

To: Members of the Alaska Board of Game

RE: Proposal 133

Thank you for listening to my oral testimony so carefully and asking such pertinent questions. I was compelled to leave the meeting yesterday to attend to critical business on the home front. It is very unsettling to not be present in the room at the meeting when so much is at stake.

After reviewing area biologist Dave Crowley's unit 9 bear data, I have concluded that shortening the fall season by a week to read October 7-21 and shortening the spring season to read May 10-25 would be a good step in heading off biological problems with brown bears in unit 9E. These season dates were originally adopted in the late 1980s to reduce level of effort and harvest allowing for better recruitment of brown bears. This along with other favorable conditions including strong salmon escapements and abundant berry crops had a positive effect in accomplishing this goal. I believe that changing the season dates as described will have a very positive effect. Keep in mind that hunter effort in unit 9 has declined by 10% in the last three seasons as has harvest. I am absolutely certain that poor hunting conditions have attributed to some of the decline. Adopting a permit drawing scheme in one small portion of unit 9E will not address any perceived biological problems throughout the whole of unit 9E.

As I indicated in my testimony, conflicts among users on state lands where there are currently no limits on the number of guides able to register for use areas needs to be addressed as soon as possible. After years and years of public input and development, a system is ready to be implemented and the seed funding is available to make this happen. In addition to shortening the seasons, implementation of a state lands guide area system will prevent overharvest and reduce conflicts among users.

RE: Proposal 132

I am strongly opposed to setting an earlier resident only season. This can only increase the possibility of additional harvest and most certainly increase the likelihood of conflicts in the field. A one week earlier start really translates in practice of two weeks of activity, which will create commotion in key hunting areas. As you know, mature bears are very sensitive. Many resident hunters are generally less selective and are not seasoned to hunting tactics such as quietness and wind sensitivity. Contrary to assertions by some, particularly airplane hunters who spend considerable time "scouting," there are more than ample locations to hunt where they will not encounter guides, especially on federal lands. Resident hunters have never had more opportunity to hunt for Brown Bears state wide than they do now.

Your consideration of my views is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

Joe Klutsch