

**PROPOSAL 2 – 5 AAC 92.990(a)(87). Definitions; 92.010. Harvest tickets and reports; and 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements.** Modify the definition of youth hunt, allow youth hunters to obtain their own harvest ticket, and remove the hunter education requirement for youth hunters as follows:

There are three areas in current regulation that would need to be adjusted to accomplish change:

1) I recommend the Board of Game (board) change the definition of youth hunt to accommodate hunters starting at eight years of age (this is the minimum age allowed by state statute).

Regulation:

a. Youth Hunt – a hunt limited to a child aged **8** [10]–17 and an accompanying adult that is a licensed resident hunter 21 years of age or older. If the child is a nonresident, the accompanying adult must be a resident parent, stepparent, or legal guardian of the child. The bag limit counts against both the youth and the accompanying adult.

2) Additionally, I recommend allowing hunters from the ages of eight to seventeen to obtain their own harvest ticket or drawing tag that would allow them to participate in youth hunting seasons. The current regulation specifies the need for youth ten to seventeen obtain a harvest ticket or drawing tag for youth hunts. In conjunction, I also ask the board to consider waiving the requirement that the youth have completed a hunter education course before partaking in youth hunts, since immediate adult supervision is required for all “youth hunts”. Regulation:

a. Hunters under age 10 may not have their own big game bag limit, so they may not obtain harvest tickets or permits **with the exception of youth hunters hunting in a youth hunting season.** (See “Youth hunts only” pg. 13 of the Alaska Hunting Regulations booklet.)

b. Youth hunts only: Hunter education is **not** required for youth hunters participating in “youth hunts[.]” **under the required supervision of an accompanying adult that is a licensed resident hunter 21 years of age or older. Additionally, participants in a “youth hunt” may obtain their own harvest ticket/draw permit.** (See page 35 of the Alaska Hunting Regulations booklet for “youth hunt” definition.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The opportunities currently available to youth participating in “Youth Hunts” excludes children younger than ten years of age. Under the current regulations, children younger than ten can hunt during the general season/draw hunt under the supervision of and using a licensed hunters permit or harvest ticket, but do not have the opportunity to participate in youth hunts specifically for youth hunters.

Changing the definition of “Youth Hunt” to allow youth under ten years of age to participate would let children gain more experience in the field with adults who would have the chance to teach children during special seasons that have been created specifically for youth hunters in mind.

In a hunt that is specifically made for young hunters, where immediate adult supervision is required, excluding children who are capable of and interested in hunting is unnecessary and counterproductive. Regulations within youth hunt special seasons, as well as in hunts where a child under ten harvests an animal in the general season, require youth harvests to be applied towards the accompanying adult’s bag limit.

Our future generation of hunters and outdoors people should be given every opportunity to partake in the outdoor experience, including those designated for our youth. This change would

provide further opportunities for the hunting community to engage future generations in the outdoors.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jacob Mattila

(HQ-F17-021)

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