

*This proposal was considered by the Board of Game at the 2012 Statewide Regulations meeting. The board deferred it to the Interior Region meeting scheduled for March, 2012.*

**PROPOSAL 109 - 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.** Clarify and remove complicated or excessively restrictive regulations and ADF&G discretionary provisions pertaining to black bear hunting.

**Units 6-26 (except Unit 6C & D and 14C) Residents and nonresidents: No Closed Season**

**Units 6-26 (except 6D & C and the coastal areas of 15&7 as defined at the March 2011 Board of Game meeting) Residents and nonresidents:**

**Bag Limit - 3 bears**

**All intensive management areas where black bears are recognized as contributing to the decline of prey species;**

**Bag Limit - No Limit**

**ISSUE:** Black bear seasons and bag limits should be standardized as much as possible. Black bears are the most underutilized big game species in most areas of greater Alaska. Healthy populations harvested far below maximum sustained yield should allow for liberalization in most areas. Liberalization of black bear seasons and bag limits has shown to have little or no effect on sustainability in non-coastal areas. A three bear bag limit leaves enough room for the board to draw attention to areas in which bear numbers need to be reduced by establishing “no limit” bag limit in certain Intensive management areas.

This proposal consists of several consensus items from a black bear resource users’ group held at the March 2011 Board of Game meeting. All of these suggestions were approved by ALL members of the group. We have not included any items or suggestions that were not supported by all members of the group.

The intent of this group is to clarify and remove complicated or excessively restrictive regulations and ADF&G discretionary provisions pertaining to black bear hunting in Alaska Statewide but especially greater Alaska. Over the years bear hunting and baiting regulations have accumulated many unnecessary restrictions. We realize Southeast Alaska has unique issues pertaining to black bear hunting. Many of our suggestions are intended to be statewide. If Southeast Alaska is intended to be excluded we will state a specific area for the regulation (Units 6-26, etc.).

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Regulations will be needlessly complicated. Opportunities will not be realized for hunters that wish to take more bears than currently allowed. Increased harvest in some IM areas will continue only by burdensome predator control permits.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** No

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Bear hunters will have less confusing regulations and more options as to the time and numbers of bears they may take.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** Those opposed to bear hunting. Those opposed to unlimited take in Intensive Management areas. Those that prefer complicated regulations.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED:** No limit on black bears in all non-coastal areas. Five bear bag limit.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Greater Alaska Black Bear Committee

**LOG NUMBER:** EG051911496

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