

During the Central/Southwest Region meeting in February 2015, the Board of Game deferred this proposal to the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 71 - 5 AAC 92.072. Community subsistence harvest hunt area and permit conditions. Implement a system to ensure communities or groups approved to participate in the moose and caribou community subsistence harvest (CSH) program meet the intent of the Board of Game findings for the program as follows:

Implement a reporting and point system for helping communities and groups make efforts to observe the Alaska Board of Game's (board's) customary and traditional use pattern found for the community subsistence hunts for caribou and moose in the Gulkana, Cantwell, Chistochina, Gakona, Mentasta, Tazlina, Chitina, and Kluti Kaah Community Harvest Area, as follows:

92.072 (c)(1)(D) make efforts to ensure that the applicable customary and traditional use pattern described by the board and included by the department as a permit condition, if any, is observed by subscribers including meat sharing...

(E) In accordance with the provisions of this subsection, the department may require written reports from administrators of and participants in Gulkana, Cantwell, Chistochina, Gakona, Mentasta, Tazlina, Chitina, and Kluti Kaah Community Harvest Area community harvest permit hunts which describe efforts by households to observe the customary and traditional use pattern described by board findings for the game population(s) to be hunted under the conditions of this community harvest permit.

(i) The department will evaluate each report submitted under (E), and will measure compliance of the communities or groups formed under 5 AAC 92.072(c) with the customary and traditional use pattern of the game population(s), as follows:

(1) Element 1, participation in a long-term, consistent pattern of noncommercial taking, use, and reliance on the game population, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: the number of years of taking and use of the game population; and involvement of multiple generations in the taking and use of the game population; and use of areas other than the community subsistence hunt area for harvest activities; and

(2) Element 2, participation in the pattern of taking or use of the game population that follows a seasonal use pattern of harvest effort in the hunt area, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicator: the months and/or seasons in which noncommercial harvest activities occur in the hunt area; and

(3) Element 3, participation in a pattern of taking or use of wild resources in the hunt area that includes methods and means of harvest characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: costs associated with harvests; and methods used to reduce costs and improve efficiency of harvest; and number of species harvested during hunting activities; and

(4) Element 4, participation in a pattern of taking or use of wild resources that occurs in the hunt area due to close ties to the area, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: number of years of taking and use of the game population; and involvement of multiple generations in the taking and use of the game population; and variety of harvesting activities that take place in the hunt area; and evidence of other areas used for harvest activities; and

(5) Element 5, use of means of processing and preserving wild resources from the hunt area that have been traditionally been used by past generations, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: complete listing of the parts of the harvested game that are used; and preservation methods of that game; and types of foods and other products produced from that harvest; and

(6) Element 6, participation in a pattern of taking or use of wild resources from the hunt area that includes the handing down of knowledge of hunting skills, values, and lore about the hunt area from generation to generation, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: involvement of multiple generations in the taking and use of the game population; and evidence of instruction and training; and

(7) Element 7, participation in a pattern of taking of wild resources from the hunt area in which the harvest is shared throughout the community, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: amount of harvest of the game population that is shared; and evidence of a communal sharing event; and support of those in need through sharing of the harvest of the game population; and

(8) Element 8, participation in a pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance on a wide variety of wild resources from the hunt area, may provide up to 12.5% of available points as measured by the following indicators: the variety of resource harvest activities engaged in within the hunt area; and evidence of other areas used for harvest activities.

(ii) failure to report under this subsection, or under 5 AAC 92.072(f), will result in denial to a household of a Gulkana, Cantwell, Chistochina, Gakona, Mentasta, Tazlina, Chitina, and Kluti Kaah Community Harvest Area community subsistence harvest permit.

[E](F) beginning July 1, 2014, in the community harvest hunt area...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The goal of the annual report evaluation process - as outlined in this proposal, the draft questionnaires, and in the draft scoring system (presented at the March 7, 2014 committee meeting) - is to provide feedback to communities and groups regarding their efforts to observe the customary and traditional use (C&T) pattern described in board finding 2006-170-BOG.

Efforts to observe the pattern are required by 5 AAC 92.072 and by the board. As background, during the December 2013 meeting of the board's Copper Basin Area Subsistence Hunting Committee, ADF&G was asked to investigate methods to better assess if households with a Copper Basin community subsistence hunt permit were observing (or were making attempts to observe) the C&T pattern described in 2006-170-BOG. In response, the department developed a draft questionnaire and scoring system that hunt administrators and participating households would be required to submit after the caribou and moose hunting seasons. The committee discussed the questionnaire and scoring system during its meetings on March 7, 2014, and April 18, 2014, and requested the concept in a draft proposal for consideration to forward to the board.

The draft proposal outlines how each element in the board findings could be measured by a set of indicators that are in turn closely linked to those findings.

A group's score would be based on combined responses from participating households and the group administrator. A group's score on each element would eventually be specified in regulation as based on a percentage of the total points available, rather than a fixed number. Using a percentage for each element allows for refinement of the set of questions for that element. It also provides a way to compare patterns among households and among groups. Furthermore, using a percentage for each element would allow the board to decide which element it would like to have the most weight. The board may choose to weigh responses on one element more than responses on another, for example.

It is recommended that this evaluation process be in place a minimum of three years before the board considers using the scores in a regulatory context. For example, after three years' of data are collected, the Board might wish to consider establishing in regulation 1) a minimum score for a conditional approval of efforts to observe this pattern, and 2) a minimum score necessary to demonstrate full observation of the C&T pattern.

Also after three years, the board could consider adopting in regulation a process for a person or group to appeal a score assigned by the department to a report submitted under (E) that resulted in denial of an application for a community subsistence hunt permit.

Additional Information: This proposal was considered by the Board of Game Committee on Copper Basin Area Subsistence Hunting Regulations (committee) which held three meetings prior to the proposal deadline. The 12 member committee was established by the Board of Game and included board members, advisory committee members, and members of the public. At their last meeting, the committee reviewed 19 proposals that were drafted at the request of the committee or were submitted by committee members. All of the proposals considered by the committee have been submitted to the Board of Game for consideration at the Central/Southwest Region Board of Game meeting scheduled for February 2015. The committee recommendation and discussion on this proposal is summarized below. Committee action on all 19 proposals is available in the meeting summary that can be accessed on the committee meeting website located at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo.

Results of April 18, 2014 Committee Meeting

Committee vote: Passed
Yea – 6 Nay – 5 (one member absent)

Key Points in Discussion

In Support

- ADF&G Division of Subsistence indicated that they plan to transfer current capacity (staff, resources) toward implementing the proposed system, as they already invest substantial time in reviewing reports currently required of CSH participants. This proposal would provide a more quantified way to review reports and, in some ways, would simplify the review and analysis.
- Supporters indicated this is the “single most important change” the committee could recommend to address the impacts of increased CSH participation.
- Noted that it is similar in intent to proposal submitted to the committee by Paxson Advisory Committee (see Proposal I-H), but the majority of the committee prefers the criteria and system in this proposal.
- The proposed system would make the determination of who may be adhering to the pattern in the CSH less subjective.

In Opposition

- Concerned that the process would be burdensome on hunt administrators, group members, and ADF&G.
- Believes that this type of regulatory process is more appropriate and warranted in a Tier II situation. Since the Copper Basin caribou and moose hunts are in a “Tier I-plus” status, do not support this requirement.

PROPOSED BY: Board of Game Committee on Copper Basin Area Subsistence Hunting Regulations (EG-C14-280)

During the Central/Southwest Region meeting in February 2015, the Board of Game deferred this proposal to the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 99 - 5 AAC 84.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt on Kalgin Island in Unit 16B as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(14)		
...		
Unit 16(B), Kalgin Island 1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20
...		

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The population objective for this predator-free, 23-mi² island is 20-40 moose, a density of 1-1.75 moose/mi². During a December 2012 survey, ADF&G staff counted 104 moose, approximately 4.5 moose/mi².

Because of concerns of over-population and deteriorating habitat conditions, a drawing permit hunt for cows was initiated in 1995. In an attempt to reduce the population quickly, the board established a registration hunt for any moose for the fall 1999 season. The population of moose on Kalgin Island is high at this time and remains above the objective of 20-40.

The "any moose" registration hunt is recommended to provide additional mortality on this predator-free island population. A registration hunt also allows ADF&G to continue gathering biological information from specimens provided by successful hunters. The difficult hunting conditions and limited access will minimize the danger of over-harvest.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (EG-C14-342)

Correction: Proposal 131 was submitted for the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015 and not the Central/Southwest Region meeting.

PROPOSAL 131 - 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game. Lower the bag limit for goldeneye for the Central/Southwest Region as follows:

Lower goldeneye to allow no more than three goldeneye in the general bag.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A low abundance of this limited range bird; Barrow's goldeneye are a sea duck with sensitive lifestage histories, behavior and reproductive strategies below long-term averages. They are mistakenly placed in with the dabbling general bag limit, with those birds counting in the millions above long term averages

PROPOSED BY: Sea Ducks Unlimited (EG-C14-311)

Note: Proposal 202 was approved by the Board as an Agenda Change Request and will be heard at the Southcentral Region meeting, March 2015.

PROPOSAL 202 - 5 AAC 85.025 (a) (16) (17) (18) (19) (20) (21) Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou; and 5 AAC 92.085 (2) (D) Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Change the caribou regulation for all game management units (GMU) associated with the Western Arctic caribou herd (WAH) and Teshekpuk caribou herd (TCH).

The affected GMUs within the ranges of the caribou herds are: portions of GMU 21D; GMU 22; GMU 23; portions of 24A; portions of GMU 24B; 24C; 24D; GMU 26A, and portions of GMU 26B. When the caribou population analysis is completed, additional regulatory changes, if any, will be shown in an amended proposal that will be provided when department comments are submitted to the Alaska Board of Game (board). The regulatory changes in this proposal are listed below. To aid in conservation of the herd, the department recommends that changes to regulations to reduce harvest begin in RY2015 (next hunting season). The board should discuss whether adopting any of the changes still provides a subsistence user with a reasonable opportunity for success.

The department prefers implementing regulatory changes to reduce harvest concurrently in both herds because of overlapping ranges of the WAH and TCH. Regulatory changes are needed to reduce opportunity to effectively lower annual harvest to promote recovery of the population. Options to reduce harvest include adoption of one or more of the following:

- 1) Change seasons:
 - a. Shorten season for bulls;
 - b. Shorten season for cows;
 - c. Close bull season after the rut (after October 1);
 - d. Keep cow season open when bulls are in rut (bull season closed);
- 2) Change bag limits:
 - a. Reduce total daily bag limit for residents;
 - b. Reduce total season bag limit for nonresidents;
 - c. Prohibit the take of calves;
 - d. Create 'bull only' bag limit during appropriate time of year;
 - e. Create 'cow only' bag limit during appropriate time of year;
 - f. Change resident daily bag limit to a total season (annual) bag limit;
- 3) Change exceptions to unlawful methods:
 - a. Discontinue same day airborne hunting in Unit 22 [5 AAC 92.085 (8)(D)];
- 4) Manage hunts by permit
 - a. Consider registration permit hunts in defined areas with harvest quotas, separately by herd.
 - b. Board of Game allocation of nonresident permits (drawing or registration);

The department will continue to explore and evaluate measures to reduce harvest and conserve the herds. Any modifications will be included in department comments.

Intensive Management feasibility assessments will be presented for the respective herds at the next available opportunity.

Units and Bag Limits

**Resident
Open Season
(Subsistence and
General Hunts)**

**Nonresident
Open Season**

(16)

...

Remainder of Unit 21(D);
*(Note to reader: this hunt area is
Unit 21(D), north of the Yukon River
and west of the Koyukuk River)*

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however,
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

(17)

Units 22(A)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however,
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

Unit 22(B), that portion west of
Golovnin Bay, and west of a line
along the west bank of the Fish
and Niukluk Rivers to the
mouth of the Libby River, and
excluding all portions of the
Niukluk River drainage upstream
from and including the
Libby River drainage

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; **however,**
calves may not be taken; and

Oct. 1 – Apr. 30

5 caribou per day; **however, calves may not be taken**; during the period May 1 – Sept. 30, a season may be announced by emergency order; however, cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
[5 CARIBOU; OR]

[OCT. 1 – APR. 30]

1 bull; however, calves may not be taken [5 CARIBOU]; during the period **Aug. 1** [MAY 1] – Sept. 30, a season may be announced by emergency order [; HOWEVER COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

Remainder of Unit 22(B)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, **calves may not be taken**; cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken [5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER, COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

Unit 22(D), that portion in the Pilgrim River drainage

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; **however, calves may not be taken**; and

Oct. 1 – Apr. 30

5 caribou per day; **however, calves may not be taken**; during the period May 1 - Sept. 30, a season may be announced by emergency order; however, cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
[5 CARIBOU; OR]

[OCT. 1 – APR. 30]

1 bull; however, calves may not be taken [5 CARIBOU]; during the period **Aug. 1** [MAY 1] – Sept. 30,

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

a season may be announced by emergency order [; HOWEVER COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Unit 22(D), that portion in the Kuzitrin River drainage (excluding the Pilgrim River drainage) and the Agiapuk River drainage, including the tributaries

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, **calves may not be taken;**
cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER, COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

Unit 22(E), that portion east of and including the Sanaguich River drainage

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, **calves may not be taken;**
cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER, COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

Remainder of Unit 22

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, **calves may not be taken;**
cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken; during the period Aug. 1 – Sept. 30 a season may be announced by emergency order

(Season to be announced by emergency order)

[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

(18)

Unit 23

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, July 1 – June 30
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[2 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

(19)

...

Remainder of Unit 24(A)
*(Note to reader, this hunt area is
Unit 24(A), north of the south bank
of the Kanuti River)*

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, July 1 – June 30
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
1 bull; however, calves may not be taken
[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

...

Remainder of Units 24(B),
24(C), and 24(D)
*(Note to reader, the 'Remainder of
Unit 24(B)' is Unit 24(B) north of the south
bank of the Kanuti River downstream from
the Kanuti-Killitna River drainage)*

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, July 1 – June 30
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull; however, calves may not be taken

[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN MAY 16 – JUNE 30]

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

...

(21)

**Unit 26(A), that portion of the
Colville River drainage upstream
from the Anaktuvuk River, and
drainages of the Chukchi Sea south
and west of, and including the
Utukok River drainage**

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

5 caribou per day; however,
calves may not be taken;
cow caribou may not be
taken May 16 – June 30

July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull; however, calves may not be taken

[5 CARIBOU; HOWEVER,
COW CARIBOU MAY NOT BE
TAKEN

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30
[JULY 1 – JUNE 30]

Remainder of Unit 26(A)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

**5 bulls per day; however,
calves may not be taken**

July 1 – Sept. 30

**3 cows per day; however,
calves may not be taken**

Oct. 1 – Oct. 31

**5 caribou;
however, no more than
3 cows may be taken;
calves may not be taken**

Mar. 1 – Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull; however, calves may not be taken

Aug. 1 – Sept. 30

Unit 26(B), that portion
north of 69° 30' N. lat. and west of the
east bank of the Kuparuk River to
a point at 70° 10' N. lat., 149°
04' W. long., then west
approximately 22 miles to 70° 10'
N. lat. and 149° 56' W. long.,
then following the east bank of

the Kalubik River to the Arctic Ocean

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou per day; however, cow caribou may not be taken May 16 – June 30
July 1 – June 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou
July 1 – Apr. 30

Unit 26(B), that portion south of 69° 30' N. lat. and west of the Dalton Highway

5 caribou; however, cow caribou may be taken only from July 1 – Oct. 10
July 1 – Oct. 10
May 16 – June 30
July 1 – Oct. 10
May 16 – June 30

Unit 26(B), that portion south of 69° 30' N. lat. and east of the Dalton Highway

5 caribou; however, cow caribou may be taken only from July 1 - May 15
July 1 – July 30
July 1 – June 30

Remainder of Unit 26(B)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou;
July 1 – Apr. 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:
5 caribou
July 1 – Apr. 30

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. The following methods and means of taking big game are prohibited in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

...

(8) a person who has been airborne may not take or assist in taking a big game animal until after 3:00 a.m. following the day in which the flying occurred; however, this paragraph does not apply to

...

[(D) TAKING CARIBOU FROM JANUARY 1 THROUGH APRIL 15, IN UNIT 22 IF THE HUNTER IS AT LEAST 300 FEET FROM THE AIRPLANE AT THE TIME OF TAKING;]

...

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

Change caribou hunting regulations for the Western Arctic caribou herd (WAH) and the Teshekpuk caribou herd (TCH) to conserve the populations while they are in decline. Population estimates as of July 2013 for the WAH and TCH were completed after the January 2014 report to the board at the Arctic and Western Region meeting in Kotzebue. The degree of decline in each

herd was higher than expected and consistently supported through population metrics measured in each herd. Since both herds have significant range overlap during their seasonal movements, it would be best to consider both herds simultaneously when considering regulatory changes. If hunting in either herd continues with no harvest restriction, overharvest will likely occur and recovery of the population will be delayed. This proposal supplements the department's agenda change request (ACR) to consider WAH and TCH caribou regulations before the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Arctic and Western Region in 2016.

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for both the Western Arctic caribou herd and the Teshekpuk Lake caribou herd in GMUs 21, 22, 23, 24, and 26. The board has found that 8,000–12,000 caribou in these two herds in those GMUs combined is the amount reasonably necessary (ANS) for subsistence (5 AAC 99.025(a)(4)).

Western Arctic caribou herd. Census results for the WAH show a 27% decline from 2011 to 2013, and a 50% decline from 2003 to 2013 (Figure 1). Long term trends of increasing adult cow mortality and decreasing recruitment suggest that the herd will likely continue to decline into the near future. Results of community-based harvest surveys and statewide harvest reports estimate that approximately 14,000 caribou were harvested in each of the last 2 years, RY2012 and RY2013. Each year residents within the range of the herd accounted for 95% of the harvest and they took approximately 60% bulls, 30% cows and 10% unknown sex. Hunters residing outside the range of the herd, including nonresidents, accounted for 5% of the harvest and took approximately 90% bulls, 9% cows and 1% unknown sex. At these rates, harvests of WAH cows have slightly exceeded the 2% sustainable harvest rate in each of the last 3 years (RY2011–RY2013) and harvests of bulls will likely exceed the 15% sustainable harvest rate within the next 1–3 years (RY2015–RY2017). Based on population size and composition, the current WAH harvestable surplus is estimated at 13,100 caribou, approximately 7% less than the annual harvest in the last 2 years. If the decline remains consistent, the projected harvestable surplus for RY2015 is estimated at 11,300 caribou, approximately 20% lower than total harvest during RY2012 and RY2013.

The *Western Arctic Caribou Herd Cooperative Management Plan* (WAH PLAN; online at <http://westernarcticcaribou.org/the-group/management-plan/>) defines the current population status as “declining conservative management level” (see Table 1 below, adapted from WAH PLAN). However, the magnitude and trajectory of the decline depicted in Figure 1 suggests the herd could quickly change to “declining preservative management level”. The harvest recommendations at these management levels in the WAH PLAN are:

Conservative Management Level

- 1) No harvest of calves.
- 2) No cow harvest by nonresidents.
- 3) Restriction of bull harvest by nonresidents.
- 4) Encourage voluntary reduction in cow harvests by residents.
- 5) Limit the subsistence harvest of bulls only when necessary to maintain a minimum 40:100 bull:cow ratio.

Preservative Management Level

- 1) No harvest of calves.
- 2) Limit harvest of cows by resident hunters through permit hunts and/or village quotas.
- 3) Limit the subsistence harvest of bulls to maintain at least 40 bulls:100 cows.
- 4) Harvest restricted to residents only, according to state and federal law.
- 5) Closure of some federal public lands to nonqualified users may be necessary.

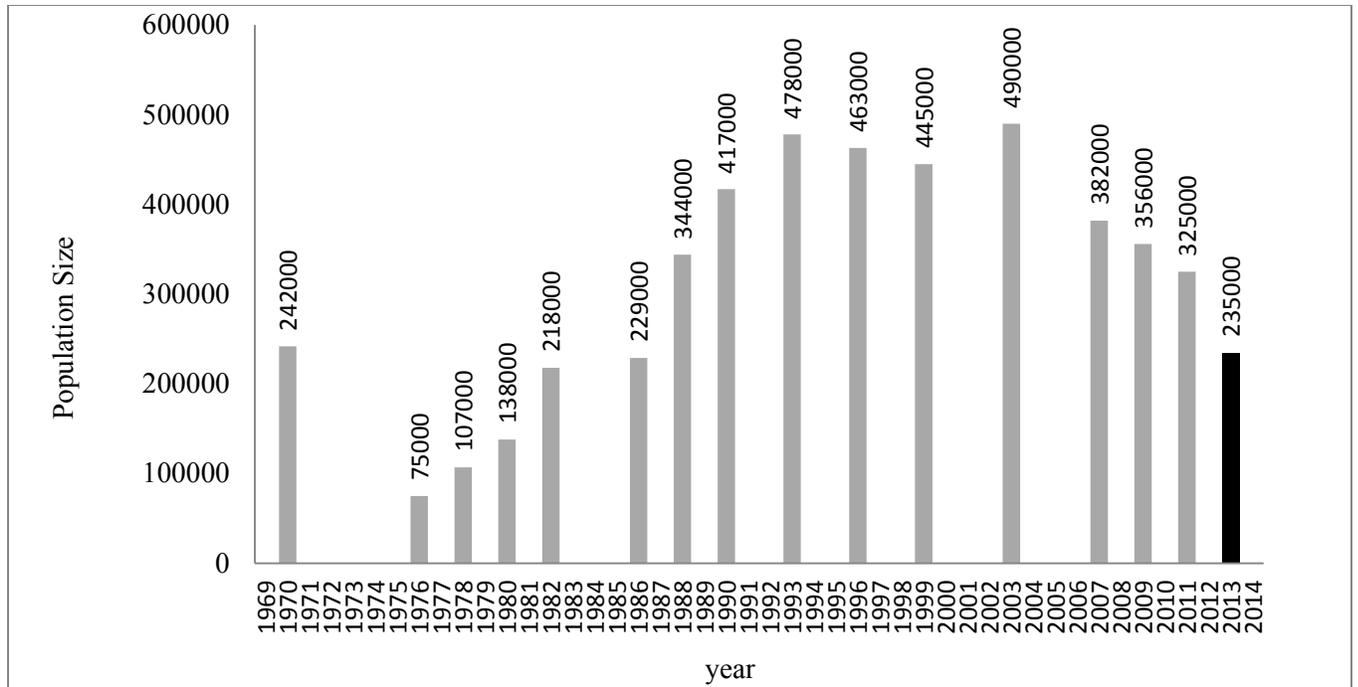


Figure 1. Population size of the Western Arctic caribou herd, 1970 – 2013.

Table 1. Western Arctic caribou herd management levels using herd size, population trend and harvest rate. (adapted from *Western Arctic Caribou Herd Cooperative Management Plan*, Revised 2011. Western Arctic Caribou Herd Working Group, PO Box 175, Nome, AK 99762)

Management Level and Harvest Level	Population Trend		
	Declining Low harvest: 6%	Stable Med harvest: 7%	Increasing High harvest: 8%
Liberal	Pop: 265,000+ Harvest: 18,550-24,850	Pop: 230,000+ Harvest: 16,100-21,700	Pop: 200,000+ Harvest: 16,000-21,600
Conservative	Pop: 200,000-265,000 Harvest: 14,000-18,550	Pop: 170,000-230,000 Harvest: 11,900-16,100	Pop: 150,000-200,000 Harvest: 12,000-16,000
Preservative	Pop: 130,000-200,000 Harvest: 8,000-12,000	Pop: 115,000-170,000 Harvest: 8,000-12,000	Pop: 100,000-150,000 Harvest: 8,000-12,000
Critical Keep Bull: Cow ratio ≥40 Bull: 100 Cow	Pop: <130,000 Harvest: 6,000-8,000	Pop: <115,000 Harvest: 6,000-8,000	Pop: <100,000 Harvest: 6,000-8,000

In fall 2014 we estimated there were 39 bulls:100 cows in this herd. This level is at or slightly below the minimum management objective of 40 bulls:100 cows recommended in the WAH PLAN. Modeling of population parameters also suggests that within 1–3 years herd size could drop below the Intensive Management (IM) population management objective of 200,000 caribou, and the corresponding estimated harvestable surplus could go below the IM harvest range of 12,000–20,000 caribou.

In summary, the WAH decline has been detectable since 2003 and recently increased in rate due to the combined effects of increasing adult mortality and decreasing recruitment. The causes behind these trends are not well understood, but were likely stimulated by winter icing conditions (rain-on-snow events), predation, and increased risk of nutritionally-mediated predation (weakened animals appear more vulnerable to predators). Harvests will have increasing influence on herd dynamics if herd size and bull:cow ratios continue to decline.

Teshkepuk caribou herd. Population counts of the TCH as of July 2013 show trends with steeper declines than the WAH, with a 42% reduction since 2011, and a 53% decline since 2008 (Figure 2). Based on observed adult mortality (>20%), low parturition rates (<60%), low calf survival (<30%), low yearling recruitment (12–15:100 adults), and reduced bull:cow ratios, the population decline appears likely to continue into the foreseeable future. Similar to the WAH, mortality rates based on collared caribou have increased steadily since 1990. It is notable that the two highest mortality rates of adult caribou have occurred in the last two years. Decline in recruitment to 10-months of age is also nearly identical to the WAH and this decrease in survival of short yearlings over the long-term is likely influencing the observed declines in TCH bull:cow ratios. Bull:cow ratios are currently estimated at 39:100 cows, down from 46:100 cows in 2009. Based on the 2013 estimate of abundance and composition of the herd, sustainable harvest is calculated by applying a 15% rate to bulls and 1.5% rate to cows, yielding an estimated range of 1,500–1,600 caribou as harvestable surplus. Harvest is estimated based on community harvest survey data collected since 2002 and adjusted for the likely ratios of WAH and TCH in the harvest, but unadjusted for annual availability of caribou. These data imply that annual harvest is approximately 1,800–1,900 bulls and 400–500 cows (dataset “A”, *Customary and Traditional Use Worksheet and Options for Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence Uses of the Teshkepuk Caribou Herd, GMUs 26A and 24B*, Braem 2014, posted online at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo&date=01-10-2014&meeting=kotzebue>). Continued harvest at this level exceeds the current estimated harvestable surplus by almost 50%. In relation to IM, the estimated harvestable surplus is within IM harvest objectives of 900–2,800 caribou; however, continued declines in the herd will push the surplus towards the lower objective. In the present structure of a combined ANS, subsistence hunt management in the TCH will largely be dominated or controlled by the available surplus in the much larger WAH.

In summary, the TCH decline is the combination of low and declining calf production, poor calf survival (30%), and high adult mortality rates. The causes are not well understood, but likely related to poor nutrition in summer and winter, high levels of winter predation on calves, and increased risk of nutritionally-mediated predation (weakened animals appear more vulnerable to predators). Harvests will have increased influence on herd dynamics if this decline continues.

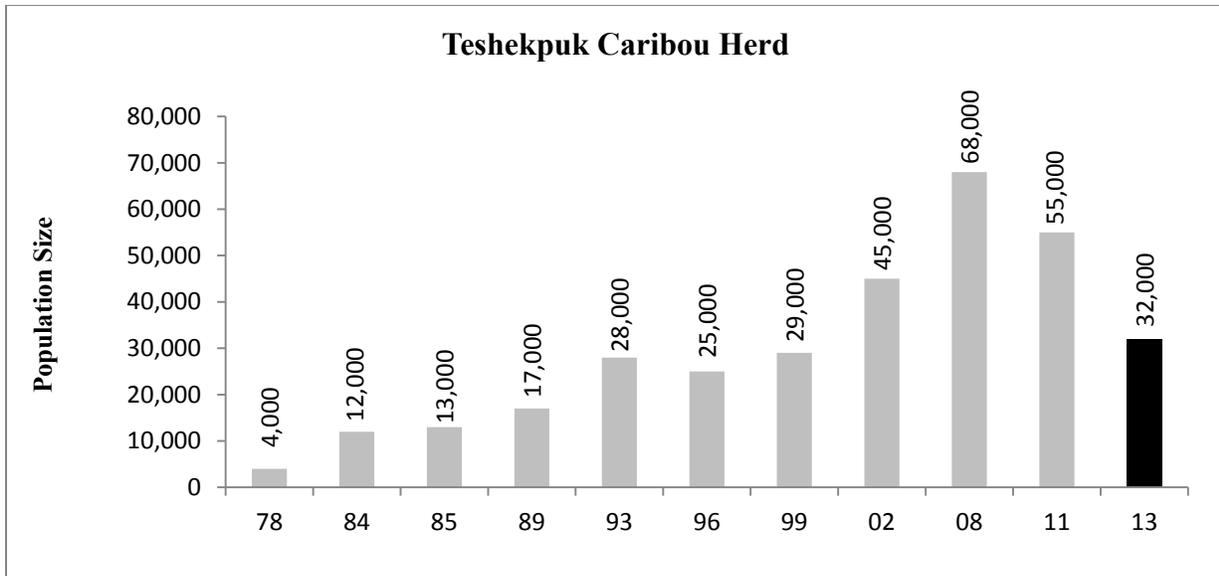


Figure 2. Population size of the Teshekpuk caribou herd, 1978–2013.

Amount Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (ANS). For RY2014, the combined estimate of harvestable surplus in both the WAH and TCH is 14,600–14,700 caribou (WAH=13,100 plus TCH=1,500–1,600), where the WAH contributes about 85% of the surplus. This is close to, but above, the ANS range of 8,000–12,000 caribou. The trends in each herd described above suggest the combined harvestable surplus will be below the upper ANS threshold in the near future. In the event that the harvestable surplus drops below the upper ANS level before the next Region V board meeting, the department can close the non-resident season by emergency order.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game at the request of the Alaska Board of Game (EG-C14-360)

Note: Proposal 203 was approved by the Board as an Agenda Change Request and will be heard at the Southcentral Region meeting, March 2015.

PROPOSAL 203 – 5 AAC 85.055 (a)(9) and (10). Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Close all Dall sheep seasons in Unit 23 and Unit 26(A) west of the Etivluk River drainage (e.g., the Brooks Range west of Howard Pass). Retain hunt areas and hunt types (general season and subsistence hunts by harvest ticket hunts and/or permit) so similar hunt regimes may be restored when the population recovers.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
<p>(9)</p> <p>Unit 23, that portion north of Rabbit Creek, Kiyak Creek, and the Noatak River, and west of the Aniuk River (“DeLong Mountains”)</p> <p>RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 sheep by registration permit only</p> <p>ALL HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only, provided that the harvestable surplus is greater than 9 sheep in combination with that portion of Unit 26(A), west of the Etivluk River.</p> <p>Unit 23, that portion south of Rabbit Creek, Kiyak Creek, and the Noatak River, and west of the Cutler and Redstone Rivers (“Baird Mountains”)</p> <p>RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 sheep by registration permit only</p>	<p><u>No open season.</u> [AUG. 10 – APR. 30] (Subsistence hunt only)</p> <p><u>No open season.</u> [AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]</p> <p><u>No open season.</u> [AUG. 10 – APR. 30] (Subsistence hunt only)</p>	<p><u>No open season.</u> [AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]</p>

ALL HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only, provided that the harvestable surplus is greater than 47 sheep

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

Remainder of Unit 23
("Schwatka Mountains")

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

3 sheep by registration permit only

No open season.
[AUG. 1 – APR. 30]
(Subsistence hunt only)

ALL HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

(10)

...

Unit 26(A), that portion west of the Etivluk River **drainage**

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 sheep by registration permit only

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – APR. 30]
(Subsistence hunt only)

ALL HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only provided that the harvestable surplus is greater than 9 in combination with that portion of Unit 23 in the DeLong Mountains

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

No open season.
[AUG. 10 – SEPT. 20]

Unit 26(A), that portion east of **and including** the Etivluk River **drainage**, excluding Gates of the Arctic National Park

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

3 sheep by registration permit only

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30
(Subsistence hunt only)

ALL HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

Aug. 10 – Sept. 20

Unit 26(A), that portion within Gates of the Arctic National Park

3 sheep

Aug. 1 – Apr. 30

No open season.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

Sheep populations in the western Brooks Range within Unit 23 and the western portion of Unit 26(A) experienced severe winter conditions in 2013–2014 resulting in high levels of natural mortality. Extensive icing conditions contributed to rapid declines of sheep populations in the De Long Mountains, Schwatka Mountains, and Baird Mountains. Populations are currently very low. If hunting continues with ‘any sheep’ bag limits, overharvest will likely occur and recovery of the populations will be delayed. This proposal supplements the department’s agenda change request (ACR) to consider sheep regulations in units 23 and 26(A) before the next regularly-scheduled meeting of the Arctic and Western Region in 2016. To aid in conservation of sheep in these areas, this proposal recommends closures of sheep seasons in Unit 23 and western portions of Unit 26(A) effective in RY2015 (next hunting season). All current regulatory year (RY2014) seasons in this area were closed by emergency order in August 2014.

Winter icing conditions in 2013–2014 affected broad areas of contiguous mountain habitat in Unit 23 and the western portion of Unit 26(A). These conditions are believed to be the primary cause of natural mortality of sheep that was detected during surveys in July 2014. The severity of impacts to sheep in 2013–2014 appears to be worse than the severe winter conditions that precipitated a sheep population decline in 1989 through 1991.

Winter (November to March) temperature data from Kotzebue shows a 50-yr average maximum of 7°F and average minimum of -6°F. During the winter period in 2013–2014 temperatures were approximately 10°F warmer, with an average maximum high of 15.2°F and average minimum low of 4.6°F. This warming was influenced by winter storm patterns that were bringing warm moist air from southern latitudes into northwestern Alaska. Unlike normal winters, rain was observed in Kotzebue every month from October to April, causing significant icing conditions in the areas affected by the storm. While lower elevations did not have lasting ice layers, higher elevations held ice due to colder ambient conditions.

In Units 23 and 26A, sheep are distributed at the northwestern margin of their range and occur at low density compared to other areas in the state (Singer 1984). They occur in three relatively discrete mountainous areas: 1) in the De Long Mountains in units 23 and 26(A): in the area west of Howard Pass north of the Noatak River and Kiyak Creek, including the Wulik Peaks; 2) in the Baird Mountains in Unit 23: in the area south and east of the Noatak River and west of the Cutler and Redstone rivers; 3) and in the Schwatka Mountains in Units 23 and 26(A): the area east of Howard Pass and the Cutler and Redstone rivers. Exchanges of sheep between these populations are likely minimal resulting in separate management strategies for each area.

Beginning in 1990, high natural mortality dramatically reduced sheep numbers in these areas resulting in closure of state and federal seasons for general and subsistence hunts from RY1991

through RY1994. Limited hunting was reestablished in all areas in RY1995 and is reflected in current regulations that provide opportunity through subsistence and general season hunts. Since RY1995 hunts in the Baird Mountains have been limited to federally-qualified subsistence users in hunts administered by National Park Service (NPS).

In 2014 sheep surveys were completed using distance sampling transects during late June and early July in broad areas of the western Brooks Range (units 23 and 26A) through coordination by NPS and department biologists (see Udevitz et al. 2006). Preliminary results indicate a population decline of between 50-80% from the previous survey levels documented in 2011. A greater decline is apparent when the current estimates are compared to 2009 levels, a time when populations were similar to pre-1990 crash populations.

In the Baird Mountains, the 2014 preliminary estimate is 309 sheep, a 50% decline since 2011 (n = 587 sheep) and a 63% decline since 2009 (n=823 sheep). Since 2009, the ratio of rams:100 “ewe-likes” sheep has changed from 36:100 to 21 to 23, respectively in 2009, 2011, and 2014. Comparing 2009, 2011 and 2014, the ratio of large rams declined from 7 to 3 to 1 rams:100 “ewe-likes” (respectively) and lambs declined from 33 to 23 to 2:100 “ewe-likes” (respectively). Lamb recruitment was the lowest on record and much lower than the lamb ratio of 7:100 “ewe-likes” observed in 1991 (after the 1990 mortality event). When sheep abundance was higher (prior to declines), there were 30:100 “ewe-likes” lambs counted in 1989 and 33:100 “ewe-likes” lambs counted in 2009.

In the De Long Mountains, the 2014 preliminary estimate is 359 sheep, an 80% decline since 2011. The ram: “ewe-likes” ratio decreased slightly from 35 to 33 rams:100 “ewe-likes”, the ratio of large rams declined from 3 to 2 rams:100 “ewe-likes” and lambs declined from 8 to 4:100 “ewe-likes”.

The Schwatka Mountains were not surveyed in 2014. However, within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve (GAAR), the Itkillik Preserve was surveyed and declining populations were detected. The Itkillik Preserve serves as a comparative bordering area that is located further east and suggests that Schwatka Mountains were also affected by sheep population declines. In the Itkillik area, the 2014 preliminary estimate is 646 sheep, a 60% decline since 2011 (n = 1,669 sheep). Comparing 2011 and 2014, the ratio of rams:100 “ewe-likes” sheep changed from 38:100 to 70, and lambs declined from 25 to 11:100 “ewe-likes”, respectively. The apparent increase in rams:100 “ewe-likes” is primarily influenced by a 60% reduction in “ewe-likes” (the denominator portion of the ratio), likely a function of low recruitment for several years. The number of rams decreased 27% from 2011 (335 rams) to 2014 (244 rams).

State harvests in the De Long and Schwatka mountains are monitored through hunt reports from applicable harvest tickets, registration permits and drawing permits. In RY2014, the drawing permit hunt (DS384) was closed so all hunting opportunity was by registration permit (RS388, RS389) or harvest ticket. NPS provides harvest summaries of sheep taken under federal regulations in the Baird and De Long mountains. The Alaska Board of Game established positive customary and traditional use determinations for sheep in each area and established amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence uses (ANS) in each area, as follows: Baird Mountains, 18 – 47 sheep; De Long Mountains, 0 – 9 sheep; and Schwatka Mountains, 2 – 4 sheep [5 AAC 99.025 (10)]. Federal management on federal public land in the Baird Mountains has preempted state management goals and objectives. The management goal of the De Long

Mountains is to maintain a minimum ratio of 7-10 large rams: 100 “ewe-like” in areas receiving significant hunt pressure.

Summaries of recent harvests and ANS findings are listed in the chart below. Using the 2004–2011 population estimates, Baird Mountains harvests were an average of 2% of ewes and 14% of rams. In 2011, De Long Mountains harvests were 14% of large rams. Based on ram:100 “ewe-like” ratio, the current number of full-curl rams is calculated to be so low that hunter success is expected to be negligible in full-curl managed hunts. Furthermore, the 90% decline in lambs will provide little or minimal recruitment for near-term population recovery. In registration permit hunts (RS388 and RS389), take of ‘any sheep’ in the current bag limit is ill-advised due to negative impacts on population recovery. Due to low numbers of sheep and to promote population recovery, the department recommends that hunting seasons be closed.

Regulatory year	Number of sheep harvested				Total Harvest
	Baird Mtns	De Long Mtns	Schwatka Mtns	Unknown	
RY2009	7	12	0	1	20
RY2010	15	11	5		31
RY2011	17	4	5		26
RY2012	16	3	3		22
RY2013	13	7	3		23

Amount Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (ANS)		
18–47	0–9	2–4

In summary, the proposed hunting closures affect all state general season and registration subsistence hunts in the De Long Mountains, Schwatka Mountains, and Baird Mountains in Unit 23, and all state-managed lands west of the Etivluk River drainage in Unit 26(A). The general season closure affects residents and nonresidents hunting by harvest ticket. The registration hunt closure affects resident permits RS388 (De Long Mountains) and RS389 (Schwatka Mountains). The population will be monitored and when harvests can be sustained a proposal to restore hunting opportunity by opening seasons will be prepared by the department.

References:

SINGER F. J. 1984. Some population characteristics of Dall sheep in six Alaska National Parks and Preserves. Pp1–10 in M. Hoefs, ed. Proc. 4th Biennial Sheep and Goat Symp., Apr.30–May 3, 1984. Yukon Wildlife Br., Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada.

UDEVITZ, M.S., B. SHULTS, L.G. ADAMS, AND C. KLECKNER. 2006. Evaluation of aerial survey methods for Dall sheep in Alaska. Wildlife Society Bulletin. 34:732-740

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (EG-C14-361)

Note: Proposal 205 was approved by the Board as an Agenda Change Request and will be heard at the Southcentral Region meeting, March 2015.

PROPOSAL 205 - 5 AAC 92.046 Permits for taking incidental or stranded musk oxen.

Allow the immediate harvest of musk ox on stranded on ice flow in Unit 18.

For Unit 18, (primarily Nunivak Island) residents can harvest the musk ox immediately when musk ox are seen stranded on ice flow, rather than wait for ADF&G to issue an emergency order, which takes three days.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

ADF&G issues permits for taking incidental or stranded musk ox on ice flow by emergency order under AAC: 92.046. It approximately takes at least three days for a response to get a permit according to the local area biologist from Bethel. Nunivak Island residents have reported stranded musk ox on ice flows during spring seal hunting seasons. It would seem pointless to report a stranded musk-ox and wait three days for a permit to harvest. This request is to allow Nunivak Island residents to harvest the musk ox immediately (on the spot where they see the musk ox). This would seem most logical since the animal will most likely perish. Musk ox will eventually die off from starvation or drowning, without residents having the opportunity to harvest immediately as requested.

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Mekoryuk (EG-C14-363)

During the Central/Southwest Region meeting in February 2015, the Board of Game deferred this proposal to the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 207 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.
Modify sheep hunting opportunities statewide.

Potential changes to use of aircraft for sheep hunting:

1. From August 10 to September 20 aircraft may only be used to place hunters and camps, maintain existing camps, and salvage meat and trophies while used for the purpose of Dall sheep hunting. Using an aircraft for the purpose of spotting sheep or locating Dall sheep during the open hunting season is prohibited.
2. It is against the law to hunt or help someone else take a Dall sheep until 2 PM the day following the day you have flown.
3. It is against the law to hunt or help someone else take a Dall sheep within 5 miles of the site where you were flown-in, until 24 (48) hours after you have flown.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

During the last few Board meetings, the Board of Game (board) has received several proposals requesting changes to sheep seasons statewide. Hunters are expressing dissatisfaction with Dall sheep harvest opportunities. Many of the concerns expressed have noted increasing conflict among Alaska resident sheep hunters, hunting guides, transporters, and non-resident sheep hunters. Proposals were deferred until the February 2015 board meeting in Wasilla. At that time, the board will consider changes to all aspects of sheep hunting seasons across the state.

The Department of Fish and Game has contracted with the University of Alaska to survey the public that may be impacted by these changes, including sheep hunters, guides, transporters and air taxi operators. The survey attempted to learn more about sheep hunter characteristics and behaviors, to quantify the extent of hunter satisfaction or dissatisfaction with current sheep hunting opportunities, and to quantify the extent of hunter approval or disapproval of potential changes to sheep hunting regulations and management. The results are available on the Board of Game website at: www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main

The public is encouraged to review the results of the survey and provide comments to the board by January 30, 2015 for the February 2015 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: The Alaska Board of Game

[WS-2015-01]

During the Central/Southwest Region meeting in February 2015, the Board of Game deferred this proposal to the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 208 - 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep, and 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts. Review and potentially modify sheep hunting opportunities statewide.

Status quo:

1. Current hunt types, seasons, and method and means will remain unchanged.

Existing draw hunts:

1. All existing drawing and registration hunts will stay in place and remain unchanged.

Options for nonresident hunters:

1. Nonresident hunters on private, state, and BLM managed lands will be entered into a limited draw for the entire season, permit allocation by Subunit.
2. Nonresident hunters on private, state, and BLM managed lands will be entered into a limited draw from Aug. 10 to 31, (permit allocation by Subunit) followed by a general season harvest ticket hunt.
3. NOTE: Nonresidents hunting on National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service managed lands are already limited due to guide concession programs, so this proposal does not address those hunters and hunt areas.

Options for resident hunters:

1. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 31, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Drawing hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
2. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 25, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Draw hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
3. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 19, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Draw hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
4. Hunters must chose to apply for current drawing hunts or one of the registration hunts by the December Drawing deadline. Hunters may not choose a registration hunt if they apply for any drawing hunt. All hunters may hunt the late open season.
 - a. 1st season registration: August 10-13 (length of season is very short to discourage choosing the “opener”, length of season could be up to 5 days if desired)
 - b. 2nd season registration: August 14-21 (short season but not too short to

- encourage choosing this option over 1st season)
- c. 3rd season registration: August 22-31 (longer season for those that want a traditional ten day hunt)
 - d. 4th season general harvest: September 1-20 (Open season for all applicants that didn't get drawn in drawing hunts, forgot to apply for either drawings or registrations or were not successful in earlier hunts.
5. Hunters must register according to his/her last name. The season will be divided into three hunt periods. Hunters with a last name starting with letters A through I can only hunt during the first period (August 10 – August 23); hunters with a last name starting with letters J through Q can only hunt during the second period (August 24 – September 6); hunters with a last name starting with letters R through Z can only hunt during the last period (September 7 – 20). The following year, hunters from the first period hunt second, hunters from the second period hunt last and the last group hunts during the first period. This rotate allows hunters to hunt the first period once every three years.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

During the last few Board meetings, the Board of Game (board) has received several proposals requesting changes to sheep seasons statewide. Hunters are expressing dissatisfaction with Dall sheep harvest opportunities. Many of the concerns expressed have noted increasing conflict among Alaska resident sheep hunters, hunting guides, transporters, and non-resident sheep hunters. Proposals were deferred until the February 2015 board meeting in Wasilla. At that time, the board will consider changes to all aspects of sheep hunting seasons across the state.

The Department of Fish and Game has contracted with the University of Alaska to survey the public that may be impacted by these changes, including sheep hunters, guides, transporters and air taxi operators. The survey attempted to learn more about sheep hunter characteristics and behaviors, to quantify the extent of hunter satisfaction or dissatisfaction with current sheep hunting opportunities, and to quantify the extent of hunter approval or disapproval of potential changes to sheep hunting regulations and management. The results are available on the Board of Game website at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main>

The public is encouraged to review the results of the survey and provide comments to the Board by January 30, 2015 for the February 2015 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: The Alaska Board of Game [WS-2015-02]

During the 2015 Central/Southwest Region meeting, the Board of Game requested this proposal be scheduled for the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 213- 5 AAC 85.010 Hunting seasons and bag limits for bison; and 92.029 Permit for possessing live game. Repeal the Unit 8 bison hunt and clarify the definition of free ranging animals.

5 AAC 85.010. Hunting seasons and bag limits for bison.

(a) ...

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(1)		
[UNIT 8]	[WINTER SEASON TO BE ANNOUNCED (GENERAL HUNT ONLY)]	[WINTER SEASON TO BE ANNOUNCED]
[1 BISON EVERY 10 REGULATORY YEARS BY REGISTRATION PERMIT ONLY; DURING A WINTER SEASON TO BE ANNOUNCED BY EMERGENCY ORDER]		

...

5 AAC 92.029(d)(2) is amended to read:

(2) musk oxen, bison, or reindeer that is lawfully owned, or an elk held under a valid game mammal farming license, that is not confined or is not under positive control is feral unless the animal is a free-ranging animal **under** [ON] a state or federal grazing lease; however,

(A) a person who can demonstrate ownership of the animal may pursue and capture the animal within 48 hours after the animal escapes from confinement, without needing to obtain a permit from the department;

(B) a person who can demonstrate ownership of the animal may pursue and capture the animal more than 48 hours after the animal escapes from confinement only if the person obtains a permit from the department;

(C) any free-ranging musk oxen, bison, reindeer, or elk for which ownership cannot be demonstrated is presumed to be game;

(D) for purposes of this paragraph, ownership of an animal **can** [MAY] be demonstrated only by means of a clearly visible permanent brand, ear tag, or owner's mark on the body of the animal[, EXCEPT THAT IN UNIT 8 FOR BISON, OWNERSHIP MAY BE DEMONSTRATED BY A SWORN STATEMENT, UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY, IF ALL BISON IN THE AREA IN QUESTION ARE PRIVATELY OWNED].

...

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

The Alaska Supreme Court issued a ruling in *Ellingson and Dorman v. Lloyd and Alaska Dept. of*

Fish and Game, Case No. S-14884 on December 26, 2014, invalidating 5 AAC 92.029(d)(2) and 5 AAC 85.010(a)(1). Specifically, the Court stated: “We hold that 5 AAC 92.029(d)(2) is invalid as a matter of law. We likewise hold invalid the portions of 5 AAC 85.010(a)(1) that authorize a hunt by emergency order, the hunting season, and the bag limit for bison in Unit 8, which includes Kodiak.” Because of this ruling, the Board of Game seeks to revise these regulations in response to the Court’s decision.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Game (CSW-2015-1)

During the 2015 Central/Southwest Region meeting, the Board of Game requested this proposal be scheduled for the Southcentral Region meeting scheduled for March 2015.

PROPOSAL 214 – 5 AAC 92.005. Policy for changing board agenda. Modify the Board of Game agenda change request policy.

5 AAC 92.005. Policy for changing board agenda. (a) The Board of Game (board) may change the board's schedule for considering proposed regulatory changes in response to an agenda change request, submitted on a form provided by the board, in accordance with the following guidelines:

(1) an agenda change request **must be** to consider a proposed regulatory change outside the board's published schedule **and** must specify the change proposed and the reason the proposed change should be considered out of sequence. **An agenda change request is not intended to address proposals that could have been submitted by the deadline scheduled for submitting proposals.**

(2) the board will accept an agenda change request only (A) for a conservation purpose or reason; (B) to correct an error in a regulation; or (C) to correct an effect on a hunt that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted;

(3) the board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominantly allocative in nature in the absence of new information that is found by the board to be compelling;

(4) a request must be **received by** [SENT TO] the executive director of the boards support section at least 60 days before **the first regularly scheduled meeting of that year** [A SCHEDULED MEETING UNLESS THE BOARD ALLOWS AN EXCEPTION TO THE DEADLINE BECAUSE OF AN EMERGENCY];

(5) **if one or more agenda change requests have been timely submitted, the board shall meet to review the requests within 30 days following the submittal deadline in subsection (4), and may meet telephonically for this purpose**[THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN COMMENTS ON THE REQUEST FROM AS MANY BOARD MEMBERS AS CAN BE CONTACTED; IF A MAJORITY OF THE BOARD MEMBERS CONTACTED APPROVE THE REQUEST, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SHALL NOTIFY THE PUBLIC AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AGENDA CHANGE AND WHEN THE BOARD WILL CONSIDER THE PROPOSED REGULATORY CHANGE REQUESTED].

(b) The board may change the board's schedule for consideration of proposed regulatory changes as reasonably necessary for coordination of state regulatory actions with federal agencies, programs, or laws.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY? These changes are to amend 5 AAC 92.005 to allow the board the flexibility to address regulatory matters out-of-cycle when warranted. Consideration of an agenda change request needs to occur within the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, and any decision to add an item to a scheduled agenda must consider the need to provide sufficient notice to the public and an opportunity for the public to provide comments. The flexibility of the board to allow an agenda change request should not be used as a means to submit a proposal for a scheduled meeting after the deadline established for submitting in-cycle proposals. The change to a single date for submitting an ACR for any meeting scheduled for that year is needed to reflect that in certain years there may be only one meeting, and is consistent with procedures adopted by the Board of Fisheries.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Game (CSW-2015-2)
