

# Petersburg & Wrangell Areas – Units 1B & 3

## PROPOSAL 45

### **5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.**

Extend the resident deer season on Mitkof, Woewodski, and Butterworth Islands in Unit 3 as follows:

Deer season: October 15 to **November 15** [OCTOBER 31]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Hunting season on Mitkof Island, Woewodski, and Butterworth Islands. To allow more hunting opportunities for residents.

**PROPOSED BY:** Steven Burrell (EG-F18-006)

\*\*\*\*\*

## PROPOSAL 46

### **5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.**

Extend the resident deer season on Kupreanof Island in the Lindenberg Peninsula area in Unit 3 as follows:

Deer season: October 15 – **November 15** [OCTOBER 31]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Hunting season on Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula east of Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage. Extend season to give more hunting opportunity for residents.

**PROPOSED BY:** Steven Burrell (EG-F18-007)

\*\*\*\*\*

## PROPOSAL 47

### **5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk.**

Eliminate the general season elk hunt in Units 1–3 as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
[UNITS 1, 2, AND REMAINDER OF UNIT 3.]		
[1 ELK]	[AUG. 1—DEC. 31]	[AUG.1—DEC. 31]
<b><u>Units 1, 2, and the remainder of Unit 3</u></b>	<b><u>No open season.</u></b>	<b><u>No open season.</u></b>

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In 1987, 33 Roosevelt and 17 Rocky Mountain elk were successfully transplanted from Oregon to Etolin Island in Unit 3. Due to concerns about the potential for disease transmission and interspecific competition with native Sitka black-tailed deer, the Department of Fish and Game's (department) elk management plan called for restricting the distribution of introduced elk to Etolin Island. Despite a desire to restrict elk to Etolin Island, not long after the initial release a group of elk swam to and colonized neighboring Zarembo Island. At the time, a decision was made to allow elk to occupy both Etolin and Zarembo islands.

To prevent dispersal of introduced elk from the Etolin and Zarembo island complex to other parts of the region, in 2000, the Board of Game (board) authorized a general season elk hunt (August 1 – December 31, one elk) for elk that dispersed outside of the Etolin and Zarembo island complex. While the department occasionally receives reports of elk having been harvested outside of the Etolin and Zarembo island complex, none of the reported kill locations has ever been verified. And while the department occasionally receives reports of elk having been observed or heard on other islands in Unit 3 and Unit 2, and on the Unit 1 mainland, none of these reports have been verified and no elk harvest has been reported outside the bounds of Unit 3.

The department believes that the general season hunt for elk outside of the Etolin and Zarembo island complex is being abused to facilitate taking elk from Etolin and Zarembo islands outside the current bull-only drawing and registration permit hunts. In the 31 years since elk were introduced to Etolin Island and soon after occupied adjacent Zarembo Island, elk have not established additional populations. Consequently, the department is now less concerned that introduced elk will colonize other areas of Southeast Alaska and potentially transmit diseases or parasites or compete with native deer.

This proposal rescinds the general season elk hunt in Units 1, 2, and the remainder of Unit 3. The department believes this change will have little effect on hunter opportunity because we have never been able to verify that an elk was lawfully harvested under this hunt. Should the presence of elk be confirmed outside the Etolin and Zarembo island complex, and should it remain desirable to limit the distribution of elk to those islands, the department will propose a new registration hunt.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-048)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 48**

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

Change the bag limit and open a fall season for brown bear hunting in Unit 3 as follows:

Unit 3: One brown bear **every regulatory year**, by permit, from March 15 – May 31 AND **September 15 – December 31**.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The population of brown bear is increasing in Unit 3. Historically, there have not been brown bears in this unit. Unit 3

includes Mitkof, Wrangell, Zarembo, Kupreanof, and Kuiu Islands and the communities of Wrangell, Petersburg, Kupreanof, and Kake. The unit is utilized by sport fishermen, hunters, mushroom pickers, berry pickers, etc. As the population of bears grows there will be an increase of bear encounters. In the fall, when most of the aforementioned activities are taking place, there is a greater chance of people encountering a brown bear.

On Mitkof Island, there are people who live very near to places that brown bear are already being observed. Chickens, garbage, and other human activities are known to attract bears, and it is only a matter of time before brown bears become a public safety problem.

**PROPOSED BY:** Max Worhatch (EG-F18-062)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 49**

**5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.**

Increase the “up to number” for drawing permits (DL029) for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide on Kuiu Island in Unit 3 as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
Unit 3 Kuiu Island NONRESIDENT HUNTERS WITHOUT A GUIDE: 1 bear by drawing permit only; up to [50] <b>75</b> permits may be issued; the season will be closed by emergency order when the harvest guideline has been reached		Sept. 1—June 30

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** At its fall 2010 meeting in Ketchikan, the Board of Game (board) adopted a proposal requiring nonresident black bear hunters who do not enlist the services of a registered hunting guide to obtain a drawing permit prior to hunting black bears in Units 1–3. Implementation of the new regulation was delayed until fall 2012 to allow guides time to adjust and the Department of Fish and Game (department) time to implement the new drawing permit requirement for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide.

During deliberations on the original proposal, the board asked the department to provide estimates of black bear numbers, bear densities, and to determine sustainable harvest levels for geographical areas of concern and/or areas that were believed to constitute discrete management areas. The board then used department figures to establish the allowable number of bears to be taken by nonresidents without a guide and guided hunters within each of ten distinct geographic areas identified by the department. Based on the department’s estimates of sustainable harvest

levels within each geographic area, the board established the number of drawing permits available for nonresident hunters without a guide on Kuiu Island at 40 permits. In order to provide the department with some flexibility regarding the exact number of drawing permits to be issued on an annual basis, the board authorized the department to issue “up to” a maximum of 50 drawing permits annually on Kuiu Island (DL029).

From regulatory year (RY) 2012 to RY2016, the department offered 40 drawing permits annually for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide on Kuiu Island. After five years, the department evaluated hunt statistics associated with the drawing permit requirement, including the level of hunter participation, effort, success rate, and total harvest of black bears taken annually on the island. Based on hunt data obtained during the initial five years of implementation, beginning with the fall 2017 season, the department increased the number of drawing permits available to nonresidents hunting black bear without a guide on Kuiu Island up to the maximum allowable 50 permits.

Given that the maximum number of allowable drawing permits established by the board has been reached on Kuiu (DL029), the department requests that the board increase the number of permits that may be issued to nonresident black bear hunters without a guide on Kuiu Island from the current 50 to 75 permits annually. Such action will allow the department to provide additional hunting opportunity should it determine a harvestable surplus of bears exists on the island.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-066)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 50**

**5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.**

Increase the “up to number” for drawing permits (DL030) for unguided nonresident black bear hunters on Kupreanof Island in Unit 3 as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
Unit 3 Kupreanof Island NONRESIDENT HUNTERS WITHOUT A GUIDE 1 bear by drawing permit only; up to [100] <b>125</b> permits may be issued		Sept. 1—June 30

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** At its fall 2010 meeting in Ketchikan, the Board of Game (board) adopted a proposal requiring nonresident black bear hunters who do not enlist the services of a registered hunting guide to obtain a drawing permit prior to hunting black bears in Units 1–3. Implementation of the new regulation was delayed

until fall 2012 to allow guides time to adjust and the department time to implement the new drawing permit requirement for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide.

During deliberations on the original proposal, the board asked the Department of Fish and Game (department) to provide estimates of black bear numbers, bear densities, and to determine sustainable harvest levels for geographical areas of concern and/or areas that were believed to constitute discrete management areas. The board then used department figures to establish the allowable number of bears to be taken by nonresidents without a guide and guided hunters within each of ten distinct geographic areas identified by the department. Based on the department's estimates of sustainable harvest levels, the board established the annual number drawing permits available for nonresident hunters without a guide on Kupreanof Island at 80 permits. To provide the department with some flexibility regarding the exact number of drawing permits issued each year, the board authorized the department to issue up to a maximum of 100 drawing permits annually on Kupreanof Island (DL030).

From regulatory year (RY) 2012 to RY2016, the department offered 80 drawing permits annually for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide on Kupreanof Island. After five years, the department evaluated hunt statistics associated with the drawing permit requirement, including the level of hunter participation, effort, success rate, and total harvest of black bears taken annually on the island. Based on that evaluation, beginning with the fall 2017 season, the department increased the number of drawing permits available to nonresidents hunting black bear without a guide on Kupreanof Island up to the maximum allowable 100 permits.

Given that the maximum number of allowable drawing permits established by the board has been reached on Kupreanof (DL030), the department requests that the board increase the "up to" number of available permits for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide on Kupreanof from the current 100 to 125 permits annually. Such action will allow the department to provide additional hunting opportunity should it determine a harvestable surplus of bears exists on the island.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-067)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 51**

**5 AAC 92.165(a)(1). Sealing of bear skins and skulls.**

Modify the black bear sealing requirement for nonresident hunters in Unit 3 as follows:

Unit 3

Nonresidents must report black bear harvest to Petersburg at (907) 772-3801 within five days of taking black bear on Kuiu Island and seal the bear within **30** [14] days after harvest.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Sealing of black bear in Unit 3 on Kuiu is required at 14 days after harvest. This is inconsistent with the rest of Unit 3. This adds to confusion and unintended consequences.

**PROPOSED BY:** Zach Decker (EG-F18-017)  
\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 52**

**5 AAC 92.010(j). Harvest tickets and reports.**

**5 AAC 92.165(1). Sealing of bear skins and skulls.**

Repeal the shorter harvest reporting and sealing requirements for black bears taken by nonresidents on Kuiu Island in Unit 3 as follows:

**5 AAC 92.010(j). Harvest tickets and reports**

[FOR BLACK BEAR, A NONRESIDENT HUNTER WHO TAKES A BLACK BEAR ON KUIU ISLAND IN UNIT 3 SHALL REPORT THE SEX AND LOCATION OF THE KILL TO THE DEPARTMENT’S DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION OFFICE IN PETERSBURG WITHIN FIVE DAYS OF HARVEST.]

**5 AAC 92.165(1). Sealing of bear skins and skulls.**

[IN UNIT 3, KUIU ISLAND, A BLACK BEAR TAKEN BY A NONRESIDENT HUNTER MUST BE SEALED WITHIN 14 DAYS AFTER THE TAKING AND MAY NOT BE TRANSPORTED FROM UNITS 1–4 UNTIL SEALED;]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In response to conservation concerns related to a rapidly escalating harvest of black bears by nonresidents during the late 1990s and early 2000s, in regulatory year (RY) 2001 the Board of Game (board) established an annual nonresident harvest guideline level (HGL) of 120 bears for Kuiu Island. To facilitate harvest management and implementation of the 120-bear HGL, the board also imposed a five-day notification of kill requirement and a 14-day sealing requirement for black bears taken by nonresidents on Kuiu Island.

To better regulate harvest, in November 2010 the board adopted a public proposal requiring a drawing permit for nonresident black bear hunters in Units 1–3 who do not enlist the services of a registered hunting guide. As a further conservation measure, the board and guides agreed to limit total guided nonresident harvest of black bears to the mean annual harvest level during RYs 2007–2009.

As a result of these measures, the harvest of Kuiu Island black bears by guided and unguided nonresidents has fallen from a mean of 85 bears per year during RYs 2007–2009 to a mean of 43 bears per year during RYs 2014–2016; well below the 120-bear HGL. Therefore, the Department of Fish and Game (department) feels the five-day notification of kill requirement and requirement to seal a bear within 14 days in Units 1–4 are no longer necessary to manage nonresident harvest of Kuiu Island black bears.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F18-071)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 53**

**5 AAC 95.530(24). Management areas.**

Modify the hunting area description within the Petersburg Management Area in Unit 3 as follows:

Replace the Petersburg Management Area description shown on page 47 of the 2017/2018 Alaska Hunting Regulations with the following:

**Petersburg Management Area:** that portion of Unit 3 on Mitkof Island, north and west of a line from Frederick Point to the highest point in Section 8, T59S, R80E; to the highest point in Section 7, T59S, R80E; to the highest point in Section 13, T59S, R79E; to the highest point in Section 23, T59S, R79E; then due south to Petersburg city boundary; and at least [1/4 MILE] **100 yards** from an airport property, dwelling, business, highway, road or street within the corporate city limits is open to hunting with bow and arrow only. International Bowhunter Education Program (IBEP) certification required for big game; small game hunting by falconry is allowed.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Modify the legal hunting area description within the Petersburg Management Area (PMA) from “at least 1/2 mile from an airport property...” to “at least 100 yards from an airport property...” The original idea behind creating the PMA for certified archery hunting was to help control the unusually high abundance of deer in Petersburg residential area using certified archers as an effective wildlife management tool. There have been a few deer harvested within the Petersburg Management Area annually by archers since the hunt was established around 2000/2001, but it doesn’t appear to have decreased the in-town population; in fact, it appears to have grown. This proposal would offer more land within the Petersburg Management Area to help control the deer population near town. The requirement to restrict hunters within the Petersburg Management Area to certified archers would remain in place.

**PROPOSED BY:** Dan McMahon

(HQ-F18-017)

\*\*\*\*\*