

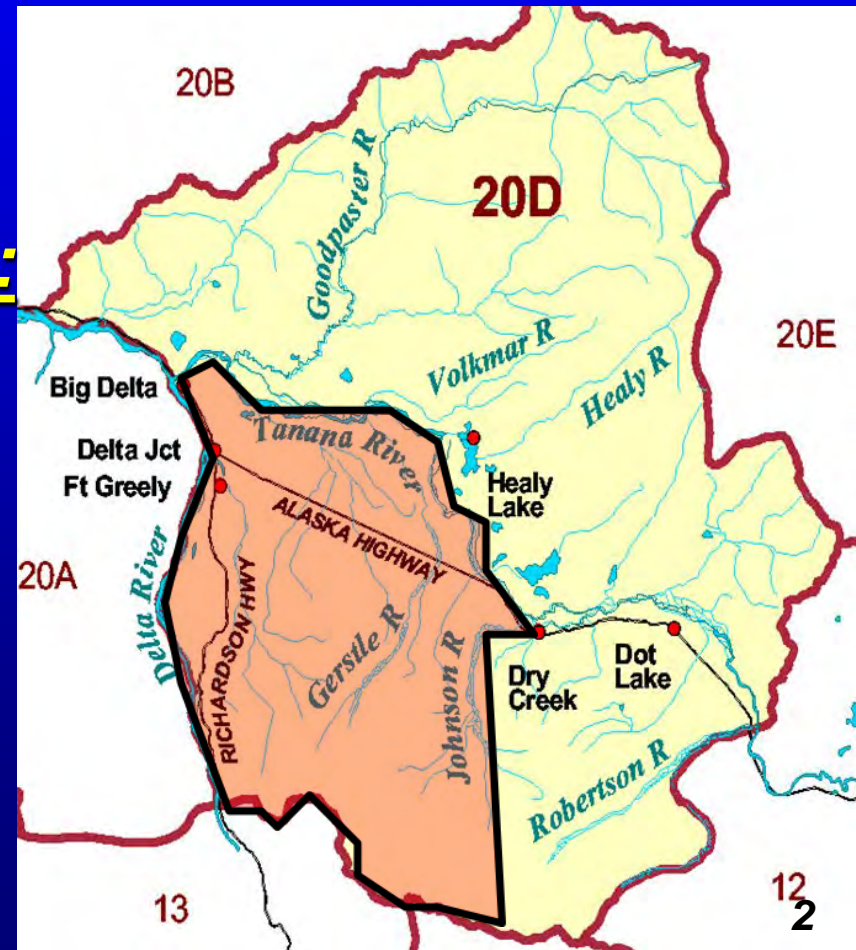
2017 BOG Regulation Proposals

Unit 20D



Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

- **Proposal:** Reduce the bag and possession limit for ruffed grouse to five a day, ten in possession in Unit 20D west of the Johnson River and south of the Tanana River
- **Submitted By:** Delta Jct. Fish & Game Advisory Committee
- **ADF&G Recommendation :**
NEUTRAL
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT



Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

- **Issue:**
 - **Local concerns about the liberal grouse bag limits in SW Unit 20D due to:**
 - **Increased popularity of small game hunting in recent years**
 - **Well-developed road and trail access throughout the proposed area**
 - **Ruffed grouse can be easily harvested along roads and trails**
 - **Would be a reduction of 10 ruffed grouse per day from the daily bag limit**

Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

- **Department Considerations:**
 - ADF&G has no biological concerns
 - No biological data to support that current harvest rates are unsustainable
 - Small game populations are typically self-regulating

Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

- ***Current Grouse Regulations***

Unit 20D west of the Johnson River and south of the Tanana River:

- 15 per day, 30 in possession, provided that not more than 5 per day and 10 in possession may be sharp-tailed grouse.....Aug 25–Mar 31

- ***Proposed Grouse Regulations***

- 15 per day, 30 in possession, provided that not more than 5 per day and 10 in possession may be sharp-tailed grouse, and not more than 5 per day and 10 in possession may be ruffed grouse.....Aug 25–Mar 31

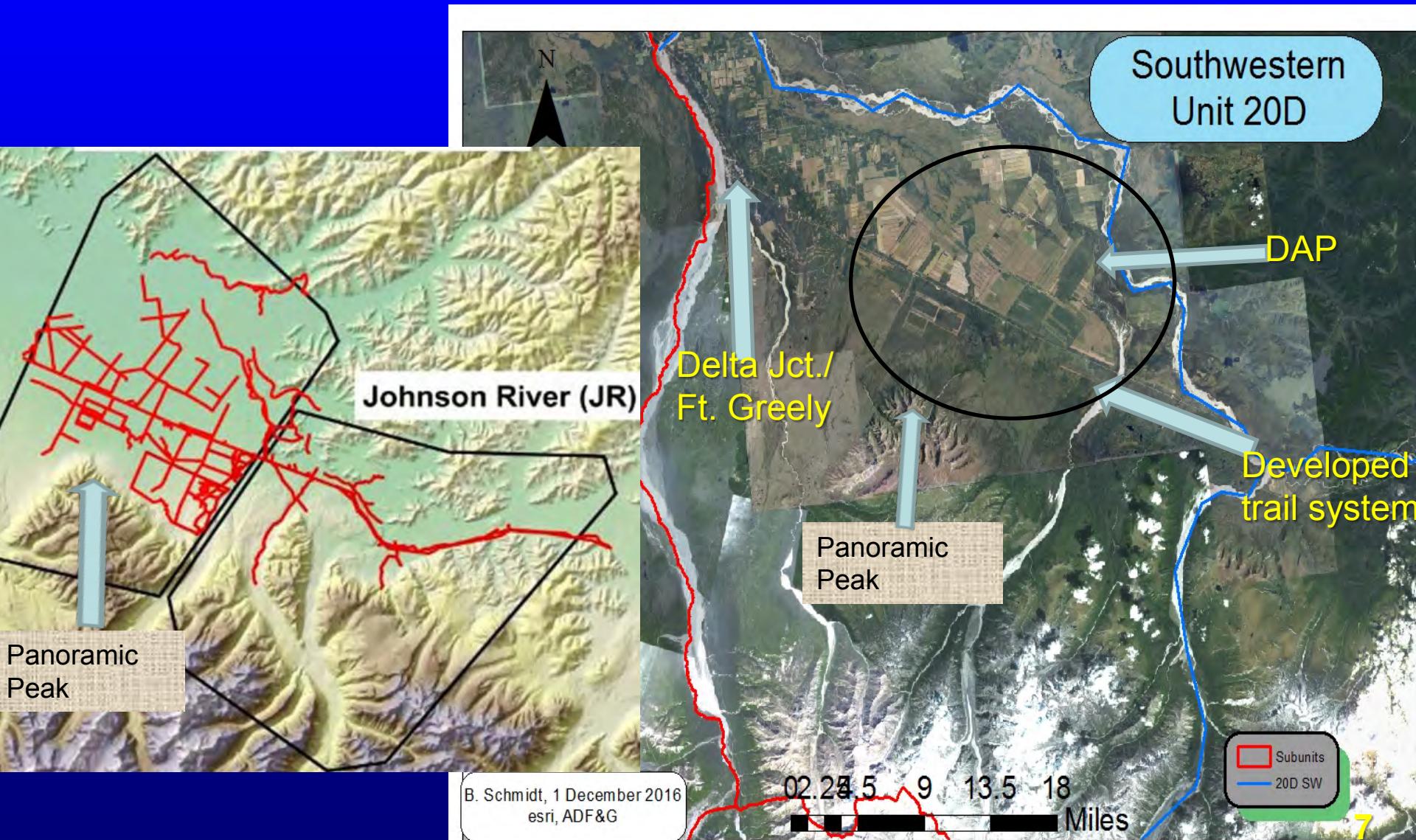
Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

Background:

- **Ruffed grouse are present throughout all of Unit 20D; this proposal only addresses SW Unit 20D**
 - **SW Unit 20D is highly developed via extensive land clearing and an extensive road/trail system**
- **The board passed a similar proposal in 1990 to reduce the sharp-tailed grouse bag limit from 15 to 5**
 - **Due to concerns that STGR were more susceptible to harvest in the highly developed, unnatural habitat of the Delta Agricultural Project and because of their grouping behavior**

Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

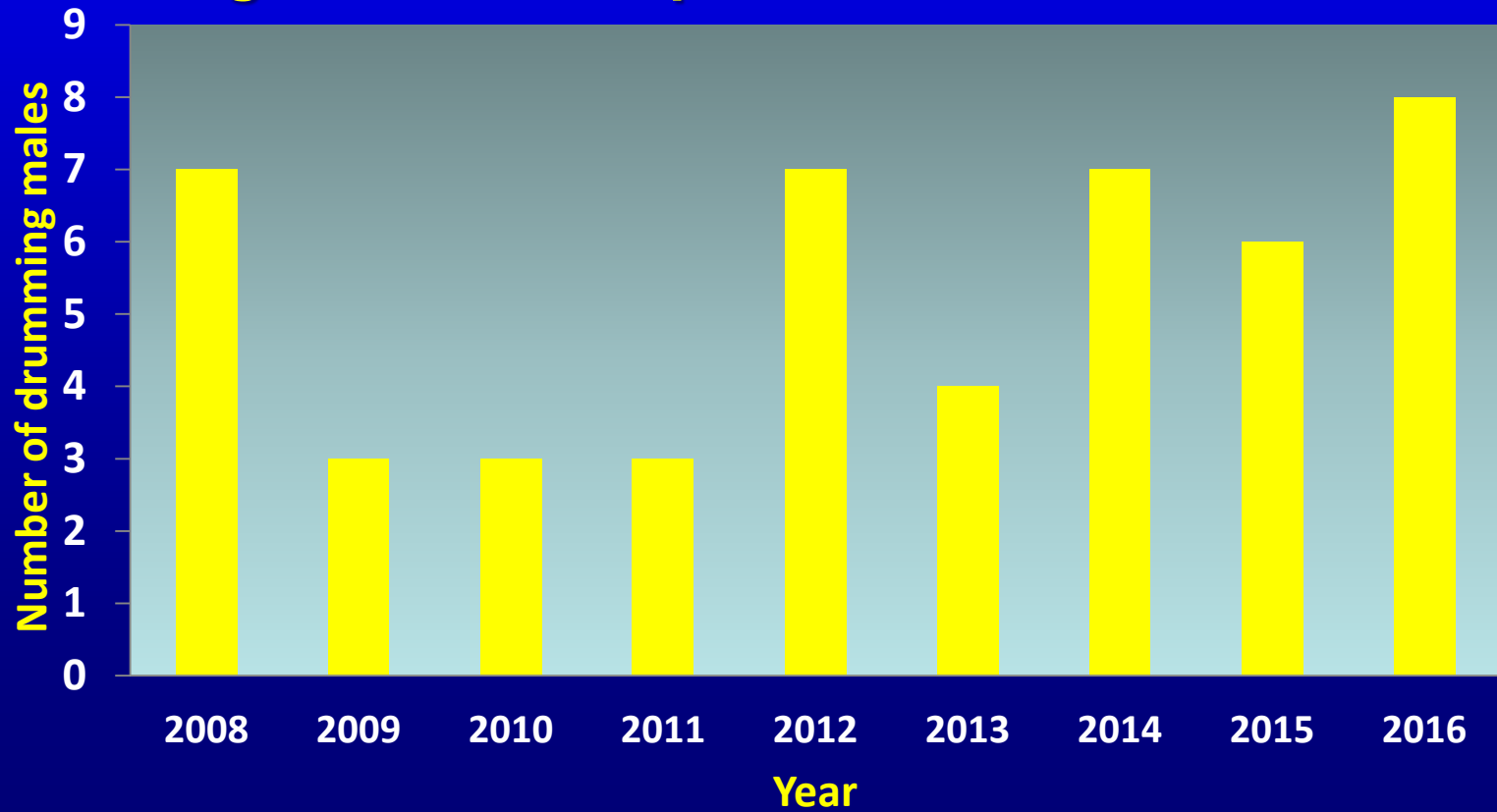
Unit 20D SW Development



Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

Population and Harvest Trend

- Spring breeding surveys conducted annually since 2008
- RUGR are likely nearing high point in their population cycle
- Limited harvest data on grouse
- Increased grouse worked planned for Delta area



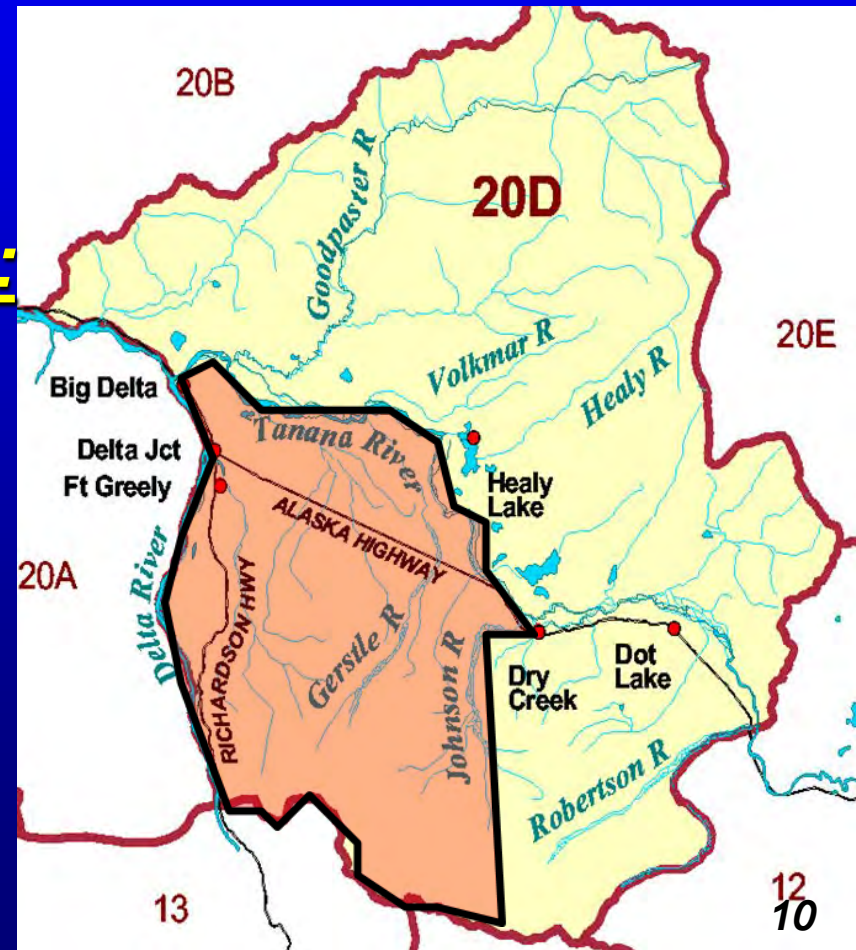
Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

Effects of Proposal/Conclusions:

- **Local residents concerned about increased popularity of small game hunting in SW Unit 20D in recent years coupled with well-developed access**
- **Adoption of this proposal would change a long-standing bag limit resulting in a 10 ruffed grouse per day reduction in the bag limit**
- **Bag limit change would align with the current sharp-tailed grouse bag limit in SW Unit 20D**
- **No biological concern; harvest would be more spread out**
- **Limited biological data on grouse populations and harvest numbers**

Proposal 116, Unit 20D, Grouse

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- **Submitted By:** Delta Jct. Fish & Game Advisory Committee
- **ADF&G Recommendation :**
NEUTRAL
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT



Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:**
 - Allow the harvest of brown bear at bear bait stations in Unit 20D during the current black bear baiting season
 - Allow the same-day-airborne harvest of brown bears at bear bait stations if the hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of taking
- **Submitted by:** Delta Junction Fish and Game Advisory Committee
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments (20D North only)



Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Issue:**

- Proponent would like increased hunting opportunity on brown bears and feels that pop. can sustain baiting
- All adjacent units currently allow baiting and therefore the proponent suggests baiting is sustainable and should not be restricted in Unit 20D

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Issues Continued:**
- **Large numbers of bait stations concentrated in highly accessible areas**
- **Management strategies would have to change if adopted to ensure brown bears are not over-harvested**
 - **Shorter brown bear hunting season**
 - **A substantial reduction in the baiting season**
 - **Brown bear hunting by registration permit only, with quota**
- **The scenarios above would complicate regulations**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Department Considerations:**
 - Brown bear harvest in Unit 20D is high
 - High female harvest
 - Limited population data on Unit 20D brown bears
 - Unit 20D harvest objective is 5-15 bears, being met nearly every year
 - The take of brown bears over bait or same-day-airborne; especially in the well-developed portion of the unit would likely be unsustainable

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Background

- **Current Regulations:**
- **Resident and nonresident hunters: One brown/grizzly bear every regulatory year, August 10–June 30**
 - **Cubs and sows accompanied by cubs may not be taken**
- **Harvesting a brown/grizzly bear over bait and hunting same-day-airborne is prohibited in Unit 20D**
- **Black bear baiting season in Unit 20D is April 15–June 30**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Background

- **Population Estimate:**

The department lacks current and precise scientific data regarding bear population numbers (extrapolated estimate)

- **185–220 total bears based on work done in the early 1990's**
- **76–86 Unit 20D South; 109–134 Unit 20D North**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Harvest objective for 20D is 5-15 bears per year

Grizzly Harvest- North 20D versus South 20D

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>
North 20D	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>
Female	1	2	0	0	2	2	1	4	3
Male	1	2	1	3	2	4	0	4	1
South 20D	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
Female	2	5	1	0	3	5	7	3	1
Male	2	9	1	8	1	3	0	4	7
Grand Total	<u>6</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>
% Female Harvest	<u>50</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>33</u>

- **Brown bear harvest appears to be stable to slightly increasing**
 - Average harvest = 11 bears per year (range = 3–18)
 - Harvest has been on the high end of the harvest objective; over-harvest by 3 in RY 08
- **Harvest exceeded the recommended 45% maximum female harvest 5 out of 9 years; 100% in 2013 and a 44% average**
- **Average of 66% of harvest occurs in Unit 20D south**
- **Harvest of an additional 5 bears per year would exceed sustainable harvest**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Background

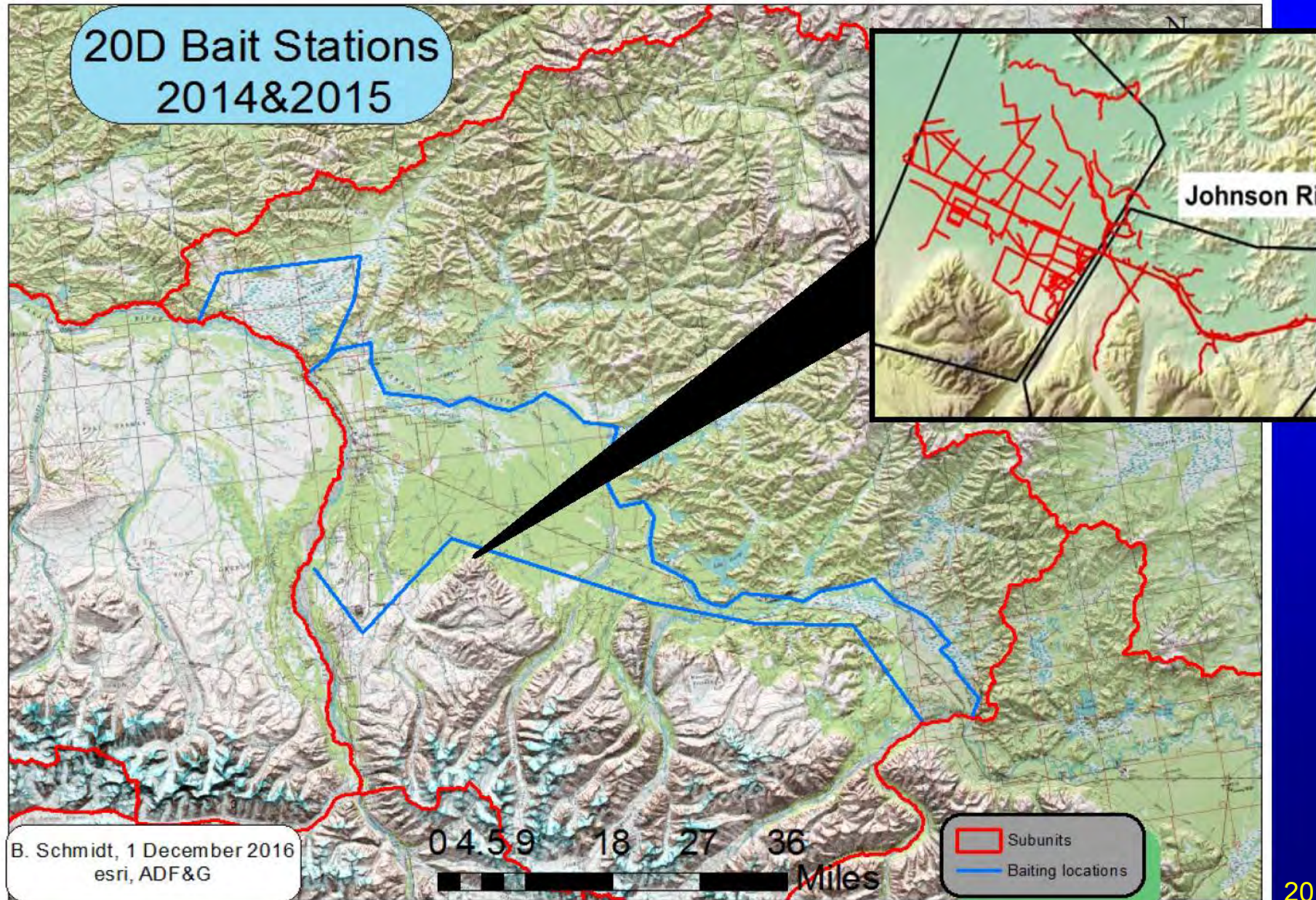
- **Positive ANS finding outside of the FNSA of 1-2 bears**
- **65 black bear bait stations registered in Unit 20D in RY15, nearly the same in RY14**
- **Most baiting occurs along developed roads and trails or along river corridors**
- **Unit 20D South is well-developed and is where most baiting occurs**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Background

- **Bait stations are currently scattered throughout the low lands where black bears are more often found; locations may shift if baiting is legalized**
- **Many locals are traveling to adjacent Units to bear bait**
 - **This pressure may shift to Unit 20D if brown bear baiting is legalized**

Bait Station Locations & Trail Development



Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Background

- Bait station registration increased when brown bear baiting was allowed (nearly doubled in 20C)
- In adjacent units brown bear harvest increased when baiting was allowed, especially in more accessible areas
 - Harvest increased by 50% in Unit 20B (access is the best)
 - Harvest increased by 10% in Unit 20E (access most limiting)
 - Unit 20C harvest more than tripled (from 5 bears to 17 bears per year)
- Unit 20D baiting season is 1 month longer than Units 20A & 20B; overall hunting season length is nearly 2 months longer
- High turnover in people bear baiting (military presence)

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Conclusions:

- Increase of harvest once baiting was allowed in all adjacent units, especially in Units 20A, 20B, & 20C
- High overall harvest & high female harvest
- Risk of over-harvest is high if this proposal is adopted
- Well-developed access, particularly in southern Unit 20D
- Unit 20D baiting and brown bear hunting seasons are longer than adjacent units

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Conclusions Continued:

- **ADF&G lacks precise brown bear population estimates**
 - **The department recommends a conservative management strategy**
 - **Accurate information needs to be gathered before relaxing harvest methods**

Proposal 117, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:**
 - Allow the harvest of brown bear at bear bait stations in Unit 20D during the current black bear baiting season
 - Allow the same-day-airborne harvest of brown bears at bear bait stations if the hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of taking
- **Submitted by:** Delta Junction Fish and Game Advisory Committee
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments (20D North only)



Proposal 118, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:** Allow the harvest of brown bear at black bear bait stations under the same restrictions as black bear in Unit 20D during black bear baiting season
- **Submitted by:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments
(20D North only)



Proposal 119, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:**
 - Allow the harvest of brown/grizzly bears at registered black bear bait stations in all of Unit 20, subject to the established seasons for brown bear in each subunit
 - No baiting of brown bears in Units that do not have a black bear population
- **Submitted by:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments
(20D North only)



Proposal 119, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

Current Regulations

- **Resident and nonresident hunters:**
 - **One brown/grizzly bear every regulatory year, August 10–June 30**
 - **Cubs and sows accompanied by cubs may not be taken**
 - **Harvesting a brown/grizzly bear over bait and hunting same-day-airborne is prohibited in Units 20D & 20F**
 - **Black bear baiting season in Unit 20D is Apr. 15–June 30**
 - **No C&T finding for Unit 20F**

Proposal 119, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:**
 - Allow the harvest of brown/grizzly bears at registered black bear bait stations in all of Unit 20, subject to the established seasons for brown bear in each subunit
 - No baiting of brown bears in Units that do not have a black bear population
- **Submitted by:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments
(20D North only)



Proposal 120, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:** Allow the harvest of brown bear at black bear bait stations under the same restrictions as black bear in Unit 20D during black bear baiting season, or even just Unit 20D North
- **Submitted by:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments
(20D North only)



Proposal 121, Unit 20D, Brown Bear

- **Proposal:** Allow the harvest of brown bear at black bear bait stations under the same restrictions as black bear in Unit 20D during black bear baiting season
- **Submitted by:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
OPPOSED
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
SUPPORT with amendments
(20D North only)



Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

- ***Proposal:*** Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting season in Unit 20D
- ***Submitted by:*** ADF&G
- ***ADF&G Recommendation:***
SUPPORT
- ***Delta AC Recommendation:***
SUPPORT



Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

- **Issue:** The Unit 20D antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually
- **Department Considerations:**
 - Allow continuation Southwestern Unit 20D antlerless drawing hunts (*fewer than 30 permits are awarded*)
 - Registration hunts are also retained in the codified regulation in case management action is needed to regulate the population

Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

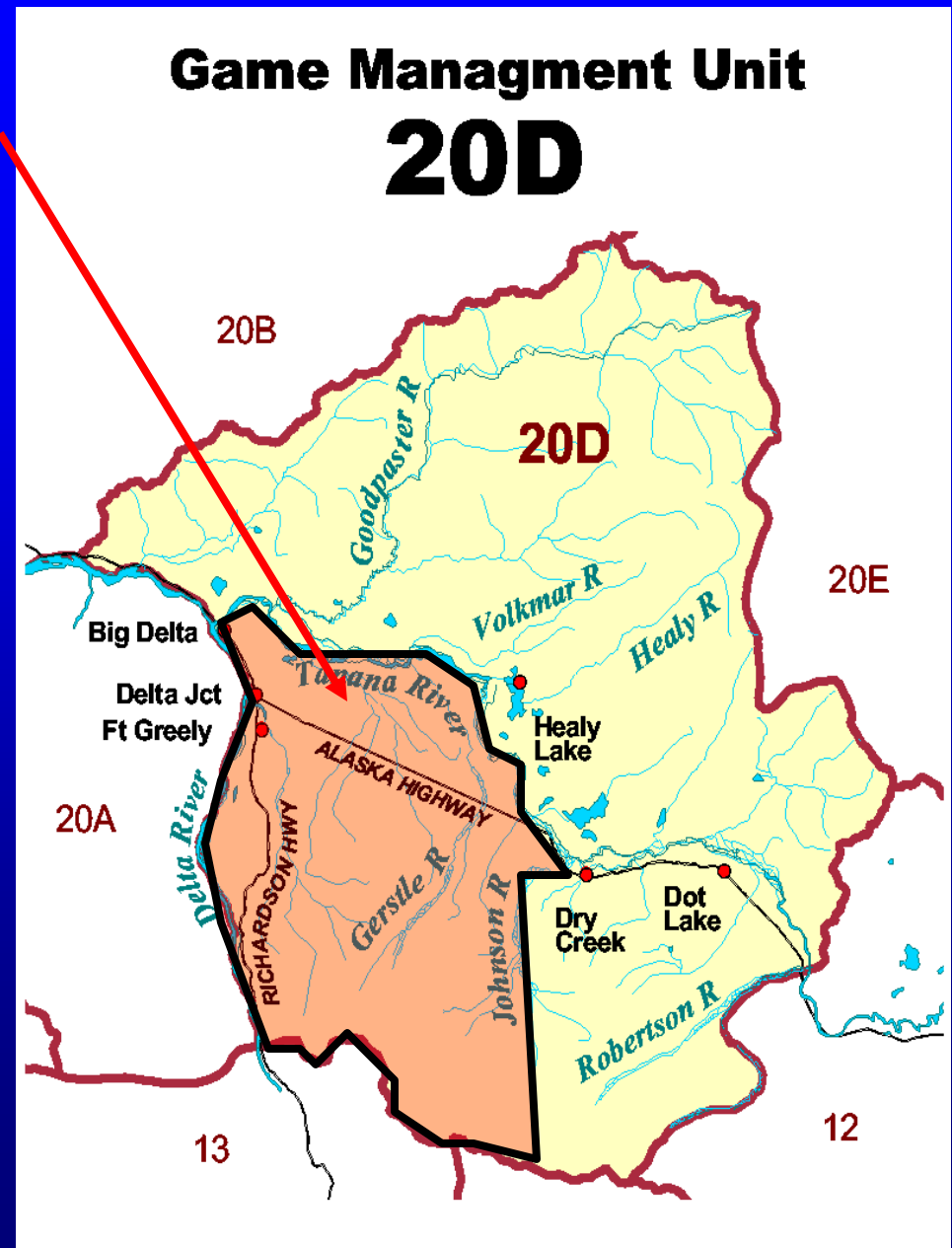
Background:

- **BOG adopted Intensive Management for Unit 20D moose in 1995**
 - **Population objective = 8,000–10,000**
 - **Harvest objective = 500–700**
- **By 2006, population in SW Unit 20D increased to 5.6 moose/mi²**
 - **Moderately low twinning rate**
 - **Moderately high browse utilization**

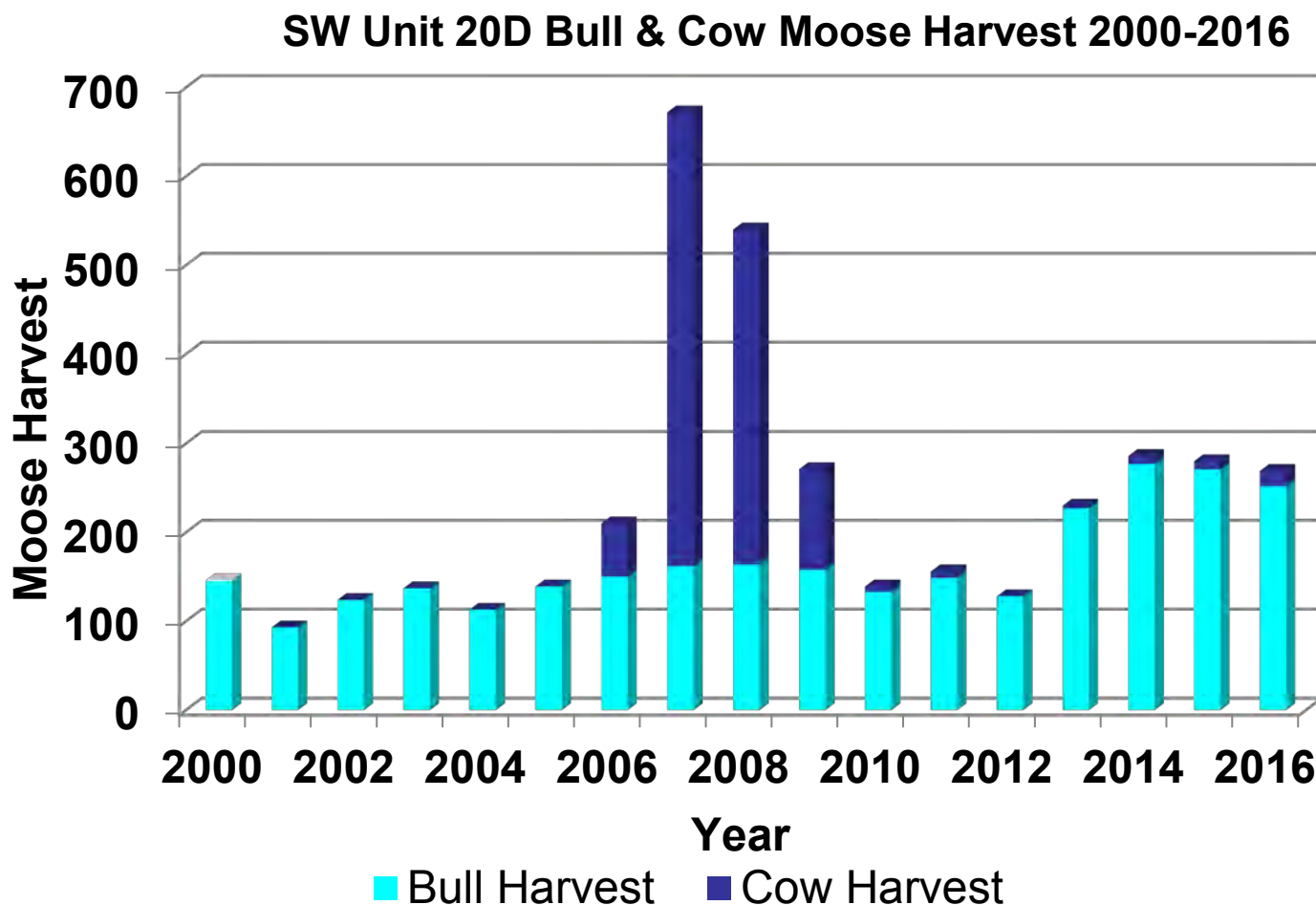
Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

Background cont'd:

- Southwest Unit 20D
 - South of Tanana River
 - West of Johnson River
- Location of highest moose density & population growth
- Extensive agricultural land clearing & wild fires last 30 years
- Created abundance of high quality moose habitat
- High bear & wolf harvest



Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose



Harvest

2006 = 52 cows

2007 = 507 cows

2008 = 382 cows

2009 = 113 cows

- 2010 – Present = Cow harvest by drawing permit only (<30/yr)
 - SW Unit 20D bull harvest is stable
 - Average bull harvest 2000–2015 = 142 per year

Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

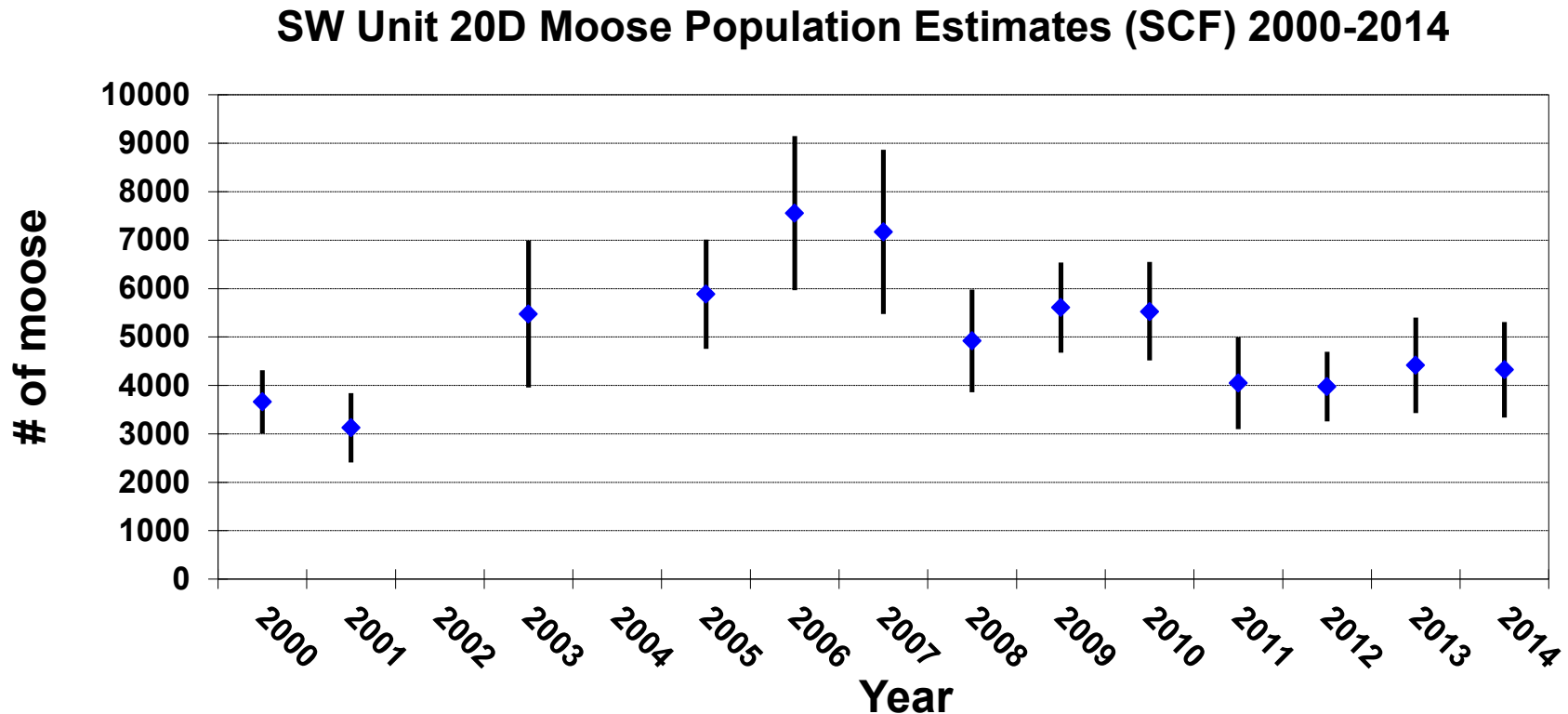
Background

SW 20D moose density was reduced by antlerless hunts:

2006 = 7,559 moose = 5.6 moose/ mi²

2012 = 3,976 moose = 3.1 moose/ mi²

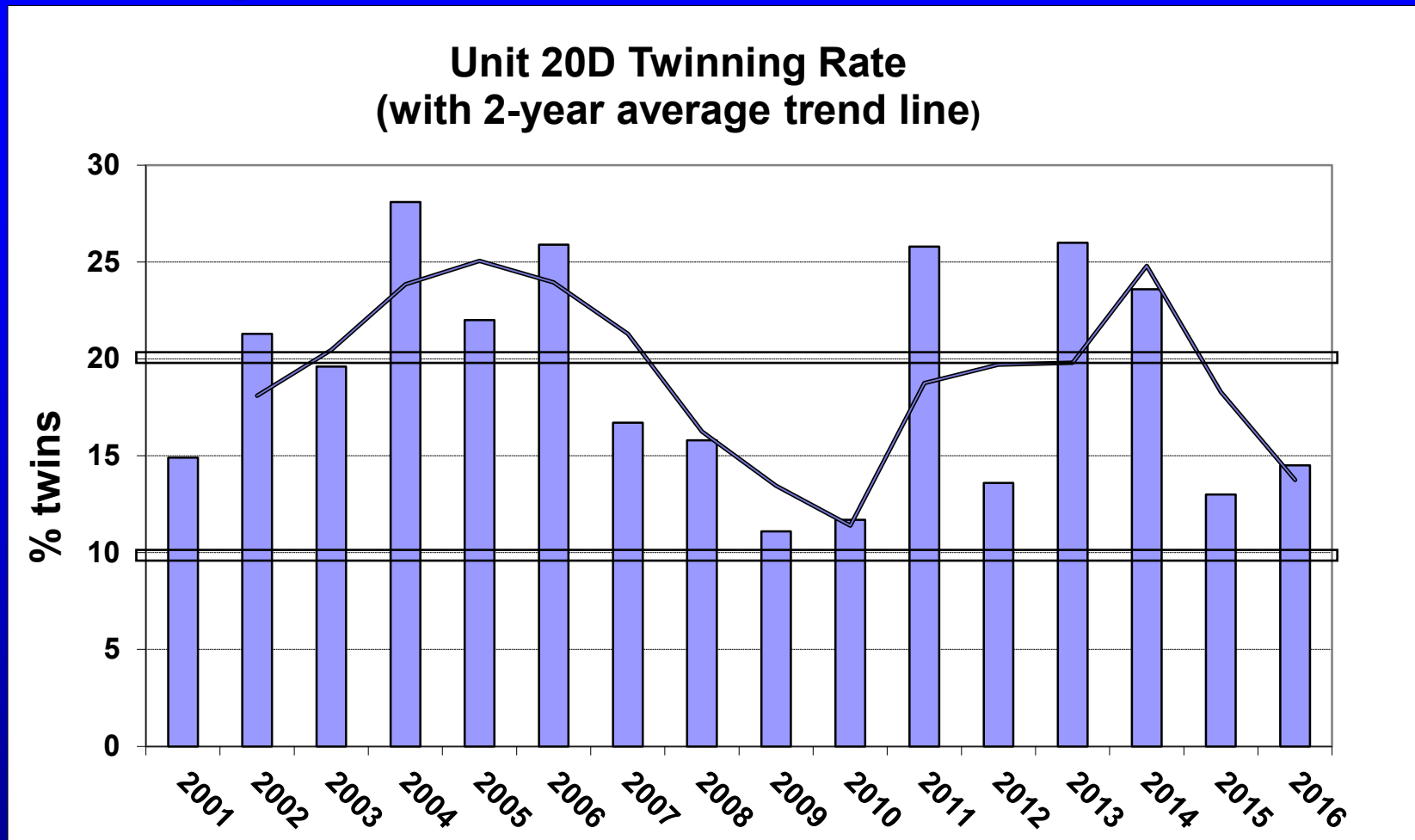
2014 = 4,321 moose = 3.4 moose/ mi²



- **2014 bull:cow ratio = 32:100**
- **2014 calf:cow ratio = 38:100**

Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

Background



- 2005–2010: decreasing twinning rates
- 2013: increased to 26%
- 2015–2016: decreasing trend, but within stable population growth management objective

Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

Background Cont'd

- Data collection to decide when antlerless hunts should be used to manage a pop.
 - Movement & population identity
 - Aerial survey sightability
 - Weights of 9 month old calves
 - Overwinter browse utilization
 - Twinning rates



Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

Summary:

- **SW Unit 20D had high density moose = 5.6 moose/mi²**
 - **1,054 cow moose harvested from 2006–2009**
- **Moose density reduced to 3.2 moose/mi²**
 - **Since 2009 less than 30 cow moose harvested per year**
- **Permits will only be issued via drawing in special hunts until data collection suggests there is a need for further reduction**
- **No plans to issue antlerless permits beyond the limited drawing permits for RY17**
- **Requesting reauthorization as a management tool**

Proposal 122, Unit 20D, Moose

- ***Proposal:*** Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting season in Unit 20D
- ***Submitted by:*** ADF&G
- ***ADF&G Recommendation:***
SUPPORT
- ***Delta AC Recommendation:***
SUPPORT



Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

- **Proposal:** Lengthen the resident hunting season for moose by 5 days making the season dates September 1–20 in that portion of Unit 20D, which is south of the north bank of the Tanana River and east of the west bank of the Johnson River, excluding that portion within the Robertson River drainage
- **Submitted By:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
NEUTRAL
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
OPPOSED



Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

- **Issue:**

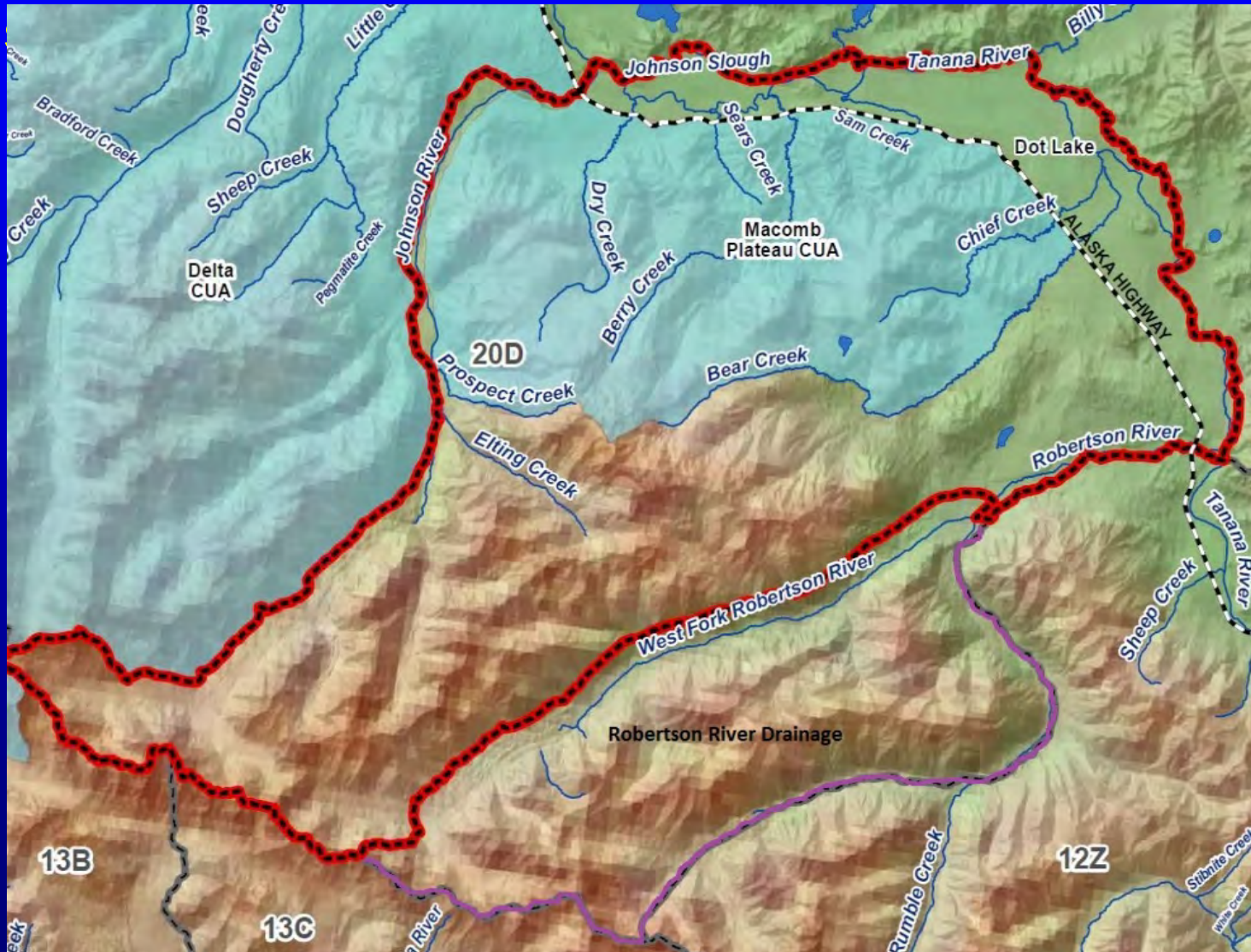
- Residents in the southeastern portion of Unit 20D are concerned about the loss of hunting opportunity when moose are showing rutting behavior
 - Currently the perception is that rutting behavior is minimal during the current hunting season, especially during a warm fall
- Would provide resident hunters with an increased opportunity to harvest a bull moose

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

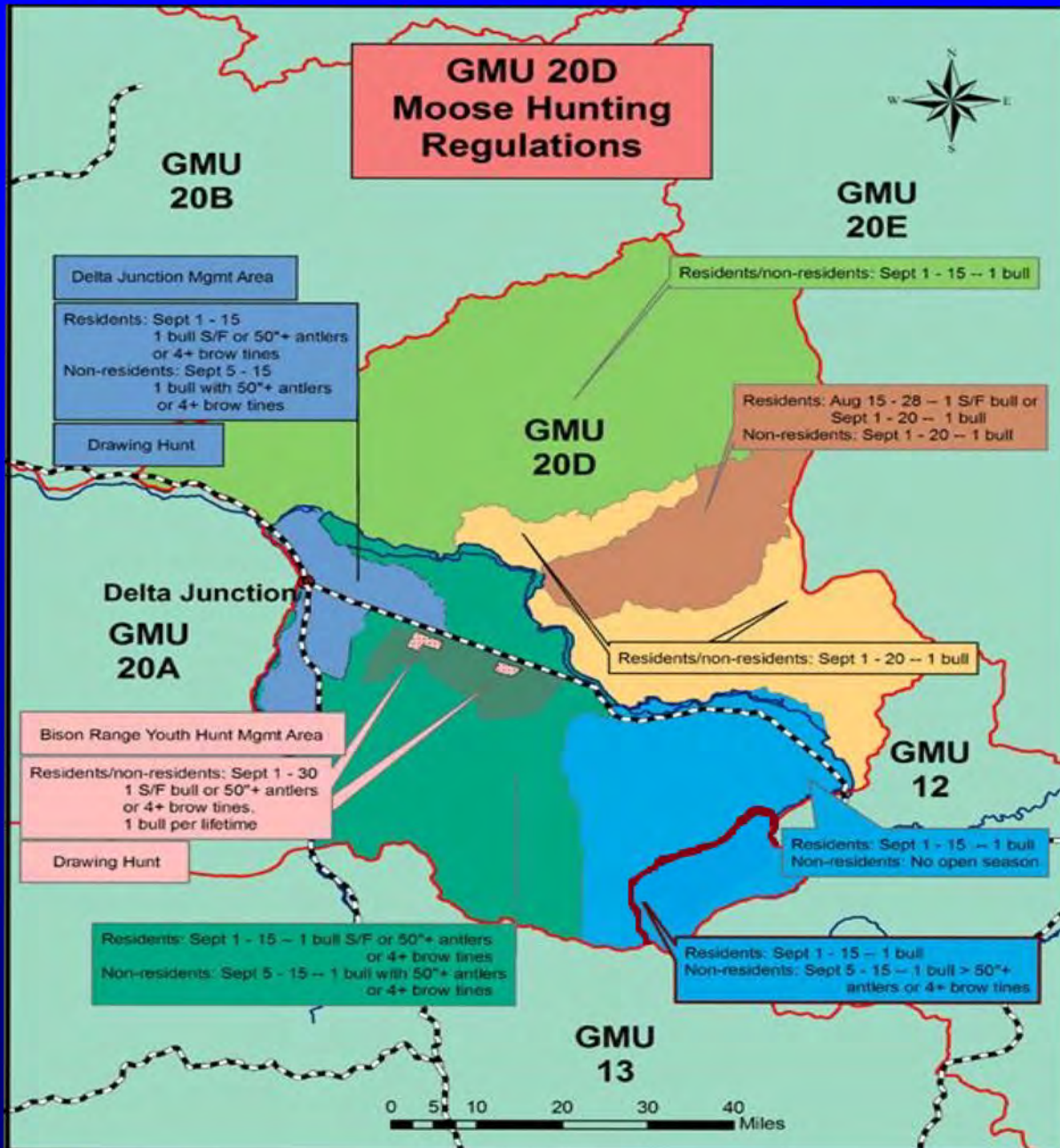
- **Department Considerations:**
 - Allocation issue
 - ADF&G has no biological concerns
 - Adopting this proposal would further complicate the moose hunting regulations in the area

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

**Proposed area to be changed and the
Robertson River Drainage adjacent to the SE**



Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose



Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Existing Hunt Structure:

OPEN TO	Unit/AREA	BAG LIMIT	OPEN SEASON
Residents	Unit 20D south of the Tanana River and east of the Johnson River, except that portion within the Robertson River drainage	1 bull	Sept 1–15
Nonresidents	Unit 20D south of the Tanana River and east of the Johnson River, except that portion within the Robertson River drainage	NA	No open season
Residents	Within the Robertson River drainage south of the confluence of the east and west forks, and within 1 mile west of the west fork	1 bull	Sept 1-15
Nonresidents	Within the Robertson River drainage south of the confluence of the east and west forks, and within 1 mile west of the west fork	1 bull - <i>50-inch/4 brow</i>	Sept 5-15

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Background:

- In 2008, the BOG extended the moose season in the eastern portion of Unit 20D north of the Tanana River to September 1–20
- Proposal last BOG cycle that asked to move part of the area being proposed in this proposal (Johnson Island Slough) to the hunting area listed above
- The Tanana River has divided Unit 20D for management purposes (north vs. south) since the early 1980's
- This area is largely undeveloped and much of it is encompassed by the MPCUA which prohibits the use of motorized vehicles for hunting August 10–September 30
- This area is outside of the FNSA; ANS for 20D outside of FNSA = 5 moose

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Background continued:

Moose Population

- The southeastern 20D moose population has been stable since 2010; low moose density compared to other Unit 20D areas
 - 20D is managed for at least 30 bulls:100 cows
 - Neighboring units are managed at 25 bulls:100 cows
- 2012 southeastern 20D population estimate = 1,408 moose (2.3 moose/mi²)
 - 39 bulls:100 cows
 - 30 calves:100 cows

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Background continued:

Moose Harvest

- **Harvest has been stable and below the sustainable level**
 - 17-27 moose harvested annually during RY11-15; average success = 34%
 - Avg. of 5 moose harvested annually from Robertson River drainage
 - Harvestable surplus for SE Unit 20D is estimated at 59 moose
- **5 additional days of hunting is not likely to increase harvest above sustainable levels**
 - Approximately 1-2 moose per day have been taken during the final 5 days of the hunting season since RY11
 - Harvest could increase by approximately 10 moose if passed (2 moose daily harvest X 5 days)

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Background continued:

- **Relatively low hunting pressure compared to other road-accessible areas of southern Unit 20D**
- **Harvest did not increase when the season was extended by 5 days in Unit 20B**

Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

Effects of Proposal/Conclusions:

- **A clear long-standing hunt structure that has worked well would change and regulations would be further complicated**
- **Resident moose hunting season dates for this area would change from September 1–15 to September 1–20, differing from all other adjacent hunt structures**
- **Proposed area is largely undeveloped w/ restricted access**
- **No biological concerns**
- **Resident opportunity would be increased**
- **Nonresident opportunity would remain the same (currently no nonresident hunting season)**
- **Harvest will likely increase by approx. 10 bulls per year**

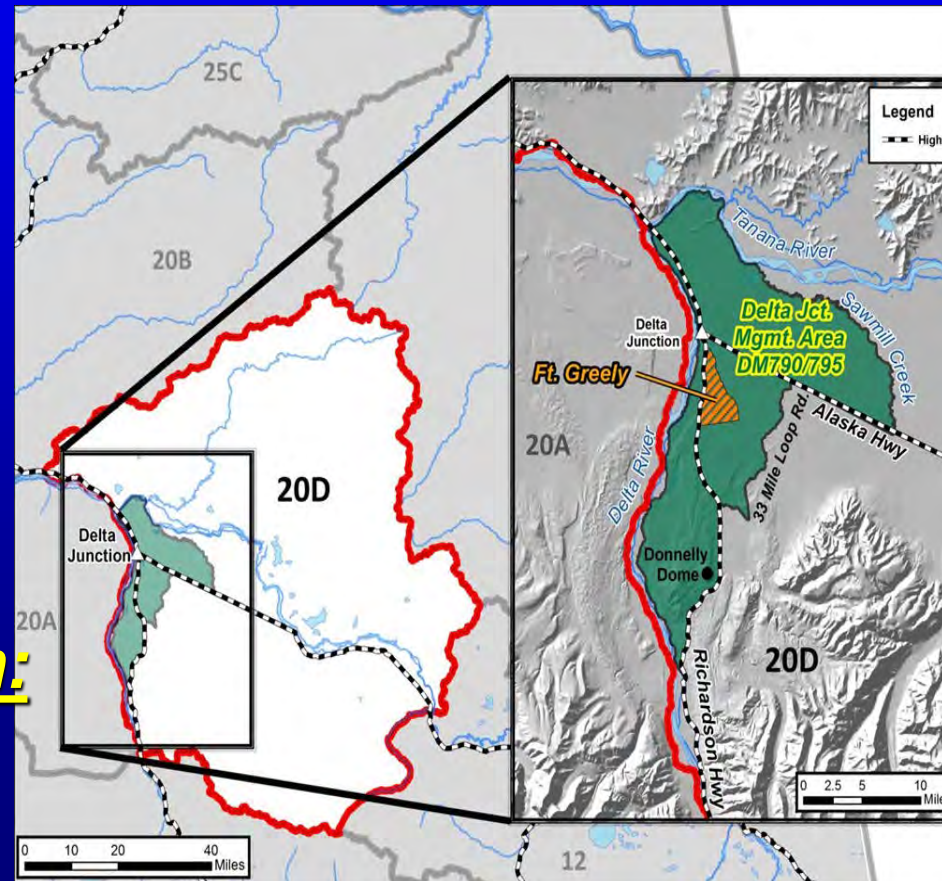
Proposal 123, Unit 20D, Moose

- **Proposal:** Lengthen the resident hunting season for moose by 5 days making the season dates September 1–20 in that portion of Unit 20D, which is south of the north bank of the Tanana River and east of the west bank of the Johnson River, excluding that portion within the Robertson River drainage
- **Submitted By:** Public
- **ADF&G Recommendation:**
NEUTRAL
- **Delta AC Recommendation:**
OPPOSED



Proposal 124, Unit 20D, Moose

- Proposal: Require proof of qualifying status prior to awarding Purple Heart recipients/Disabled Veterans drawing permits in Unit 20D within the Delta Junction Management Area (DJMA).
- Submitted by: Public
- ADF&G Recommendation:
NEUTRAL
- Delta AC Recommendation:
TAKE NO ACTION



Proposal 124, Unit 20D, Moose

- **Issue:** Currently DM795 permits are not getting to qualified applicants and subsequently some permits are going unused
 - Will help get the permits to qualified applicants & increase opportunity
- **Department Considerations:**
 - ADFG has no biological concerns
 - Allocative proposal
 - ADF&G can already reissue permits under discretionary permit authority and has put additional steps in place to further screen applicants when applying
 - Draw supplement language has also been refined for this hunt

Proposal 124, Unit 20D, Moose

- ***Current Regulations***

- The board amended this hunt during the last board cycle creating the current eligibility criteria of “Purple Heart Recipient” and 100% service connected disability
- Up to 25% of the drawing permits available in the DJMA must be issued to qualified DM795 applicants
- Applicants are asked to verify qualifying status during the online draw application
- Permits can be reissued to a qualified applicant if a unqualified applicant draws a permit

Proposal 124, Unit 20D, Moose

Conclusions

- **This hunt structure is only 2 years old**
- **The department is already doing everything this proposal is asking**
- **Issue can be resolved without a regulation change**
- **Local community is supportive of this hunt**
- **Have received very positive feedback from hunters who have received this permit**

Proposal 124, Unit 20D, Moose

- Proposal: Require proof of qualifying status prior to awarding Purple Heart recipients/Disabled Veterans drawing permits in Unit 20D within the Delta Junction Management Area (DJMA).
- Submitted by: Public
- ADF&G Recommendation:
NEUTRAL
- Delta AC Recommendation:
TAKE NO ACTION

