



Joe Klutsch <joeklutsch@gmail.com>

proposal 207

Joe Klutsch <joeklutsch@gmail.com>

Fri, Mar 13, 2015 at 11:05 AM

To: kristy.tibbles@alaska.gov

Kristy,

Please forward this message to Chairman Spraker and members of the Board of Game.

Re: Proposal 207

Chairman Spraker and members of the Board of Game:

I had intended to attend the BOG meeting however due to the current expense of travel along with scheduling difficulties, I will not be able to make this meeting.

I have actively hunted, fished, trapped, and guided in bush Alaska for approaching 50 years now. I have also hunted as an assistant guide in the Wrangle Mountains in the 1970's and early 80's and personally hunted sheep in the Alaska Range and Brooks Range with my son. Sheep hunting is a very special endeavor and when hunted in Fair Chase is an incredible process of problem solving and discovery which includes proper planning, physical fitness, and the ability to work in a wilderness setting that most other hunters cannot.

Too often hunters in the field are confronted with aircraft being used to relentlessly locate sheep which has caused a very contentious atmosphere which should not be a part of true wilderness hunting. It has also given individuals who use aircraft in this manner a disproportionate advantage in harvesting sheep - especially fully mature age class sheep. I have been in the field on a number of occasions when after days and days of excruciating work an airplane or airplanes show up to locate sheep and in some cases, maneuver them to areas where they may be harvested by the people they are flying. For those of us who truly love wildlife and the wilderness and respect the merits of Fair Chase hunting, this is a devastating experience and it has become all too common in recent years. Individuals who engage in this activity are both resident hunters and non resident hunters who are being guided. I believe it is time for Alaska to finally set a standard for ethical Fair Chase hunting which will benefit honest and dedicated hunters who are committed to a true quality of experience.

Utilizing aircraft to access wilderness areas is a necessary aspect of hunting in Alaska when used with discretion. Unfortunately there are far too many individuals who do not use aircraft ethically by standards of Fair Chase. These people have little or no regard for how their activities affect other hunters. It is unreasonable and unfair that they are able to exercise the power to disproportionately harvest animals. It is also unacceptable that they violate the very premise of ethical Fair Chase hunting. I urge you to let Alaska set the standard for quality of experience and for future generations of younger hunters whose opportunity to experience sheep hunting will be greatly diminished if these practices are not curtailed.

I have listened to many people repeatedly state that this methods and means restriction is unenforceable. Nearly all the people who have stated this opinion in fact use aircraft to locate animals and even specific animals in the field. I believe they are saying this because this is how they like to "hunt" without regard to how it affects the resource and other people. I remember when same day airborne hunting was eliminated and the very same argument was made at that time. Although same day airborne "hunting" still occurs it is very rarely practiced and for those who do, public safety and the courts have done an excellent job at holding them accountable.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Joe Klutsch
Master Guide 91