achieve maximum benefits to Alaskans. Specifically, state management programs should avoid habituating bears wherever possible. Conflicts between user groups can frequently be reduced if viewing programs adopt "best viewing practices."

In areas where bear management plans have been developed, the Department will adhere to the recommendations included in those plans as long as they are consistent with the newest policies and regulations adopted by the Board.

Nothing in this policy affects the authority under state or federal laws for an individual to protect human life or property from bears (5 AAC 92.410). All reasonable steps must be taken to protect life and property by non-lethal means before a bear is killed.

B. Research Strategies

Developing and implementing precise, cost-effective methods for determining bear populations will continue to be a research priority for the Department. Work to date suggests that no single population estimation method will work across the state given the vast areas, varied topography, differing vegetation communities and great differences in bear density. Some methods work well in one area but not in another. Aerial stream

surveys, line-transect surveys, capture-mark-recapture, intensive aerial surveys, and DNA analysis are some of the tools that can be utilized to provide population estimates.

Predator-prey relationships between bears and large ungulates have not been thoroughly examined in most of the state. Bears use a wide variety of foods seasonally including vegetation, fish, mammals, birds, and carrion and they are exceptionally adaptable in their ability to capitalize on available food resources. Consequently, the impact of ungulate prey abundance on bears is difficult to ascertain. Similarly, the impact of bears on prey populations is multifaceted and can be further compounded by the presence of other predators such as wolves.

Where appropriate, the Department will cooperate in research efforts with other agencies. Research findings will be reported in a timely fashion and presented in a form that is easily understood by the public.

C. Information and Education Strategies

Public education is critical in any bear management program. Perhaps as much as any species in Alaska, bears elicit a wide variety of emotions, have myriad uses, and directly impact peoples' lives both in the field and near settlements. Clear, objective information is necessary for citizens and managers alike to make wise decisions when dealing with bears. As the agency primarily responsible for bear management, the Department must take a lead role in producing and disseminating this information.

Bear information will be developed for a wide range of audiences and be delivered in a variety of media. A principal focus of bear education will be to promote a better understanding of life history, behavior, and habitat associations. Specific messages will include discussions of bear/human interactions, bear hunting, bear viewing, and bear predation on moose, caribou, and sheep. To assure consistent and accurate presentation of bear information, the Department will continue to work with the Alaska Interagency Bear Safety Education Committee.

The Department will strive to include the public in all bear management decisions. The primary method of public involvement will be through existing local Fish and Game Advisory Committee and Board processes. Citizen-driven bear management plans will be sponsored and supported by the Department. To date, such plans have been developed for Game Management Unit 4, the Kenai Peninsula, and the Kodiak Archipelago. The Department is committed to implementing as many of the recommendations from bear management plans as possible.

Because of the economic importance of guiding and other commercial enterprises associated with the varied uses of bear, it is recommended that extra efforts are made to notify all concerned parties that area specific predator control activities are being considered.

BEAR PREDATION MANAGEMENT

Purpose of Policy

1. To guide the Board of Game (Board) and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department) in implementing any bear predation management actions pursuant to AS 16.05.255(e) and 5 AAC 92.106, when the Board determines ungulate populations important for human consumption are being kept at low levels because of bear predation.

Goals

1. To provide guidelines for developing, implementing, and evaluating bear management actions designed to reduce bear specific predation in precise areas for specific time periods required by predator control implementation plans.

Background

In areas where the Board has authorized for intensive management (IM) activities, set IM population and harvest objectives and those objectives are not being met and bear predation has been found to be a major factor in the decline in prey populations or in keeping prey populations from recovering, the Board can authorize bears to be included in predator control planning. Whenever bears are considered and authorized for predator control activities, the implementation control plan must specify whether one or both bear species are to be considered in the control plan.

Based on careful consideration of scientific information and public comment, the Department and the Board believe that in some limited circumstances it may be beneficial and appropriate to control predation by bears to achieve population and human use objectives.

Guiding Principles

1. Where bear reductions are authorized, the first step should be to reduce bear numbers through general hunting provisions such as liberalized seasons, bag limits, hunting methods and means and tag wavers.
2. Where predation regulates prey populations, identify to the extent possible, the relative contribution by each primary predator species so that management response can be focused and effective.
3. Implement measures to reduce black and/or brown bear numbers to allow prey species to increase population management objectives in areas managed for high consumptive use where predation by bears itself or in combination with other predators is keeping prey at low levels.
4. Manage bears at the appropriate scale that may vary from an entire Game Management Unit to a specifically defined area (e.g. key calving sites).
5. If liberalization of general hunting provisions does not adequately reduce the target bear population, an additional control program may be authorized. This program should be conducted for the minimum time necessary to achieve the stated

- management objectives and may utilize methods and means not approved for general hunting.
6. Consider the management goals and objectives of state, federal, and private land owners and work cooperatively with them to design, implement, and evaluate bear control activities.
 7. Encourage federal and private land owners, where possible, to work cooperatively in any management and/or species control programs.
 8. If reduction in bear numbers fail to result in reasonable increases in availability of prey populations for human use, management practices intended to reduce bear populations should be reconsidered.

Management Strategies

In areas where bears have been identified as an important component in reducing and/or holding prey populations well below objectives, higher harvest levels than those listed under general management strategies will be allowed. In these areas, specific harvest reporting conditions will be imposed which may include additional requirements for permits, sealing, and/or reporting. In addition, the Department will closely monitor the effects of higher harvest on the bear and prey populations.

Research Strategies

In areas where bear predation control programs are considered, the Department may conduct research to quantify the contributions of each bear species and of wolves to the causes of decline in the ungulate population important for human use. Alternatively, the Department may use standard survey and inventory data and interpretation of other research results to guide the decision-making process. Monitoring activities designed to determine the effects of high levels of bear harvest on recovery of depressed ungulate populations would help focus management efforts in the most cost-effective manner.

Information and Education Strategies

In any situation where the Board or Department believes bear predation control may become necessary, the public will be informed as soon as possible. Detailed information on the specific location, the predator, prey and habitat concerns, and the proposed management action and its anticipated costs and duration will be widely disseminated. Public meetings may be held in the affected area and in major Alaska communities, in addition to regularly scheduled Board and Advisory Committee meetings. Once implemented, the Department will provide the Board and the public with an annual report and evaluation of the management action.

Board Consideration

The Board may consider bear control on a bear species when:

1. Bear predation has been determined to be an important factor in the decline of a prey population or is preventing recovery of a low density prey population.

2. Bear predation is an important factor preventing attainment of approved prey population of human-use objectives.
3. Efforts to control bear predation can be reasonably expected to achieve improvement in sustainable human use of ungulates.

If the Department or the Board determines that one or more of these conditions exist in a given IM area, at the Board's direction, an implementation plan will be prepared for public review.

It is the intent of the Board of Game that bear control programs authorized under this policy shall be directed at only specified target areas and is not intended for implementation under general hunting regulations.

Under methods and means the Board may selectively consider:

- Relocation
- Sterilization
- Use of communications equipment between hunters or trappers
- Sale of hides and skulls as incentive
- Use of bears for handicraft items for sale
- Trapping
- Bear baiting
- Changing the definition of a legal bear
- Same day airborne taking, except aerial shooting
- Diversionary feeding

Vote: 7/0
May 14, 2006
Anchorage, Alaska



Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

**Findings of the Alaska Board of Game
2004-151-BOG**

**Finding regarding Bear Baiting Allocation
March 10, 2004**

The Alaska Board of Game hereby finds that the board is tasked with and responsible for the allocation of the wildlife resources of the State of Alaska,

Black bears have proved to be a popular species for hunting and viewing via a number of methods, including baiting, across the State,

Population and harvest objectives for species important for human use, particularly for food, may be attainable without drastic bear control measures if a considerable number of bears are taken by bear baiters,

Approximately 650 black bears are currently harvested over bait in Alaska each year,

The harvest of black bears using bait has important economic benefits to the state including business for guide/outfitters and transporters, taxidermy, tanning, sale of handicraft items, sale of equipment for both archery and firearm hunters and more directly, from the sale of licenses and tags by the state,

The Boards of Fisheries and Game routinely allocate fish and game resources to user groups which are based upon the method of take.

The Alaska Board of Game has allocated at least 1,000 bears to bear baiters, for harvest in eighteen (18) Game Management Units across the state where regulations have been developed specifically to allow for such harvest.

Vote: 7/0
March 10, 2004
Fairbanks, Alaska

Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

**Alaska Board of Game
2003-139-BOG**

**A resolution of the Alaska Board of Game Concerning
Management of Kenai Peninsula Brown Bear Mortality.**

Be it resolved that the Board of Game recommends that the Department manage brown bears in Game Management Units 7 and 15 so that total human-caused mortality does not exceed twenty bears per year.

Vote: 7-0

Adopted this 11th day of March, 2003
Anchorage, Alaska


Mike Fleagle, Chair
Alaska Board of Game

Alaska Board of Game Findings
Trapping and Wolf Snaring in Alaska
98-119-BOG

At its March, 1998 meeting in Fairbanks, the Board of Game considered several proposals that restrict or eliminate the use of snares for harvesting wolves and other trapping concerns. Extensive public testimony and advisory committee reports regarding concern over the reduction or loss of snares as a method of harvesting wolves, and other trapping concerns was also received on both the proposals and the potential ballot initiative banning wolf snaring.

Based on this testimony and information provided by the Division of Wildlife Conservation and the Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection, and considerable deliberation, the BOG makes the following findings:

1. Snares are an important harvest tool for Alaska trappers, and the restriction or removal of that tool will result in personal and financial hardship for trappers and others dependent on the fur trade for their livelihood. In most areas of Alaska, economic opportunities are few, and the inability to harvest wolves with snares will lead to significantly reduced income levels in already depressed communities.
2. The harvest of wolves, through regulated methods and means, is an important management tool used by the Department of Fish and Game and the BOG in maintaining harvestable quantities of big game species, and is considered to be an important factor in the management of those species. Restricting or eliminating the use of snares to harvest wolves will reduce wolf harvest numbers, leading to potential predator to prey ratio imbalances and low moose and caribou densities in many areas.
3. It is strongly substantiated through many years of scientific monitoring and research that wolves are a highly prolific, productive and resilient species, capable of sustaining consistent harvestable surplus rates of over 30% annually on any given wolf pack. The annual reported harvest from Alaska's estimated wolf population of 7000 seldom exceeds 20% in a given area or statewide under existing harvest and management regimes.
4. The source of the data used by snaring opponents and ballot initiative supporters is the result of an intensive wolf trapping and snaring program conducted by the Department of Fish and Game in 1993-1994 in GMU 20A. It can not be considered representative of common trapping practices. Trappers use varying numbers of snares at a set, rarely more than 12, determined by location and prevailing conditions. There is no evidence that trappers use snares set in the manner of a drift net, or that they set snares in multiple heights.
5. The rate of incidental catch by trappers of non-target species such as moose, caribou, eagles, ravens, and bears is very low, due to the careful and exact placement of their snares, and the timing of trapping seasons, in habitats, locations, and configurations that minimize catch of other species. Other species of furbearers caught in wolf snares, such as fox, wolverine and lynx, are desirable and legal, and are not considered to be incidental non-target catches to the trapper.
6. The instances of wolves being caught around other parts of the body, such as the legs and feet are rare. In cases where wolves are caught around the foot, the snare rarely breaks the flesh. Most wolves caught in snares are caught around the neck, leading to swift and humane death. A very small

percentage of wolves are caught around the torso. These wolves are usually still alive when the trapper returns to the set.

7. We heard widespread public support among Alaska residents, particularly those residing in rural areas, for the use of snares by trappers to harvest wolves. There is no evidence to support the notion that the bush communities support a ban on wolf snares.
8. Alaska trappers are conscientious and operate within the laws and regulations governing trapping. Snares are rarely left operable at the end of the season. Snares are valuable to the trapper, and great effort is made to recover snares set in the field.
9. Regulated trap checks are not reasonable in Alaska, considering climatic conditions, length of traplines, and other considerations that would make a time limit impossible to comply with.
10. Trap identification is not warranted at this time. Trappers have experienced harassment by those against trapping and worry about the information being made available to the public. The Alaska Trappers Association assists law enforcement officers in determining who traps belong to. Most traplines are well known by other people and Department staff, further assisting in the identification of those trappers.

The Board of Game found that much of the information used in the claims against snaring came from a specific intensive wolf management program. Many more snares were used per set and higher density of snares were used for a longer season in habitats not normally trapped. The area also had a higher density of moose than most of Alaska. Two grizzly bears were caught before the normal trapping season begins, and two eagles were caught in snares set by helicopter in high terrain.

It is our conclusion that the numbers used by the Alaska Wildlife Alliance and Alaskans Against Snaring Wolves are inflated and do not represent common trapping practices or actual rates of wolf harvest or incidental take of other species.

ADOPTED DATE: March 26, 1998

Fairbanks, Alaska



Lori Quakenbush, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game