

Alaska Department of Fish & Game
Boards Support Section
PO B 115526
Juneau, Ak 99811

RC0022

Dear Chairman and Members of the Board

The following comments are my thoughts on proposals submitted for the South central region Board of Game meeting. They focus on the Kenai Peninsula moose proposals. I have hunted moose elsewhere in the state, but only have harvested moose on the Kenai Peninsula; I have hunted here on the Kenai since the early 60's with my father, then continuing on as a Dad and then as a grandfather, helping my Grandson get his first moose. Since 1973 I have had an airplane, with the exception of 5 years from 1990 to 1995. I have history of flying the trophy area of 15B, around Trophy Lake, Nicolai, Cytex creeks, Deep Creek Dome, Hill 26 and 27, Eagle Flats and west of Eagle flats. I spend 30-35 hrs per year, both in summer, fall and after the moose season closes looking for moose. I love seeing moose and seeing how they're doing or not doing. As you can imagine that over the years, I have discovered where moose like to be - they have favorite spots. More moose congregate in some areas more than others, and I know where they are. The fires that swept through the Caribou Hills area, concentrated those favorite spots. It has also opened the area up so that any moose are pretty visible, especially after a snow. Several of us hunters did a comprehensive flying survey 2 years ago, gridding areas and being very careful to count moose, with clickers for bulls and clickers for cows. I have argued long and hard with Mr. Selinger about the moose population. Our count was slightly over 1,200 moose. Now granted we did not fly across Kachemak Bay, but snow covered the terrain where we did fly, and either tracks or no tracks coupled with wide open terrain, makes me confident that no more than 1,600-1,800 moose are in 15C. I even talked to a guy that flies professionally and he said "Well, from what I see, perhaps there isn't as many as ADF&G is saying, but in my opinion a little more than you think, perhaps in the 2,200-2,400 range." Now we both have opinions on the density, but as much as I fly-we DO NOT have 3,500 moose in 15C. Back in the early 70s we probably did-not now. I grant you we have a higher bull to cow count right now-but I think it is more like a low cow count to bulls than a high bull count to cows.

Proposal 63 and 64 Oppose

Adding forks back into the mix would allow hunters to take those dumb moose quickly, which is your future recruitment. I also strongly oppose removing the Lower Kenai Peninsula controlled use area regulations. We have better ATVS than ever before, there are more people than ever before hunting and we will whack moose at

an unprecedented rate, and we will be coming back for more restrictions in a few years.

Proposal 65 Support

This was the rule for many years and the amount of bulls we currently have, can probably sustain it.

Proposal 69 Support

I have flown the Tustamena Trophy area a lot, before and after the fire. The population was declining before the fire due to predators and has really declined since. I harvested one of the last big moose in 2002. There was one other big one taken the following year, but since-not so much. I reluctantly support this, because possibly people will open up trails and harvest predators. 2 years ago, before the hunting season, I saw a cow and a calf in the square hunt area (Bear creek/Shantalic creek) and in the Timberline area, 4 bulls. After the season nothing was seen in the Bear creek area, and 2 bulls and 1 cow in the Timberline area. On the same flight, I did not see any moose in the Big Indian area. Last year after the season, again 1 cow and calf was observed in the Bear Creek area and only 2 small 50" bulls in the Timberline area and 1 large brown bear. The good news was, I saw at least 250 caribou, which seem to be rebounding after the snow slide loss.

Proposal 70, 71 Oppose

Although similar proposals to 69, I am against. I strongly disagree with the count that F&G has come up with.

Proposal 72, 73 Oppose

I attended and debated the proposals at the Central Advisory Committee. I was opposed then, and still am. There is a lot of road hunting already with streams of vehicles-this would make it worse as more people try to get a moose during the last few days of the rut. I feel the move we made to go to the 25th was not good.

Proposal 75 Oppose

Again additional permits with our current population (not 3500) is not acceptable. Archery and muzzleloaders can be used during the current season.

Proposal 74 and 76 Oppose

With the likely hood of 65 or 66 passing, I oppose these proposals at this time. If we make too many big moves-such as a ridiculous number of 200 draw permits- with in 3 years we are going to come back asking for reductions. Lets take a measured approach- if we see the population can handle it, in 3 years, maybe a small number

of permits- perhaps up to 40.

Proposal 77 Oppose

I totally disagree as I have previously mentioned contention with F&G on the moose densities they are presenting.

In the 70s time frame, I would ride out on to the moose range towards Trophy lake. I would see 20-30 cows at the end of the big swamp. Now you rarely see one cross the swamp, except very early in the morning or very late in the evening of the day.

I hunt with horses and the moose are way more apt to stand to see what you are, and sometimes even approach you, as the rut gets closer. On a 5-hour morning ride, and a 5-hour evening ride, I used to see from 10 to 20 moose. Now I'm lucky to see 2 to 3 moose, and on some rides I get blanked.

In closing- again, constant flying before and after the season reflect the lack of moose that I observe. The moose population south of the south fork of Deep creek appear to have adequate cows and calves-but 10 years ago, North of Deep Creek had adequate cows-but does not have the cow calves that it used to.

Respectfully,

Dan Presley
Happy Valley, Ak 99556

