**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

**STAFF COMMENTS**

**SOUTHEAST REGION PROPOSALS**

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME MEETING**

**PETERSBURG, ALASKA**

**JANUARY 11-15, 2019**

The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Game meeting, January 11-15, 2019 in Petersburg, Alaska, and are prepared to assist the public and board. The stated staff comments should be considered preliminary and subject to change, if or when new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral testimony presented to the board.

**PROPOSAL 1**

**5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.**

**5AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game: exceptions.**

Allow the use of crossbows in restricted-weapons hunts for the Southeast Region as follows:

Allow the use of crossbows in any hunt in game management areas, state game refuges and/or special hunts where either a muzzleloader or shotgun is legal along with bow and arrow.

For areas or hunts that are specified bowhunting only, crossbows will remain illegal.

**PROPOSED BY:** Howard Delo

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would allow the use of crossbows in areas or hunts that are weapons-restricted to muzzleloaders, shotguns or bow and arrow.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?** There are currently no hunts in Southeast Alaska that are weapons restricted to muzzleloaders and shotguns. Unit 1C provides for an archery only area under RG014 permit conditions.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Adoption of this proposal would have no immediate effect to the Southeast Region because there are currently no weapons-restricted areas or hunts that allow muzzleloaders or shotguns in addition to archery equipment.

**BACKGROUND:**

There are currently several state game management areas, state refuges and special hunts which support weapons-restricted big game hunts. These hunts prohibit the use of centerfire and high powered rifles and allow only short-range weapons, including muzzleloaders, shotguns and bow and arrow. Examples of these include moose hunts that take place in the Kodiak and Palmer-Wasilla management areas.

Crossbows are comparable to bow and arrows in power and range but have much less than shotgun or muzzleloaders. Crossbows are becoming increasingly popular in both Alaska and the Lower 48. As a result, the Board has recently enacted requirements on crossbows such as peak draw weight, bolt length and weight, and broadhead design. In addition, starting July 1, 2018 hunters using a crossbow must successfully complete an ADF&G approved crossbow certification course.

This proposal originated as a statewide proposal and is currently being addressed on a hunt by hunt basis in each region.

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**PROPOSAL 2– 5 AAC 92.230 (2). Feeding of Game.** Allow the feeding of deer in the Southeast Region as follows:

Allow food plotting on private property for feeding and harvesting deer in Units 1-5.

**PROPOSED BY:** Lucas Shilts

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would allow the intentional feeding of deer.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

5 AAC 92.230. Feeding of Game.
A person may not

> (a)(2) Intentionally feed a moose, deer, elk, sheep, bear, wolf, coyote, fox, wolverine or deleterious exotic wildlife, or intentionally leave human food, animal food, mineral supplements, or garbage in a manner that attracts these animals.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would allow intentional feeding of deer with the use of food plots, as is done in many areas in the Lower 48 states.

This proposal is unlikely to affect deer populations through additional harvest. However, attracting concentrations of animals to one area could affect the population by enhancing transmission of diseases and parasites among deer or other wildlife and between domestic stock and wild game. In addition, depending on the location of food plots, big game hunting closed areas and local ordinances prohibiting the discharge of firearms may restrict the ability to harvest deer.

**BACKGROUND:** Currently there are no prohibitions to growing gardens, flowers, fruit, and ornamental shrubs that deer may find to be a food source; however, these activities have not been defined as "intentional" feeding, nor has the vegetation listed above been defined as "bait".

The proposal specifically requests the ability to feed deer year around but fails to identify the type(s) of food to be used.

The proposal does not define "food plotting", so there would be no restrictions on what foods could be used to attract deer. Some foods may attract other wildlife, such as bears and moose. Attracting food conditioned animals to communities could result public safety and nuisance animal concerns.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 3 – 5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs and hides.** Modify the salvage requirements for Sitka black-tailed deer in Units 1-5 as follows:

**PROPOSED BY:** Nicholas Orr

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would remove the salvage requirement of rib meat for Sitka black-tailed deer in Units 1-5.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**5 AAC 92.990 (26)**

"edible meat" means, in the case of a big game animal, except a bear, the meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters, hindquarters and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters; however "edible meat of big game does not include meat of the head, meat that has been damaged and made inedible by the method of taking, bones, sinew, incidental meat reasonably lost as a result of boning or a close trimming of the bones, or viscera.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** If this proposal were adopted salvage requirements for deer in Units 1-5 would differ from salvage requirements for deer in Units 6 and 8. Any time salvage requirements vary, particularly within a species, can cause confusion for hunters. State salvage requirements would also be out of alignment with federal salvage requirements.

**BACKGROUND:**

Sitka black-tailed deer are classified as big game animals in the State of Alaska, and as such, salvage of rib meat is required per 5 AAC 92.220. Some hunters believe removal of rib meat is time consuming and the amount of meat from the ribs is negligible.

Sitka black-tailed deer are one of the smallest big game animals and the rib meat represents a small proportion of meat taken by deer hunters. The 2018-2019 Alaska Hunting Regulations (pg. 28) suggests hunters get approximately 68 pounds of boned out

meat per deer; these are estimates and deer weight varies by region and location. While rib meat represents a small proportion of the overall edible meat, it still contributes to the total meat taken.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no biological concern.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 4 – 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.** Allow the harvest of game from a boat in Units 1 – 5 as follows:

Remove Section (9): from 5 AAC 92.085:

> From a boat in Units 1 -5; however, a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department.

**PROPOSED BY:** Nicholas Orr

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would allow for taking big game from a boat in Units 1-5.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

5 AAC 92.080 Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

…

(4) unless otherwise provided in this chapter, from a motor-driven boat or a motorized land vehicle, unless the motor has been completely shut off and the progress from the motor's power has ceased, except that a

(A) motor-driven boat may be used as follows:

(i) in Units 23 and 26 to take caribou;

…

(iii) under authority of a permit issued by the department

…

**5 AAC 92.085 Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.** The following methods and means of taking big game are prohibited in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

(9) From a boat in Units 1 -5; however, a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal has the potential to significantly increase deer harvests, particularly in deep snow conditions when deer tend to congregate on beaches.

**BACKGROUND:** Prior to regulatory year 1972, hunters in Units 1-5 could hunt big game from a boat if the motor had been completely shut off and forward progress from the motor had ceased.
In 1987, the department submitted a proposal to the board to repeal the state prohibition on taking big game from a boat in a house keeping measure to align regulations for all Game Management Units in the state. The repeal was not adopted by the board.

In the mid-1990's federal regulations were changed to allow federally-qualified hunters ***on federal lands*** to hunt big game from a boat if the motor had been completely shut off and forward progress from the motor had ceased. This allowance however did not apply to hunting from marine water shorelines. However, hunters either did not understand or chose to ignore this distinction: it was widely held then that shooting from a boat was once again legal. ADF&G biologists noted increases in Sitka black-tailed deer wounding loss during spring mortality transects in the years following this new federal regulation. In the late winter of 1994-95, 8 beach mortality surveys were conducted. Data from bone marrow examination revealed the causes of death for 34 deer were winter mortality (23 deer) and crippling loss (11) from the hunting season. Winter-killed deer were almost entirely fawns, but adult deer comprised all of the crippling loss. The rate of finding dead deer was 2.9 winter mortalities and 1.4 crippling losses per mile of beach examined. The winter of 1995-96 was more open and snow did not concentrate deer near the beaches. For the 13 beach transects examined, winter mortality was 1.2 deer per mile of beach and wounding loss was 0.5 deer per mile.

Except for mortality surveys and registration hunt reports the department does not collect information on wounding loss for most species, including black bears. However, brown bear hunters in some areas are asked to report wounding loss on permit hunt reports. For brown bear hunting in Unit 4 during regulatory years 2014-2018, of the 2,901 people issued registration or draw permits, 1,398 (48%) permittees hunted brown bears, 659 (47%) people who hunted reported harvesting bears, and 35 (2.5%) reported wounding

and not recovering bears. We do not know how applicable brown bear wounding loss data are to other species, and the numbers presented should probably be viewed as minimums.

In 2001, the department asked hunters about shooting from boats on the annual deer harvest survey questionnaire. We asked 1) Would you support a change in state law to legalize shooting deer from a boat in Southeast Alaska and 2) If it was legal, would you do it? For the first question 43% were in favor of changing the law and 42% were opposed to it with 15% undecided. For question number 2, 47% of respondents said they would shoot from a boat and 30% said they would not; 23% of respondents were undecided.

Hunters in Region I generally have relatively long seasons with generous bag limits for deer, black bear, and wolves. Access for hunting has also been greatly expanded in some parts of the region by development of networks of remote logging roads. Finally, 5 AAC 92.085(9) & (12) allow a hunter with physical disabilities to acquire a permit that authorizes hunting from a boat. Region I staff issued an average of 24 permits annually to take big game from a boat during the period 2013-2018.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal since populations can be sustainably managed under the current or proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 5 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.** Shorten the hunting season and change the bag limit for moose in the Southeast Region as follows:

Change moose season region-wide to Oct. 1-15 with an "any bull" bag limit.

**PROPOSED BY:** Harold Martindale

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal as written would change all the various moose hunts in Southeast Alaska (Units 1-5) to season dates Oct. 1-15 with a bag limit of any bull.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Unit 1A (Unuk River)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull | RM022 | Sept. 15-Oct. 15 |
| **1B, 1C & 3 (Petersburg Area)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull with spike-fork antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least one side, or antlers with 2 brow tines or more brow tines on both sides. | RM038 | Sept. 15-Oct. 15 |
| **1C (Berners Bay)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull | DM041 | Sept. 15-Oct. 15 |
| **1C (Gustavus)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull with spike-fork antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least one side. | RM049 | Sept. 15-Oct. 15 |
| **1C (Remainder)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull | RM046 | Sept. 15- Oct. 15 |
| **1D (Haines)**<br>Residents only<br>One bull with spike-fork antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least one side. | TM059 | Sept. 15-Oct. 7 |
| **5A (Nunatak Bench)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One moose | RM059 | Nov. 15-Feb. 15 |
| **5A (Yakutat Forelands)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull | RM061 | Oct. 15-Nov. 15 |
| **5B (Malaspina Forelands)**<br>Residents and nonresidents<br>One bull | RM062 | Sept. 1-Dec. 15 |

In addition to these regulations, the Southeast Region has general region-wide management goals set by the department related to sustainability and hunter participation. Most Southeast Alaska moose populations are small and discrete. The following are the management objectives for population size and harvest across Southeast Alaska:

| **Area** | **Post hunt population** | **Annual harvest** |
|---|---|---|
| 1A (Unuk River) | 50 | 2 |
| 1B (Stikine River) | 300 | 30 |
| 1B (Thomas Bay) | 200 | 20 |
| 1C (Berners Bay) | 80-90 | 5 |
| 1C (Taku River) | No objective | 10 |
| 1C (Chilkat Range) | No objective | 10 |
| 1C (Gustavus) | 250-350 | 15 |
| 1D (Haines) | 200 | 20-25 |
| 3 (Petersburg) | 400 | 40 |
| 5A (Yakutat Forelands) | 600-800 | 55 |
| 5A (Nunatak Bench) | 50 | 5 |
| 5B (Malaspina Forelands) | 250 | 25 |
| **Total** | **2,600 – 2,900** | **237-242** |

The Board of Game has made the following findings of customary and traditional uses and amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence for the following moose populations in the Southeast Region:

| **Area** | **Finding** | **Amount reasonably necessary for subsistence** |
|---|---|---|
| Units 1B and 3 (RM038) | Positive | 40 moose |
| Unit 1C (Gustavus Forelands) | Negative | |
| Unit 1D | Positive | 100% of allowable harvest |
| Unit 5 (All) | positive | 50 moose |

The other moose populations are in nonsubsistence areas.

There are no positive determinations for Intensive Management of moose in Southeast Alaska. (5 AAC 92.108).

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The proposal as written would shorten moose seasons in the region. The proposal may simplify moose regulations across the region although it is likely that individual hunts would have to have different season lengths to maintain bull:cow ratio objectives or adequate numbers of bulls. The proposal would likely reduce the number of sublegal moose taken in the region. Depending on the moose population, subsistence opportunity may be reduced.

Several hunts already have an any bull bag limit. For example, RM022, DM041, RM046 and RM061 currently have any bull bag limits and a one-month season. So, the result of this proposal would be elimination of 2 weeks of hunting opportunity for these hunts. Hunters who participate in the RM059 hunt would lose 2.5 months of hunting opportunity and see their bag limit restricted from any moose to any bull. Hunters who participate in the RM062 hunt would lose 3 months of opportunity. Tier II hunters in Haines (TM059) would gain a less restrictive antler configuration requirement but trade one week of opportunity. Hunters in Gustavus (RM049) would gain a less restrictive antler configuration requirement, but lose at least two weeks of opportunity.

**BACKGROUND:** Although the proponent of this proposal identifies all of Southeast Alaska it is likely he is most concerned with RM038 which is a Units 1B, 1C and 3 hunt administered out of the Petersburg office. The following is offered on the history of this hunt (From ADF&G Species Management Report and Plan ADF&G/DWC/SMR&P-2018-2).

From 1995 to 2008 the RM038 hunt area was managed with season dates of 15 September – 15 October, a 1-bull bag limit, and a spike-fork (SF), 3 brow tine, or 50-inch antler restriction. The antler restrictions were originally developed for Alaska-Yukon moose (*Alces alces gigas*) on the Kenai Peninsula and later applied to western Canada moose inhabiting the central Alaskan Panhandle. Moose in the area seldom acquire antler spreads in excess of 50 inches, and often develop atypical antler configurations. As a result, it was widely believed that the SF50, 3 brow tine restriction failed to partition the harvest among various age classes as intended and protected mature bulls in excess of those needed for breeding. Nonetheless, given the high level of interest and participation in the RM038 moose hunt, the antler restrictions in place at the time did a good job of constraining the moose harvest to sustainable levels.

At the department's request, in 2004 the board established a limited number of any-bull drawing permit hunts within portions of Units 1B and 3. The any-bull drawing hunts were intended to gather information on the age structure and antler characteristics of that segment of the bull population, which was otherwise protected under the existing antler restrictions. After 3 seasons of limited any-bull harvest, the department felt it had sufficient information to safely recommend that the then existing SF50, 3 brow tine restriction could be modified to also allow harvest of bulls with 2 brow tines on both antlers.

As a result, beginning with the 2009 season, the RM038 antler restrictions were liberalized to allow the harvest of bulls that possessed spike-forked antlers, or 50-inch

spreads, or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least 1 side, or 2 or more brow tines on both sides.

The current antler restrictions for moose in the RM038 hunt are among the most liberal in the state. If not for several factors, including that much of the RM038 hunt area is remote and inaccessible to hunters and moose sightability is hampered by dense coniferous forests, the area might otherwise be incapable of sustaining the current antler restrictions and season dates.

Between 1995 and 2008 the annual harvest from the RM038 hunt area averaged 67 bulls annually. Since 2009, when antler restrictions were liberalized, the average annual harvest has increased to 96 bulls annually (Figure 5-1). The department has illegal moose data for RM038 dating back to 2003. The number of illegal bulls has averaged 7% of the harvest (range 2% -12%) (Figure 5-1). This compares similarly with other areas of the state (Table 5-1).

There are some federal seasons for moose in Southeast Alaska as well. Federal moose hunting regulations generally require federally qualified hunters to follow state hunting regulations and requirements (e.g., seasons, bag limits, and registration permit). There are three exceptions: Unit 1A maintains a federal moose hunt that allows federally qualified hunters to hunt two weeks prior to the state season; the federal hunt in Unit 1C Berners Bay provides for drawing permits for federally qualified hunters (25% of the permits awarded by the department), and federally qualified moose hunters in Unit 5A can hunt two weeks prior to the start of the state season. In Unit 1A the harvest is low with an estimated 3 moose taken annually, and of those, 35% are taken by federally qualified hunters. The Unit 1C Berners Bay hunt is new for RY19 and no data is available on the federal hunt. In Unit 5A, the total harvest averages 42 moose annually with approximately 80% being taken by federally qualified hunters.

Figure 5-1. RM038 legal and illegal moose harvest based on antler configuration (1995-2017).

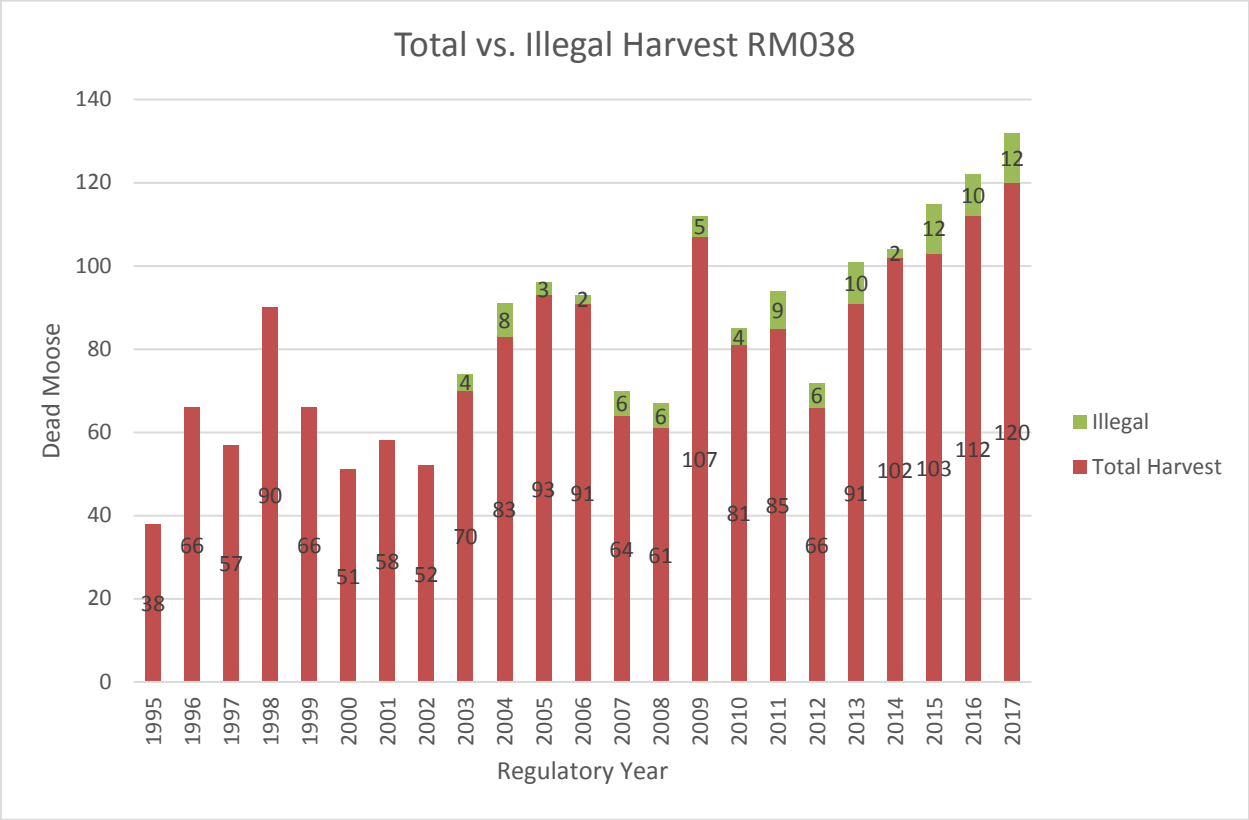


Table 5-1. Examples of other moose hunts and the annual % illegal harvest.

| **Hunt** | **Antler Restrictions?** | **Annual illegal (%)** |
|---|---|---|
| RM022 (1A, Unuk River) | No (Any bull) | 0 |
| RM038 (1B, 1C and 3) | Yes (SF50, 3 or 2x2BT) | 7% (2003-2017) |
| DM041 (1C, Berners Bay) | No (Any bull) | 0 |
| RM046 (1C, Taku and Chilkat) | No (Any bull) | 0 |
| RM049 (1C, Gustavus) | Yes (SF50 or 3BT) | 20% (2013-2017) |
| TM059 (1D, Haines) | Yes (SF50 or 3BT) | 11% (2013-2017) |
| RM059 (5A, Nunatak Bench) | No (Any moose) | 0 |
| RM061 (5A, Yakutat Forelands) | No (Any bull) | 0 |
| RM062 (5B, Malaspina Forelands | No, (Any bull) | 0 |
| Kenai Peninsula Unit 15 | Yes (SF50 or 4BT) | 21% (2011-2017) |

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the department can sustainably manage moose populations under the current or proposed regulation.

This proposal addresses moose populations for which the board has recognized customary and traditional uses. The proposal would significantly shorten hunting season

lengths for moose across the region. The board should consider if passage of this proposal would limit reasonable opportunities for a normally-diligent person to have success in harvesting moose for subsistence uses. If the board decides to implement hunts without antler restrictions, the department requests that this change be implemented over several years so that sustainable season lengths could be established in a single area before moving to another hunt area. This would reduce the number of areas over- or under-harvested while appropriate season lengths are determined, and would provide better information for starting season lengths for subsequent areas. Based on any bull drawing hunt data for Unit 3 (2005-2008), the department estimates the season would be open for 7 days to reach a harvest of 100 bull moose in Unit 3. Alternatively, the department could establish quotas for hunts at the current harvest levels and close the hunt by emergency order.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 6 – 5 AAC 92.220 (3). Salvage of game meat, furs and hides.** Change the salvage requirement for black bears in Units 1-5 as follows:

Remove the requirement for residents to salvage black bear hides in Units 1-5 and instead require salvage of the meat throughout the season.

**PROPOSED BY:** Mark Freshwaters

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would require resident black bear hunters in Southeast Alaska to salvage meat year-round and make salvaging the hide optional year-round. Non-resident salvage requirements would not change if the proposal was passed as written.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs and hides.** (a) Subject to additional requirements in 5 AAC 84 – 5 AAC 85, a person taking game shall salvage the following parts for human use:

(3) from January 1 through May 31, the hide, skull, and edible meat as defined in 5 AAC 92.990, from June 1 through December 31, the skull and either hide or edible meat of a black bear taken in a game management unit in which sealing is required;

| Black bear salvage requirements (page 28, 2018-2019 Alaska Hunting Regulations No. 59 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unit | Jan 1 – May 31<br>Evidence of sex must remain naturally attached to the hide. | June 1 – Dec 31<br>Evidence of sex must remain naturally attached to salvaged meat or hide. |
| 1-7 | Meat, Hide, Skull | Skull AND Meat or Skull AND Hide |

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** If this proposal were adopted salvage requirements for black bears in Units 1-5 for residents only would differ from salvage requirements for residents and nonresidents in the rest of the state. This will add another level of complexity to salvage requirements. State salvage requirements would also be out of alignment with federal salvage requirements. The department does not anticipate any change in harvest patterns if this proposal is implemented.

**BACKGROUND:** Statewide sealing of black bears began in 1973. At that time black bear salvage requirements were "skins and skulls." The requirement to salvage meat from spring black bears in Southeast Alaska began with the fall 1997 season and was directly tied to controversies surrounding black bear baiting. The meat salvage requirement was adopted as a compromise alternative to a proposal to eliminate bear baiting. The Board received 3 proposals to rescind the meat salvage requirement at the October 1998 meeting. The department's comments at that time were that the reasons those dates were specified were because from January 1 to May 31, black bears have little or no access to salmon, which many people believe flavors bears meat, and that there were valid points on both sides of the issue. The Board concluded that salvaging meat during the fall hunt relates to personal values and not requiring salvage of meat during the fall was unlikely to result in a conservation concern.

Since draw hunts were implemented for unguided nonresident black bear hunters (RY2012), nonresidents have harvested on average 55% of the black bears in Southeast Alaska (~ 250/yr.) (Figure 6-1). Prior to the draw hunts (RY08-RY12), nonresidents accounted for approximately 68% of the annual harvest (Figure 6-2). As draw hunt requirements are relaxed in Southeast Alaska, the department expects percentage of nonresident take to increase.

Figure 6-1. Total black bear harvest for Southeast Alaska, Game Management Units 1-5 (2012-2017)

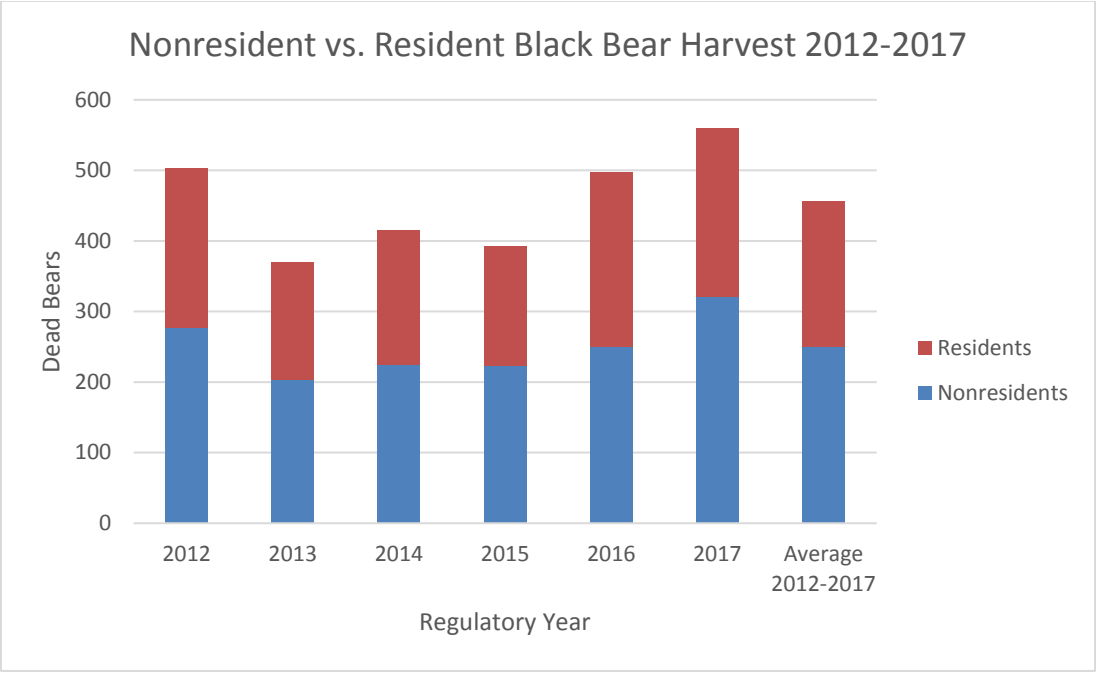
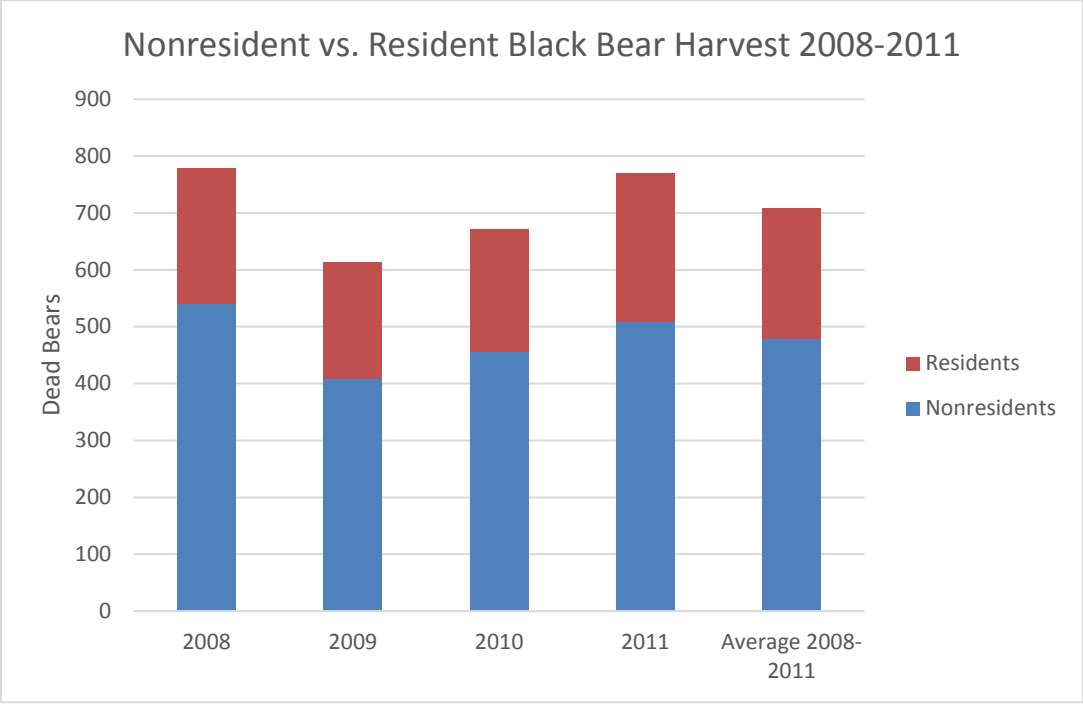



Figure 6-2. Total black bear harvest for Game Management Units 1-5 prior to drawing permit requirements.



**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the proposal does not create biological concerns for the black bear population, which can be sustainably managed under the current or the proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 7 – 5 AAC 92.165. Sealing of bear skins and skulls.** Eliminate the black bear sealing requirement for resident hunters in the Southeast Region.

**PROPOSED BY:** Mark Freshwaters

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would eliminate the black bear sealing requirement for resident hunters in Units 1-5.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
Black bears taken in Units 1-7, 14A, 14C, 15-17, and 20B must be sealed. Sealing must be completed within 30 days of kill, or less as required by permit conditions.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The department would lose black bear data obtained during the sealing process, such as ages (from tooth cementum annuli), skull sizes, sex verification, tissue and/or hair samples, and anecdotal population information.

**BACKGROUND:** Statewide sealing of black bears began in 1973. Biological and hunt information collected includes pelage color, sex, skull size (length and width), date and location of kill, number of days hunted, transportation method, and hunter use of commercial services, including guide use. A premolar is collected from most bears and sent to Matson's Laboratory for age determination. Managers also have the opportunity to collect hair and/or tissue samples for DNA and stable isotope analysis for specific research projects.

Without current population or density estimates for black bears in much of Southeast Alaska, managers rely heavily on data collected during sealing to monitor black bears. Most units have age, sex, and skull size management objectives. Comparison of current and historical data related to management objectives can indicate harvest trends and may offer indirect evidence of population trends. Sealing provides more accurate determination of sex because sealed bears are more closely scrutinized. Proportion of females in the harvest is an important metric for ensuring sustainability and optimum yield levels. Managers also collect anecdotal population information by talking to

hunters directly during the sealing process. In addition to area offices and Alaska Wildlife Troopers, there are 14 appointed sealers in Southeast Alaska who collect sealing information for the department in communities that do not have department staff.

Beginning with RY 2009, black bear hunters were required to obtain harvest tickets for black bears prior to hunting. If sealing for residents were eliminated, we would still have the ability to track harvest and hunter effort through these harvest ticket reports, but not as reliably as sealing records.

Currently, resident hunters make up approximately 45% of the annual Southeast Alaska black bear harvest (Figure 7-1). However, in some areas, such as Units 1C, 1D, Remainder of 3, and 5, the resident harvest greatly exceeds the nonresident take. From RY2012 to RY2017 residents harvested 77% (479 of 626) of black bears from these units. The loss of this amount of data would be considerable for managers of these game management units (Figure7- 2).

Figure 7-1. Total black bear harvest by residency for Southeast Alaska (2012-2017).

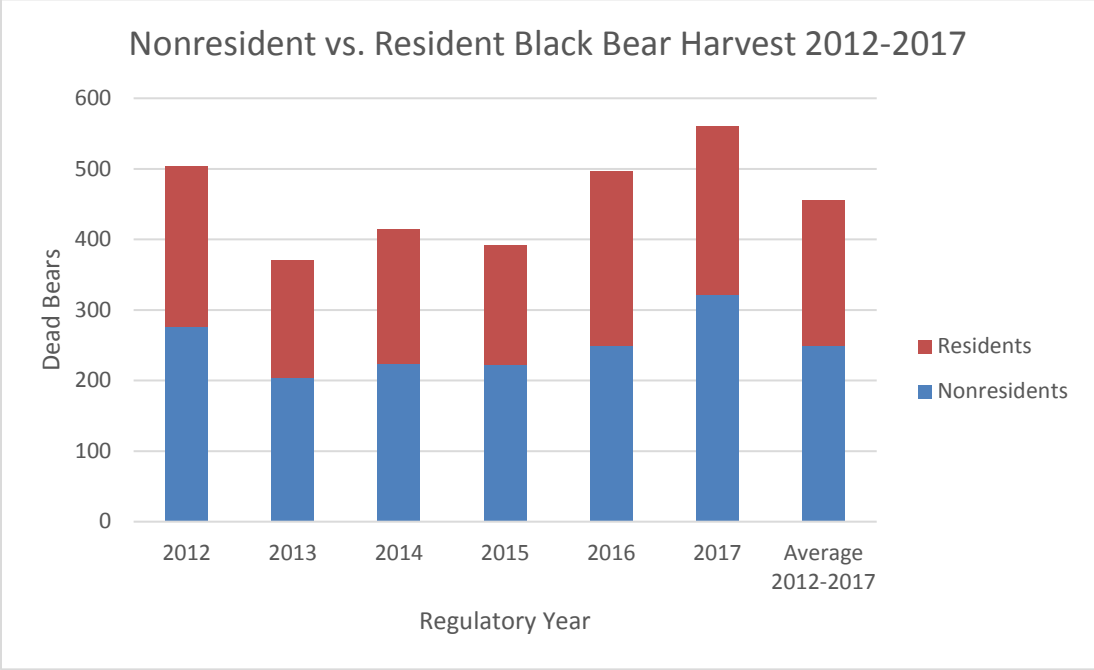
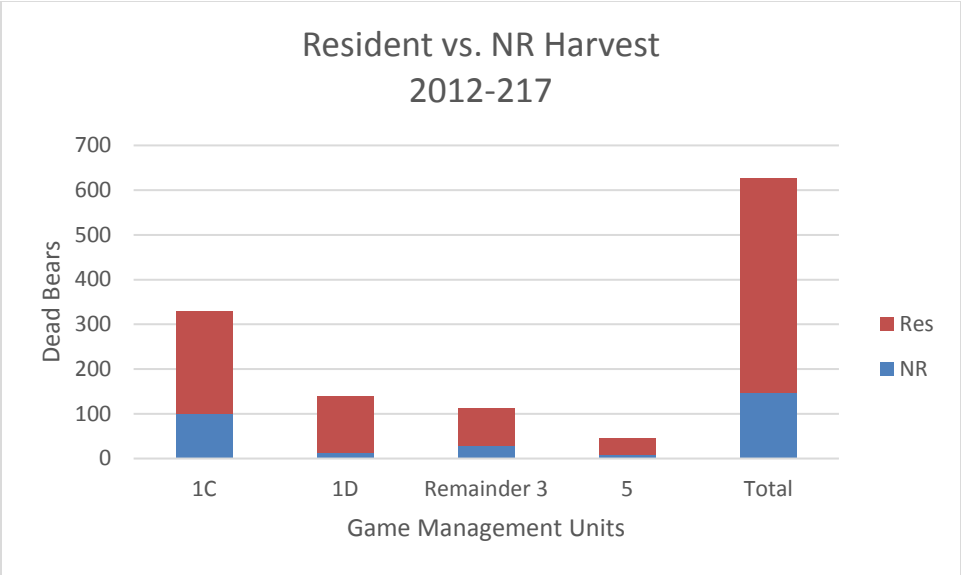


Figure 7-2. Black bear harvest for specific units by residency for Southeast Alaska (2010-2017).




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the proposal does not create biological concerns for the black bear population, which can be sustainably managed under the current or the proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 8 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.** Rescind the guide requirement for nonresidents hunting black bear in the Southeast Region as follows:

Eliminate the guided non-resident general season black bear hunt in Southeast Alaska and require all nonresident black bear hunting in Southeast be by drawing permit only.

**PROPOSED BY:** Resident Hunters of Alaska

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would repeal the allowance for nonresidents to hunt black bears in Southeast Alaska, which currently exists in Game Management Units 1-3, with a registered guide without possessing a drawing permit.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

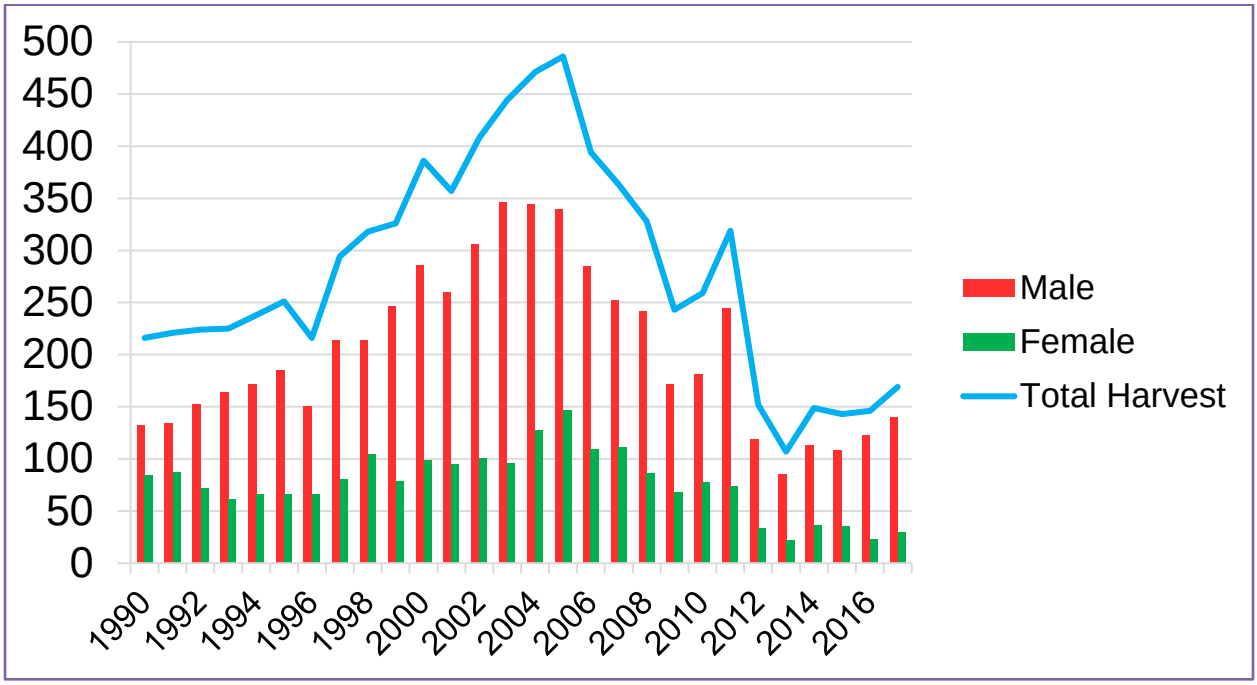
| **Unit 1** | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL016-DL021 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| **Unit 2** | | |
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL027 | Sept 1 – Dec 31 |
| | DL028 | Jan 1 – Jun 30 |
| **Unit 3** | | |
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL029-DL031 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| **Unit 4** | No open season | |
| **Unit 5** | | |
| Nonresidents | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |

There are positive customary and traditional use findings for black bears in Units 1-5 outside the Juneau and Ketchikan nonsubsistence areas, and various amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** All nonresident black bear hunters, guided or unguided, in Units 1-3 would be required to draw a permit.

**BACKGROUND:** Amid conservation concerns and higher than sustainable black bear harvests in Unit 2 (Figure 8-1), the department brought before the board at the November 2010 meeting Proposal 36 to address these concerns. The department's proposal included 5 potential options, all allocative in nature for the board to consider, including a draw hunt for all non-resident black bear hunters. At the same meeting the Alaska Professional Hunters Association submitted Proposal 37 to implement a draw hunt for unguided, nonresident black bear hunters. The reasoning behind their proposal was that resident and guided nonresident annual harvest percentages were stable, and it was the unguided nonresident segment of the harvest that had been growing substantially for several years.

Figure 8-1. Total Unit 2 black bear harvests 1990-2017




The board adopted Proposal 37 and, starting with RY 2012, draw hunts were initiated for all unguided nonresident black bear hunters in Units 1-3. This action has been successful in reducing black bear harvest to sustainable levels. For the January 2019 Southeast and Yakutat Region Meeting, the department has submitted Proposal 9 to the Board to return some black bear hunts to general season hunts where there is no need for the restricted access.

Prior to implementation of the draw hunts, nonresidents accounted for approximately 68% of the Southeast Region's annual black bear harvest (Figure 8-2). In popular locations such as Prince of Wales and Kuiu islands, this figure exceeded 80%. After implementation of the draw hunts in 2012, the percentage of take by nonresidents has dropped to approximately 55% (Figure 8-3). Figures 8-2 and 8-3 also illustrate that the number of bears harvested by residents has remained fairly constant, so they have not been affected by this new hunt strategy. Also of note is that some areas in the Southeast Region have not been traditionally targeted by nonresident hunters and in these areas harvest is overwhelmingly attributed to resident hunters (Figure 8-4).

Figure 8-2. Southeast Region black bear harvest, by residency, 2008-2011

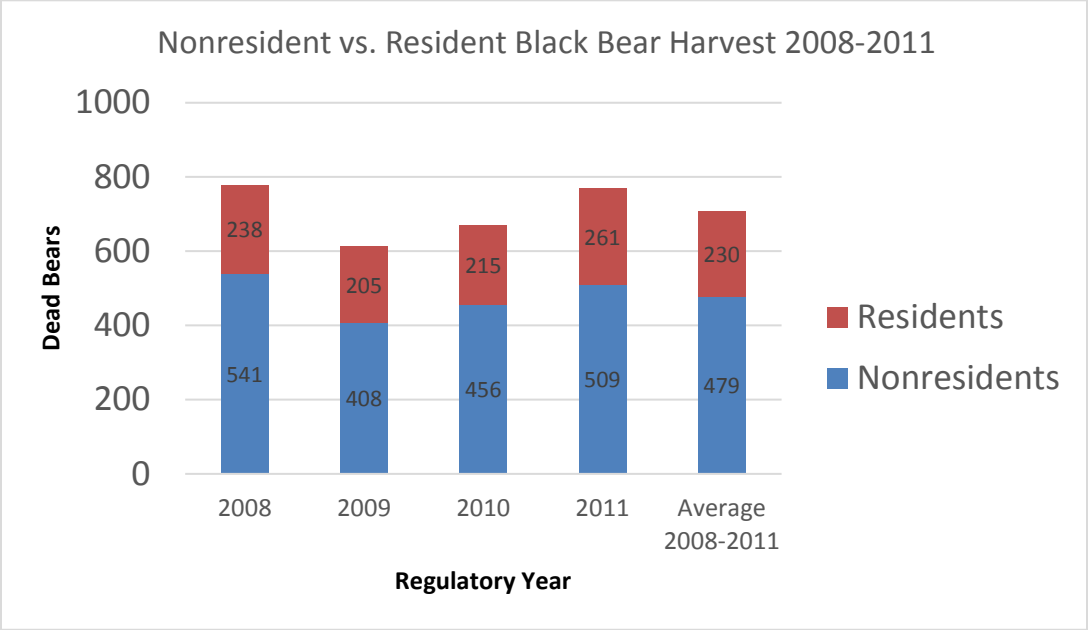



Figure 8-3. Southeast Region black bear harvest, by residency, 2012-2017

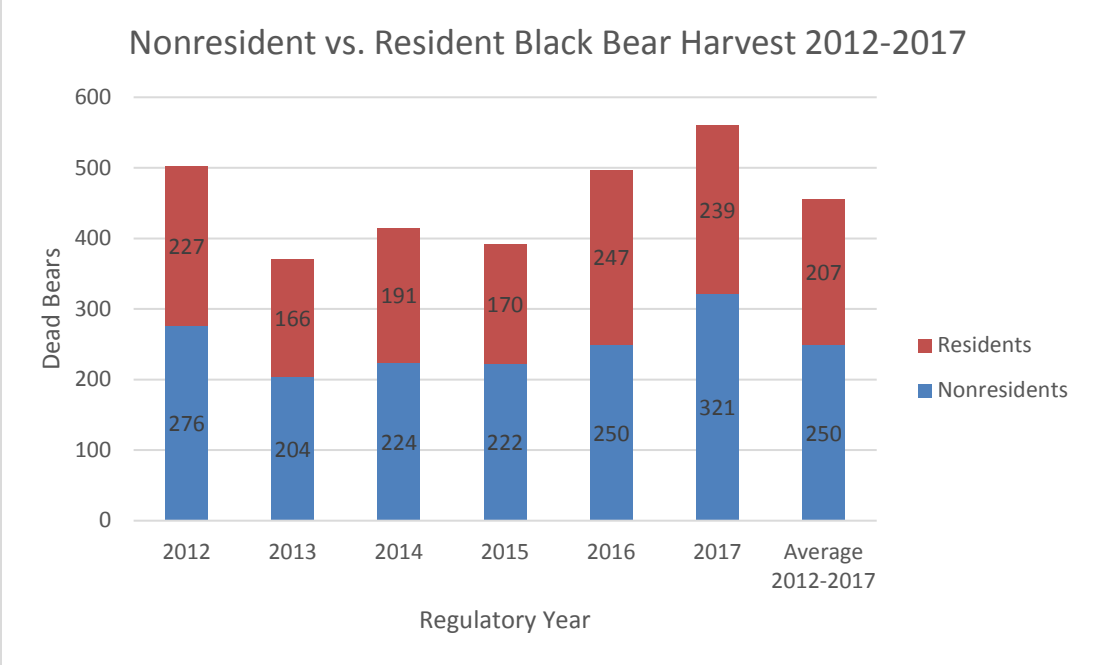
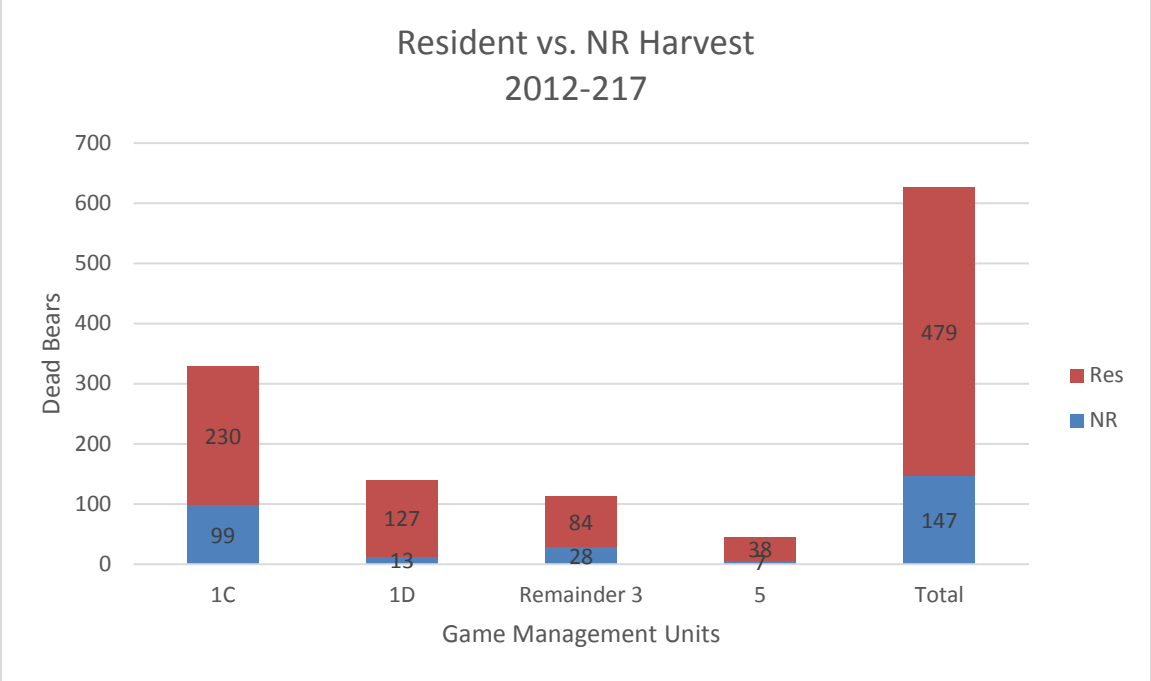


Figure 8-4. Black bear harvest, by residency, in select GMU's




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the proposal does not create biological concerns for the black bear population in Southeast Alaska, which can be sustainably managed under the current or the proposed regulations. If the board adopts this proposal, the board will need to determine where and how harvest will be limited to maintain sustainability.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 9 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.** Change the nonresident black bear drawing permit hunts for Units 1A, 1B, 1C, and 1D to general season hunts as follows:

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

| **Units and Bag Limits** | **Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1(B) | | |

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
2 bears, not more than 1 of which may be a blue or glacier bear — Sept. 1—June 30

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS
JUNE 30]
WITH A GUIDE: 1 BEAR] — [SEPT.1—

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS
JUNE 30]
WITHOUT A GUIDE
1 BEAR BY DRAWING PERMIT ONLY;
UP TO 40 PERMITS
MAY BE ISSUED] — [SEPT.1—

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**
**JUNE 30**
**1 BEAR** — **SEPT. 1** –

Unit 1(C), north of Taku Inlet
And the north bank of the Taku River

RESIDENT HUNTERS:
2 bears, not more than 1 of which may be a blue or glacier bear; however, a white-colored bear may not be taken — Sept. 1—June 30 (General hunt only)

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS
JUNE 30]
WITH GUIDE: 1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN] — [SEPT.1—

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS
JUNE 30]
WITHOUT A GUIDE:
1 BEAR BY DRAWING PERMIT ONLY;
UP TO 30 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED;
HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR
MAY NOT BE TAKEN] — [SEPT.1—

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**
**JUNE 30**
**1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED** — **SEPT. 1** –

**BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN**

Unit 1(C), Remainder

RESIDENT HUNTERS: Sept. 1—June 30
2 bears, not more than 1 of which may be a blue or glacier bear; however, a white-colored bear may not be taken

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITH GUIDE: 1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN]

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITHOUT A GUIDE:
1 BEAR BY DRAWING PERMIT ONLY; UP TO 30 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN]

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: SEPT. 1 – JUNE 30**
**1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN**

Unit 1(D)

RESIDENT HUNTERS: Sept. 1—June 30
2 bears, not more than 1 of which may be a blue or glacier bear; however, a white-colored bear may not be taken

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITH GUIDE: 1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN]

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITHOUT A GUIDE:
1 BEAR BY DRAWING PERMIT ONLY;

UP TO 20 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED;
HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR
MAY NOT BE TAKEN]

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:** **SEPT. 1 – JUNE 30**
**1 BEAR; HOWEVER, A WHITE-COLORED BEAR MAY NOT BE TAKEN**

Unit 3, Remainder

RESIDENT HUNTERS: Sept. 1—June 30
2 bears, not more than 1 of which may be a blue or glacier bear

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITH A GUIDE: 1 BEAR]

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS [SEPT.1—JUNE 30]
WITHOUT A GUIDE
1 BEAR BY DRAWING PERMIT ONLY;
UP TO 50 PERMITS MAY BE ISSUED]

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:** **SEPT. 1 – JUNE 30**
**1 BEAR**

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would remove the drawing permit hunts for Unit 1A (DL016), Unit 1B (DL017), Unit 1C north of the Taku River (DL019), Unit 1C Remainder (DL020), Unit 1D (DL021), and Unit 3 Remainder (DL031) and replace them with a general season hunt.

This proposal *will not* change unguided nonresident drawing hunt requirements for Unit 1C south (DL018), Unit 2 (DL027 and DL028), Unit 3 Kuiu Island (DL029) and Unit 3 Kupreanof Island (DL030).

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Unit 1** | | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 | |
| One bear | | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | | DL016-DL021 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | | |

| **Unit 2** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL027 | Sept 1 – Dec 31 |
| One bear | DL028 | Jan 1 – Jun 30 |

| **Unit 3** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL029-DL031 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |

| **Unit 4** | No open season |
|---|---|

| **Unit 5** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nonresidents | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |

The board has made positive customary and traditional use findings for black bears in Unit 1B and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (ANS) of 2–5 bears. There are also positive C&T findings for black bears in Unit 1C outside the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area (ANS 50–70 bears); in 1D (ANS 10–20 bears); and in Unit 3 (ANS 15–20 bears).

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would remove the requirement for unguided nonresident black bear hunters to draw a permit in several areas of Region 1. It would provide more opportunity because drawing permits would no longer be required. Harvest may increase but not beyond sustainable levels.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2010 the Alaska Board of Game required nonresident black bear hunters without a guide to have a drawing permit. The board received numerous black bear proposals during that cycle due to conservation concerns in several areas of

Southeast Alaska. The primary areas of concern were Unit 2, Kuiu and Kupreanof islands in Unit 3, and Unit 1C south of the Taku River to Cape Fanshaw. Rather than implement the draw in just those areas of concern, the Board chose to implement draw permits across Units 1-3 in order to avoid hunters moving to adjacent areas without draw restrictions. There is no black bear season in Unit 4 and the department did not have conservation concerns with black bears in Unit 5.

At the Board's request, the department provided estimates of bear numbers, bear densities, and harvestable surpluses for 10 geographical 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 residents, guided nonresident hunters, and unguided nonresident hunters in each of the 10 distinct geographic areas. This information was then used to determine the allowable number of drawing permits available annually for each geographic area beginning with the fall 2012 season.

In the six regulatory years since the regulation was implemented in 2012, black bear draw permits for the areas identified in this proposal have been consistently undersubscribed (Table 9-1). The domino effect did not materialize. The department therefore recommends that the drawing permit requirement for nonresident black bear hunters without a guide in DL016, DL017, DL019, DL020, DL021 and DL031 be eliminated and replaced with a general season (harvest ticket) hunt.

Table 9-1. Drawing permit distribution for Game Management Units 1-3 (2010-2017).

| Hunt No. | Permits/Year | Ave. Issued (Range) | Average Undersubscribed |
|---|---|---|---|
| DL016 | 75 | 57 (40-71) | 24% |
| DL017 | 30 | 21 (11-27) | 31% |
| DL018 | 10 | 9 (6-10) | 8% |
| DL019 | 10 | 7 (2-10) | 30% |
| DL020 | 24 | 12 (5-23) | 51% |
| DL021 | 20 | 5 (4-6) | 74% |
| DL027 | 30 | 30 | 0% |
| DL028 | 100 | 100 | 0% |
| DL029 | 50 | 50 | 0% |
| DL030 | 100 | 100 | 0% |
| DL031 | 40 | 27 (20-40) | 33% |

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no longer a conservation concern in these areas and black bear populations can be sustainably managed under the current or proposed regulations. The Board may wish to consider if adoption of the proposal affects reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of black bears in the affected units.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 10 – 5 AAC 92.170. Sealing of marten, fisher, lynx, beaver, otter, wolf, and wolverine. Require sealing of coyote in Units 1 – 5 as follows:**

Coyote must be sealed within 30 days after the close of the season.

**PROPOSED BY:** Upper Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Committee

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would require coyotes taken in Units 1-5 to be sealed.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Units 1-5** | **Season** | **Dates** |
|---|---|---|
| Two coyotes | hunting | Sept. 1 – April 30 |
| No limit | trapping | Nov. 1 – April 30 |

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** Hunters and trappers who take coyotes in Units 1-5 will have to get them sealed.

**BACKGROUND:** The Board extended the coyote season in Units 1-5 at the January 2013 meeting to match the wolf season in Southeast Alaska so that coyotes taken incidentally during wolf season could be kept by the trapper. The department at that time recommended that sealing should be required so the department could track harvest numbers and gain insight into coyote distribution in the region. The Board chose to lengthen the season but not require sealing. Coyote distribution and abundance in Region 1 is unknown. Anecdotal reports from local trappers suggests populations may be increasing, especially in Unit 1C and other portions of northern Southeast Alaska. Coyotes are not currently required to be sealed anywhere in Alaska.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no conservation concern.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 11 – 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.** Extend the trapping season for beaver in Units 1 - 5 to May 15.

**PROPOSED BY:** Robert Jahnke

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would extend the beaver trapping season in Units 1 – 5 by two weeks.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

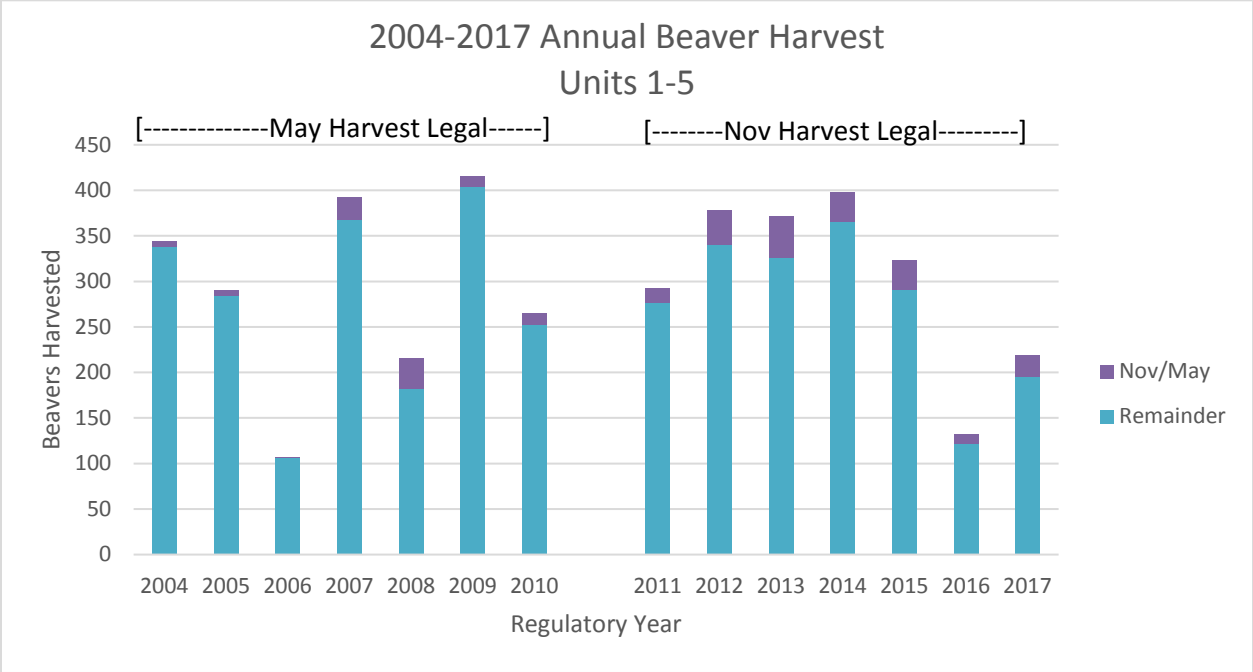
| Area | Open Season | Limit |
|---|---|---|
| **Units 1 – 5** | Nov 10 – April 30 | No Limit |

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The department anticipates a nominal increase in harvest of approximately 5% if the proposal is passed, which does not present any conservation concerns.

**BACKGROUND:** Prior to Regulatory Year 2011/2102, beaver trapping season was Dec. 1 – May 15 in most of Southeast. (Mitkof Island Dec. 1 – *April 15* and Unit 5 *Nov. 10* – May 15). At the November 2010 Board meeting the department brought Proposal 29 before the Board to change the opening date for beaver trapping in Units 1-5 to Nov. 10. The rationale for the proposal was that beaver populations are believed to be healthy, and the increased season would reduce nuisance permits and allow additional opportunity. Proposal 29 was adopted and the season start date was changed to Nov. 10; however, the season ending date was moved to April 30.

The average annual beaver harvest in Units 1-5 from RY 2004 to RY 2017 is 303. From 2004 to 2010, when it was legal to trap beavers in May but not November, the average annual May harvest was 14 (range 1 – 33) or about 5% of the total harvest. From RY2011 to RY2017, when it was legal to trap in November but not May, the average annual November harvest was 28 or about 10% of the total harvest (Figure 11-1). The department anticipates the annual beaver harvest to increase approximately 5% if this proposal passes.

Figure 11-1. Southeast Alaska beaver harvest 2004-2017.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the proposal does not create biological concerns for beaver populations in Units 1-5, which can be sustainably managed under the current or the proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 12 – 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.** Extend the trapping season for beaver in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Beaver, Units 1 – 5: **No closed season** [NOV. 10 – APRIL 30]

**PROPOSED BY:** Luke Rauscher and Darren Belisle

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would permit beaver trapping year-round.

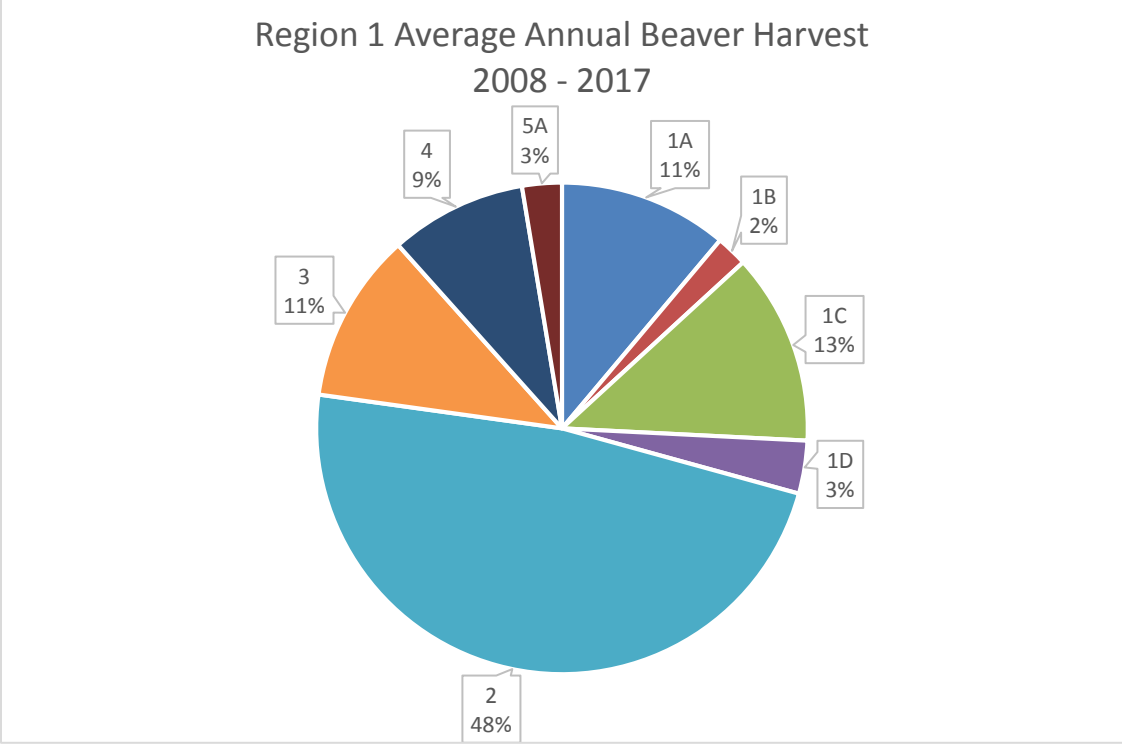
**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| Area | Open Season | Limit |
|---|---|---|
| **Units 1 – 5** | Nov 10 – April 30 | No Limit |

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
Overall trapping pressure for beavers is light and overharvest is not considered to be a conservation concern. Very few people would be interested in trapping beaver during periods when pelts are not considered prime (e.g., summer and fall). This proposal would eliminate the need for the department to issue nuisance beaver permits.

**BACKGROUND:** The average annual beaver harvest in Units 1-5 from the last 10 years (2008-2017) is 310 beavers (Figure 12-1). Nearly 50% of the harvest occurs in Unit 2. The remainder of Southeast Alaska subunits see very little harvest. The department does not anticipate a significant increase in the region's beaver harvest if this proposal passes.

Figure 12-1. Southeast Alaska beaver harvest by Game Management Unit 2008-2017.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the proposal does not create biological concerns for the beaver populations in Units 1-5, which can be sustainably managed under the current or the proposed regulations. The department currently has a program developed for issuing nuisance beaver permits when they are needed (See page 11 of 2018/2019 Alaska Trapping Regulations No. 59).

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 13 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.** Require identification tags for traps and snares in Units 1 – 5 as follows:

In Units 1-5, trappers are prohibited from using a trap or snare unless the trap or snare has been individually marked with a permanent metal tag upon which is stamped or permanently etched the trapper's name and address or the trapper's permanent identification number.

**PROPOSED BY:** Lauri Jemison

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would reinstate the trap tag requirement for Units 1 -5.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?** There are currently no requirements for trappers to identify their traps or snares in Units 1-5.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** In Units 1-5 trappers trapping on non-federally managed lands would be required to mark traps and snares with an identification tag. Much of Region 1 is federally owned land and currently there is no trap tag requirement under federal regulations.

**BACKGROUND:** Trap marking in Region 1 began with the 2003-2004 season. Trappers in the Gustavus area had to mark both traps and snares or have a placard near their set. Trappers in the rest of the region had to mark snares set out of water. Beginning with the 2007-2008 season, the Board adopted a proposal requiring all traps and snares in Units 1-5 be marked with a permanent tag with trapper's name and address or department permanent identification number, or be set within 50 yards of a sign with the same information..

Because much of the land in Region 1 is federally managed there were enforcement issues with the regulation due to no corresponding requirement under federal regulations. The department worked with the federal Regional Advisory Council to require trap marking through federal regulation (proposal WP12-14) beginning in the 2013-2014 trapping season.

At the March 2016 statewide meeting the Board rescinded all trap tag requirements for Units 1-5. The department was neutral on that proposal, citing trap tags make enforcement easier but could potentially cause problems for otherwise legal trappers. The Federal Subsistence Board removed the requirement to mark traps and snares on federally managed lands at their spring 2018 board meeting.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no biological concern.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 14 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.** Require trappers to post identification signs for traps and snares in Units 1 – 5 as follows:

In Units 1-5, trappers are prohibited from using a trap or snare unless a sign is posted within 50 yards that lists the trapper's name and address or the trapper's permanent identification number; the trapper must use the trapper's Alaska driver's license number or state identification card number as the required permanent identification number. Signs at a snaring site must be at least 8.5" x 11" in size, be clearly visible, and have numbers and letters that are at least one inch high and ½ inch wide in a color that contrasts with the background color of the sign. Signs must be placed at both the start and end of a trapline.

**PROPOSED BY:** Lauri Jemison

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would require trappers to place signs in the area they are trapping.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?** There are currently no requirements for trappers to identify their traps or snares in Units 1-5.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** In Units 1-5 trappers trapping on non-federally managed lands would be required to mark traplines with an identification sign. Much of Region 1 is federally owned land and currently there is no trap sign requirement under federal regulations.

**BACKGROUND:** Trap marking in Region 1 began with the 2003-2004 season. Trappers in the Gustavus area had to mark both traps and snares or have a placard near their set. Trappers in the rest of the region had to mark snares set out of water. Beginning with the 2007-2008 season, the Board adopted a proposal requiring all traps and snares in Units 1-5 be marked with a permanent tag with trapper's name and address or permanent identification number or be set within 50 yards of a sign with the same information.

Because much of the land in Region 1 is federally managed there were enforcement issues with the regulation due to no corresponding requirement under federal regulations.

The department worked with the federal Regional Advisory Council to require trap marking through federal regulation (Proposal WP12-14) beginning in the 2013-2014 trapping season.

At the March 2016 statewide meeting the Board rescinded all trap tag requirements for Units 1-5. The department was neutral on that proposal, citing trap tags make enforcement easier but could potentially cause problems for otherwise legal trappers. The Federal Subsistence Board removed the requirement to mark traps and snares on federally managed lands at their spring 2018 board meeting.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal since there is no biological concern. This appears to be a companion proposal to Proposal 13.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 15 – 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.**
Lengthen the hunting season for waterfowl in the Southeast Region as follows:

Expand the waterfowl hunting season for Southeast Alaska into January and/or February.

**PROPOSED BY:** Perry Klein

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would extend the current waterfowl season ending date of December 31 into January or February. Specific dates were not provided by the proponent.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Southeast Region Units 1-4**
Residents and nonresidents Dates: Sept. 16 – December 31

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
If adopted, the proposal would shift the 107-day season to start after September 16 and end no later than January 26. As a result, harvest opportunity would shift from earlier to later in the season. Overall harvest is not likely to change if the proposal is adopted.

**BACKGROUND:** The federal migratory bird hunting frameworks allow the state to structure a 107-day season that is uniform across the Southeast Alaska migratory game bird hunting zone (Units 1–4), and falls within the framework's date range outer limits of September 1 to January 26. This proposal is similar to several proposals the Board has addressed over many years and is indicative of the wide range of waterfowl hunter

preference for either earlier or later season dates. Shifting season dates represents a tradeoff between harvest opportunities for September migrants (e.g., wigeon, pintail, teal) or wintering waterfowl (e.g., resident mallards and sea ducks). Although the proponent of this proposal is not asking specifically for a shift, he is clearly indicating a preference for a later season date.

In 2008, the department conducted a survey of resident waterfowl hunters in Southeast to determine preferences for season dates. The results showed a preference for an earlier season in the northern part of the region and a later season in the southern part of the region. At the November 2008 Southeast Region meeting the Board addressed Proposal 47 to shift the season dates to start in early October and end in mid-January. The Board chose at that time to adjust the season dates by two weeks (From Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 to Sept. 16 – Dec. 31) as a compromise to best address the desires of the majority of waterfowl hunters.

The current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) framework for the waterfowl season limits the season to a maximum of 107 consecutive days and the entire zone must have the same start and end dates. Currently, Alaska is afforded 5 waterfowl hunting zones and 1 split season for Kodiak Island. Changes to zones and splits can occur at 5-year intervals: the next opportunity is in 2020. Alaska's waterfowl hunting zone structure is considered grandfather status and if changes are made to that structure we will lose grandfather status and have to conform to zone and split season structures that are less desirable for a state as large and significantly environmentally diverse as Alaska. The department is exploring options for hunting zone changes and split seasons with the USFWS but the outcome of these discussions is unknown currently.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocation issue with no anticipated biological effects.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 16 – 5 AAC 85.065(4)(A-F) and (I). Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.** Shift the hunting season for waterfowl in the Southeast Region as follows:

The waterfowl season for Units 1-4 would shift two weeks earlier to be open Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 instead of Sept. 16 – Dec. 31 for both residents and nonresidents.

Alternatively, the proponent suggests altering the season annually to Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 for odd years and Sept. 16 – Dec. 31 for even years.

**PROPOSED BY:** Mike Vaughn

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would shift the current waterfowl season to start and end two weeks earlier.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Southeast Region Units 1-4**
Residents and nonresidents Dates: Sept. 16 – December 31

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Waterfowl hunters would be traded additional opportunity at the start of the season for decreased opportunity at the end of the season.

A second suggestion to alternate season dates by odd and even years would incorporate the original proposal for shifting season dates earlier (Sept. 1-Dec. 16) during even years and would keep with the Board's previous actions by providing later season dates (Sept. 16-Dec. 31) in odd numbered years.

Overall harvest is not likely to change if the proposal is adopted.

**BACKGROUND:** This proposal is similar to several proposals the Board has addressed over many years and is indicative of the wide range of waterfowl hunter preference for either earlier or later season dates. Shifting season dates represents a tradeoff between harvest opportunities for September migrants (e.g., wigeon, pintail, teal) or wintering waterfowl (e.g., resident mallards and sea ducks). The proponent has stated that waterfowl hunting conditions have shifted in recent years that would favor more opportunity for migrating dabbling ducks with an earlier season start and that hunting at the end of the season has become inconsistent.

In 2008, the department conducted a survey of resident waterfowl hunters in Southeast to determine preferences for season dates. The results showed a preference for an earlier season in the northern part of the region and a later season in the southern part of the region. At the November 2008 Southeast Region meeting the Board addressed Proposal 47 to shift the season dates to start in early October and end in January. The Board chose at that time to adjust the season dates by two weeks (From Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 to Sept. 16 – Dec. 31) as a compromise to best address the desires of the majority of waterfowl hunters.

The current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) framework for the waterfowl season limits the season to a maximum of 107 consecutive days and the entire zone must have the same start and end dates. Currently, Alaska is afforded 5 waterfowl hunting zones and 1 split season for Kodiak Island. Changes to zones and splits can occur at 5-year intervals: the next opportunity is in 2020. Alaska's waterfowl hunting zone structure is considered grandfather status and if changes are made to that structure we will lose

grandfather status and have to conform to zone and split season structures that are less desirable for a state as large and significantly environmentally diverse as Alaska. The department is exploring options for hunting zone changes and split seasons with the USFWS but the outcome of these discussions is unknown currently.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocation issue with no anticipated biological effects.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 17 – 5 AAC 92.013. Migratory bird hunting guide services.** Reserve waterfowl hunting in the Sitka area for local hunters.

**PROPOSED BY:** Mike Vaughn

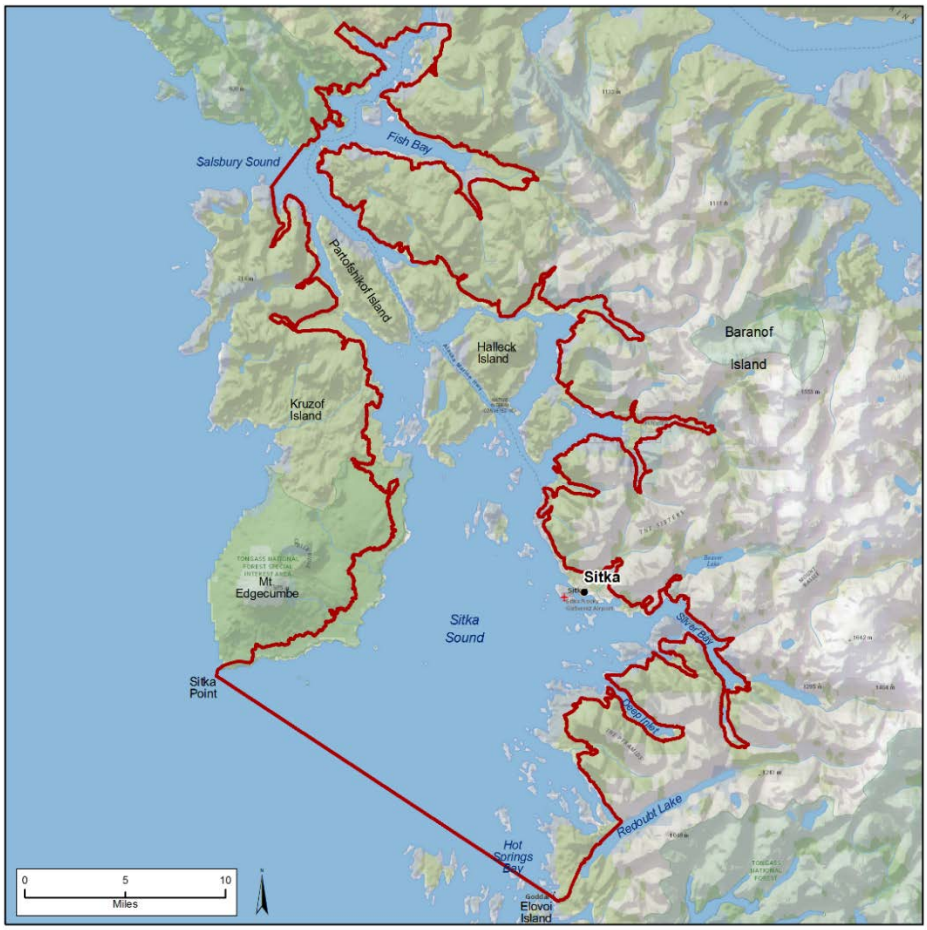
**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would prohibit guided waterfowl hunting of puddle ducks (mallard, wigeon, teal, pintail, gadwall, shoveler) and geese in an area around the community of Sitka.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Southeast Region Units 1-4**
Residents and nonresidents Dates: Sept. 16 – December 31

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The area identified in the map below (Figure 1) would be reserved for nonguided waterfowl hunters.

Figure 1. Area proposed for prohibiting guided waterfowl hunts near Sitka, Alaska.




**BACKGROUND:** There is very little guided waterfowl hunting effort taking place in the Sitka area (Table 1). Waterfowl hunting guides must register with the Department prior to conducting guided waterfowl hunts. This registration is used only to track the number of guides offering this service in Alaska. 51 guides have registered with the Department to hunt waterfowl in Southeast Alaska; 20 for Unit 4; and 8 guides list Sitka as their company address. Guided waterfowl hunts are generally part of a larger guided hunt, though some hunters focus on waterfowl. While the department has limited waterfowl guiding effort data, the level of waterfowl guiding in and around Sitka is believed to be low.

Table 1

| **04-03 USE AREA (SITKA AREA) reported guided waterfowl hunts** | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| DE GROFF BAY | | | | 1 | 2 | | | |
| INNER POINT | | | | | | | 2 | |

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocation issue with no anticipated biological effects.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 18 – 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.** Increase the bag limit for deer in Unit 4 as follows:

Increase bag limit for Unit 4 Remainder (outside the area of Chichagof Island east of Port Frederick and north of Tenakee Inlet including all drainages into Tenakee Inlet) from four to six deer.

**PROPOSED BY:** Nicholas Orr

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would increase the state bag limit in the Remainder of Unit 4 (outside the area of Chichagof Island east of Port Frederick and north of Tenakee Inlet including all drainages into Tenakee Inlet) from four to six deer.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Unit 4 Remainder**

| Residents and nonresidents | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Four deer total | Bucks only | Aug. 1 – Sept. 14 |
| | Any deer | Sept. 15 – Dec. 31 |

The IM population objective for Unit 4 is 125,000 deer and the harvest objective 7,800 annually.

The Alaska Board of Game has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 4 with an amount necessary for subsistence of 5,200 – 6,000 deer annually.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This would mainly affect Juneau based hunters by giving them the opportunity to harvest two additional deer (most likely on nearby Admiralty Island). Hunters in other parts of Unit 4 who hunt state owned tidelands would also be allowed to harvest an additional two deer. The additional harvest may bring the total harvest closer to the minimum amount necessary for subsistence.

**BACKGROUND:** Under federal subsistence regulations, rural residents of Units 1-5 are qualified to hunt deer on federal lands within Unit 4. The majority of Unit 4 land is managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. The Federal Subsistence Board promulgates regulations that apply only on federal lands to ensure a subsistence priority on those lands, usually through more liberal season length and bag limits than under state regulations. Currently federally qualified subsistence hunters in Southeast Alaska are already allowed six deer and an additional month of hunting opportunity in January. Unit 4 sees very little nonresident hunter effort.

It is difficult to fully predict how the proposed liberalization in bag limit would affect harvest. However, since this proposal would affect Juneau based hunters the most, looking at historical deer harvests of Juneau hunters may be the best indicator of possible effects. Table 18-1 describes average harvest and success from 2013-2017. Thirty-eight (38) percent of Unit 4 hunters are from Juneau and they take approximately 30% of the annual unitwide deer harvest. Fifty-seven (57) percent of that harvest comes from Admiralty Island, the majority of which comes from the areas most accessible to boat-based Juneau hunters. Currently hunters are allowed four deer in the Remainder of Unit 4 under state regulations and successful Juneau hunters are on average taking 2 deer per hunter. From 2013-2017, an average of 116 Juneau based hunters took their full four deer bag limit (8% of Juneau hunters). Deer populations in Unit 4 are currently robust after 5 consecutive mild winters, particularly on Admiralty Island (Figure 18-2), and harvest likely does not exceed 5% of the total population. The bag limit increase would likely have little impact on the overall population and could be beneficial from a range management standpoint.

Weather is the most limiting factor for deer populations in Southeast Alaska. However, hunting can be a limiting factor in local areas when deer are concentrated on beaches due to deep and persistent snowpack, and a large number of hunters are able to access an area. There is some potential for localized heavy pressure and harvests from easy access points on Admiralty Island, particularly between Point Retreat and Point Arden under these conditions.

Table 18-1. Unit 4 deer harvest statistics 2013-2017 (averages)

| | Deer Harvested | No. of Hunters | No. of Successful Hunters | Deer/Hunter | Deer/Success Hunter |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Unit 4 Total Harvest | 5,831 | 3,559 | 2,490 | 1.6 | 2.3 |
| Juneau Based Hunter Proportion of Unit 4 Harvest | 1,756 | 1,349 | 886 | 1.3 | 2.0 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Admiralty Is. Total Harvest | 1,559 | 1,254 | 794 | 1.2 | 2.0 |
| Juneau Based Hunter Harvest Majors X38 & X41 (see Figure 18-1) | 840 | 888 | 500 | 0.9 | 1.7 |
| Juneau based Hunter Harvest Majors X39 & X40 | 165 | 144 | 100 | 1.1 | 1.7 |

Figure 18-1. Major land areas for Unit 4 as defined by the department's Uniform Coding Unit (UCU).

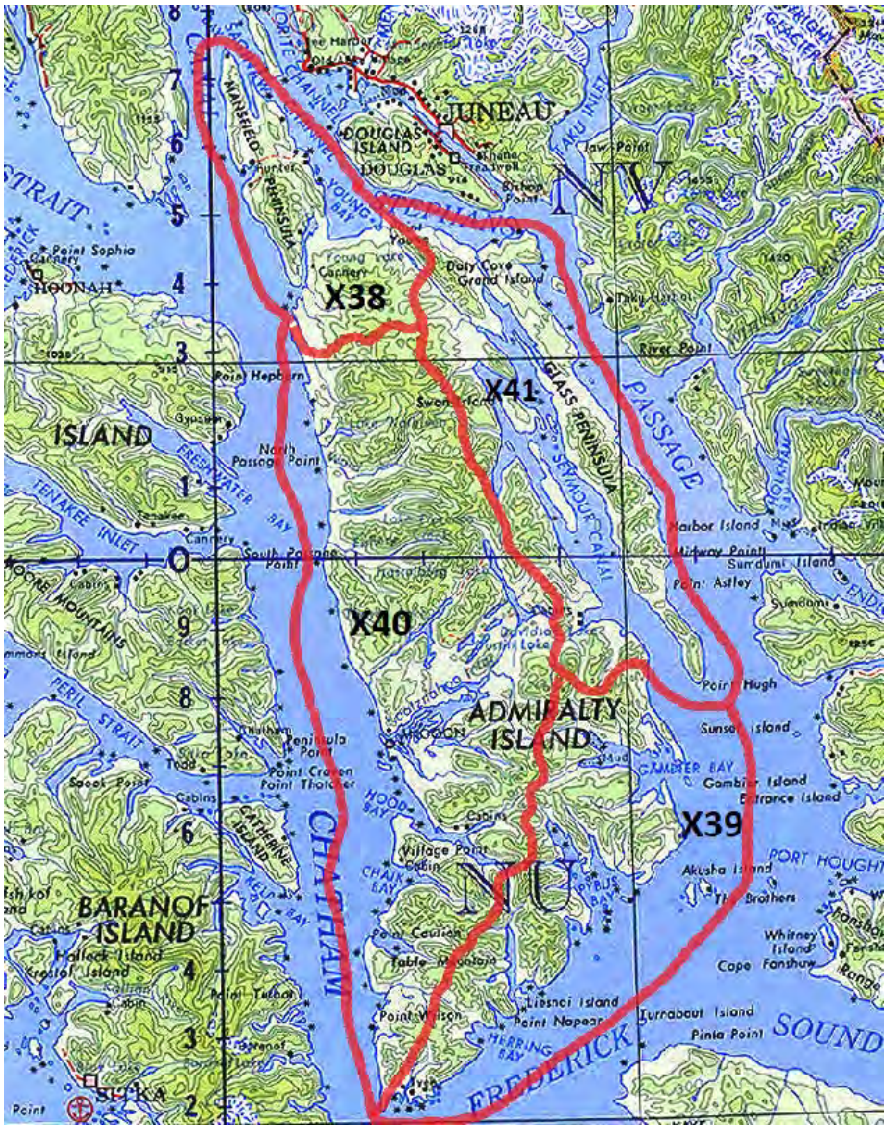
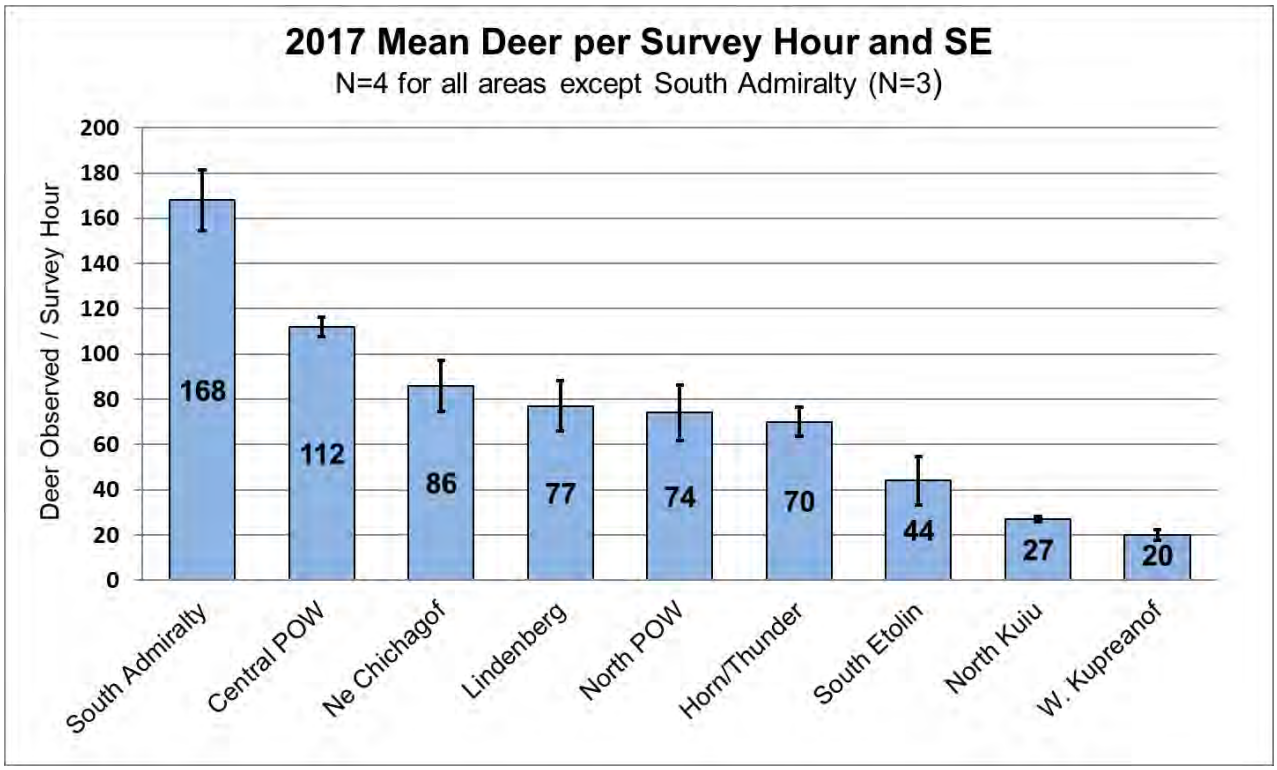


Figure 18-2. Aerial alpine deer survey data, 2017.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no biological concern and deer populations can be sustainably managed under the current or proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 19 – 5 AAC 92.510(6). Areas closed to hunting.** Close an area around the Greens Creek Mine road system and mine infrastructure in Unit 4 to hunting as follows:

Greens Creek Mine Road System and associated mine infrastructure, including the road system and associated infrastructure starting ¼ mile north of the Greens Creek Hawk Inlet facilities extending to the Greens Creek mine, including an area ¼ mile on all sides of the road, is closed to hunting.

**PROPOSED BY:** Hecla Greens Creek Mining Company (HGCM)

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would close the Greens Creek road system and associated infrastructure to hunting ¼ mile north of the Greens Creek Hawk Inlet facilities extending to the Greens Creek mine including the "B Road" and an area ¼ mile on each side of the road (Figure 19-1) and associated infrastructure including the Tailings Storage Facility (Figure 19-2).

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Unit 4 Remainder**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Residents and nonresidents | Bucks only | Aug 1 – Sept 14 |
| Four deer total | Any deer | Sept 15 – Dec 31 |

There are currently no hunting closures or restrictions in this area outside the regular Remainder of Unit 4 hunting regulations.

The Alaska Board of Game has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 4 with an amount necessary for subsistence of 5,200 – 6,000 deer annually.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
Adoption of this proposal will reduce the area that can be hunted and will likely reduce effort and harvest.

**BACKGROUND:** The Greens Creek Mine and the area that would be closed to hunting is located within Wildlife Analysis Area 3837. Table 19-1 shows the five-year (2013-2017) average of hunter effort and success in this area.

Table 19-1. Average hunter effort and success, WAA 3837, 2013–2017.

| Avg. No. Hunters | Avg. No. of Successful Hunters | Avg. No. of Days Hunted | Avg. Deer Harvest |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | 13 | 75 | 26 |

Hecla Greens Creek mine operates under a lease agreement with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The proponent states the lease does not provide clear guidance regarding public access to this area. HGCM indicates that hunter activity has increased on the "B" road, which is narrow, has guard rails, and traverses mountainous terrain with blind corners. The proponent states this road is heavily travelled by haul trucks and poses a significant safety risk to pedestrians and bicyclists.

HGCM also states that they have documented several safety incidents over the past few years and that they have concerns for the safety of both hunters and mine employees and contractors. HGCM has also cited several hunting violations associated with shooting on,

from or across the road. HGCM states they have attempted several different options to address safety issues and safety issues caused by hunting on the roads.

Greens Creek Mine is located within the city and borough of Juneau which already has a restriction against using firearms ¼ mile from any public street, road or highway.

Figure 19-1. Large scale map of the Greens Creek mining complex, Admiralty Island, Alaska.

Figure 19-2. Aerial photograph of Greens Creek mining complex, Admiralty Island, Alaska.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal and there are no anticipated biological effects for this proposal. If adopted, the Board should consider whether reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting deer for subsistence uses continues to be provided.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 20 – 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limit for deer.** Limit the take of does in Unit 1C to 1 per season, as follows:

| Units and bag limits | Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | | |
| … | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1 (C), that portion including [DOUGLAS,] Lincoln, Shelter, and Sullivan Islands<br>4 deer; however, only bucks may be taken before Sept. 15 | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 |
| **Unit 1(C), Douglas Island<br>4 deer total, only one of which may be a doe, and only bucks may be taken before Sept. 15** | **Aug. 1—Dec. 31** | **Aug. 1—Dec. 31** |

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would limit the take of doe deer on Douglas Island to one doe per season with a total bag limit of 4 deer; 3 of the 4 must be bucks.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Units and bag limits** | **Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | | |
| … | | |
| Unit 1(C), that portion including Douglas, Lincoln, Shelter, and Sullivan islands<br><br>4 deer; however, only bucks may be taken before Sept. 15 | | |
| 2 bucks | Aug. 1- Dec. 31 | Aug. 1 - Dec. 31 |

The current management population objective for all Unit 1C for deer is 6,200 with a harvest objective of 450. Douglas Island is within the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would limit the number of does taken on Douglas Island. In the short term this may result in a slight decrease in hunter success, while in the long term there should be

an increase in breeding does that will result in a greater number of bucks produced and increased hunter success.

## BACKGROUND

Douglas Island offers the greatest road-accessible opportunity to hunt deer in the Juneau area and harvest from the island usually accounts for over 70% of deer harvested in Unit 1C. In recent years, hunters have expressed concern over the return of wolves to Douglas Island and a perceived increase in effort required to harvest deer. During regulatory years (RY) 2012–2016, deer harvest on Douglas Island ranged from 192 to 272 and averaged 245 deer per year, slightly below the ten-year average of 258 (RY2007–2016; Figure 20-1). The total number of hunters hunting on Douglas Island has varied for the period 2013-2017 with a high of 566 in 2013 and a low of 408 in 2015. Hunter success ranged from a low of 21% in 2014 to a high of 30% in 2015 with an average of 26%, which was similar to the ten-year average of 27%. The days of hunting effort required to harvest a deer ranged from 6.8 days in RY2015 to 10.7 days in 2014 (average 8.7 day: Figure 20-2).

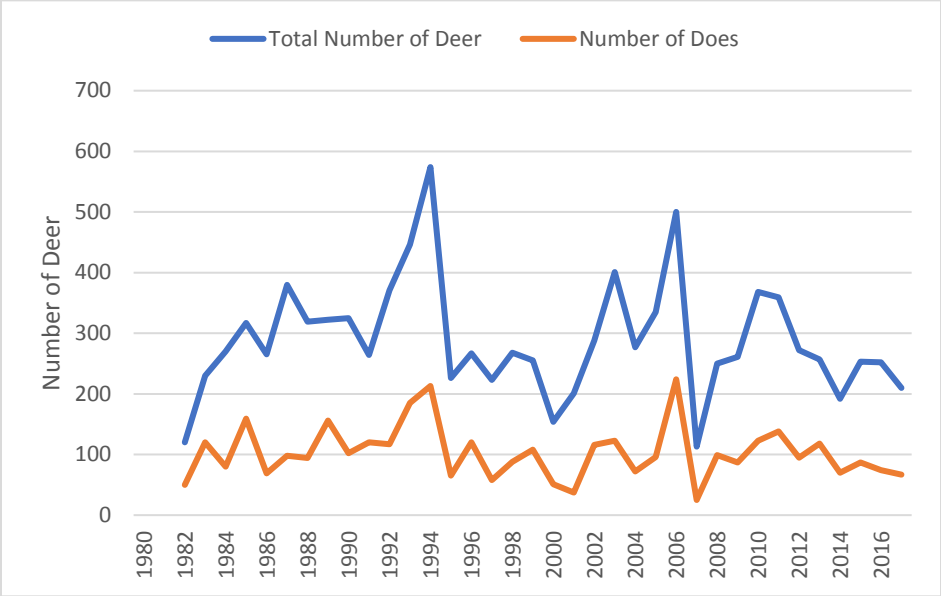



Figure 20-1. The annual harvest of does and all deer on Douglas Island from 1982 to 2017.

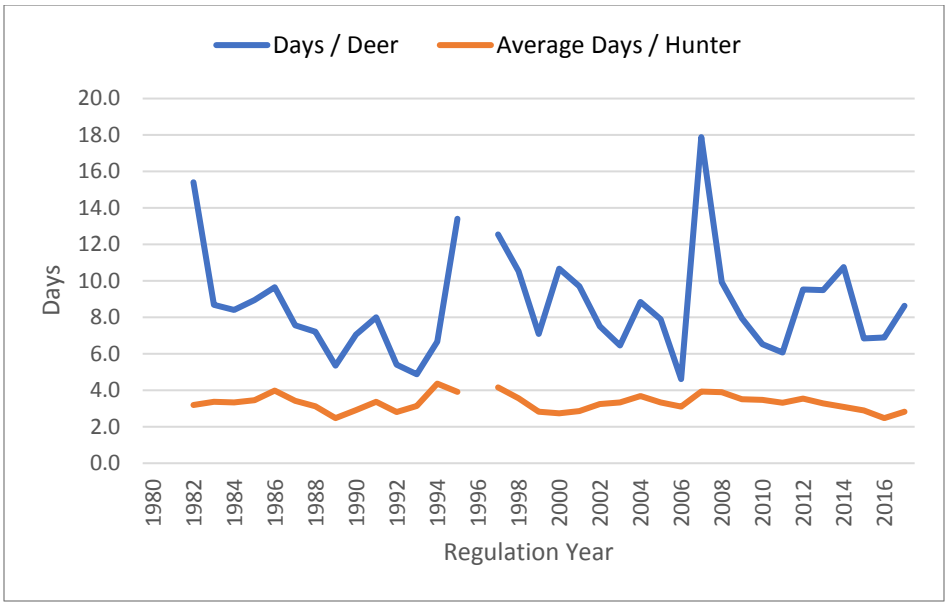



Figure 20-2. The annual average number of days hunted per hunter and the average annual number of days per harvested deer from 1982 to 2017 on Douglas Island.

Following a decade of absence, or use by only individual wolves, a breeding pack is thought to have occupied Douglas Island in 2013. At about 77 square miles Douglas Island is smaller than wolf pack territories documented elsewhere in Southeast Alaska (average ~125 square miles), suggesting that Douglas Island is part of a pack territory and that pack members likely move between the island and mainland. The number of wolves using Douglas Island is unknown. During RY2016, the department closed the wolf hunting and trapping seasons on Douglas Island following harvest of three wolves in accordance with the provisions for the Douglas Island Management Area (5 AAC 92.530(23)). Despite considerable effort, during the RY2017 hunting and trapping seasons only one wolf was harvested on Douglas Island.

In addition to harvest statistics, the department monitors the Douglas Island deer population using annual spring pellet group surveys. Because pellet survey results can be influenced by snowfall patterns, pellet persistence, deer distribution, and timing of leaf-out, they are only considered reliable indicators of substantial (≥30%) changes in the population. Deer pellet group counts on Douglas Island have been below the ten-year average since 2013. From RY2008–2017, pellet group counts averaged 1.37 groups/plot on the north side of Douglas Island and 1.59 groups/plot on the west side of Douglas Island. In RY 2014, pellet group counts declined by 47% on north Douglas Island and 36% on the west side compared to 2013. Pellet group counts fell to a ten-year low in RY2016 when 0.77 groups/plot were observed on northern Douglas Island and 1.01 groups/plot were found on the west side of Douglas Island. Although the number of pellet groups/plot increased slightly from 2016 to 2017, pellet group counts during 2017 remained 37% lower on north Douglas Island and 52% lower on the west side of Douglas Island compared to counts in 2013.

Winters with little snow can result in low pellet group counts because deer remain dispersed, rather than concentrating in low elevation wintering habitat. From 2014

through 2016, winters were mild to very mild with little snow. Lower pellet group counts in recent years are consistent with anecdotal reports that deer numbers have declined but could also result from deer remaining dispersed during mild winters.

For several reasons—the Douglas Island deer population is important to Juneau hunters, wolves are again using the island, a new pioneer road has increased access for hunters, and there is some uncertainty over the current status of the population —the department believes more conservative harvest management is warranted. Current regulations allow harvest of four deer including does. Rather than reducing the overall bag limit, we propose keeping the bag limit at four deer, but limiting hunters to harvest of one doe. Historically, 30–40% of the deer harvested from Douglas Island have been does with an average of 35.1% between 1982 and 2017 (Figure 20-3). The second doe harvest was just 4.4 % of the total harvest over the last five years (2013 - 2017), and third doe harvest was just a fraction of that, at 0 – 1 % over that same five-year period. Until more is known about the status of the Douglas Island deer population, we believe this modest change will still allow ample harvest opportunity while conserving does for reproduction.

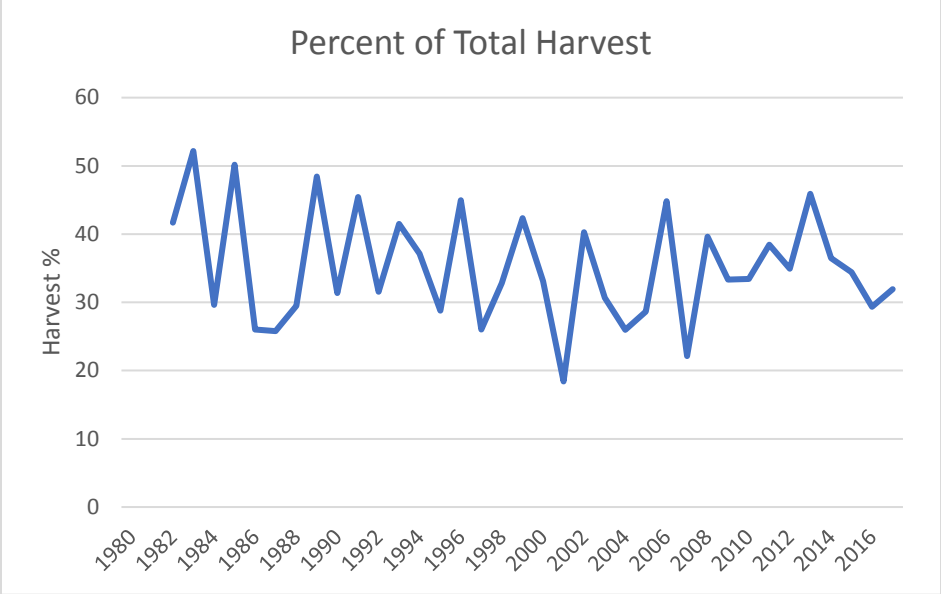



Figure 20-3. The percentage of the total harvest that consisted of doe harvest for 1982 to 2017 for Douglas Island.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. If the Board chooses to adopt this proposal the department recommends the Board consider if there is a need to designate one of the numbered harvest tickets for deer as the doe ticket.

**COST ANALYSIS:** Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 21 – 5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting.** Amend the area closed to hunting along the Douglas Highway in Unit 1C as follows:

Unit 1(C):

(B) in the Juneau area, that area between the coast and a line one-fourth mile inland of the following road systems is closed to the taking of big game:

(ii) Douglas Highway from the Douglas city limits to [MILEPOST 7] **the northeast bank of Fish Creek**.

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would shift the boundary of Unit 1C on Douglas Island from a non-stationary boundary marker (Milepost 7) to a more stationary boundary marker (the northeast bank of Fish Creek).

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

5 AAC 92.510(3) reads:

Unit 1(C):

(B) in the Juneau area, that area between the coast and a line one-fourth mile inland of the following road systems is closed to the taking of big game:

(ii) Douglas Highway from the Douglas city limits to Milepost 7 on the North Douglas Highway.

This area is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would shift the Unit 1(C) boundary to a more stationary boundary marker making it easier for hunters to determine the unit boundary. In doing so, this would close a very small area (<1 $mi^2$) to hunting.

**BACKGROUND:** Current regulations use "Milepost 7" as the landmark to identify the boundary of the area adjacent to the Douglas Highway closed to big game hunting (Figure 21-1). There has been some confusion among hunters because the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities recently relocated mile markers on the Douglas Highway. Changing the legal description of the closed area boundary to a fixed and readily identifiable geographic feature like Fish Creek will clarify the location of the boundary (Figure 21-2). Another possibility for relocating the boundary would be to the

northeast side of Fish Creek/Eagle Crest Road (Figure 21-3). One of the intents of this regulation is to buffer hunting efforts against areas with housing development and having the boundary at Fish Creek versus Fish Creek/Eagle Crest Road would provide the largest buffer to developed areas.

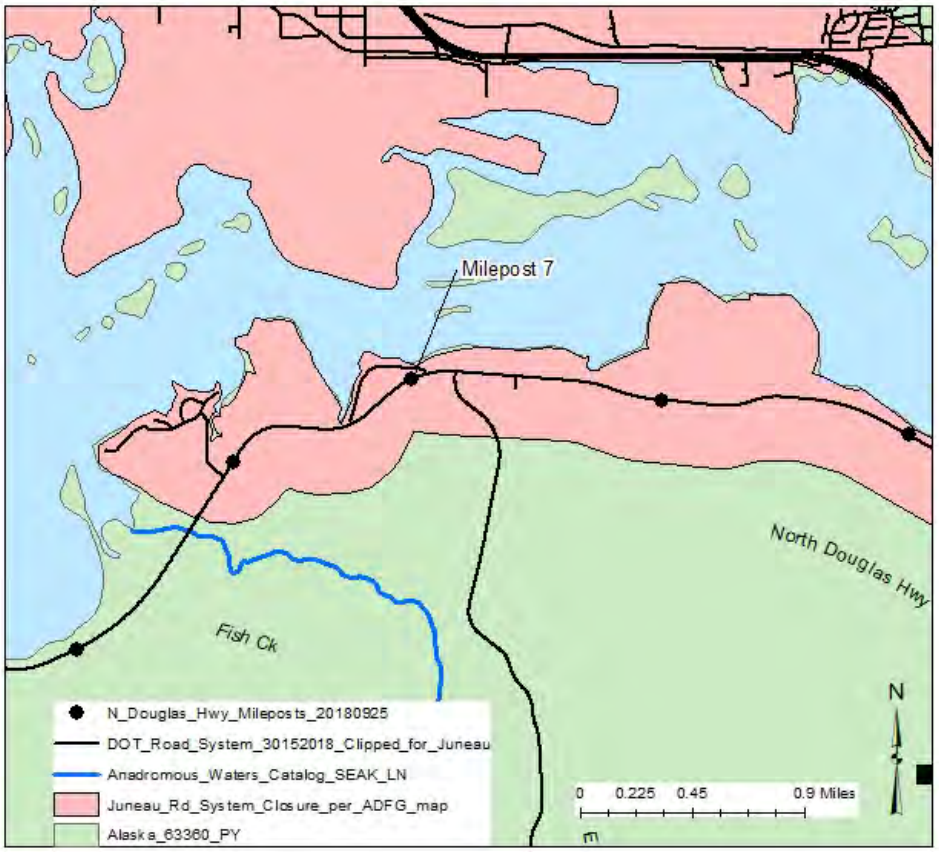



Figure 21-1. The current closure boundary according to the department website.

This change will result in an area of 0.06 $mi^2$ that used to be open to hunting now being closed to hunting if the boundary is moved to Fish Creek (Figure 21-2). If the boundary is moved to Fish Creek/Eagle Crest Road it would add 0.66 $mi^2$ of hunting area (Figure 21-3).

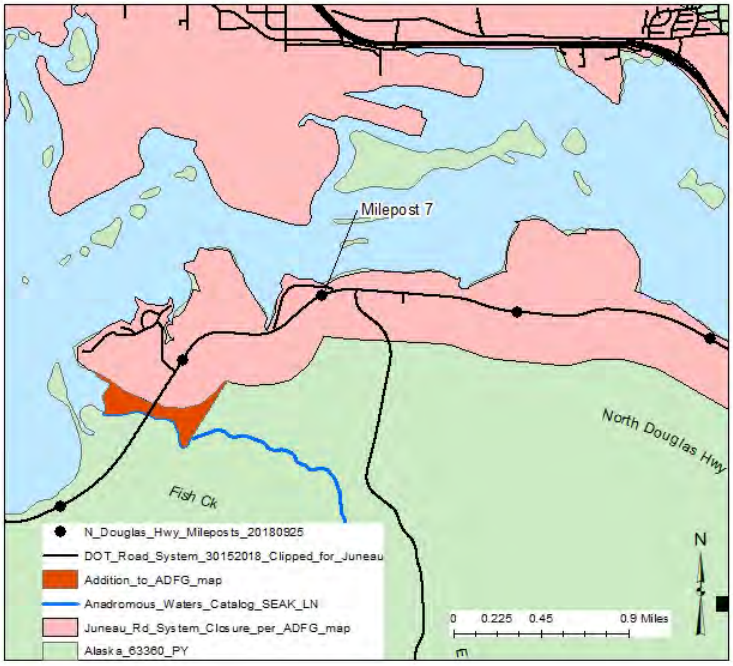



Figure 21-2. The additional area that would be closed if the boundary is moved to the northeast bank of Fish Creek.

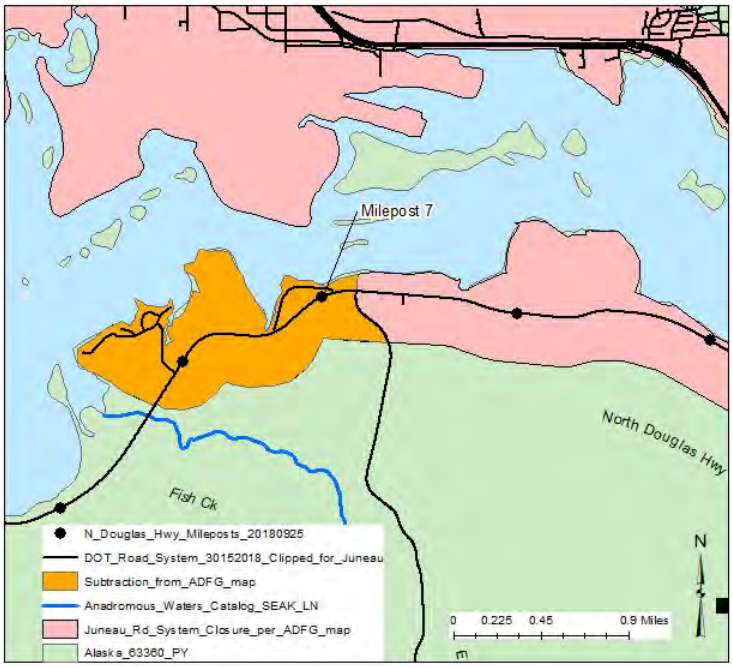



Figure 21-3. The area that would be opened to hunting if the boundary is moved to the west side of Fish Creek/Eagle Crest Road.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department **SUPPORTS** clarifying this boundary but is **NEUTRAL** on where it should be placed. Adoption of either option presented here will not result in any biological concerns.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 22 – 5 AAC 92.530(23). Management areas.** Eliminate the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C as follows:

Remove the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C from regulation.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jesse Ross

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would remove the Douglas Island Management Area for wolves in Unit 1C from regulation, which currently limits the take to no more than 3 wolves annually on Douglas Island.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

5 AAC 92.510(23) reads:

Douglas Island Management Area:

(A) The management area consists of Douglas Island in unit 1(C);
(B) hunting and trapping of wolves is open in the Douglas Island Management Area and, except as specified in (E) and (F) of this paragraph, the harvest cap for hunters and trappers is three wolves; hunting and trapping seasons will be closed by emergency order when three wolves have been harvested;
(C) before trapping wolves in the management area, a person must register with the department; a hunter or trapper who takes a wolf in the management area must report the harvest to the department's division of wildlife conservation office in Douglas within 48 hours of taking the wolf and present the hide for sealing with five days of taking the wolf;
(D) if the department determines that any or all of the following conditions were met during the most recent deer hunting season, deer conservation provisions will be implemented:
    (i) more than 11 hunter-days were expended per deer harvested on Douglas Island during the most recent hunting season;
    (ii) the average deer harvest-per-deer-day during the three most recent hunting season was lower than the base average with at least 95 percent statistical confidence

(iii) the deer population is below the base average, but is likely to increase to near the base average within two years if deer conservation provisions are implemented;

(E) the average deer-harvest-per-hunter-day during 1983 – 2003 will be used as a base measurement to determine if deer conservation provisions will be implemented by increasing or lifting the wolf harvest cap during the remainder of the current wolf season and the following seasons: if the department evaluates available information on the Douglas Island deer population and determines that recent harvest-hunter-day statistics do not accurately reflect the status of the deer population and that the population is not significantly below the base average, the department may decide whether or not to implement deer conservation provisions;

(F) regardless of whether conditions in (D) of the paragraph are met, if the department determines that a significant deer decline has occurred or is likely to occur, the department will increase the wolf bag limit and harvest cap as necessary to avoid a decline or rebuild the deer population; as part of this determination, the department will attempt to prevent extirpation of wolves and maintain some level of wolf protection on Douglas Island.

This area is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would allow for continuous wolf hunting and trapping on Douglas Island for the full season as listed in the current Alaska hunting and trapping regulations.

**BACKGROUND:** The Douglas Island Management Area was introduced in 2002 to address concerns of wolf extirpation on Douglas Island, and the management area regulations were amended during the 2004 Board of Game meeting to the current regulation limiting the annual harvest to 3 wolves. Since then, only one Emergency Order has been issued (December 2016) to close the wolf hunting and trapping seasons on Douglas Island due to reaching the 3-wolf limit.

Wolf harvest in Unit 1C has been moderate since RY2010 with less than 20 wolves harvested each year; however, the 2016 and 2017 harvest significantly increased with a high of 32 wolves harvested in RY2017 (Figure 22-1).

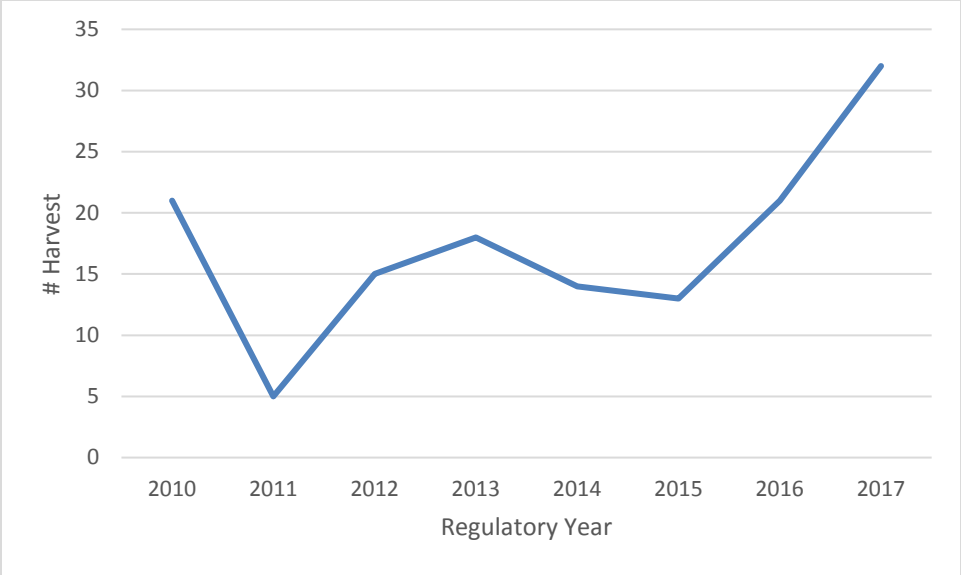


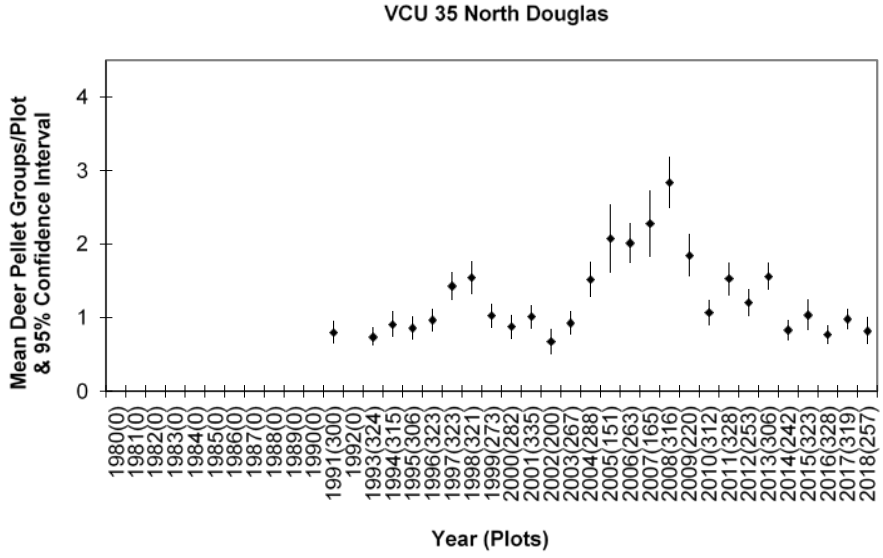
Figure 22-1. Wolf harvest in Unit 01C from 2010 to 2017.

Following a decade of absence or use by only individual wolves, a breeding pack is thought to have occupied Douglas Island in 2013. At about 77 square miles, Douglas Island is smaller than wolf pack territories documented elsewhere in Southeast Alaska (average ~125 square miles), suggesting that Douglas Island is part of a pack territory and that pack members likely move between the island and mainland. The number of wolves using Douglas Island is unknown, but, despite considerable effort, during the RY2017 hunting and trapping seasons only one wolf was harvested on Douglas Island; the remaining 31 wolves taken in the Unit were taken in mainland areas. In addition to an increased wolf harvest in Unit 1C, the department has received numerous reports of wolf activity on Douglas Island. Sightings, photographs, and other sign (tracks and scat) have become increasingly common in recent years.

The Douglas Island Wolf Management Plan provides direction as to when to allow additional wolf harvest beyond 3 animals. These directions provide deer harvest related thresholds. A review of the Douglas Island deer conservation conditions revealed:

1. In 2017, 8.6 hunter days were expended per deer harvested, which is less than the 11 hunter-days threshold.
2. The 1983-2003 average deer-harvest-per-hunter-day = 0.13. The averages for the last three hunting seasons are 2015 = 0.15, 2016 = 0.14, and 2017 = 0.12 deer-harvest-per-hunter-day (average 2015-2017 = 0.14). There was no significant difference between the base measurement and the last 3 years (two sample unequal variance t-test $p = 0.64$).
3. We don't have a measure of the deer population, but the department has used deer pellet count surveys as an index of the deer population. Because pellet survey results can be influenced by snow fall patterns, pellet persistence, deer distribution, and timing of leaf-out, they are only considered reliable indicators of substantial ($\geq$30%) changes in the population. Also, the surveys do not cover the entire base measurement time-period. There are two deer pellet

count locations on Douglas Island (Figure 22-2). The North Douglas site has baseline measures between 1991 – 2010 (average = 1.34 pellet groups/plot), and the Inner Point site has baseline measures between 1985 – 2010 (average = 1.47 pellet groups/plot). North Douglas pellet count average for the last 3 years is 0.93, and for the Inner Point the pellet count average is 1.22. These numbers may indicate that deer conservation provisions are warranted even though measures of hunter effort and harvest (Figure 22-3) do not mirror the pellet count data. During regulatory years (RY) 2012–2016, deer harvest on Douglas Island ranged from 192 to 272 and averaged 245 deer per year, slightly below the ten-year average of 258 (RY2007–2016). Over the last 5 years, hunter success ranged from a low of 21% in 2014 to a high of 30% in 2015 with an average of 26%, which was similar to the ten-year average of 27%. The days of hunting effort required to harvest a deer ranged from 6.8 days in RY2015 to 10.7 days in 2014 (average 8.7 day).


VCU 35 North Douglas
Mean Deer Pellet Groups/Plot & 95% Confidence Interval
0
1
2
3
4
1980(0)
1981(0)
1982(0)
1983(0)
1984(0)
1985(0)
1986(0)
1987(0)
1988(0)
1989(0)
1990(0)
1991(300)
1992(0)
1993(324)
1994(315)
1995(306)
1996(323)
1997(323)
1998(321)
1999(273)
2000(282)
2001(335)
2002(200)
2003(267)
2004(288)
2005(151)
2006(263)
2007(165)
2008(316)
2009(220)
2010(312)
2011(328)
2012(253)
2013(306)
2014(242)
2015(323)
2016(328)
2017(319)
2018(257)
Year (Plots)

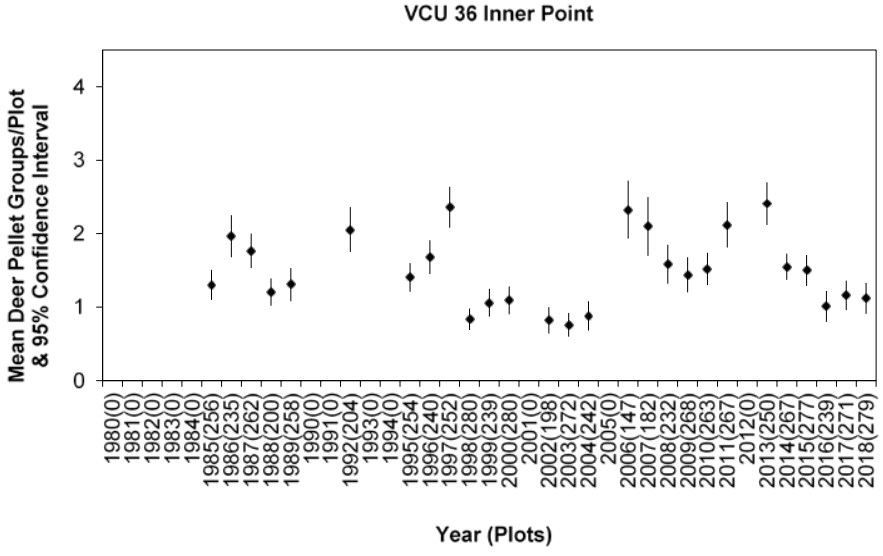

VCU 36 Inner Point
Mean Deer Pellet Groups/Plot & 95% Confidence Interval
0
1
2
3
4
1980(0)
1981(0)
1982(0)
1983(0)
1984(0)
1985(256)
1986(235)
1987(262)
1988(200)
1989(258)
1990(0)
1991(0)
1992(204)
1993(0)
1994(0)
1995(254)
1996(240)
1997(252)
1998(280)
1999(239)
2000(280)
2001(0)
2002(198)
2003(272)
2004(242)
2005(0)
2006(147)
2007(182)
2008(232)
2009(268)
2010(263)
2011(267)
2012(0)
2013(250)
2014(267)
2015(277)
2016(239)
2017(271)
2018(279)
Year (Plots)

Figure 22-2. Pellet count data for Douglas Island's North Douglas and Inner Point study sites.

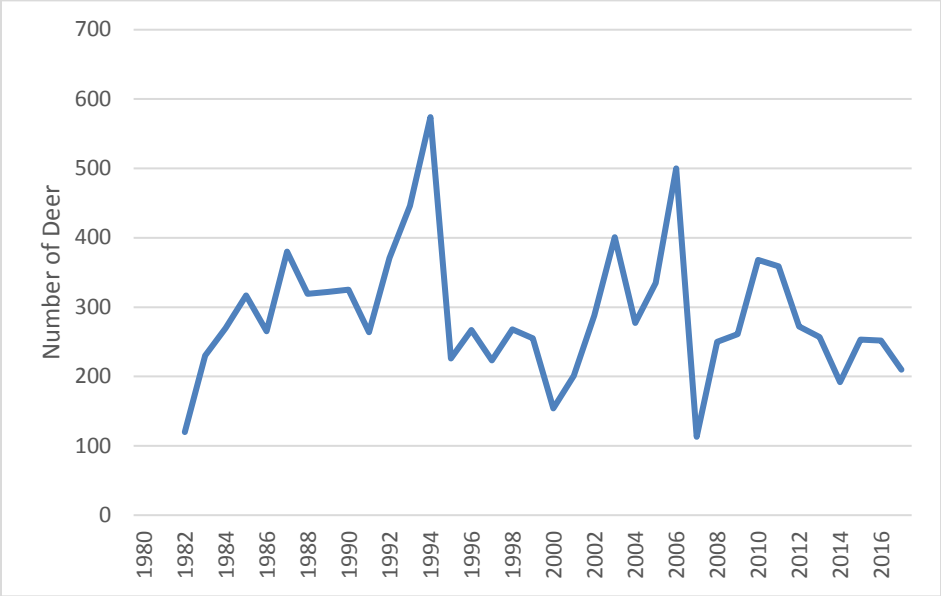



Figure 22-3. Deer harvest on Douglas Island from 1980 to 2017.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adoption of this proposal will likely not result in a significant increase in the wolf harvest on Douglas, and is not anticipated to negatively impact the wolf population in Unit 1C.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 23 – 5 AAC 85.040(a)(1). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.**
Expand the archery-only registration permit hunt area for goat in Unit 1C as follows:

5 AAC 85.040(a)(1) Seasons and bag limits for goat in Unit 1C: That portion of Unit 1C to include all mainland areas between the south bank of the Mendenhall River and the Mendenhall Glacier and south to the western bank of Taku Inlet and Taku Glacier. 1 goat by permit by bow and arrow only. The taking of nannies with kids is prohibited Aug. 1–Nov. 30.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jake Abbott

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would increase the size of the RG014 archery hunting area for mountain goats to include all of the mainland south of the Mendenhall River and the Mendenhall Glacier and west of the Taku Inlet and Taku Glacier (Figure 23-1).

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**5 AAC 85.040(a)(1)**

Unit 1(C), that mainland portion draining into the south bank of Little Sheep Creek, Gastineau Channel south of Little Sheep Creek, Stephens Passage, and Taku Inlet between the mouth of Little Sheep Creek and Taku Glacier, including that portion between the south side of Blackerby Ridge and the north side of Salmon Creek Reservoir, above the 1,000 foot contour and east to Observation Peak

1 goat by registration permit only, and by bow and arrow only; the taking of nannies and kids is prohibited. This area is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would increase the area open to archery hunting in registration hunt RG014.

**BACKGROUND:** The department uses small geographic areas within hunt areas to manage mountain goat harvest in Southeast Alaska. Guideline harvest levels (GHL) are established for each area and are based on the allocation of points determined through aerial surveys (male goat= 1 point, female goat= 2 points) within each area. GHLs are established by allowing the harvest of 6 points per 100 adult goats seen during aerial surveys. Once the harvest has reached the GHL the hunt is closed by emergency order. The harvest of billies is encouraged to increase opportunity for other hunters and ensure the long-term sustainability of the localized populations.

The proponent of this proposal would like to see additional areas opened to archery hunting for mountain goats in the Juneau area.

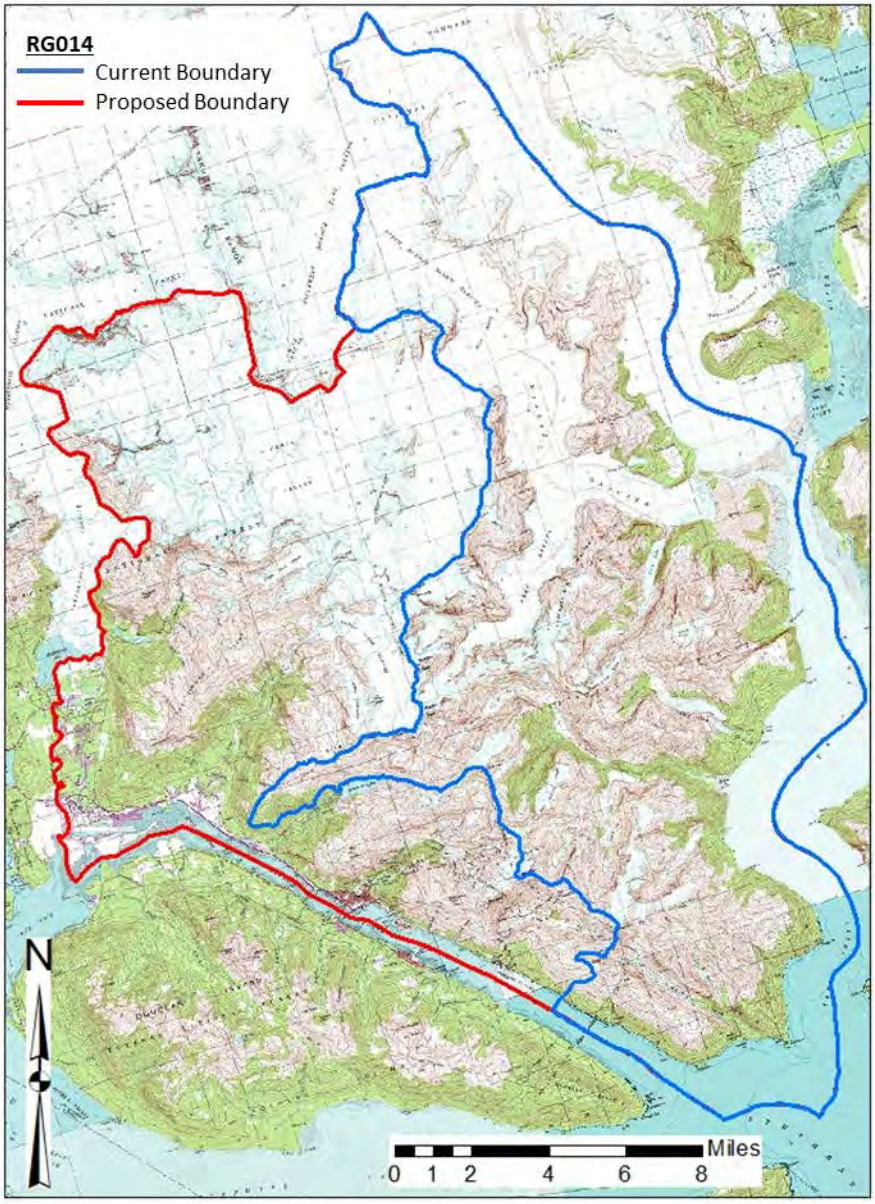



Figure 23-1. The RG014 archery mountain goat hunt area depicting the current and proposed boundaries.

The archery mountain goat hunt RG014 was adopted by proposal during the 2000 Board of Game meeting, and the south side of Blackerby Ridge was added to RG014 hunt area at the 2015 meeting, creating the current boundaries of RG014. The addition of the proposed lands would add 149 $mi^2$ (387.5 $km^2$) to the current 357.0 $mi^2$ (924.6 $km^2$) of

RG014. Mountain goat research in Southeast Alaska has demonstrated there is very little movement among goats from one area to another. While the goat population around Juneau is managed as one population, the number of goats in any given area varies widely, and as noted above, little movement between groups has been observed in radiocollared animals. Because of access, localized overharvest of goats is a concern and the lack of animals to take the place of those harvested may have compounding effects to future mountain goat numbers in the Unit.

Previous surveys conducted in 2012 and 2014 showed approximately 150 goats in RG014 and almost 200 goats in the area proposed for adding to the unit. A fall 2018 survey resulted in 44 goats in RG014 and 39 goats in the area proposed for adding to the unit, both of which were less than 1/3 of previous counts (Table 23-1). It is important to note survey conditions were poor and the count was at the end of two weeks of the driest and warmest September weather in Juneau history and as a result the survey likely does not reflect the mountain goat population in the area Surveys are planned for summer 2019 to assess goat numbers in both the existing and proposed hunt area. The allowable harvest will be adjusted based on survey data.

Table 23-1. Aerial mountain goat survey data for the RG014 hunt area, and the area proposed for addition to RG014. The reported numbers are the number of goats observed.

| Year | Existing RG014 Hunt Area | Proposed Additional RG014 Area |
|---|---|---|
| 2012 | 146 | 185 |
| 2014 | 236 | 203 |
| 2018 | 44 | 39 |

Harvest in the unit has been consistently low over the years (Table 23-2). Harvest in 2018 looks to be one of the highest, with 5 goats already harvested, including 1 nanny and 1 illegal harvest taken with a rifle.

Table 23-2. Harvest in RG014 for 2014-2017.

| Year | Total Permits | Reported | Male Killed | Female Killed | Unknown Killed | Hunted | Did Not Hunt |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2014 | 11 | 11 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 |
| 2015 | 13 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 8 |
| 2016 | 33 | 33 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 23 | 10 |
| 2017 | 31 | 31 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 17 | 14 |

There are several areas around Juneau (e.g., Mount Juneau, Thunder Mountain, and Mount Bullard) where goats can be readily viewed. Ensuring that wildlife viewing opportunities remain available should be considered in determining the hunt boundaries. Other considerations are that Juneau has a well-developed and maintained trail system that allows recreational user groups to gain easy access to several mountain ranges all around town. This expansion of the hunt boundary would now encompass that trail system, and conflicts among hunters and other outdoor recreationists may occur. These trails, including the tram going up to the alpine at Mount Roberts, have over 200,000 visitors each year and so the public presence of non-hunters is substantial.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it has biological concerns for the population in question. Recent aerial surveys have indicated a significant decline in goat numbers in all the hunt areas along the Juneau road system, and these areas are currently closed to hunting. Additional survey data and population monitoring should be collected to determine when mountain goat numbers increase and additional mountain goats can be sustainably harvested.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 24 – 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.** Clarify the boundary description for the RG014 mountain goat hunt area in Unit 1C as follows:

| **Units and Bag Limits** | **Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | | |
| Unit 1 (C), that mainland portion draining into the south bank of Little Sheep Creek, Gastineau Channel south of Little Sheep Creek, Stephens Passage, and Taku Inlet between the mouth of Little Sheep Creek and Taku Glacier, including that portion **on the south side of Blackerby Ridge encompassed by a line from Observation Peak west along the ridgeline down to** | Aug. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only) | Aug. 1—Nov. 30 |

**the 1,000-foot contour, east along that contour to the north shore of Salmon Creek Reservoir, north of the main drainage into the head of reservoir following that drainage south and east up to the ridgeline and east to Olds Mountain**
[BETWEEN THE SOUTH SIDE OF BLACKERBY RIDGE AND THE NORTH SIDE OF SALMON CREEK RESERVOIR, ABOVE THE 1,000 FOOT CONTOUR AND EAST TO OBSERVATION PEAK]

1 goat by registration permit only, and by bow and arrow only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal would clarify the western boundary of RG014 because hunters found the existing language describing the boundary along Blackerby Ridge confusing.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | | |
| Unit 1 (C), that mainland portion draining into the south bank of Little Sheep Creek, Gastineau Channel south of Little Sheep Creek, Stephens Passage, and Taku Inlet between the mouth of Little Sheep Creek and Taku Glacier, including that portion between the south side of Blackerby | Aug. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only) | Aug. 1—Nov. 30 |

Ridge and the north side of
Salmon Creek Reservoir,
above the 1,000 foot contour
and east to Observation Peak

1 goat by registration permit
only, and by bow and arrow
only; the taking of nannies with
kids is prohibited

This area is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal should help clarify the boundary of RG014 along the western boundary following Blackerby Ridge near Salmon Reservoir.

**BACKGROUND:** The south side of Blackerby Ridge was added to RG014 at the 2015 Board of Game meeting. Since the addition, several hunters have described difficulties determining the new boundary along portions of the added Blackerby Ridge (Figure 24-1). The new description is intended to clarify the description of the boundary to assist hunters in knowing when they are in and out of the hunt area. Adoption of this proposal will not result in loss of hunting opportunity because the hunt area will not change; this proposal will update language used to describe the hunt area boundaries.

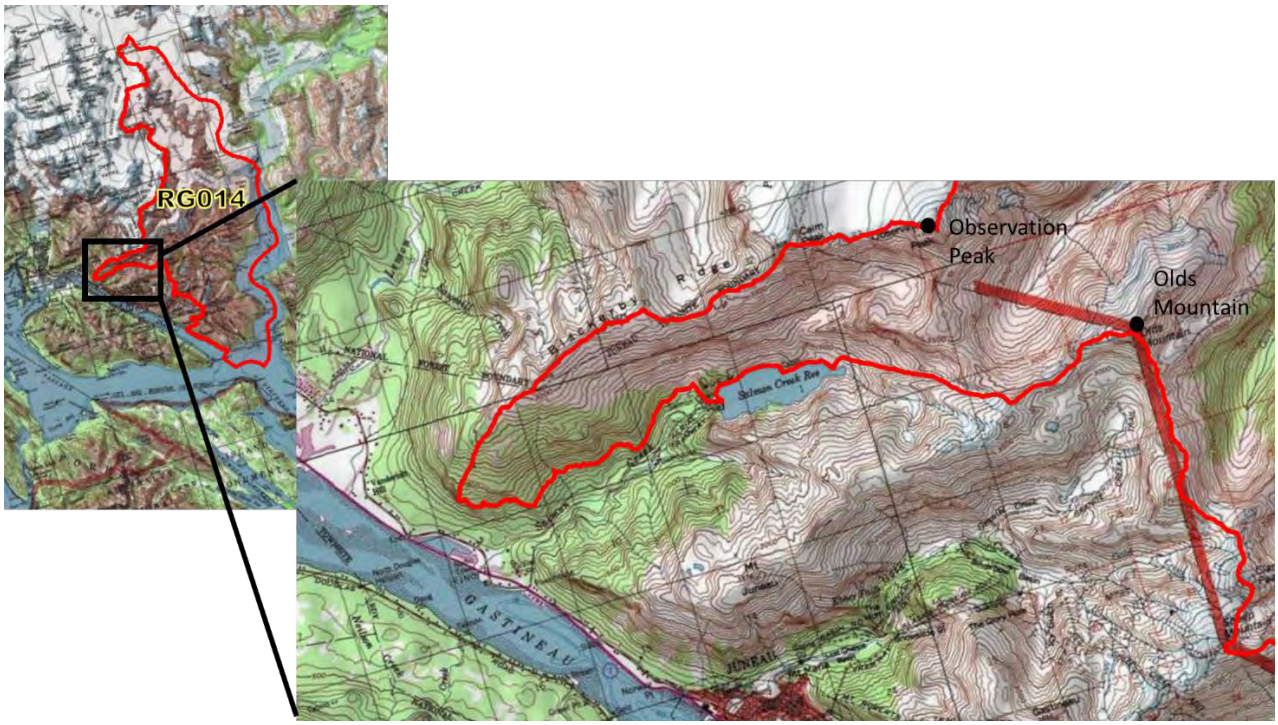


Figure 24-1. Map showing RG014 and Blackerby Ridge with the landmarks that define the proposed boundary description highlighted.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 25 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**
Restructure the moose hunt in Unit 5A Remainder to align with the federal subsistence regulations as follows:

Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench, west of the Dangerous River – 1 bull by joint state/federal registration permit only, October 8 – November 15. From October 8 – October 21, federal public lands are closed to harvest of moose except by residents of Unit 5A.

Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench, east of the Dangerous River – 1 bull by joint state/federal registration permit only, September 16 – November 15. From September 16 – September 30, federal public lands are closed to harvest of moose except by residents of Unit 5A.

**PROPOSED BY:** Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal would shift the Unit 5A, east of the Dangerous River, moose hunting season start date by approximately one month earlier and would add approximately 30 days to the season length.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Units and Bag Limits** | **Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| (3) | | |
| Remainder of Unit 5(A)<br><br>1 bull by joint State/Federal registration permit only; up to 60 bulls may be taken; the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the season in that portion west of the Dangerous River | Oct. 15—Nov. 15 | Oct. 15—Nov. 15 |

when 30 bulls have been taken from
the area

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in Unit 5 and has found that 50 moose are reasonably necessary for subsistence uses.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
This change will allow additional harvest opportunities (increased season length) on the east side of the Dangerous River, potentially resulting in an increased number of animals harvested. The harvest is managed by a quota (30 bull moose), so overharvest is not anticipated to be a concern.

The intent of this proposal is to distribute hunter effort across the Yakutat Forelands. Current hunt management for the Yakutat moose hunt regularly results in a short season, due to harvest, on the west side of the Dangerous River. By providing an earlier opportunity east of the Dangerous River the season may go longer and include a state season on the west side.

**BACKGROUND:** Currently, the area in Unit 5A west of the Dangerous River receives heavy hunting pressure during the first few days of the federal open season, resulting in a rapid harvest and multiple animals taken out of localized areas. In recent years, the quota has been met and the season closed within about 4–5 days of the opening. The area east of the Dangerous River is less accessible than the west side, including minimal to no local air taxi service after September, and receives less pressure (the harvest quota is not usually met in this area; Table 25-1). By opening up the east side of the Dangerous River earlier, access will be improved for subsistence users (longer days, potentially better weather conditions, and greater availability of local air taxis), allowing additional opportunities for subsistence users and potentially reducing the hunting pressure during the opening days of the subsistence season on the west side.

Table 25-1. Total harvest on the west and east sides of the Dangerous River for the last 10 years (2008-2017).

| Year | Harvest West of Dangerous River | Harvest East of Dangerous River | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2017 | 35 | 22 | 57 |
| 2016 | 27 | 17 | 44 |
| 2015 | 29 | 21 | 51 |
| 2014 | 28 | 16 | 44 |
| 2013 | 25 | 8 | 33 |
| 2012 | 27 | 13 | 40 |
| 2011 | 25 | 13 | 38 |
| 2010 | 23 | 14 | 37 |
| 2009 | 22 | 16 | 38 |
| 2008 | 20 | 15 | 35 |

Aerial surveys east of the Dangerous River were most recently conducted in 2015 and a partial survey in 2016. The 2016 survey resulted in a count of 54 bulls, 38 cows, 44 calves, and 117 of unidentified sex for a total of 253 moose. In 2016, 142 bulls/100 cows were estimated for animals that were positively sexed. At the time of the year that these counts occur some animals are losing antlers and so the sex ratio estimates from these surveys are conservative. The 2015 survey resulted in a count of 76 bulls, 85 cows, 100 calves, and 274 of unidentified sex for a total of 535 moose. In 2015, 89 bulls/100 cows were counted for animals that were positively sexed. The department's written reports for 2015 and 2016 suggest that the survey in 2016 was a partial survey conducted under marginal conditions and may not reflect the true population, while the 2015 survey was thought to be a complete survey of the area conducted under favorable conditions. Aerial survey data combined with the availability of additional bull moose on the east side give managers confidence that the extended season on the east side will not cause biological concerns.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 26 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**
Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 5A, Nunatak Bench, as follows:

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| (3) | | |
| Unit 5(A), that portion south of Wrangell -Saint Elias National Park, north and east of Russell and Nunatak Fiords, and east of the east side of East Nunatak Glacier to the Canadian Border (Nunatak Bench)<br>1 moose by registration permit only; up to 5 moose may be taken | Nov. 15—Feb. 15 | Nov. 15—Feb. 15 |

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal provides for the reauthorization of an antlerless moose hunt in Unit 5A. Reauthorization is required annually.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| (3) | | |
| Unit 5(A), that portion south of Wrangell -Saint Elias National Park, north and east of Russell and Nunatak Fiords, and east of the east side of East Nunatak Glacier to the Canadian Border (Nunatak Bench) 1 moose by registration permit only; up to 5 moose may be taken | Nov. 15—Feb. 15 | Nov. 15—Feb. 15 |

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in Unit 5, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 50 moose.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal allows for additional moose hunting opportunities in Unit 5A, especially important to those hunters who did not harvest a moose earlier in the season.

**BACKGROUND:** The Nunatak Bench (Unit 5A) hunt area is managed as a separate population because it is generally isolated from other moose populations by fiords and glaciers. The area is subject to severe winters and has low capability to support moose relative to other moose habitat in Unit 5A. The purposes of this hunt are to provide opportunity as the population allows and to maintain the number of moose within a level the limited habitat can support. This hunt opens after other moose hunts in the unit have closed, and it is a popular alternative for hunters who were unsuccessful during those hunts. Because much of the open season for this hunt takes place after bulls have dropped their antlers, either sex may be harvested.

The Nunatak Bench strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt population of no more than 50 moose. During an aerial survey in 2001, 52 moose were seen. From 2005 through 2012, only 11–14 moose with one or two calves were seen during surveys. The decline in moose numbers following the 2001 survey may be related to the 68-foot rise of Russel Fiord, which flooded and damaged habitat when it was blocked by the surging

Hubbard Glacier during 2003. Due to poor weather and the remoteness of the location, this area was not surveyed again until December 2015 when a total of 14 moose (three bulls, two cows, three calves, and six unknown) were seen. A series of severe winters from 2006 through 2012 may have inhibited recovery of the population. Anecdotal reports from hunters indicate that wolves in the area may also be inhibiting recovery of this small population.

From 1997 through 2004, an average of 12 either sex permits were issued annually with an average of four people hunting each year. During that period a total of 15 moose (nine bulls, six cows) were harvested for an average of about two moose per year. No permits have been issued and no moose have been harvested in this area since 2004.

The department believes it is important to retain the ability to implement an antlerless hunt in this area to prevent habitat damage should the population increase. The department will continue to monitor this population as conditions allow, but we do not plan to issue hunt permits until the population reaches at least 25 moose.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 27 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(1). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**
Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 1C as follows:

| **Units and Bag Limits** | **Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1C, Berners Bay drainages<br>1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued | Sept. 15—Oct. 15<br>(General hunt only) | Sept. 15—Oct. 15 |
| … | | |
| Unit 1C, that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage<br><br>1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: | | |
| … | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits | Nov. 10—Dec. 10<br>(General hunt only) | Nov. 10—Dec. 10 |

may be issued

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal provides for the reauthorization of an antlerless moose hunt in Unit 1C (DM041 and RM049). Reauthorization is required annually.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1C, Berners Bay drainages<br>1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued | Sept. 15—Oct. 15<br>(General hunt only) | Sept. 15—Oct. 15 |
| … | | |
| Unit 1C, that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage<br><br>1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: | | |
| … | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued | Nov. 10—Dec. 10<br>(General hunt only) | Nov. 10—Dec. 10 |

The Berner's Bay population is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area, and the Gustavus Forelands moose population has a negative customary and traditional use finding.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal allows for antlerless moose hunts for Berners Bay and Gustavus, which would manage the moose population within carrying capacity and provide additional harvest opportunity.

**BACKGROUND:** Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized for the Berners Bay and Gustavus moose populations in Unit 1C for over a decade. Those hunts were instituted as tools that could be used to manage both populations to within carrying capacity of the limited habitat in each area and to offer additional harvest opportunity as warranted. Antlerless hunts have been periodically and successfully used in both areas but must be reauthorized each year.

**Berners Bay:** The Berners Bay (Unit 1C) strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt population of 90 moose based on the area's estimated carrying capacity. The department has been successful at maintaining the Berners Bay population close to the post-hunt population objective by implementing both bull and cow hunts.

From 1998–2006, the number of drawing permits for Berners Bay moose ranged from ten bull and ten antlerless permits to seven bull permits and no antlerless permits. The average annual harvest of bulls during that period was seven moose, and in years when antlerless permits were issued, the annual harvest averaged four cow moose. Although the department has authorization to issue a total of 30 permits each year, no more than 20 total permits have been issued during a single year. Several severe winters from 2006 to 2009 resulted in overwinter mortality and population declines. No Berners Bay moose permits were issued from 2007 to 2013.

The number of drawing permits issued annually for Berners Bay is based on the number of moose observed during winter aerial surveys. The mean number of moose seen during aerial surveys conducted from 1990 to2006 was 77 (range: 59–108). The number of moose seen on surveys declined during consecutive severe winters from 2006 to 2009, and only 33–62 moose were seen during surveys from 2007 to2009. Since 2010, most winters have been moderate to mild and the population has recovered. Under ideal survey conditions in 2012, 102 moose were observed, including 21 bulls, 81 cows, and 14 calves. Adjusted for sightability based on collared moose, the 2012 population was estimated at 113 +/-11 moose. During the most recent survey in December 2016, a total of 115 moose were observed, including 18 bulls, 31 cows, 27 calves, and 39 adult moose of unknown sex. Based on that survey and sightability of collared moose, the population was estimated to be 141 +/-25 moose. The winter of 2017–18 was relatively snow-free until mid-February, and we were unable to survey this population. However, survival of radiocollared moose was high and we believe the population continues to slowly grow. The Berners Bay population now exceeds the population and bull:cow objectives in the management plan. However, more recent habitat data suggest habitat in Berners Bay can support a higher post-hunt population than previously thought.

The department plans to manage the population by harvesting bulls. Five bull permits were issued in 2014 and 2015, and in response to growing population estimates, seven bull permits were issued in 2016 and 2017. However, the department would like to retain the ability to implement an antlerless moose hunt should the population or habitat conditions warrant that type of management.

**Gustavus:** The Gustavus moose population (Unit 1C) rapidly expanded from just a few animals in the 1980s and early 1990s to a peak of about 400 animals in 2003. In 2002, the department estimated the density of moose on the Gustavus Forelands winter range exceeded five moose per $km^2$ despite only a small proportion of the area consisting of productive (abundant willow) winter habitat. In response to concerns about moose damaging the winter habitat, the department initiated spring browse surveys in 1999 and determined that an unsustainable level (85% – 95%) of the current annual growth of willow twigs had been consumed by moose.

To conserve winter habitat, the department requested the Board of Game authorize an antlerless moose hunt and the first antlerless hunt was held in the fall of 2000. From 2002 to 2008, hunters harvested between 11 and 67 antlerless moose annually, depending on the number of permits issued. No hunt was held in fall 2007 due to high moose mortality during the severe winter of 2006–2007 and no antlerless hunts have been held since 2009.

The objective of antlerless moose hunts in Gustavus is to maintain the moose population using the winter range to levels commensurate with habitat capability. Based on aerial surveys corrected for sightability and annual browse surveys, management of the population using antlerless hunts has been successful. In 2013, under favorable survey conditions, 186 moose (25 bulls, 121 cows, and 40 calves) were observed. The population estimate corrected for sightability was 323 +/-87 moose. Under poor late winter survey conditions in March 2014, 91 (24 cows, 12 calves, and 55 unknown) moose were seen, which yielded a sightability corrected population estimate of 244 +/-98 moose. Due to exceptionally mild winter weather at the time of the March 2014 survey, a number of radiocollared moose had already transitioned to forested summer range outside the survey area. There was little snow cover during the winter of 2014–15, so no survey was attempted. The most recent survey, in March 2018, had moderate conditions and resulted in a population estimate of 230 ± 30 moose.

Severe winters from 2006 through 2009 reduced calf survival, but since then calf survival has improved. Even during severe winters, survival of adult females remained high at about 89%. Given the improved survival rate of calves during successive mild winters and stable cow survival, the potential exists for the Gustavus moose population to rapidly increase.

The Gustavus moose population is currently at a level the department believes is appropriate for the available winter habitat. However, we believe it is important to retain the ability to implement antlerless hunts should the population increase to a level that is detrimental to the habitat.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 28 – 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

Issue permits for using bait or scent lures to hunt black bear in Unit 1C as follows:

Either compel the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to issue black bear baiting permits for Unit 1C or adopt a new subsection under 5 AAC 92.044 that states that ADF&G shall issue these permits so that they may not make an arbitrary decision on a method and means without public input.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jake Abbott

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would allow black bear baiting within Unit 1C.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**5AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

(a) A person may not establish a bear bait station to hunt bear with the use of bait or scent lures without first obtaining a permit from the department under this section.

The department currently uses its discretionary authority found in 5 AAC 92.052 to limit where bear baiting is allowed. The department does not currently issue permits for hunting bears with the use of bait or scent lures in Unit 1C.The department has discussed all existing closures with the board and intends to address any new closures with the board.

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for black bears in Unit 1C outside the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area, and has found that 50–70 bears are reasonably necessary for subsistence.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The use of bait to take black bears would be allowed in Unit 1C. Depending on the number of hunters who use bait, the total harvest will likely increase, but remain within sustainable levels.

**BACKGROUND:**

The annual black bear harvest in Unit 1C has averaged 72 animals over last 10 years (Table 28-1). The department does not have information on the number of black bears in the population; however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of calls received about nuisance bears. Table 28-1 also presents harvest data from Unit 2, where baiting of black bears is allowed. Hunter harvest for Unit 2 was a mean of 205/year over the last 10 years and is higher than in Unit 1C.

Table 28-1. Number of black bears harvested and sealed in units 1C and 2, 2008-2017.

| Unit 1C | Unit 2 |
|---|---|

| Year | Animals Harvested | ADF&G Sealed* | Animals Harvested | ADF&G Sealed* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2008 | 90 | 7 | 327 | 0 |
| 2009 | 84 | 4 | 245 | 0 |
| 2010 | 104 | 6 | 265 | 0 |
| 2011 | 103 | 8 | 320 | 0 |
| 2012 | 75 | 7 | 159 | 0 |
| 2013 | 41 | 7 | 111 | 0 |
| 2014 | 58 | 12 | 153 | 1 |
| 2015 | 40 | 5 | 147 | 0 |
| 2016 | 61 | 4 | 147 | 0 |
| 2017 | 68 | 12 | 174 | 0 |

* Nuisance animals or road kills

Unit 1C, particularly in and around Juneau, has a high level of urban bear conflicts. The department has undergone great effort over many years with the City and Borough of Juneau, the local refuse company, local citizen groups, and a variety of publics to address this problem. In addition, the department has worked toward educating the public on the necessity of preventing bears from accessing non-natural foods in proximity to human habitation or activity because this leads to urban bear problems.

These cooperative efforts have enabled the department to build trust with the public in our collective efforts to avoid urban bear conflicts. If the department were to open the area to the use of bait for bears without the topic going through the board process, it is possible it could be construed by the public as being contradictory to the department's urban refuse management efforts and Juneau's ordinance **36.20.056 bear attraction nuisance** that outlaws having bear attractants on your property. There is a lot of public sentiment against the use of bait among the residents of Juneau which has partly influenced where the use of bait is allowed.

The use of bait for bears is allowed under the conditions of 5 AAC 92.044 and is not considered to be a nuisance if it is otherwise in compliance with the regulation. The regulation clearly states bait and scent lures may not be placed within one-quarter mile of a publicly maintained road, trail, or the Alaska Railroad; may not be placed within one mile of a house or permanent dwelling, except that bait may be used within one mile of a cabin if the cabin is on the opposite side of a major river system, as identified by the department in the permit, from the bear baiting station; or within one mile of a business, school, developed campground, or recreational facility. The use of bait is prohibited in the Anchorage area, which also has a history of urban bear problems, but is allowed on the Mat-Su Valley, Kenai Peninsula, and Fairbanks, where bear conflicts are fewer.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it will not have a biological impact on the resource.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 29 – 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.**
Shift the hunting season for waterfowl in Unit 1C as follows:

The waterfowl season for Unit 1C would shift two weeks earlier to be open Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 instead of Sept. 16 – Dec. 31 for both residents and nonresidents.

**PROPOSED BY:** Tom Rutecki

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would shift the current waterfowl season to start earlier on September 1 instead of September 16 and go until December 16 instead of December 31.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Southeast Region Units 1-4**
Residents and nonresidents Dates: Sept. 16 – December 31

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** If adopted, the proposal would shift the season to start September 1 and end on December 16. As a result, harvest opportunity would shift from later to earlier in the season. Overall harvest is not likely to change if the proposal is adopted.

**BACKGROUND:** The federal migratory bird hunting framework allows the state to structure a 107-day season that is uniform across the Southeast Alaska migratory game bird hunting zone (Units 1–4), and falls within the framework outside date range of September 1 to January 26.
This proposal is similar to several proposals the Board has addressed over many years and is indicative of the wide range of waterfowl hunter preference for either earlier or later season dates. Shifting season dates represents a tradeoff between harvest opportunities for September migrants (e.g., wigeon, pintail, teal) or wintering waterfowl (e.g., resident mallards and sea ducks).

In 2008, the department conducted a survey of resident waterfowl hunters in Southeast to determine preferences for season dates. The results showed a preference for an earlier season in the northern part of the region and a later season in the southern part of the

region. At the November 2008 Southeast Region meeting the Board addressed Proposal 47 to shift the season dates to start in early October and end in mid-January. The Board chose at that time to adjust the season dates by two weeks (From Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 to Sept. 16 – Dec. 31) as a compromise to best address the desires of the majority of waterfowl hunters.

Currently, Alaska is afforded 5 waterfowl hunting zones and 1 split season for Kodiak Island. Changes to zones and splits can occur at 5-year intervals: the next opportunity is 2020. Alaska's waterfowl hunting zone structure is considered grandfather status and if changes are made to that structure we will lose grandfather status and have to conform to zone and split season structures that are less desirable for a state as large and as significantly environmentally diverse as Alaska. The department is exploring options for hunting zone changes and split seasons with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocation issue with no anticipated biological effects.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 30 – 5 AAC 92.520(a). Closures and restrictions in state game refuges.** Create a youth hunt for waterfowl in the Unit 1C Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge as follows:

Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge Youth Hunt Area: Unit 1C; the area is open to waterfowl hunting from September 16 through September 18 by a child aged 10 to 17 years of age* who has successfully completed a Department of Fish and Game-approved hunter education class and who is accompanied by a licensed resident adult aged 21 years of age or older.

*A permit may be issued to a child aged 10 to 17 who will be accompanied in the field by a resident adult 21 years of age or older, with the child being the permittee. Both the adult and child will need the Mendenhall Waterfowl Permit (WU001).

**PROPOSED BY:** Kevin Maier

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal would create a youth only hunt during the first three days of the waterfowl hunting season on the Mendenhall Wetland State Game Refuge.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

The refuge is currently open to all waterfowl hunters who have completed a basic hunter education course; registered to hunt on the Mendenhall Wetland State Game Refuge; and

who possess a hunting license and appropriate waterfowl stamps. The waterfowl season is Sept. 16-December 31.

This area is within the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would limit the participants who can hunt the first three days of waterfowl season on the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge to youth hunters (10 to 17 years of age and have successfully completed a basic hunter education course) accompanied by a licensed resident adult aged 21 years of age or older. Some adult hunters will be unhappy about not being able to hunt the first day of the season, especially hunters who want the season to start earlier than it currently does. Overall harvest is not likely to change if the proposal is adopted.

**BACKGROUND:**

The are no waterfowl biology or population concerns addressed in this proposal; it is specific to the allocation of hunting opportunity on the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge (Refuge).

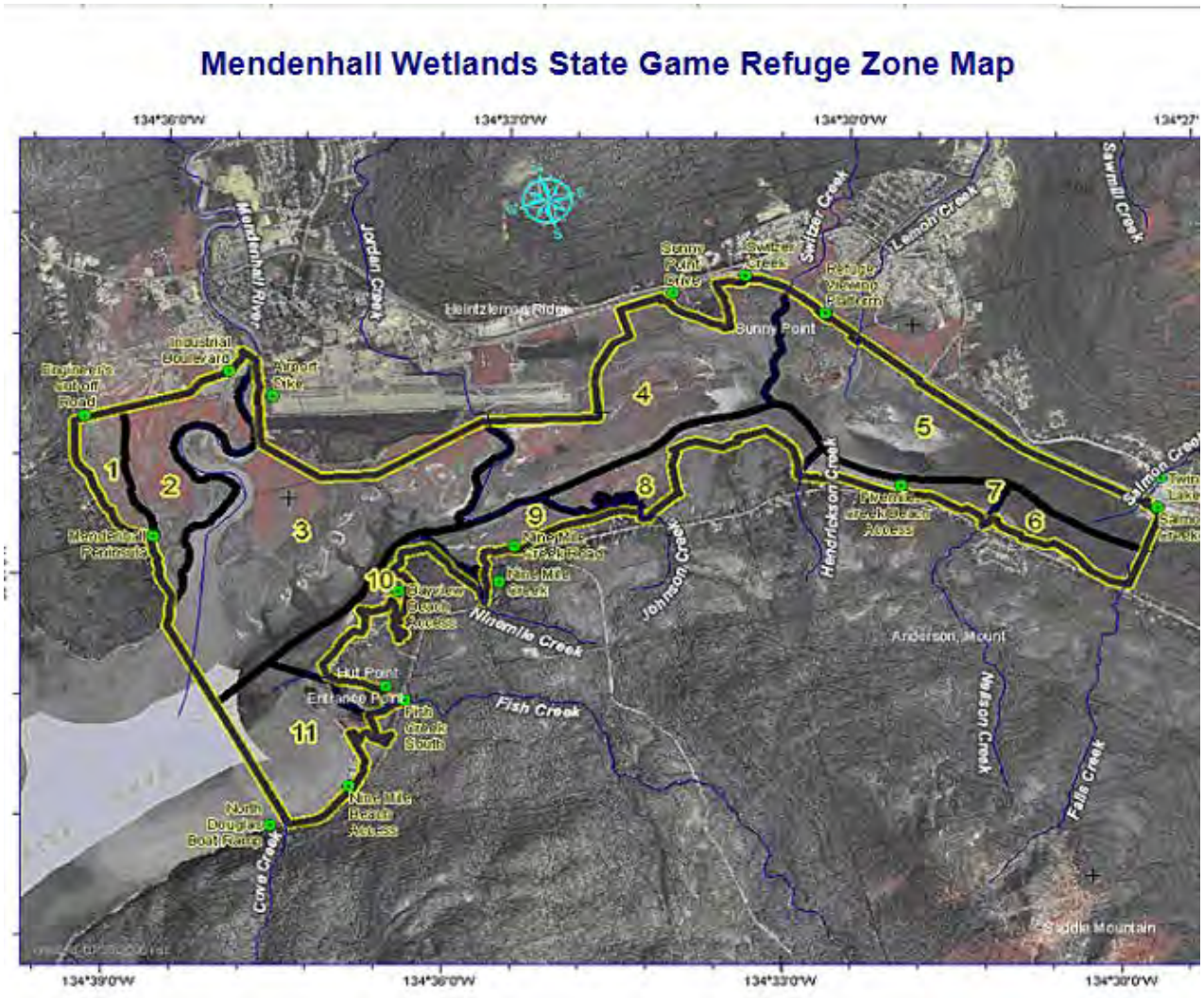



Figure 30-1. The Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge divided into different hunt units.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. Another consideration, or compromise, could be to designate parts of the Refuge for youth hunting only.

The Refuge has been mapped into different zones if the need arose to manage smaller geographic areas within the Refuge (Figure 30-1). Designating a portion of the refuge using the existing zones, or creating a new area, is an option the Board may want to consider. This would both address the author's request and continue to provide hunting opportunity for the larger waterfowl hunting community in Juneau.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 31 – 5 AAC 92.550(1)(F). Areas closed to trapping.** Allow the use of submerged traps in the Juneau closed area in Unit 1C as follows:

AREAS CLOSED TO TRAPPING

Unit 1C, (Juneau Area)

A strip within 1/4 mile of the following trails as designated on 1962 U.S. Geographical Survey maps and revisions: Herbert Glacier Trail, Windfall Lake Trail, Peterson Lake Trail, Spalding Meadows Trail, (including the loop trail), Nugget Creek Trail, Outer Point Trail, Dan Moller Trail, Perseverance Trail, Granite Creek Trail, Mount Roberts Trail, Nelson Water Supply Trail, (off of Mt. Roberts Trail), Sheep Creek Trail, Point Bishop Trail, Amalga Trail, Auke Nu/John Muir Trail, Eagle Glacier Trail, Point Bridget Trail, Treadwell Ditch Trail, and Salmon Creek Trail; however **traps that are completely submerged, and** traps with an inside spread of five inches or less which are set at least five feet above the ground and snow are allowed if more than 50 yards from the trail.

**PROPOSED BY:** Juneau Trappers Association

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** The proposal would allow for underwater sets to be used in the Juneau closed area if they are completely submerged and 50 yards from the trail.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

AREAS CLOSED TO TRAPPING

Unit 1C, (Juneau Area)

A strip within 1/4 mile of the following trails as designated on 1962 U.S. Geographical Survey maps and revisions: Herbert Glacier Trail, Windfall Lake Trail, Peterson Lake Trail, Spalding Meadows Trail, (including the loop trail), Nugget Creek Trail, Outer Point Trail, Dan Moller Trail, Perseverance Trail, Granite Creek Trail, Mount Roberts Trail, Nelson Water Supply Trail, (off of Mt. Roberts Trail), Sheep Creek Trail, Point Bishop Trail, Amalga Trail, Auke Nu/John Muir Trail, Eagle Glacier Trail, Point Bridget Trail, Treadwell Ditch Trail, and Salmon Creek Trail; however traps with an inside spread of five inches or less which are set at least five feet above the ground and snow are allowed if more than 50 yards from the trail.

This area is in the Juneau Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would increase trapping opportunities around Juneau for beaver, otter, and mink. The ability for local trappers to make submerged sets and under-ice sets would allow the harvest of these animals, increase opportunity (which is limited under current regulation), and aid the department in managing damage complaints.

**BACKGROUND:**

The issue at hand is whether trappers can set traps that won't catch domestic dogs in the sets allowed by this regulation. In 1987, the board created a regulation that closed trapping within ¼ mile of many Juneau area trails. The justification for the closure stated public safety concerns, the possibility of catching domestic pets, and the value of wildlife viewing along trails. This closure significantly reduced areas close to Juneau that could be trapped. Most drainages that allow access away from the road system contain a trail that includes the ¼ mile trapping closure. Many of these drainages are narrow and steep sided, which can make it difficult to get ¼ mile from the trail.

During the fall 2008 Board of Game meeting, a proposal addressing trapping in the Juneau area was considered. The resulting regulation added several trails to those where trapping was prohibited. However, as part of the same regulation, the ¼ mile closure became specific to only large traps, while small traps (those with a jaw spread of 5 inches or less) could be set within 50 yards of these trails provided they were elevated at least 5 feet above the ground/snow. With this regulation, a compromise was reached where those concerned with safety due to large traps near trails were accommodated and trappers gained opportunity for harvesting small furbearers nearer the trails.

There are currently 19 trails that require 1/4 mile set-backs for trapping, with the exception of small traps that are elevated at least five feet above ground/snow. Many of these trails follow water courses to some extent. Also, the Juneau area is closed to all trapping within 1/4 mile of the coast along the entire road system. Local trappers believe this restricts their ability to harvest water-oriented furbearers such as mink, river otter, and beaver. Sealing is not required for mink, but sealing records for otter pelts go back to 1983, and to 1984 for beaver. The ¼ mile regulation was created in 1987. In Unit 1C the mean take for river otters from 1983-1986 was 31/year, and for beavers from 1984-1986 was 55/year. The current mean take for otter and beaver according to sealing records (2007-2017) is 24 otter/year and 39 beaver/year suggesting that trapping harvest is slightly lower than pre-regulation times.

Local trappers indicate the area is experiencing a large increase in the beaver population, resulting in an increase of complaints regarding personal property damage, flooding, and roads and culverts being compromised (Figure 31-1).

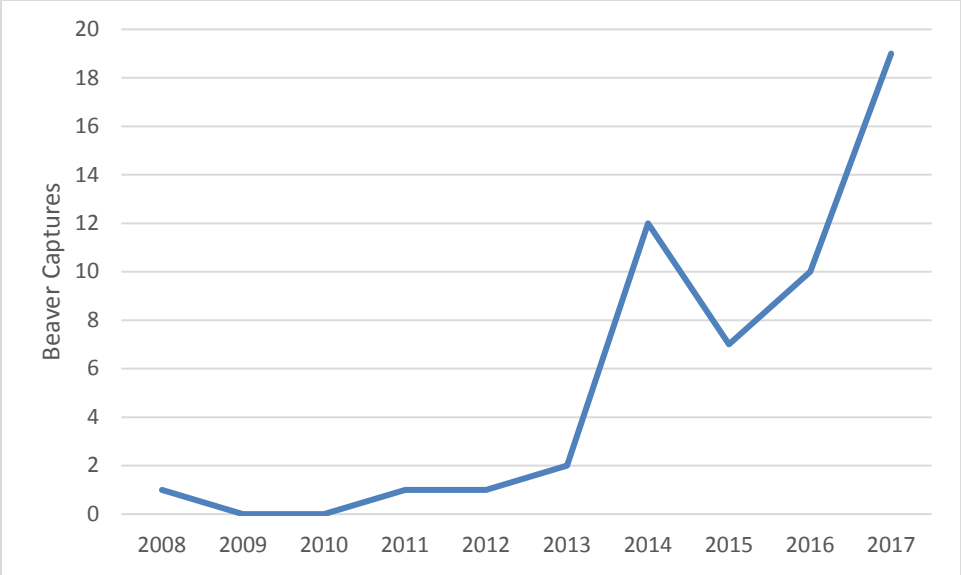



Figure 31-1. Nuisance beaver harvest in Unit 1C for 2008-2017.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal and has no biological concerns for furbearer populations in the area.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 32 – 5 AAC 92.550. Areas Closed to Trapping**. Modify the trapping regulations to close certain areas within the Skagway Borough (Unit 1D).

**PROPOSED BY:** Municipality of Skagway.

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**

This proposal will create areas closed to trapping within the Municipality of Skagway; designate trapping corridors along roads, rail roads, and trails; and prohibit the use of some traps within 1/8 mile of any public street, road or right-of-way or highway, or established/marked trails.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

Species, seasons, and bag limits in Unit 1D are consistent with those listed for all of the Southeast Region (Game Management Units 1-5) found in the 2018-2019 Alaska Trapping Regulations, No. 59. There are no Board of Game regulations that restrict trapping or trap placement in Unit 1D.

**Additional Regulatory Information**

Skagway Municipal Code, Title 9.

## Chapter 9.04
## TRAPPING

### 9.04.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to protect the safety and welfare of the public, domesticated animals and pets by designating areas where trapping is a prohibited land use activity.

### 9.04.015 Applicability.

A. This chapter shall apply to lands within the Skagway Borough as determined by Sections 9.04.025 through 9.04.035.

B. For the purposes of this chapter, the assembly shall establish a list of "established trails" by resolution. These established trails will require adequate signage at the trailhead detailing each respective trail map, and signage shall be affixed along each trail route indicating the correct path.

### 9.04.020 Definitions.

The following words and phrases shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them by this section:

A. "Trap" means any device designated or identified by the state of Alaska in any statute or regulation as a "trap," or otherwise commonly referred to as a "trap" by the state of Alaska. "Trap" does not apply to the capturing of sea creatures through use of shrimp and crab pots.

B. "Trapping" means the definition of "trapping" used by the state of Alaska. "Trapping" does not apply to live traps, mouse traps or to the catching of animals within a dwelling place, garage, shed, greenhouse, barn, or the ocean.

C. "Trails" are primary and are marked and/or published as "established trails."

1. For the purposes of this chapter, "trails" exclude current and future secondary off-shoot trails.

D. "Off-shoot trails" are secondary and unmarked and/or unpublished trails, and are not considered to be "established trails."

**9.04.025 Tree trap regulations.**

Tree traps must be at least five feet (5') above the ground and/or fifty (50) yards from any public street, road or right-of-way, highway or marked/established trail within the boundaries of the Skagway Borough.

**9.04.030 Leg-hold trap regulations.**

Leg-hold traps and other ground traps are prohibited within one-eighth (1/8) mile of any public street, road or right-of-way or highway or established/marked trail within the boundaries of the Skagway Borough.

**9.04.035 Areas in which trapping is prohibited.**

A. Trapping is prohibited within fifty (50) yards of any public street, road, right-of-way or highway, or established/marked trail within the boundaries of the Skagway Borough, unless the area is a designated rural trapping area per subsection (B) of this section.

B. Rural Trapping Areas. Trapping is prohibited within twenty-five (25) yards of any public street, road, right-of-way or highway, or established trail within the designated rural trapping areas designated as follows:

1. Beginning one-half (1/2) mile north of Mile Marker 3 on the Klondike Highway and extending to the north boundary of the Skagway Borough;

2. Beginning one-half (1/2) mile north of the Gold Rush Cemetery on the railroad tracks on the east side of the Skagway River and extending to the north boundary of the Skagway Borough;

3. Beginning at the West Creek Bridge and extending north and west (Dyea side) to the Borough boundaries;

4. Alaska State Land Survey No. 97-36, which is the location of the municipal incinerator.

C. In addition to the areas designated in subsections (A) and (B) of this section, trapping is prohibited on properties within the following parks and common use areas: Mollie Walsh Park, Pullen Creek Park, Yakutania Point and Smugglers Cove, Seven Pastures, Dyea Point, Dyea Campground and Flats and community cemeteries.

**9.04.040 Private property.**

A. When trapping occurs on private property, "Active Trapping" signage must be prominently posted.

B. Trappers must have permission from landowners to trap on private property.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for furbearers in Unit 1D with an amount reasonable necessary for subsistence of 90% the harvestable surplus.

## WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal will require that all “tree traps” be placed at least 5 feet off the ground and at least 50 yards from any public street, or road, or right-of-way or highway, or established/marked trail within the Municipality of Skagway. Leghold and other ground traps will be prohibited within 1/8 mile from any public street, or road or right-of-way or highway or established/marked trail within the Skagway Borough.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2014 the Skagway Assembly contacted the department inquiring about trapping regulations and a desire to create an ordinance that mimics Juneau’s to address complaints from some members of the public. The department attended several public meetings as a resource to better inform the decision-making process. In June of 2014 the Municipality of Skagway implemented a trapping ordinance that conflicts with the current State of Alaska trapping regulations. In May of 2015 the Skagway Borough submitted an agenda change request (ACR) to the Board of Game to put into regulation their municipal ordinance; this was denied because it didn’t meet the criteria defined in ACR policy under 5 AAC 92.005. The Upper Lynn Canal Advisory Committee, the Alaska Trappers Association, and several Skagway residents have contacted ADF&G biologists, the department’s Boards Support staff, and the Alaska Department of Law expressing concerns about the ordinance.

Title 9 of the Skagway Municipal Ordinance contains municipal codes for public safety. Concerns have been raised regarding the legality of regulating trapping by the Municipality of Skagway. In response to these concerns the Municipality included the regulations in the public safety title.

The area available for trapping within the Skagway Borough is limited. Trapping is not legal within the Klondike Gold Rush Historic Park and steep terrain elsewhere within the Skagway Borough poses challenges which make it difficult to trap far from trails.

From 2008 through 2017 the number of successful trappers in the Skagway Area ranged from 1-4 per year. Trapper harvest has varied during the same period (Table 32-1).

Table 32-1. Unit 1D Skagway area trapper harvest, regulatory years 2008–2017.

| RegYear | Beaver | Wolves | Wolverines | Marten |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2008 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2009 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2010 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2011 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| 2012 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 |
| 2013 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 27 |
| 2014 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| 2015 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 26 |
| 2016 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| 2017 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 37 |
| Average | 0.5 | 0.4 | 1.1 | 17.1 |

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adoption of this proposal is not anticipated to have significant biological impacts. The proposal mirrors Skagway Municipal Ordinance chapter 9.04.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the public or to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 33**
**5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Ed Toribio

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
The proposal would open a drawing hunt for goats in Units 1A and 1B on that portion of the Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. The bag limit would be one male goat, with season dates of August 1 - December 31, two permits would be available, and the hunt would be open to both residents and nonresidents.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

Units 1A and 1B, Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet:

- No open season

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in Unit 1A outside of the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–10 goats. There is also a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in Unit 1B and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–10 goats. A portion of the proposed hunt area is within the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Legal harvest could be up to two billies per year. Incidental take of nannies may occur. Given the relative isolation of this population and low minimum counts, any kind of harvest would likely be additive mortality. Harvest may increase the rate of decline, if adopted.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Cleveland Peninsula (Figure 33-1) is an approximately 31-mile-long peninsula from the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet to the southernmost tip. It is mainly forested, with lakes and muskeg complexes scattered throughout. It also has nine ridges and mountain tops that have historically held mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*; hereafter referred to as goats). Hunting in this area was prized for its trophy goats. Approximately 20 miles separate suitable goat habitat between the lower Cleveland Peninsula and mainland mountain complexes. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department) research staff and faculty from Trent University are collaborating on a study currently looking into the genetic relations between goats north and south of this divide to determine genetic flow between the northern and southern portion of the peninsula. The southern end of the Cleveland Peninsula was subjected to one clear cut on Sealaska Corporation land.

The former hunting season allowed residents to take two goats on the Cleveland Peninsula from regulatory years 1949 to 2002 (e.g., RY16 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017). Harvest and days hunted were steady from 1985 to 1990 until there was a decline from 1990 to 2001 (Figure 33-2). The average number of hunters from 1985 to 2001 was 12 (Range = 3 – 24). Low minimum counts of goats and a decrease in occupied habitat on the Cleveland Peninsula was presented to the board by Alaska Department of Fish and Game during the 2003 Board meeting. The result was a closure of the goat season on the Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet, which has remained closed since 2003. Two proposals were brought up in 2004 to open a hunting season on the Cleveland Peninsula, both of which were not adopted due to biological concern.

Goats on the Cleveland Peninsula were first surveyed in 1982; however, surveys have only consistently been flown with fixed-wing aircraft from 1996 – 2018 (Figure 33-3). From 1996 – 2018 minimum counts ranged from 7 – 30 goats. The number of occupied mountains and ridges in the lower peninsula decreased from nine in 1982 to five in 2018. The ratio of kids to adults from 1997 – 2018 averaged 40 kids per 100 adults, although this is based on a low sample size. The remainder of Unit 1A from 1982 – 2018 averaged 28 kids per 100 adults. Surveys during RY12-14 with a sightability correction factor estimated the population on the lower Cleveland Peninsula at 30-40 goats. However, confidence intervals were wide due to small sample sizes. The department's best estimate is there are about 35-50 goats on the lower Cleveland Peninsula.

Previous research suggests that harvest should not occur on a population of mountain goats with ≤ 50 individuals. Research suggests a harvest rate of 1 – 4 percent of a native population and 7 – 15% of an introduced population is sustainable. The Cleveland Peninsula population is native with an estimated population of fewer than 50 mountain

goats. Genetic research suggests that only 1 goat per generation (10-15 years) immigrates to the lower Cleveland Peninsula.

The Department manages goats conservatively due to their sensitivity to harvest. The Department flies minimum count surveys on a yearly basis in Game Management Units (Unit) 1A and 1B. Weather may prohibit goat surveys and funding constrains the Department to survey only a portion of Unit 1A. Based on the minimum count of goats the Department allocates 6 points for every 100 goats surveyed. Harvest of each billy counts as one point and a nanny counts as two points. The area in or adjacent to the survey area is closed by emergency order once 6 points is reached for every 100 goats counted.

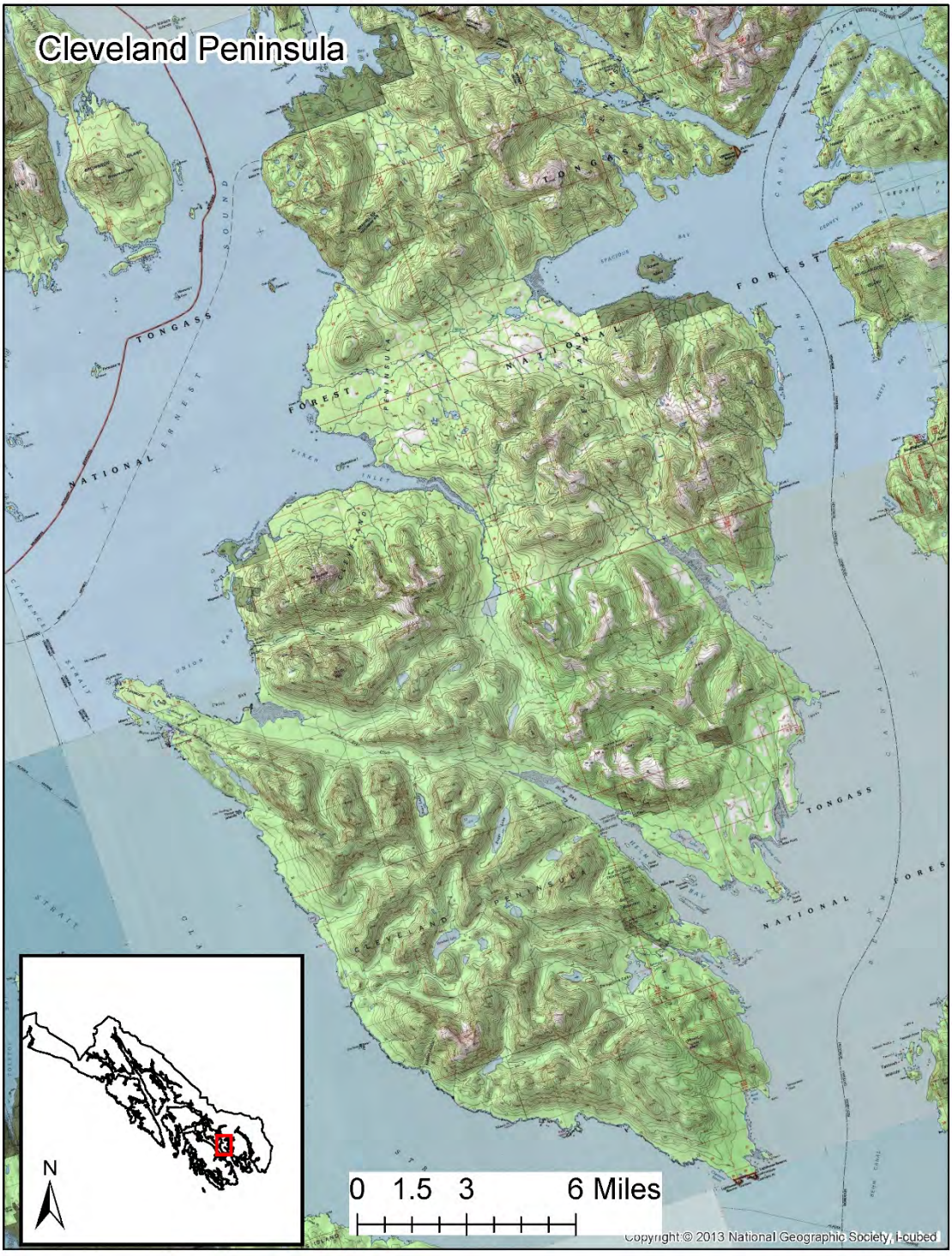


Figure 33-1. Map of the Cleveland Peninsula in Game Management Unit 1A and 1B.

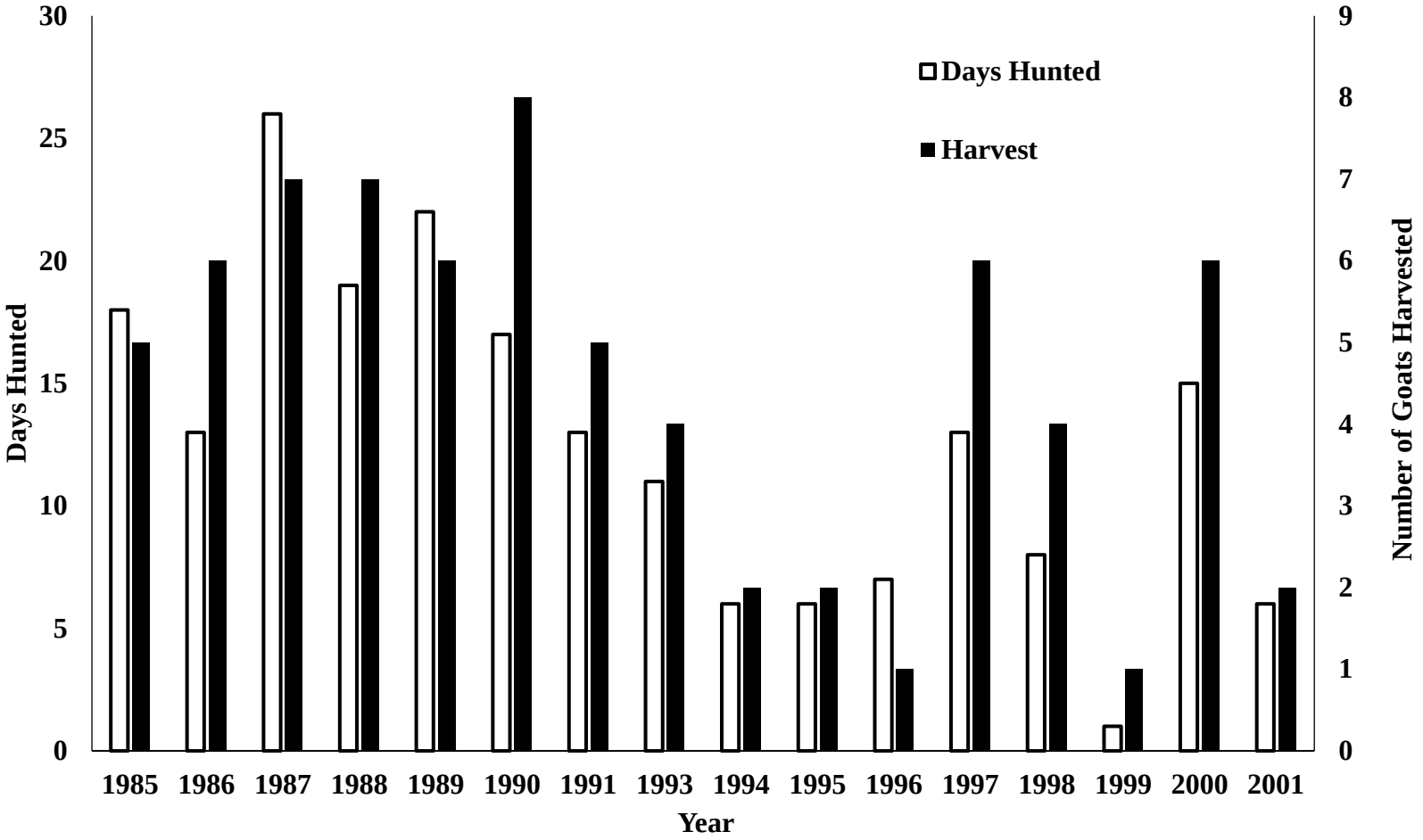


Figure 33-2. Harvest and Days Hunted for Mountain Goats on the Cleveland Peninsula 1985-2001. Days hunted include successful and non-successful hunters.

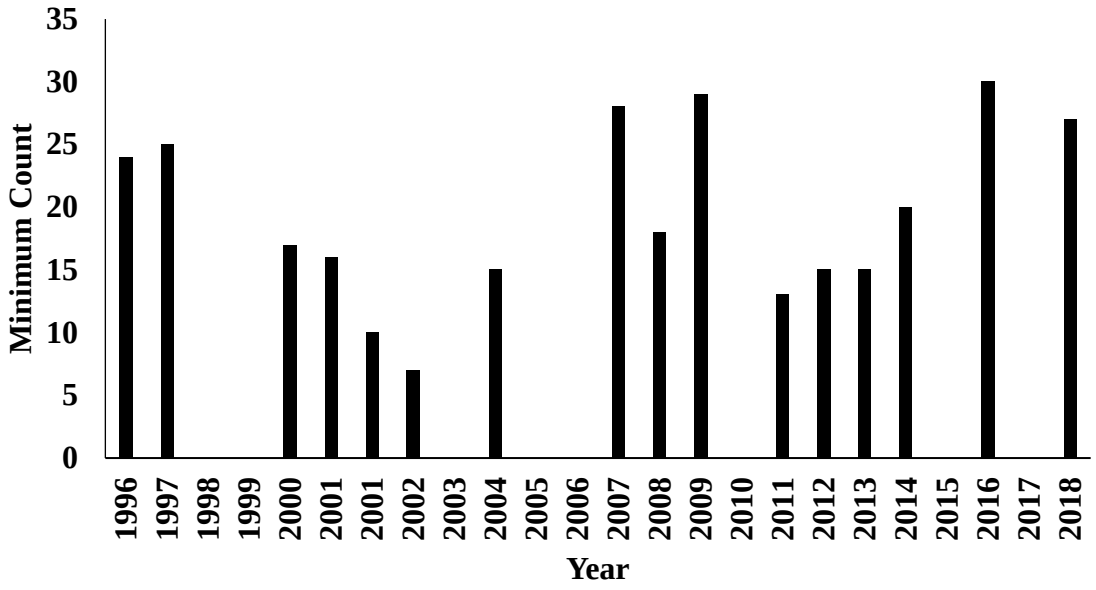


Figure 33-3. Minimum counts of mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*) on the lower Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and the Santa Anna Inlet from 1996 to 2018. Years without data represent years not surveyed.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**
The Department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because there is a biological concern for the population of mountain goats on the Cleveland Peninsula in Units 1A and 1B. If this proposal were adopted, the Department recommends only one draw permit for a billy every other year to reduce additive mortality, and the board will need to determine when to allocate the permit between residents and nonresidents. If a nanny were taken, the hunt should be shut down for two cycles or 4 years to allow for recovery.

**COST ANALYSIS:**
Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 34**
**5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Ed Toribio

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
The proposal would open a registration hunt for goats in Units 1A and 1B on that portion of the Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. The bag limit would be one male goat, with season dates of August 1 - December 31; however, hunters would be restricted to a ten-day hunting period within those dates, and the hunt would be closed by emergency order after two goats have been harvested. The hunt would be open to both residents and nonresidents.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
Units 1A and 1B, Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet:

- No open season

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in Unit 1A outside of the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–10 goats. There is also a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in Unit 1B and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–10 goats. A portion of the proposed hunt area is within the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
Legal harvest could be up to two billies a year. Incidental take of nannies may occur. Given the relative isolation of this population and low minimum counts, any harvest would likely be additive mortality. Harvest may increase the rate of decline, if adopted. Billies are also the most likely to disperse between mountains and ridges, so a decrease in billies could result in increased inbreeding, reduced fitness, and an increased decline in the meta population.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Cleveland Peninsula (Figure 33-1) is an approximately 31-mile-long peninsula from the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet to the southernmost tip. It is mainly forested, with lakes and muskeg complexes scattered throughout. It also has nine ridges and mountain tops that have historically held mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*; hereafter referred to as goats). Approximately 20 miles separate suitable goat habitat between the lower Cleveland Peninsula and mainland mountain complexes. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department) research staff and faculty from Trent University are collaborating on a study currently looking into the genetic relations between goats north and south of this divide to determine genetic flow between the northern and southern portion of the peninsula. Hunting in this area was prized for its trophy goats. The southern end of the Cleveland Peninsula was subjected to one clear cut on Sealaska Corporation land.

The former hunting season allowed residents to take two goats on the Cleveland Peninsula from regulatory years 1949 to 2002 (e.g., RY16 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017). Harvest and days hunted were steady from 1985 to 1990 until there was a decline from 1990 to 2001 (Figure 33-2). The average number of hunters from 1985 to 2001 was 12 (Range = 3 – 24). Low minimum counts of goats and a decrease in occupied habitat on the Cleveland Peninsula was presented to the board by Alaska Department of Fish and Game during the 2003 Board meeting. The result was a closure of the goat season on the Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet, which has remained closed since 2003. Two proposals were brought up in 2004 to open a hunting season on the Cleveland Peninsula, both of which were not adopted due to biological concern.

Goats on the Cleveland Peninsula were first surveyed in 1982; however, surveys have only been consistently flown with fixed-wing aircraft from 1996 – 2018 (Figure 33-3). From 1996 – 2018 minimum counts ranged from 7 – 30 goats. The number of occupied mountains and ridges in the lower peninsula decreased from nine in 1982 to five in 2018. The ratio of kids to adults from 1997 – 2018 averaged 40 kids per 100 adults, although this is based on a low sample size. The remainder of Unit 1A from 1982 – 2018 averaged 28 kids per 100 adults. Surveys during RY12-14 with a sightability correction factor estimated the population on the lower Cleveland Peninsula at 30-40 goats. However, confidence intervals were wide due to small sample sizes. The department's best estimate is there are about 35-50 goats on the lower Cleveland Peninsula.

Previous research suggests that harvest should not occur on a population of mountain goats with ≤ 50 individuals. Research suggests a harvest rate of 1 – 4 percent of a native population and 7 – 15% of an introduced population is sustainable. The Cleveland Peninsula population is native with an estimated population of fewer than 50 mountain goats. Genetic research suggests that only 1 goat per generation (10-15 years) immigrates to the lower Cleveland Peninsula.

The Department manages goats conservatively due to their sensitivity to harvest. The Department flies minimum count surveys on a yearly basis in Game Management Units (Unit) 1A and 1B. Weather may prohibit goat surveys and funding constrains the Department to survey only a portion of Unit 1A. Based on the minimum count of goats

the Department allocates 6 points for every 100 goats surveyed. Harvest of each billy counts as one point and a nanny counts as two points. The area in or adjacent to the survey area is closed by emergency order once 6 points is reached for every 100 goats counted.

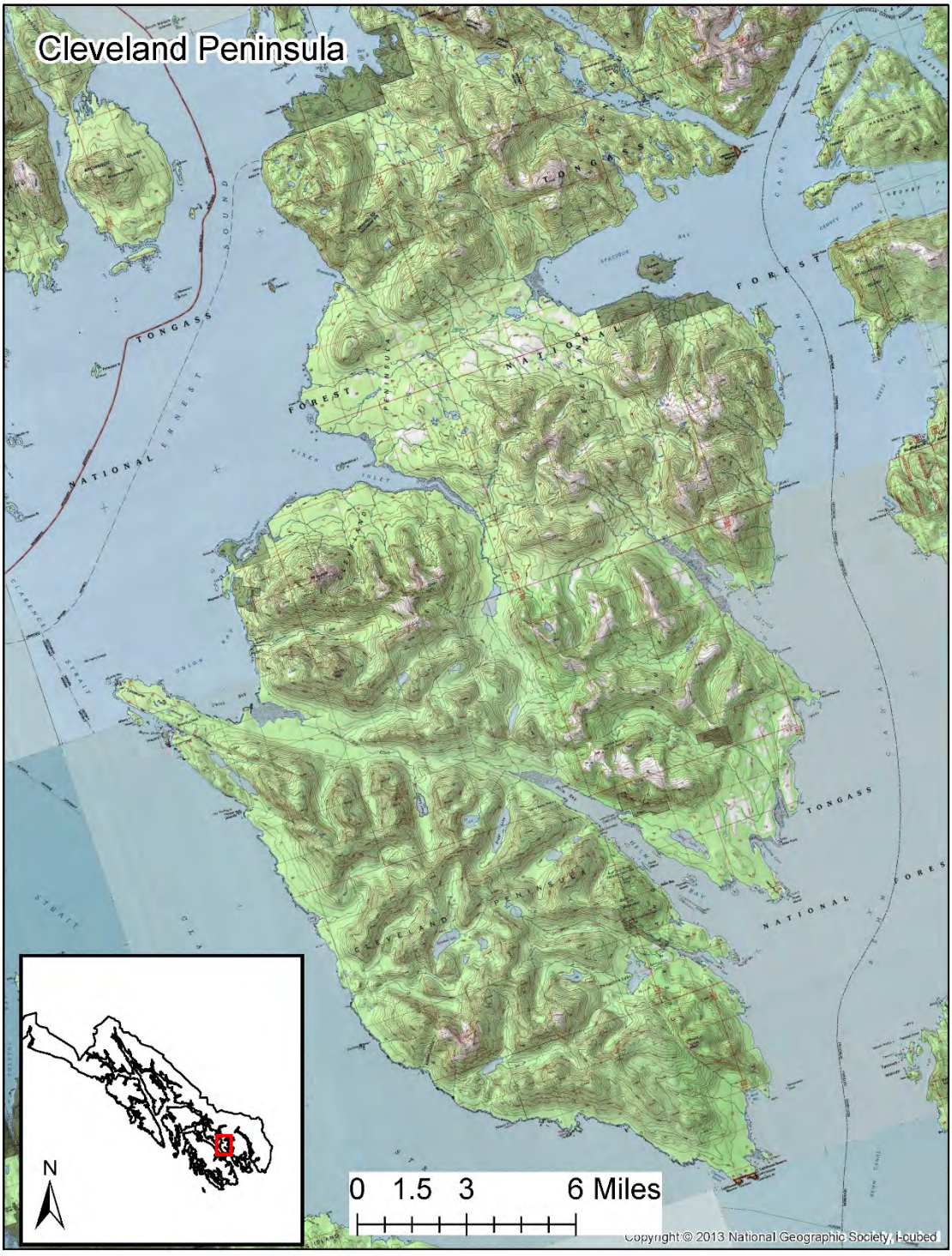


Figure 33-1. Map of the Cleveland Peninsula in Game Management Unit 1A and 1B.

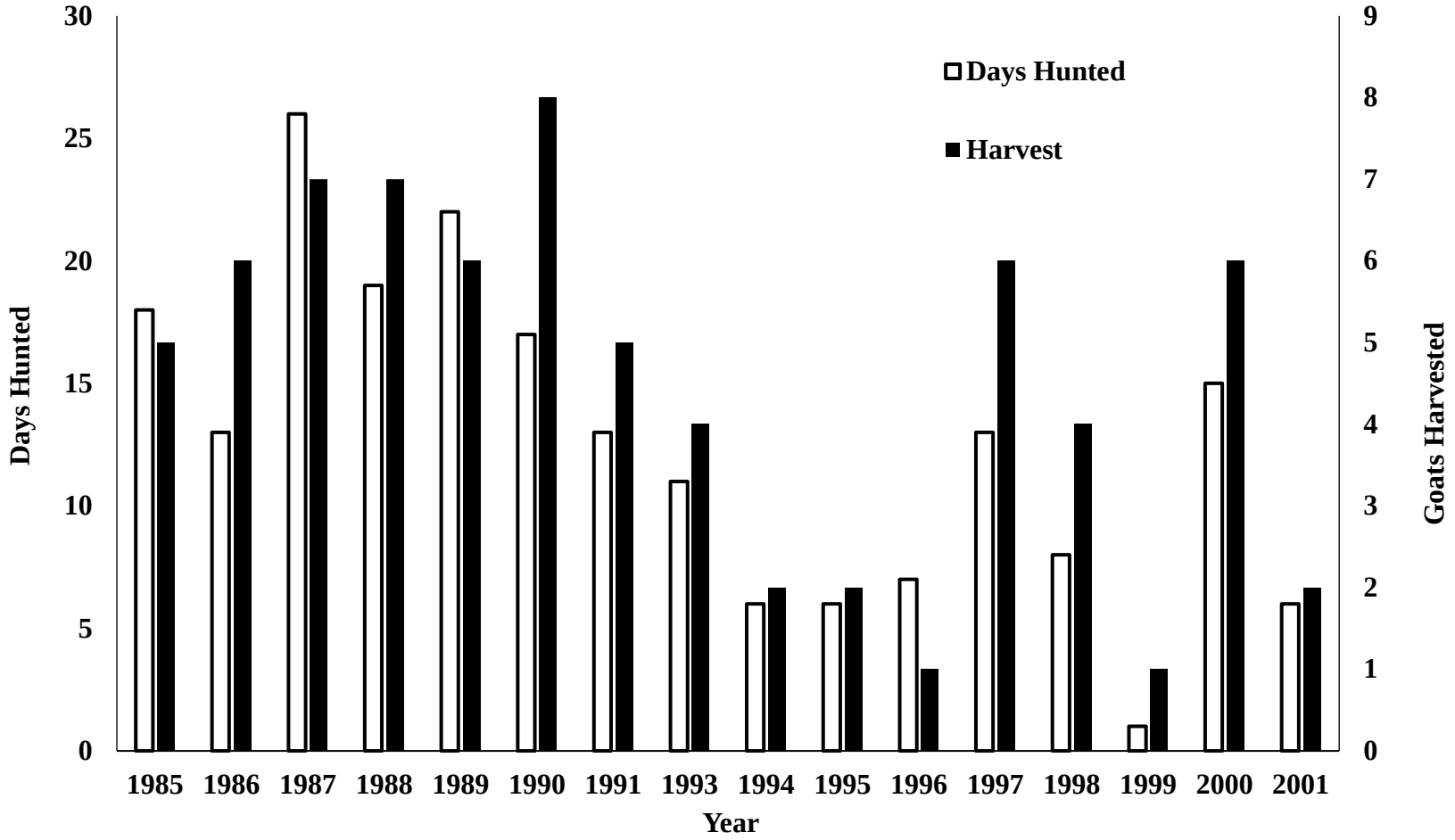


Figure 33-2. Harvest and Days Hunted for Mountain Goats on the Cleveland Peninsula 1985-2001. Days hunted include successful and non-successful hunters.

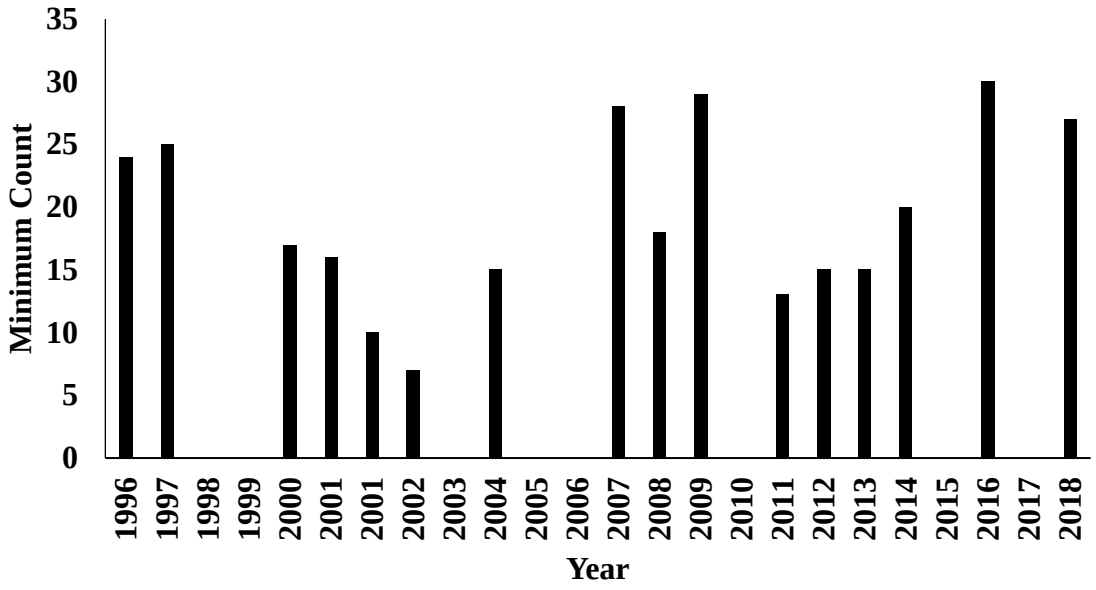


Figure 33-3. Minimum counts of mountain goats (*Oreamnos americanus*) on the lower Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and the Santa Anna Inlet from 1996 to 2018. Years without data represent years not surveyed.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**
The Department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because there is a biological concern for the population of mountain goats on the Cleveland Peninsula in Units 1A and 1B. If this proposal were adopted, the Department recommends only one billy be harvested every other year to reduce additive mortality. If a nanny were taken, the hunt should be shut down for two cycles or 4 years to allow for recovery. The board will need to determine when to allocate between residents and nonresidents if the proposal is adopted.

**COST ANALYSIS:**
Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 35**
**5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.**

**PROPOSED BY:** ADF&G

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
Change the hunt structure for Revillagigedo Island mountain goat in Unit 1A as follows:

For Unit 1A, eliminate the mountain goat drawing hunt DG007 and add that hunt area to the RG001 hunt area, Remainder of Revillagigedo Island, and increase the allowable number of drawing permits that may be issued on Revillagigedo Island from 25 to 50 permits.

| **Resident Units and Bag Limits** | **Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| (1)<br>Unit 1(A), Revillagigedo Island, except that portion [WEST OF CARROLL INLET AND CREEK, WEST OF THE DIVIDE BETWEEN CARROLL CREEK AND THE SOUTH FORK OF ORCHARD CREEK, SOUTH OF ORCHARD CREEK, ORCHARD LAKE, SHRIMP BAY, AND GEDNEY PASS] **south and west from Donnelly Point to Naha Bay, Roosevelt Lagoon, Naha River, and Heckman Lake, the divide between Heckman Lake and the head of Salt Lagoon and the western shores of Salt Lagoon and George Inlet to Mountain Point** | Aug. 1—Dec. 31<br>(General hunt only) | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited | | |
| Unit 1(A), remainder of Revillagigedo Island<br><br>1 goat by draw permit only; up to [25] **50** permits will be issued; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 |

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Resident Units and Bag Limits** | **Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)** | **Nonresident Open Season** |
|---|---|---|
| Unit 1(A), Revillagigedo Island, except that portion west of Carroll Inlet and Creek, west of the divide between Carroll Creek and the south fork of Orchard Creek, south of Orchard Creek, Orchard Lake, Shrimp Bay and Gedney Pass<br><br>1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 | Aug. 15—Dec. 31 |
| Unit 1(A), remainder of Revillagigedo Island<br><br>1 goat by draw permit only; up to 25 permits will be issued; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 |

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in Unit 1A outside of the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–10 goats. The drawing hunt DG007 is entirely within the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence

Area and a portion of the existing registration hunt area (RG001) is within the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Drawing results for DG007 from 2016 resulted in 233 applicants with 10 permits distributed. If adopted, the Department expects an increase in hunting effort in the area and a subsequent increased harvest. Opportunity to access the hunt by boat or airplane would be available immediately, and by highway vehicle once the US Forest Service road is connected from Shoal Cove to Revilla Road via a state road connection above Salt Lagoon at the head of George Inlet.

**BACKGROUND:**

Despite the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (Department) steadily increasing the number of available drawing permits, the mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*; hereafter referred to as goats) population on northern Revillagigedo Island continues to increase. Mild winters, limited predation, and good habitat conditions likely account for this growth. However, additional growth of this population could risk damage to fragile alpine habitat. The Department believes this portion of Revillagigedo Island can support more goat hunting and harvest than allowed under the current maximum number of draw permits (25) that may be issued. To better manage this population and provide additional hunting opportunity, we propose eliminating draw hunt DG007, adding the DG007 hunt area to the registration, RG001, hunt area, and increasing the maximum number of drawing permits that may be issued on Revillagigedo Island from 25 to 50 permits (Figures 35-1 and 35-2). These changes will enable the Department to conserve goat habitat and provide additional hunting opportunity when goat numbers are high, while still controlling goat hunting effort in more easily accessed areas near Ketchikan through drawing permits.

DG007 was first opened in 2011 and has since had a low annual harvest. Harvest from 2011 to 2017 totals 8 goats (Figure 35-3). Average harvest from 2011 – 2017 was two goats. This low annual harvest is likely due to the poor access, boat and plane only, compared to DG005 and DG006 on Revilla which have trail access from the road system. This introduced population of goats continues to expand throughout the island and the Department believes opening up more opportunity to hunt goats will not have a negative impact on the population.

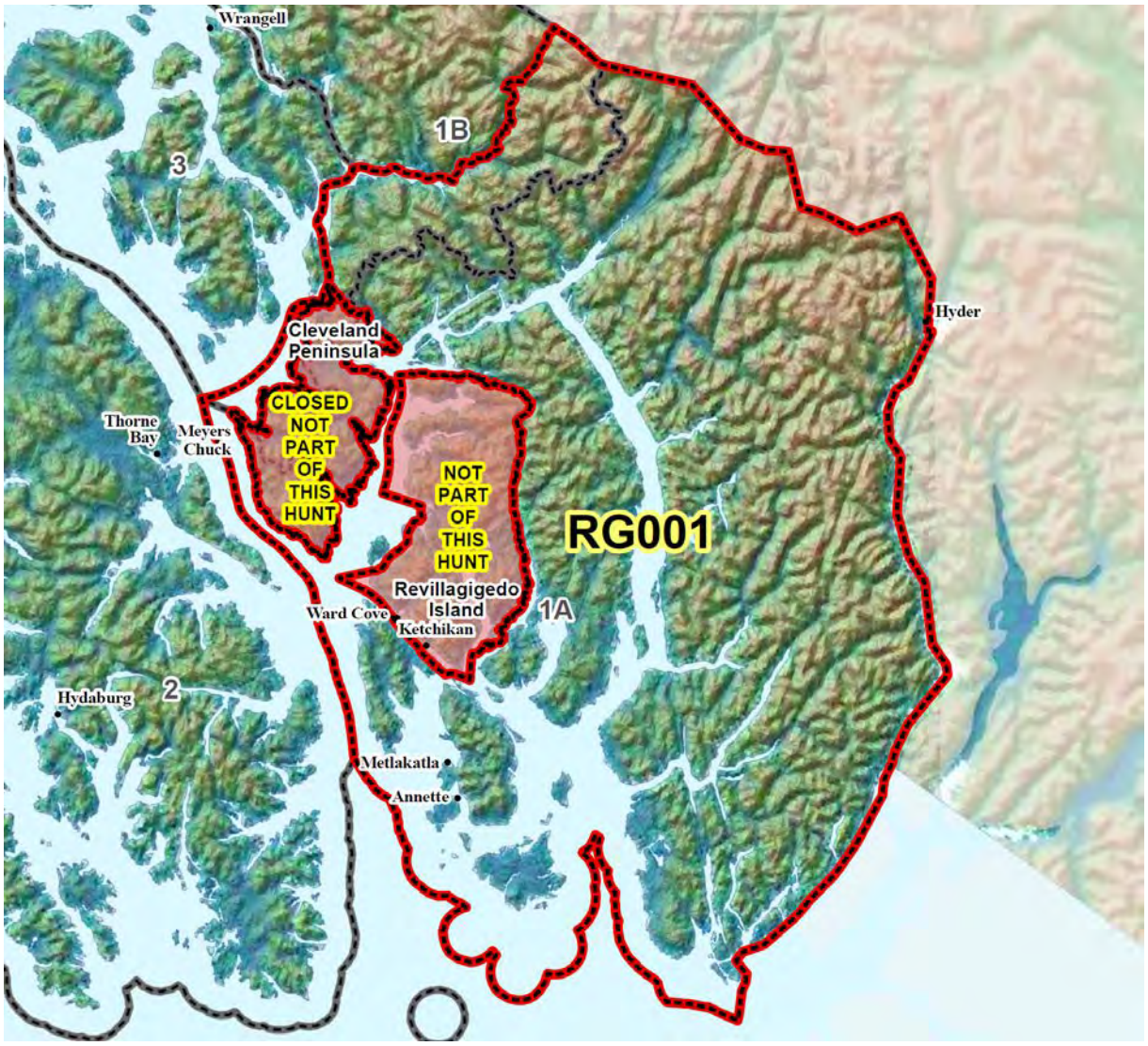

Figure 35-1. Current boundaries of registration hunt 001 (RG001) in Game Management Unit 1A.

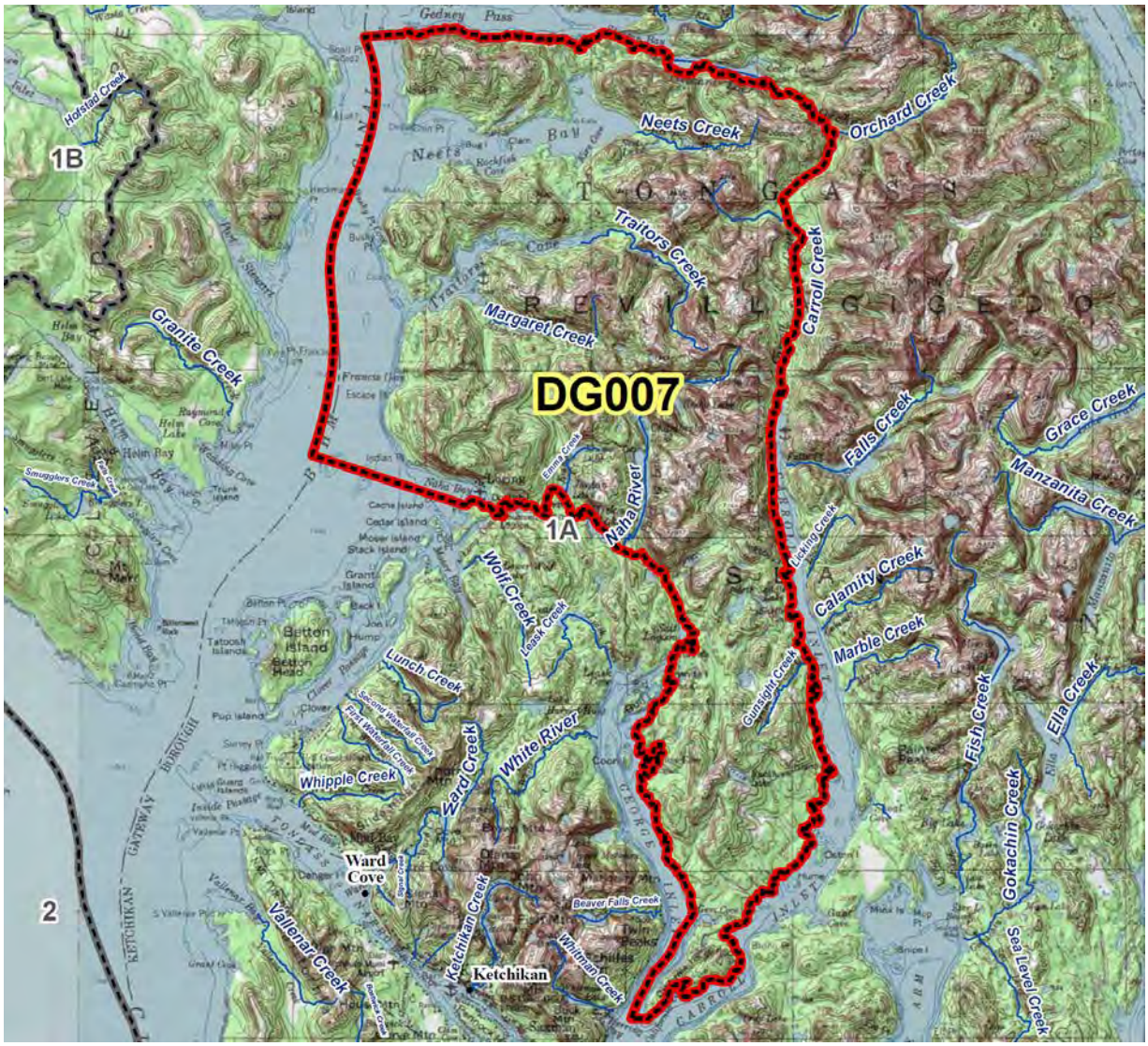

Figure 35-2. Current Boundaries of goat drawing hunt 007 (DG007) in Game Management Unit 1A.

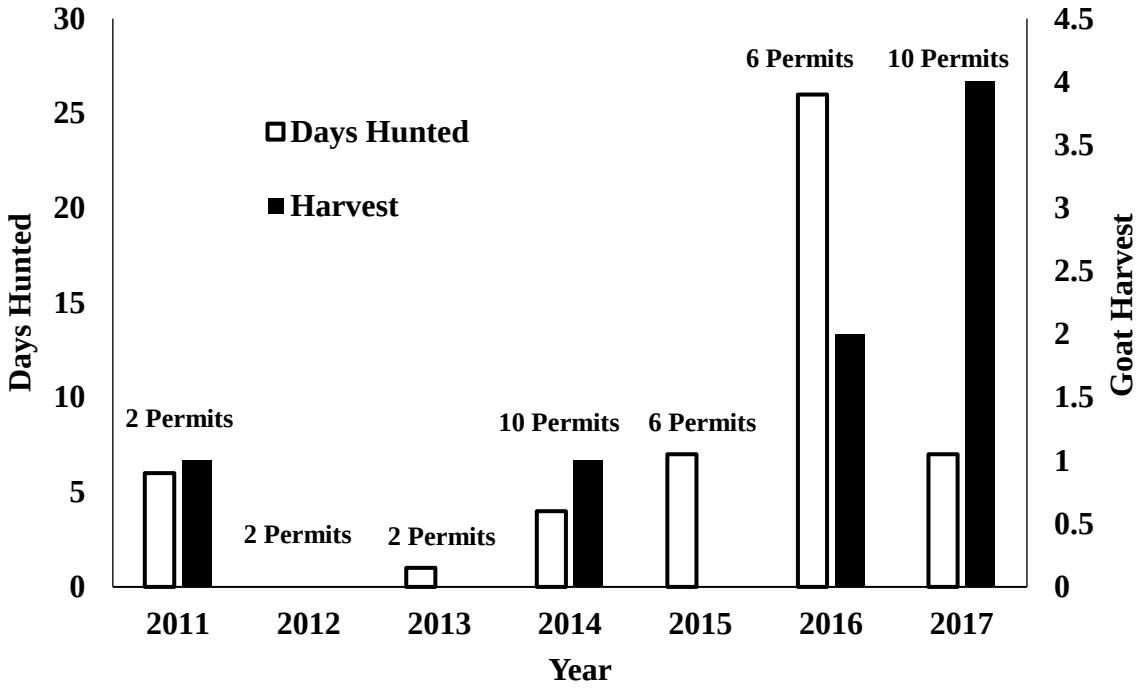


Figure 35-3. Mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) harvest and days hunted in Drawing hunt DG007 from 2011 – 2017.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adoption of the proposal will allow for increased opportunity for goat hunting close to Ketchikan. It should also help relieve the browse pressure of the goats on critical winter habitat in the area, which may reduce the likelihood of a population crash from under-harvesting from this population of goats.

**COST ANALYSIS:**

Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 36**

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

**PROPOSED BY:** Robert Jahnke

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**

The proposal will increase the bag limit for deer from 2 bucks to 4 bucks, with no change to the season length.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

The deer hunt in the portion of Unit 1A on the Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and the Santa Anna Inlet is open to both residents and nonresidents and the bag limit is two bucks, with season dates of August 1 - November 30.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 1A outside the Ketchikan Nonsubsistence Area, and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5–40 deer. A portion of the Cleveland Peninsula is also in Unit 1B, which also has a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer, with an amount reasonably necessary of 40–50 deer.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

If the proposal is adopted there would be a potential increase in harvest. Populations are currently at low densities on the Cleveland Peninsula and have been since 2000. This meta population has not increased since the initial decrease from about 1995 to 2000, and an increase in harvest could cause additive mortality and continue to decrease deer abundance.

**BACKGROUND:**

The Cleveland Peninsula (Figure 36-1) is an approximately 31-mile-long peninsula from the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet to the southernmost tip. It's mainly forested, with lakes and muskeg complexes scattered throughout. There is an abundance of *Vaccinium spp*. in the understory of the forest that is highly nutritious for Sitka-black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*). However, winters are more severe on the Cleveland Peninsula, which receives greater snowfall than the surrounding islands, excluding deer from much of this forage in winter. We believe that due to this lack of forage during energetically stressful winter months, deer abundance is low. The southern end of the Cleveland Peninsula was subjected to one relatively large clear cut on Sealaska Corporation land.

Deer pellet surveys started in 1981 on the Cleveland Peninsula in the Helm Bay area and in 1993 in Port Stewart (Figure 36-2 and Figure 36-3, respectively). Data are limited in the Port Stewart area but data from the Helm Bay area show a trend in abundance. From 1984 to 1995, deer abundance was relatively high. Abundance decreased during a series of hard winters (i.e., heavy snowfall) from 1995 to 1998. A similar downward trend in abundance is present in the Port Stewart data from 1995 to 2001 (Figure 36-3). Deep snow inhibits movement of deer and excludes them from forage they need to survive the winter. After the hard winters, deer abundance has remained low.

The hunting season for Sitka black-tailed deer was a four buck bag limit until the 2009-2010 season. The low abundance of deer sustains a low harvest (Figure 36-4). Hunters took an average of five deer per year from 2011 – 2017. In addition, wolf harvest is low on the Cleveland Peninsula. From 2011 – 2017, 10 wolves have been taken south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet in Unit 1A.

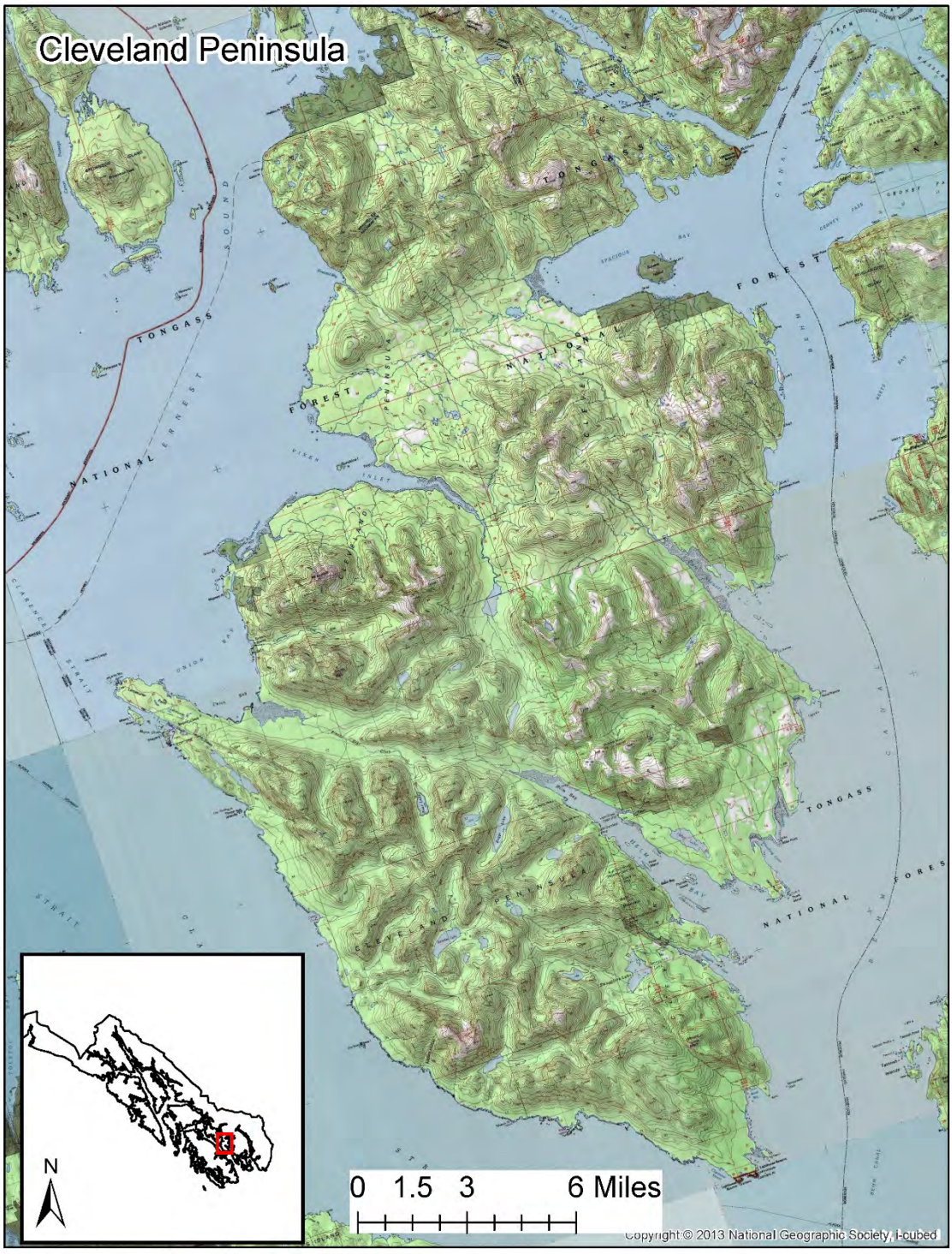


Figure 36-1. Map of the Cleveland Peninsula in Game Management Unit 1A and 1B.

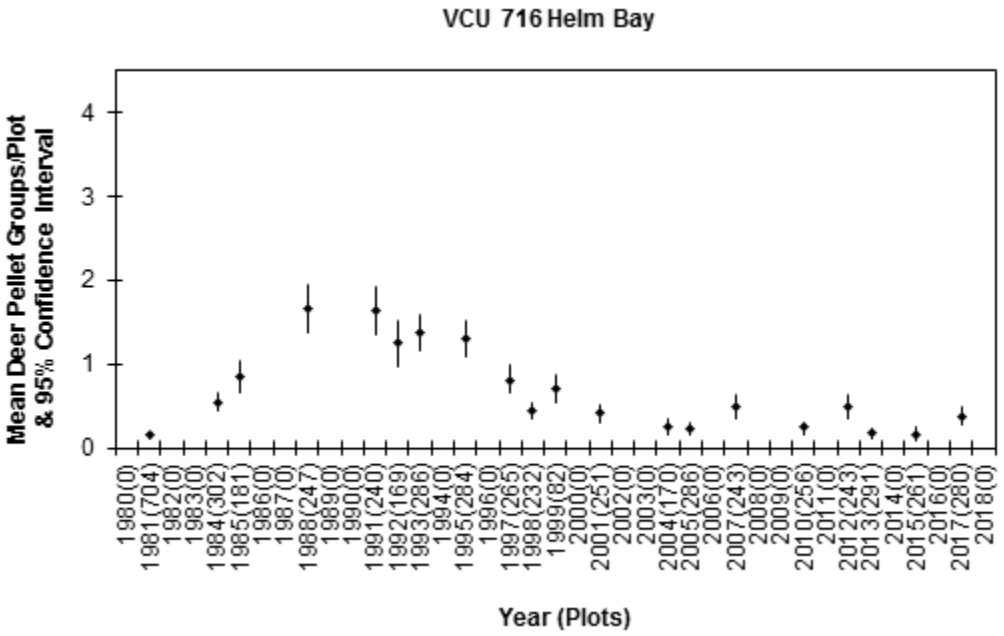


Figure 36-2. Helm Bay pellet count data from 1980 to 2018 showing mean pellet groups per plot and 95% confidence intervals. The number of pellet plots surveyed for each year is included in parenthesis after each year on the x-axis.

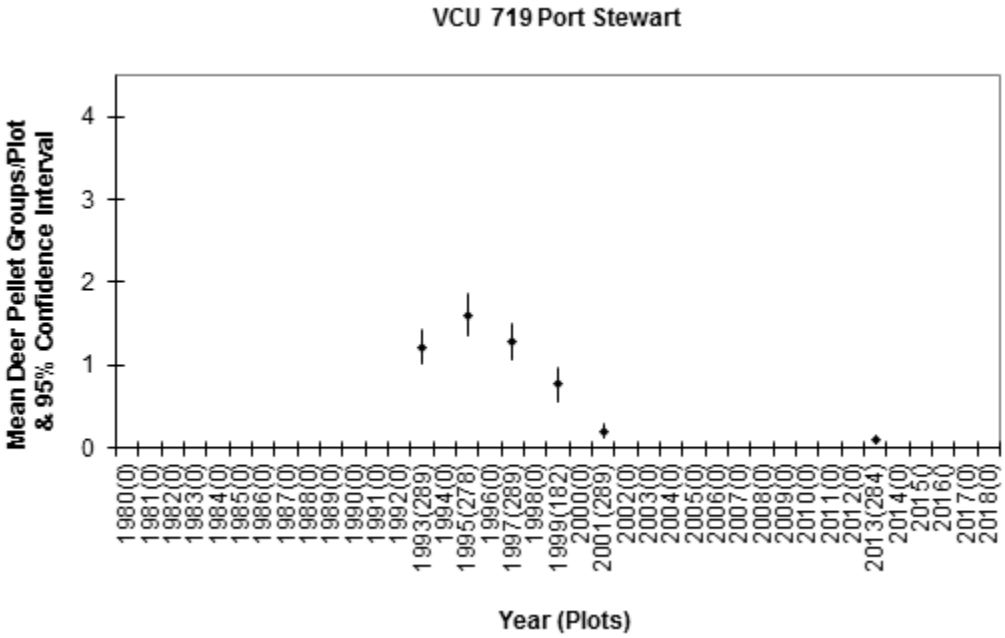


Figure 36-3. Helm Bay pellet count data from 1980 to 2018 showing mean pellet groups per plot and 95% confidence intervals. The number of pellet plots surveyed for each year is included in parenthesis after each year on the x-axis.

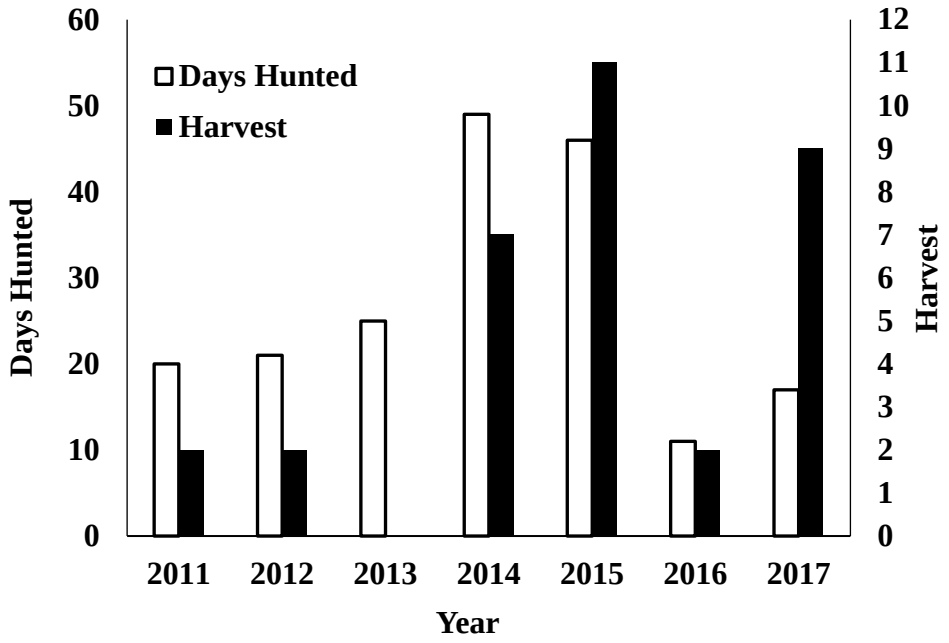


Figure 36-4. Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) harvest on the Cleveland Peninsula from regulatory years 2011 to 2017 (e.g., RY16 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017). Days hunted include days from successful and non-successful hunters.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Deer abundance on the Cleveland Peninsula is low and additional harvest may contribute some additive mortality that could reduce buck numbers; however, the resulting reduction in buck abundance would not be a biological concern. The Department has no reason to believe that there would be a substantial change in effort on the Cleveland Peninsula if the bag limit were increased.

**COST ANALYSIS:**

Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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## ANALYSIS
## and
## RECOMMENDATIONS
## for

## BOARD OF GAME PROPOSAL 37

*The department is in the process of preparing draft analysis and recommendations for Proposal 37, which addresses deer in Unit 1A. The department will provide its analysis and recommendations in advance of the January 2019 Southeast Board of Game meeting.*

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**PROPOSAL 38 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Chad Crittenden

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
The proposal would extend the trapping season for beaver in Unit 1A by two weeks, to end May 15.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
The trapping season for beaver in Units 1-5 is Nov. 1 – Apr. 30, with no bag limit.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
The trapping season for beavers in Unit 1A would change to Nov. 1 – May 15. The adoption of this proposal may increase harvest for beaver in Unit 1A. The Department estimates a small increase in overall harvest. Based on the yearly mean beaver harvest of 26 from 1998 – 2017, we estimate a mean increase of 2 beavers a year. This season extension would set the season in Unit 1A apart from the rest of Southeast Alaska: it is currently the same for all of Southeast Alaska (Units 1-5).

**BACKGROUND:**
Low prices at auction and the substantial amount of work to prepare pelts for sale, compared to other more valuable furbearers, limits beaver (*Castor canadensis*) harvest. Many trappers primarily trap beaver for use as bait for carnivores such as wolves (*Canis lupus*) and American marten (*Martes americanus*) while some target them for use in making garments.

Mean beaver harvest in Unit 1A has been low from 1998 – 2017 (Figure 38-1). During this time mean harvest was 26 beavers a year (range = 2 – 65). Mean number of trappers was six from 1998 – 2017 (Figure 38-2).

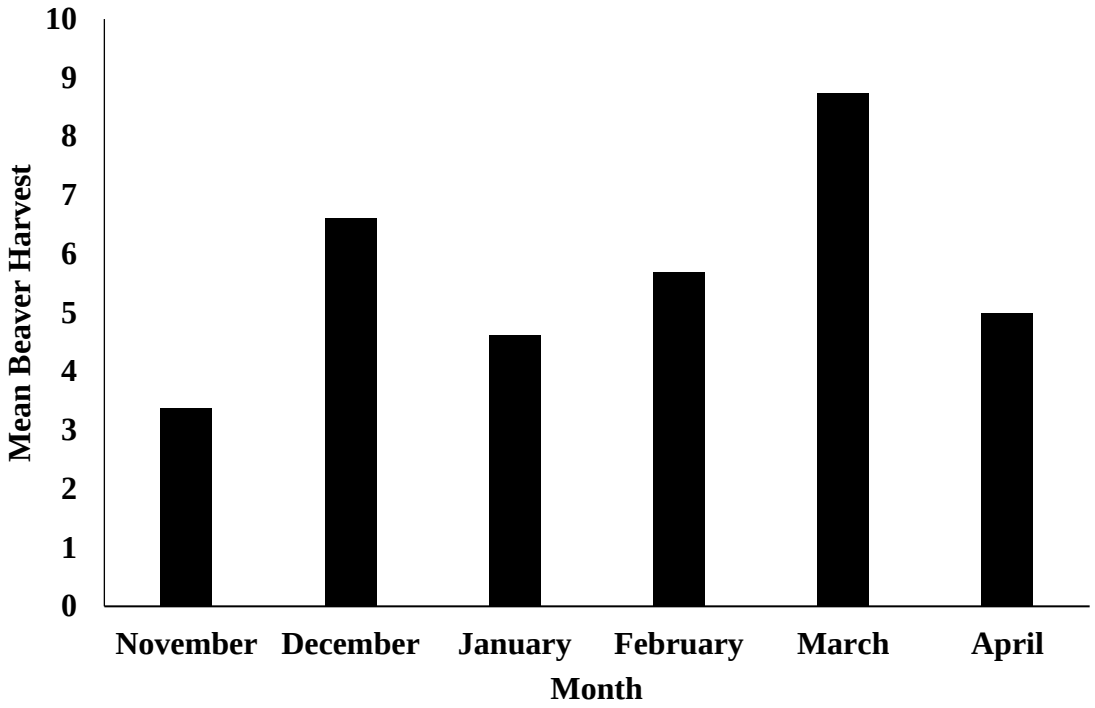


Figure 38-1. Mean beaver (*Castor canadensis*) harvest by month from regulatory year 1998 – 2017 (e.g., RY16 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017).

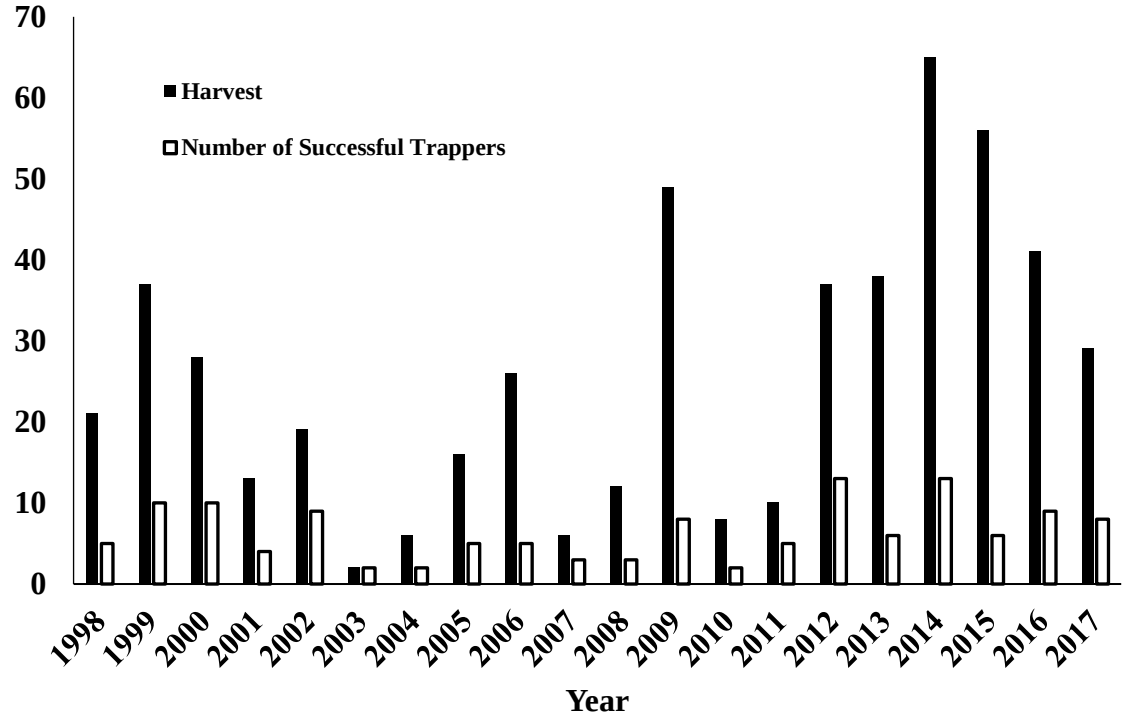


Figure 38-2. Beaver (*Castor canadensis*) harvest and number of successful trappers during regulatory year 1998 – 2017 (e.g., RY16 = 1 July 2016–30 June 2017).

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. If the proposal is adopted the Department estimates a slight increase in harvest. The board should consider consistency, since this would misalign this area with the rest of Southeast Alaska.

**COST ANALYSIS:**
Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

## ANALYSIS
## and
## RECOMMENDATIONS
## for

## BOARD OF GAME PROPOSAL 39

*The department is in the process of preparing draft analysis and recommendations for Proposal 39, which addresses deer in Unit 2. The department will provide its analysis and recommendations in advance of the January 2019 Southeast Board of Game meeting.*

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**PROPOSAL 40**
**5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
The proposal would decrease the nonresident bag limit for deer in Unit 2 from 4 bucks to 2 bucks annually.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
The deer hunt in Unit 2 is currently 4 bucks, with season dates of Aug. 1 – Dec. 31. The hunt is open to both residents and nonresidents.

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 2 and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence finding of 1,500 – 1,600 deer.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
Based on the past five years of data a mean of 175 deer are taken each year by non-residents compared to 3,452 by residents (Figure 40-1). Of those 175 deer, only 5% are taken on the third or fourth harvest ticket tag (9 deer; Figures 40-2 and 40-3). We expect that if this proposal were adopted that harvest would be reduced by about 9 bucks a year.

**BACKGROUND:**

Many factors influence Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*; deer) populations in Unit 2. These factors include severe winters (deep snow accumulation), predation (the two main predators of deer are wolves (*Canis lupu ligonis*) and black bears (*Ursus americanus*)), timber harvests (which reduce critical winter habitat), and hunter harvest.

Non-resident harvest constitutes a small fraction of overall deer harvest in Unit 2 (Figure 40-1). A mean of 5% of deer were harvested by non-residents from 2013 – 2017 (Figure 40-2). Of all successful non-resident hunters, a mean of 5% of the total harvest was from the third or fourth harvest ticket tag. This amounts to a mean of 9 deer each year taken with the third and fourth harvest ticket tags (Figure 40-3).

Recently, the Federal Subsistence Board passed a reduction for non-federally qualified hunters from a four deer bag limit to a two deer limit in Unit 2. Federal Board members cited public testimony about low deer numbers. Rural residents of Units 1-5 are federally qualified to hunt deer under federal regulations in Unit 2.

Deer harvest, the number of hunters, and the number of days hunted have fluctuated over the past 20 years in Unit 2 (Figure 39-2). The mean number of hunters, total days hunted, and harvest between 1998 – 2017 were 2,125 hunters (range = 1,510 – 2,812), 11,549 days hunting (range = 7,182 – 14,086), and 3,008 deer harvested (range = 1,885 – 4,249). From 2003 – 2015 the number of hunters, days hunted, and harvest steadily increased. A decrease in all three metrics occurred in 2016 and continued in 2017 (Figure 39-2). The decrease in harvest is likely a function of a decrease in hunters and days spent hunting. Sightability of deer may be decreasing as timber stands cut 20 – 30 years ago become too thick to spot deer, increasing days hunted before killing a deer, and creating the perception of low deer abundance.

The decreased harvest, which alone may be interpreted as a decrease in abundance, is not supported by pellet count or aerial alpine survey data. All six pellet transects in the area show stable or increasing trends in abundance (see Proposal 39, figures 39-3 through 39-8). Sampling these plots since 1985 gives us an indicator of trends in abundance over this long time frame. Our second year of aerial alpine surveys show an increase of abundance in central, and a slight decrease in northern, Prince of Wales Island. However, we take caution in analyzing the aerial survey data since we only have two years of data for central Prince of Wales and 4 years for northern. The department does not currently know how the aerial counts correspond with the population size. Future research on this subject will shed light on this relationship.

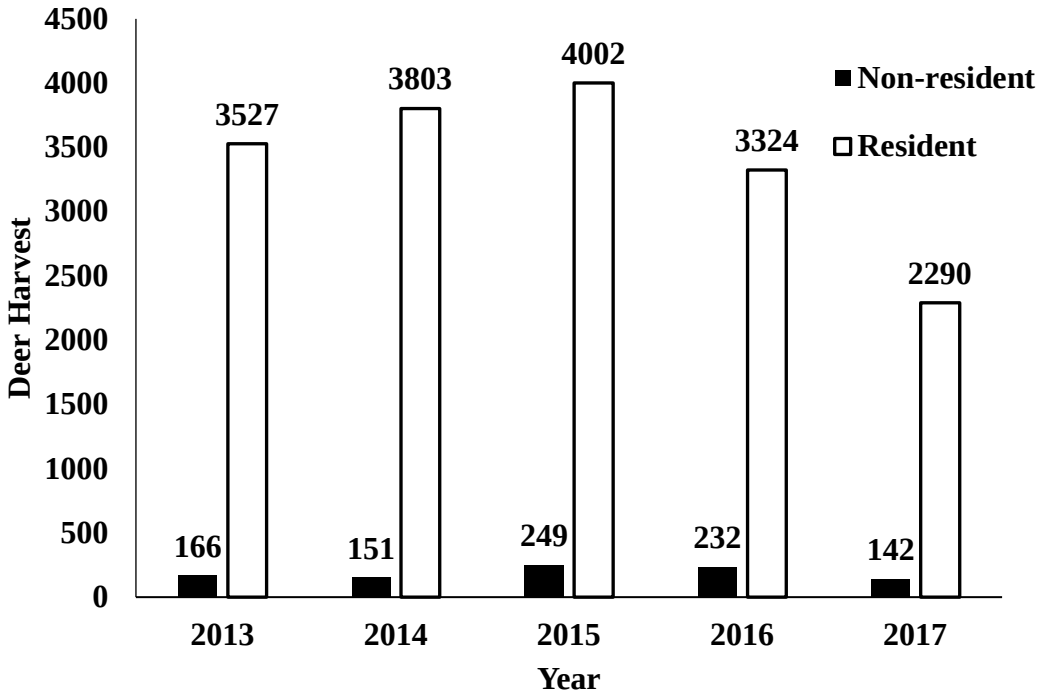


Figure 40-1. Total harvest of Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) for residents and non-residents from 2013 – 2017.

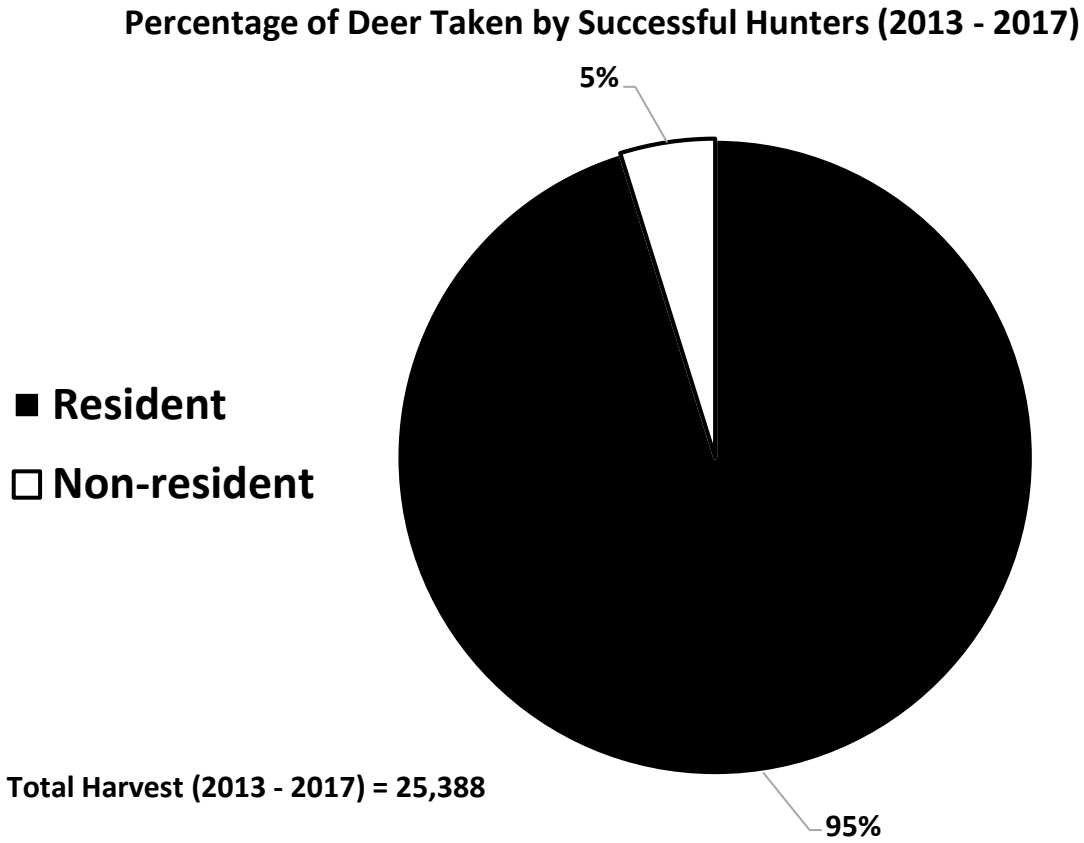

Figure 40-2. Percentage of Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) taken by residents and non-residents between 2013 – 2017.

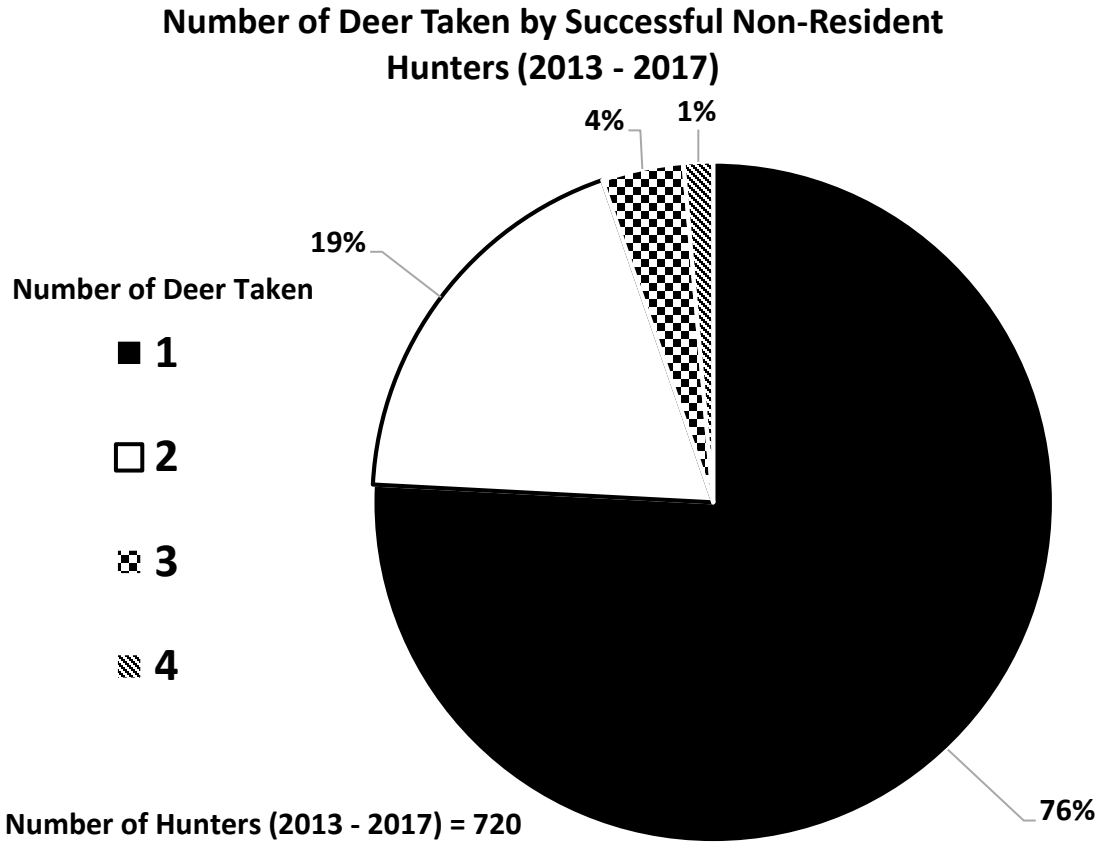


Figure 40-3. Number of Sitka black-tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus sitkensis*) taken by successful non-residents (N = 720) between 2013 – 2017.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**

The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The majority of harvest comes from residents. There is no conservation concern for the population of deer at this time and restricting non-resident harvest from 4 bucks to 2 would have little to no impact on overall harvest.

**COST ANALYSIS:**

Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 41**

**5 AAC 92.010. Harvest tickets and reports.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**

The proposal would require harvest tickets be attached to deer harvested in Unit 2 at the time of harvest, and remain attached until the deer reaches the location it will be processed for human consumption.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

Harvest ticket(s) must be carried in the field and must be validated by cutting out the month and day immediately upon killing the game. Validated harvest ticket(s) must remain in the hunter's possession until the animal has been delivered to the location where it will be processed for human consumption. Upon request from an employee of the department or a peace officer of the state, a person may not refuse to present for inspection any license, harvest ticket, permit, tag, or bowhunter certification card, any game, or any apparatus designed to be, and capable of being, used to take game.

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 2 and an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence finding of 1,500 – 1,600 deer.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Harvest tickets would be required to be attached to harvested deer, but the proposal does not specify which part of the harvested deer. The paper tickets would likely fall off en route between the field and the place of processing. Requiring harvest tickets be affixed to harvested deer in one area only would also lead to confusion among hunters and further complicate the regulations. This would also introduce a discrepancy in the regulations for hunters hunting under state regulations and hunters hunting under federal regulations. Affixing harvest tags to deer may not have the desired effect of reducing poaching and easing the burden of enforcement because currently harvest tickets are made of card stock and would likely fall off during transport if attached to a harvested deer.

**BACKGROUND:**

Harvest tickets (HT) have long been the method for keeping track of harvested game from the field until it arrives at a processing location. Validating the harvest ticket by cutting out the day and month of harvest ensures that the hunter cannot use the HT for another deer. There are reports of taking deer out of season and taking deer over the bag limit. The enforcement issue arises when the same ticket is used for another deer while in transport, or not validated at all. For deer, hunters must have all unused harvest tickets in their possession and must validate harvest tickets in sequential order beginning with harvest ticket number one. Based on anecdotal reports and the fates of radio-collared deer, the failure to report deer that are otherwise legal during the hunting season probably accounts for a substantial amount of unreported human caused mortality for deer in Unit 2. It is impossible to quantify the amount of either activity that has not resulted in enforcement actions.

Enhancing law enforcement's ability to reduce illegal harvest benefits users that do obey the rules. Unreported harvest leads to conservative harvests during times of shortage and increases difficulty in allocating among users. Due to the limited presence of enforcement available on Prince of Wales Island, requiring harvest tickets or locking tags to be affixed would likely result in little change in the reported take of deer. An increased effort to educate and build trust with users may make more progress.

Increased enforcement presence would likely reduce take out of season; however, as with the current harvest ticket system, enforcement officers must encounter hunters in the field engaged in the non-legal activity or receive reports and evidence from others to take action. This limits the effectiveness of fixable tickets or locking tags.

Proposal 50 from the 2004 Board of Game meeting had similar intentions; however, the cost associated with implementing the change was deemed too high due to the desire to implement the change statewide. At the time the change was to switch its tagging method over to the plastic-based tags, but again the expense associated with this change was considered too significant. To be effective, federal regulations would need to be changed to mirror this regulation as well.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**
The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS:**
Cost to the department of implementing this system depends on the method implemented for tags. As suggested, harvest tickets would likely fall off en route from the kill to the place where the meat would be processed, thus another solution is needed. Plastic locking tags may prove a sturdier choice, and at $0.10 per tag, are relatively cheap. Based on the 10-year average number of hunters in Unit 2 (11,472 hunters) and assuming we give out 5 tags to every hunter to correspond with the federally qualified hunter bag limit of 5 deer a year, the cost of the tags would be roughly $5,736 per year. However, if the board were to address this on a statewide basis and require locking tags for all deer, the cost would be higher. The department issues approximately 25,000 general season deer harvest tickets annually, and each harvest ticket has 6 ticket stubs because some areas have a six deer bag limit; on this scale, the department would spend approximately $15,000 annually on deer locking tags.

**********

**PROPOSAL 42**
**5 AAC 92.008(1). Harvest guideline levels.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
Increase the allowable take of wolves in Unit 2 from 20 to 30 percent of the most recent unit-wide preseason population estimate.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
The annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should not exceed 20 percent of the unit-wide, preseason population estimate by the department.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
The harvest guideline level (HGL) would increase to 30%, which would allow more wolves to be

harvested. For example, the 2018 – 2019 season quota would change to 68 wolves as compared to a quota of 45 wolves based on the current 20% HGL.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 1997, the Board adopted a harvest guideline level for wolves (*Canis lupus ligoni*) in Unit 2. The HGL read: "(1) wolves: the annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should not exceed 25% of the unitwide, preseason population as estimated by the department". This changed to 30% in 2001 based on an analysis of mortality by the department which indicated low natural mortality, and thus an increase in harvest would be sustainable. In 2014 an estimated low population of 89 wolves initiated changing the HGL by lowering it to 20% of the recent population estimate for the 2015 season (Table 42-1). The department took further action in the 2015 season by cutting the quota in half due to the low 2014 estimated population.

Since 2012, the department and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) have collaborated on abundance estimates of the wolf population in Unit 2 (Table 42-1) using a DNA-based technique. Individual wolves were identified via genotyping which enables the estimation of wolf densities using a spatially-explicit capture-recapture technique. This method requires multiple recaptures of individual wolves in different locations.

Following autumn 2016 and autumn 2017 Unit 2 population estimates of 232 wolves and 225 wolves, respectively, the department considers the Unit 2 population recovered from an estimated low of 89 wolves in autumn 2014 (Table 42-1). We believe the conservative harvest management strategy in place since autumn 2015 promoted growth of this population and that it is now appropriate to change how harvest is managed.

Managing through an HGL requires annual population estimates and closing the trapping season by emergency order, the latter of which has resulted in short seasons. Annual population estimates represent the previous preseason population of wolves. The wolf trapping season from 2015 – 2017 lasted anywhere from 16 – 20 days. The quota has also recently been exceeded multiple times (Figure 42-1, Table 42-2); however, the harvest was successfully reduced from the high rates in 2012 and 2013.

Table 42-1. Autumn wolf population estimate and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) during 2013–2017 for Game Management Unit 2.

| Year | Population estimate | 95% CIs |
|---|---|---|
| 2013 | 221 | 130–378 |
| 2014 | 89 | 50–159 |
| 2015 | 108 | 69–167 |
| 2016 | 231 | 192–285 |
| 2017 | 225 | 198–264 |

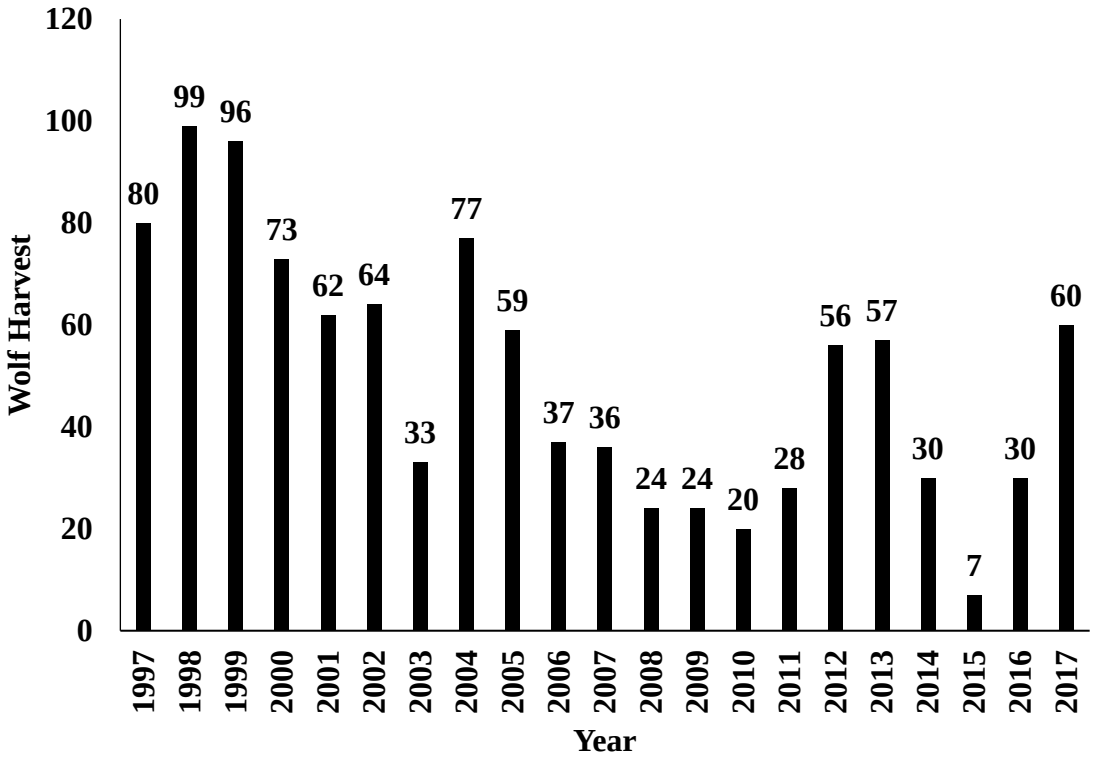



Figure 42-1. Wolf (*Canis lupus ligoni*) harvest from 1997 – 2017 from Game Management Unit 2.

Table 42-2. Wolf (*Canis lupus ligoni*) harvest and harvest cap from 1997 – 2017 from Game Management Unit 2.

| Year | Wolf harvest | Harvest cap |
|---|---|---|
| 1997 | 80 | 90 |
| 1998 | 99 | 90 |
| 1999 | 96 | 90 |
| 2000 | 73 | 90 |
| 2001 | 62 | 90 |
| 2002 | 64 | 90 |
| 2003 | 33 | 90 |
| 2004 | 77 | 90 |
| 2005 | 59 | 90 |
| 2006 | 37 | 90 |
| 2007 | 36 | 90 |
| 2008 | 24 | 90 |
| 2009 | 24 | 90 |
| 2010 | 20 | 60 |
| 2011 | 28 | 60 |
| 2012 | 56 | 60 |
| 2013 | 57 | 60 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2014 | 30 | 25 |
| 2015 | 7 | 9 |
| 2016 | 30 | 11 |
| 2017 | 60 | 46 |

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**
The Department is **NEUTRAL.** See Proposal 43 for the department's alternative to this proposal.

**COST ANALYSIS:**
Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 43** Change the harvest management strategy for wolf in Unit 2.

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal makes the regulatory changes necessary to implement a new Unit 2 wolf population and harvest management strategy based on a unit-wide population objective. If this proposal is adopted, harvest management would change in three ways: 1) season dates and bag limits would be unchanged, but the department would be granted explicit authority to close the Unit 2 wolf trapping season by emergency order; 2) the current 14-day sealing requirement for wolves trapped in Unit 2, originally adopted to facilitate in-season harvest monitoring, would revert to "on or before 30 days after the date of take"; and 3) instead of setting harvest quotas using a percentage of the estimated population, the department would be granted flexibility to manage harvest by season length to maintain the population within a specific population objective range identified by the Board.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

Hunting Regulations

| | |
|---|---|
| Season dates | Dec. 1 – Mar. 31 |
| Bag limit | 5 wolves |
| Sealing | Within 30 days of take |

Trapping Regulations

| | |
|---|---|
| Season dates | Dec. 1 – Mar. 31 |
| Bag limit | No limit |
| Sealing | Within 14 days of take |

Harvest Guideline Level

Up to 20% of the unit-wide preseason population as estimated by the department

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use determination for wolves in Unit 2 with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 90% of the harvestable surplus.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The intent of this proposal is to implement a new harvest management strategy for Unit 2 wolves. Managing to meet a population objective would allow the department greater flexibility to adjust harvest opportunity to changing wolf abundance. Finally, establishing a population objective would clarify expectations for the wide range of public with an interest in this population and allow the department to develop a record of successful management.

**BACKGROUND:** Since 1997 harvest of the Unit 2 wolf population has been managed using a Harvest Guideline Level (HGL) that is a percentage of the department's preseason population estimate. The HGL has ranged from 25% (RY1997-RY1999) to 30% (RY2000-RY2014) and in RY2015 the Board reduced the HGL to 20% of the preseason population estimate.

Harvest quotas were calculated from estimated wolf abundance but estimating wolf abundance in a forested environment is challenging. The estimate used to calculate harvest quotas from RY1997 – RY2009 (267 wolves) was based on estimates of deer abundance, known wolf harvest, and a per capita birth rate calculated from data gathered in Unit 2. The harvest quotas for RY1997 – RY2009 were 90 wolves per year. Following a decline in harvest and an apparent decline in wolf abundance the harvest quota was reduced to 60 wolves during RY2010-RY2013 and 25 wolves during RY2014 (Figure 43-1).

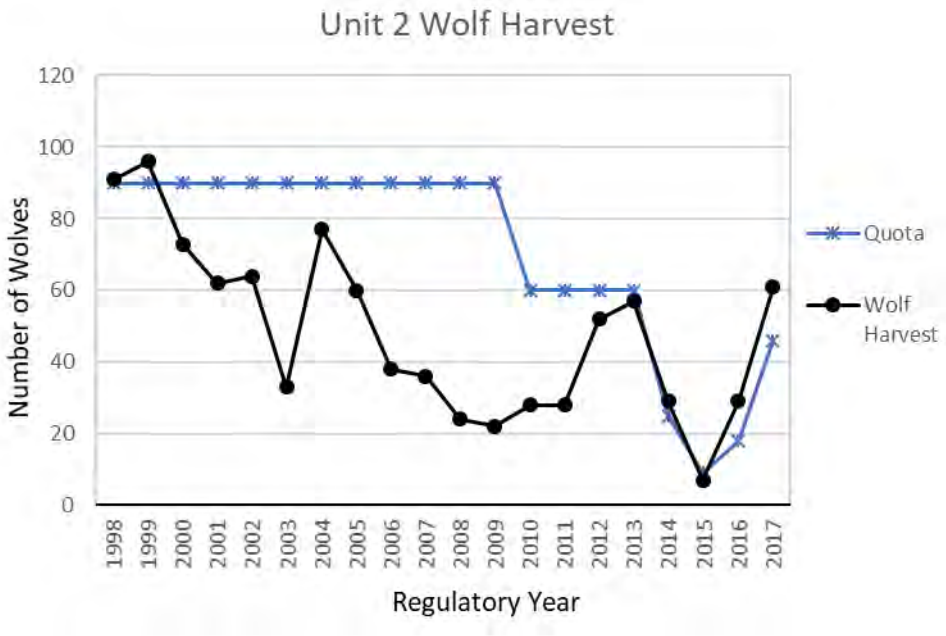



Figure 43-1. Harvest quotas and actual harvest of wolves in GMU 2, regulatory years 1998-2017.

In 2012 the department began experimenting with a noninvasive DNA-based mark-recapture population estimation technique. That technique involves collecting wolf hair from an array of hair boards distributed throughout a large study area. Wolves are attracted to hair boards by a scent lure, roll on the boards, and leave hair in barbed wire; DNA is extracted from hair follicles. In fall 2012 too few samples were collected to compute an estimate, but we have succeeded at producing population estimates each fall since 2013 and the precision of those estimates quickly improved and remains high (Figure 43-2). This new technique enables more regular and precise population estimates than were previously possible. It also enables the department to manage harvest for a population objective and confirm that objective is being met.


Figure 43-2. Violin plot of autumn wolf population estimates during 2013–2017 for Game Management Unit 2. White dots represent the point estimates used for managing harvest, black bars represent the 95% confidence intervals, and violin plots (grey shapes) represent the probability density of the population estimates. Wider horizontal ranges are associated with more likely values of the population estimate. The point estimates for each year are located at the widest portion of their respective violin plot.

Using the new DNA mark-recapture technique the department estimated the fall 2013 Unit 2 wolf population at 221 wolves (95% CI = 130-378) (Figure 43-2). The fall 2014 population was estimated at only 89 wolves (95% CI = 50-159), and the fall 2015 population was estimated at 108 wolves (95% CI = 69-167). Despite being much lower, the 2014 and 2015 estimates did not significantly differ from the 2013 estimate. In January 2015 the Board reduced the HGL to 20%

of the estimated population. At that time an Endangered Species Act-related Species Status Assessment was underway, but the fall 2014 population estimate was not yet known. Following the low fall 2014 population estimate the department further reduced the RY2015 harvest quota to 9 wolves and the RY2016 quota to 11 wolves, or 10% of the respective population estimates. The reduced HGL and harvest quotas were effective at growing the Unit 2 wolf population, and in fall 2016 and fall 2017 the population was estimated at 231 (95% CI = 192-285) and 225 (95% CI = 198-264) wolves, respectively. Those estimates were significantly higher than estimates in 2014 and 2015.

Recent fluctuations in the Unit 2 wolf population highlight the department's need for further guidance on the public's goals for this population. The current HGL only addresses the appropriate level of harvest, leaving the department to determine the appropriate size of this insular population. In RY 2015 and RY 2016 the department determined the population was too low and curtailed harvest at half of the HGL. In RY 2017 and RY 2018 the department determined the population was sufficient to harvest the full HGL. While we have been successful at maintaining a sustainable harvest, we request guidance from the Board on the appropriate size of the Unit 2 wolf population.

Setting a population objective would serve the public in a number of ways. Currently many Unit 2 residents feel there are too may wolves and that wolf abundance has affected deer harvest.

The department has developed a draft Unit 2 Wolf Management Plan (Appendix 1) that suggests a population objective range and outlines how harvest could be managed when the population is within, above, and below the objective range.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department recommends the board **ADOPT** this proposal. Regulating abundance of Unit 2 wolves to within a population objective range by adjusting harvest opportunity will provide the public and department with much needed clarity on the management goals for this population.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**PROPOSAL 44 - 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.** Extend the trapping season for wolf in Unit 2 as follows:

Change the starting date for wolf trapping season on state and private lands in Unit 2 to align with the starting date for wolf trapping season on federal land.

Wolf season shall be [DECEMBER1] (same date as wolf trapping on Unit 2 federal lands) – March 31.

**PROPOSED BY:** Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?**
The trapping season for wolves would change in Game Management Unit 2 to an open season from November 15 – March 31.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**
State of Alaska Trapping
Unit 2: Open Season Dec. 1 – Mar. 31, No limit

Federal Trapping
Unit 2: Open Season Nov. 15-Mar. 3, No limit

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**
The state trapping season for wolves would change in Game Management Unit 2 to an open season from November 15th – March 31st. If adopted, this proposal will provide Unit 2 wolf trappers with an additional 15 days of trapping opportunity on state and privately managed lands (approximately 28% of the Unit 2 land area). The aligned seasons would simplify regulations and logistics for trappers trapping on federal and non-federal lands.

An increase of the wolf season by two weeks may have some increase in harvest, however, with the harvest guideline still in place, the season will still close by emergency order once 20% of the latest population estimate is reached. Based on the past 10 years of data, we expect a potential increase in mean harvest of 6 wolves in November. Opening state and private land two weeks earlier would open up land below the high tide line, which is state land, to trapping wolves with popular tide sets. An earlier start to the season may result in an early closure of the trapping season if the harvest increases.

**BACKGROUND:**
Following a fall 2014 unit-wide population estimate of 89 wolves (*Canis lupus ligoni*) and a concurrent Endangered Species Act Species Status Assessment, in January 2015 the Board adopted a reduced Harvest Guideline Level (HGL) for Unit 2 wolves of 20% as a conservation measure that would continue to provide some harvest opportunity while allowing the population to recover. By fall 2016, the population had grown to an estimated 231 wolves; the fall 2017 population estimate resulted in 225 wolves.

In response to this increase in the wolf population, the department has proposed to open the hunting season to the maximum length possible, remove the harvest guideline, and change the sealing requirement from within 14 days of kill to within 30 days (see Proposal 43). This change in regulations may provide increased opportunity to harvest wolves.

Harvest during November from 2008 – 2017 averaged six wolves (Figure 44-1). The wolf trapping season from 2015 – 2017 lasted anywhere from 16 – 20 days. Harvest of wolves by federally qualified trappers is much higher than that of non-qualified trappers (Figure 44-2). Mean harvest in November by federally qualified trappers was six animals (Figure 44-1).

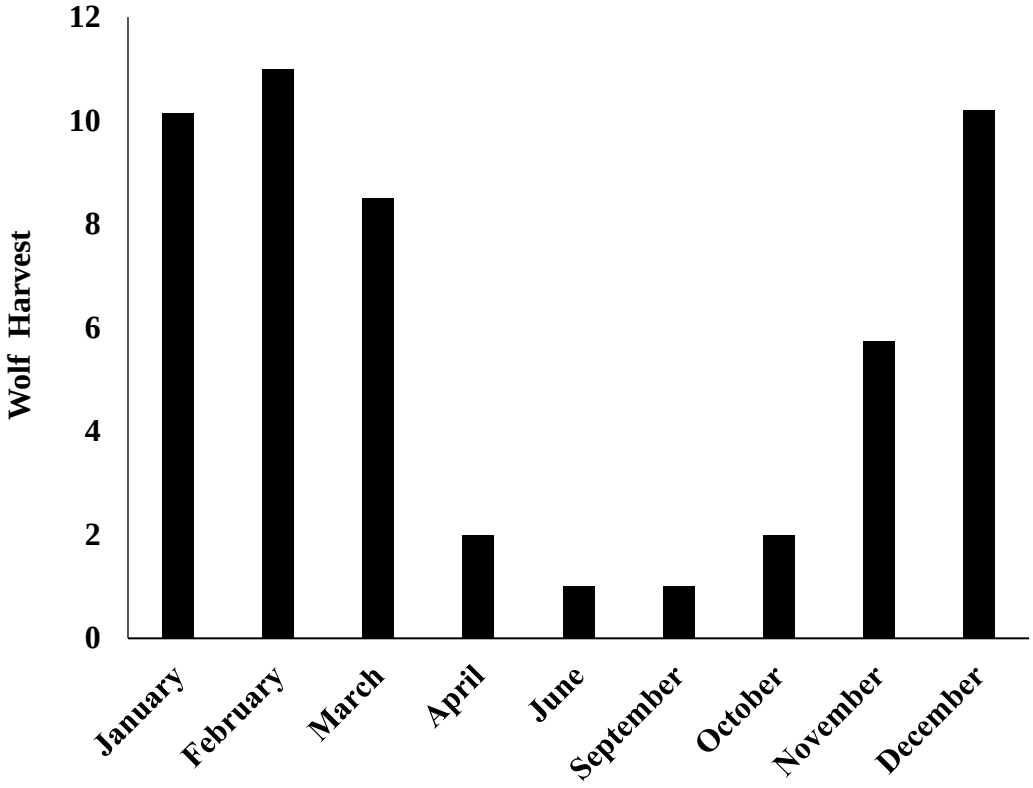



Figure 44-1. Mean wolf (*Canis lupus ligoni*) total harvest by month in Game Management Unit 2 from 2008 –2017. Wolf season for federally qualified hunters is November 15 – March 31. Harvest from April through October represents illegal harvest and non-hunting or trapping caused mortality.

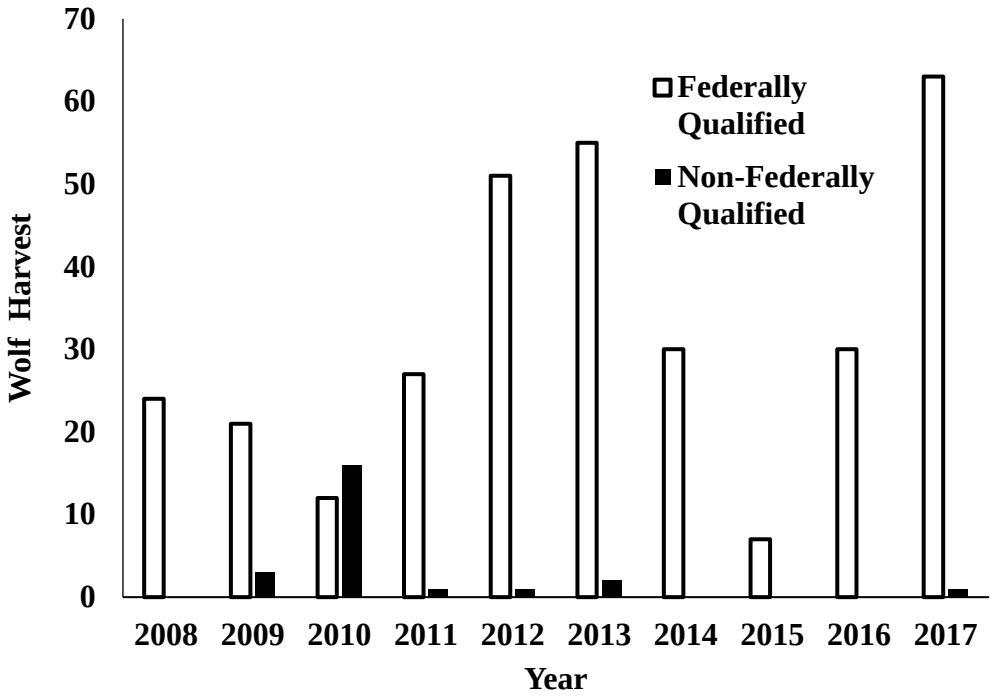



Figure2. Total wolf (*Canis lupus ligoni*) harvest for federally qualified and non-federally qualified residents in Game Management Unit 2.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:**
The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This would align the state and federal season which would simplify regulations and logistics for some trappers.

**COST ANALYSIS:** Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**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:

Resident deer season: October 15 to **November 15** [OCTOBER 31]

**PROPOSED BY:** Steven Burrell

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would add two additional weeks to the current resident deer season on the remainder of Mitkof (outside the Petersburg Management Area), Woewodski and Butterworth islands.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Unit 3**

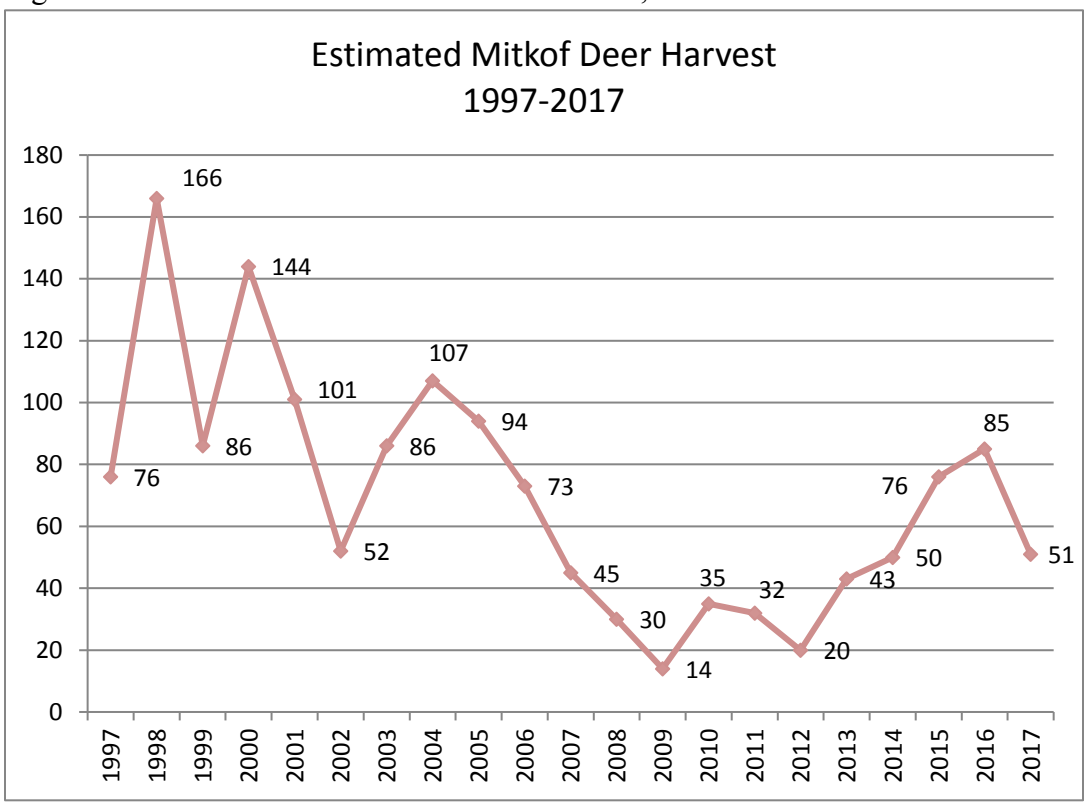
| Residents and nonresidents | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| One buck | Bucks only | Oct. 15 – Oct. 31 |

The Intensive Management population objective for Unit 3 is 15,000 deer and the harvest objective is 900 annually.

The Alaska Board of Game has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 3 with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 150-175 deer annually.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** If adopted, Proposal 45 would add an additional 16 days to the deer hunting season in the majority of Game Management Unit (Unit 3). The Department anticipates an increase in the deer harvest if this proposal is adopted. Since the season length would double, it is reasonable to expect at a minimum that harvest would double. The annual harvest the last three years (2015-2017) on Mitkof, Woewodski and Buttersworth islands has averaged 71 bucks. A harvest of 142 bucks (and possibly higher since the proposed season would run concurrently to the rut) would be well above historical averages when bag limits and seasons were more liberal (Figure 45-1). However, compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s when deer harvests were high, habitat changes, including loss of old growth winter habitat, reduced forage abundance as clearcuts regenerate into stem-exclusion second-growth forest, and competition with an expanding moose population have likely reduced habitat capability for deer in this area. Doubling the deer harvest in this area may not be sustainable. Success rates for the remainder of Mitkof, Woewodski and Buttersworth islands has averaged 25% (range; 10%-40%) over the past 20 years. Success rates for all of Unit 3 combined has been about 50% (range: 40%-60%) for the same period.

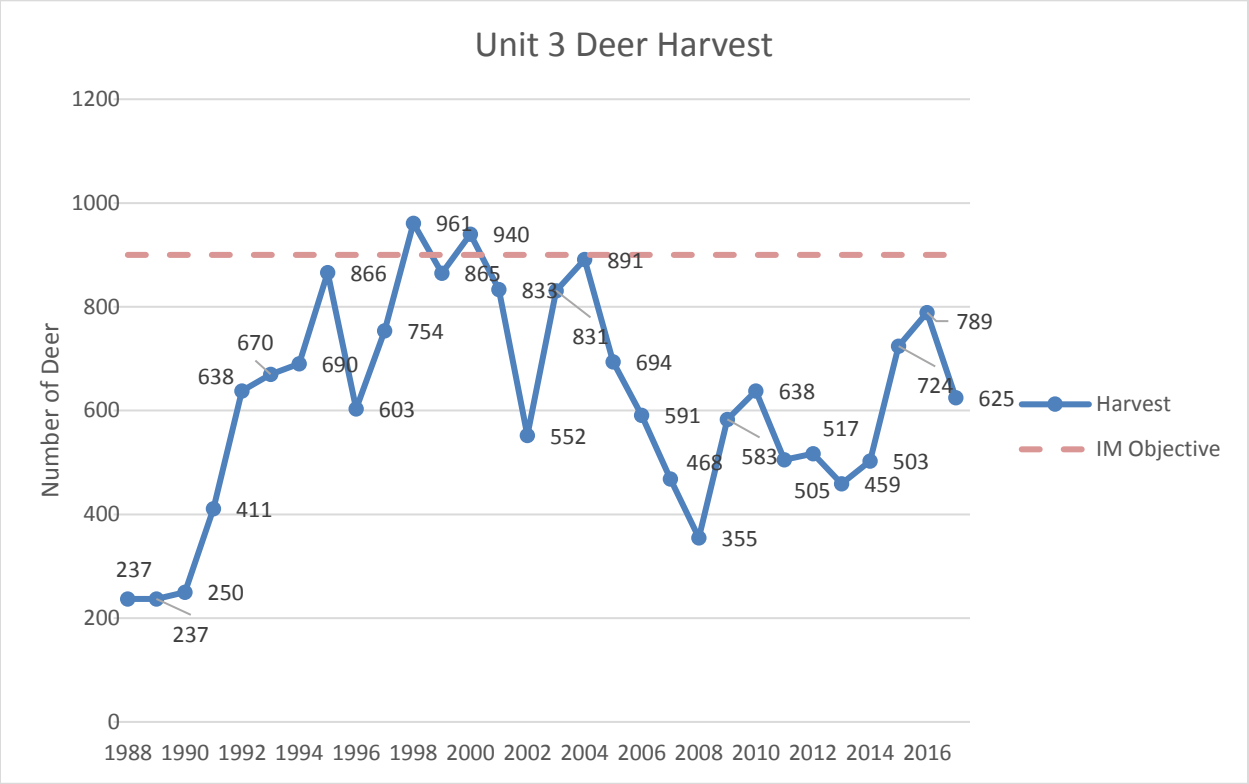
Figure 45-1. Mitkof Island estimated deer harvest, 1997-2017.




**BACKGROUND:** Seasons and bag limits for deer on Mitkof, Buttersworth, and Woewodski islands and Unit 3 in general, are more restrictive than seasons and bag limits in other island-dominated management units in Southeast Alaska (e.g., Unit 4). Deer populations in Unit 3 have historically fluctuated with winter weather severity. Effects of occasional severe winters are exacerbated by forest management practices such as clear-cut logging, predation (both wolves and bears), likely competition with moose, and illegal hunting. The Board has historically adjusted seasons and bag limits in this Unit according to population and harvest trends.

Unit 3 hunters enjoyed high harvests in the late 1990s and early 2000s until harvest began declining in 2005, reaching a low of 355 deer in 2008. These declines are directly related to snowfall amounts well above average from 2006-2008. Yearly harvests remained well below IM objectives (Figure 45-2) and in 2013 the Board adopted a Department proposal to reduce the resident deer season by 10 weeks, reduce the bag limit from 2 bucks to one, and close the nonresident deer hunting season on the Lindenberg Peninsula (Kupreanof Island) east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage. This realigned the season and bag limits on the Lindenberg Peninsula with those of Mitkof, Woewodski and Buttersworth islands.

Figure 45-2. Total Unit 3 deer harvest, 1988-2017.




Since 2013, in response to milder winter conditions, the Unit 3 the deer population appears to be trending upwards. This is seen in harvests (figures 45-1 and 45-2), pellet surveys (Figure 45-3), and aerial alpine surveys (Figure 45- 4), and is consistent with anecdotal reports from hunters in the field.

Figure 45-3. Estimated deer pellet density in Unit 3, 2013-2018.

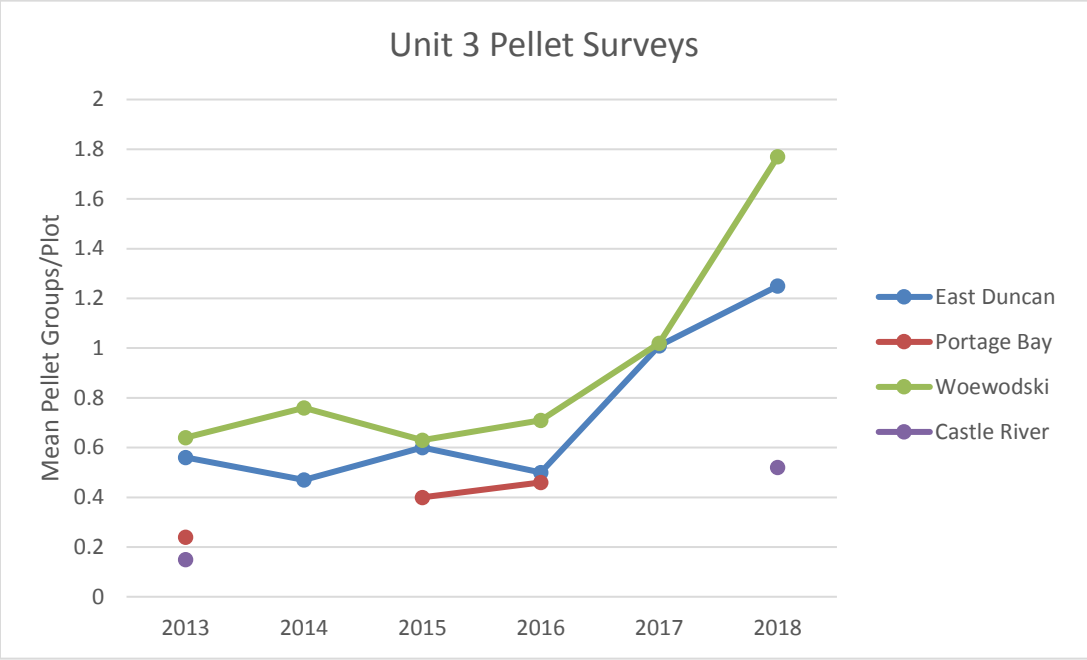
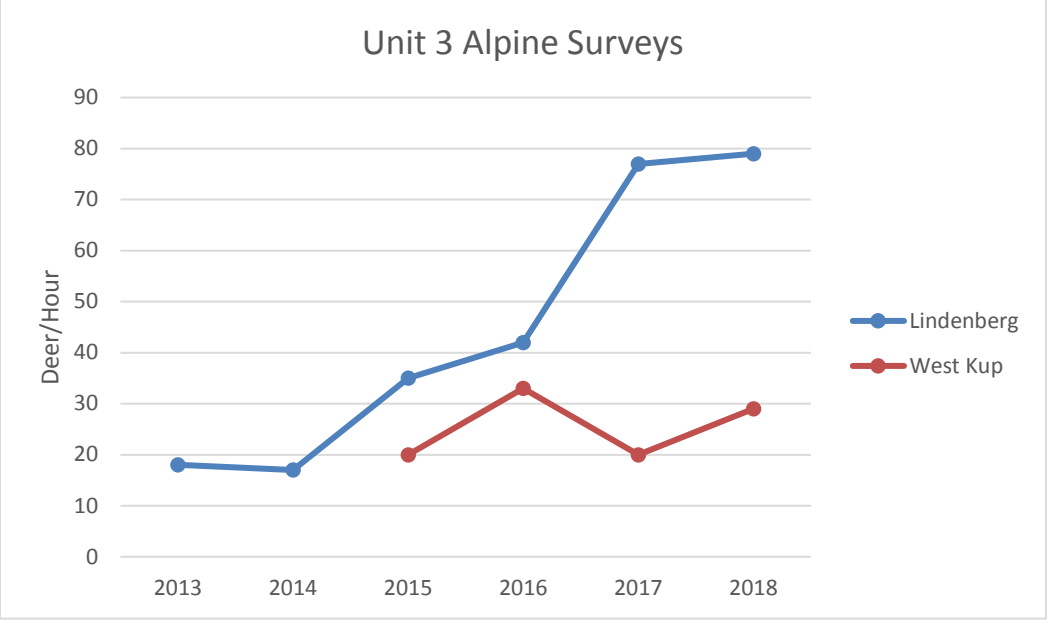



Figure 45-4. Unit 3 deer aerial alpine surveys, 2013-2018.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The Unit 3 deer population has demonstrated adequate recovery in most areas to support liberalized seasons. However, the proposal would provide opportunity to hunt during the peak rut period, so the amount of additional harvest that may result from this change could lead to local depletions of bucks.

If possible, the department recommends that if this proposal is adopted, that seasons and bag limits on the portion of Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage be consistent with the area in this proposal for simplicity, and because the harvestable surplus of deer in Unit 3 is above the high end of the ANS range. There is a companion proposal (see Proposal 46) to align the regulations in these areas.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**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: in Unit 3 as follows:

Resident deer season: October 15 to **November 15** [OCTOBER 31]

**PROPOSED BY:** Steven Burrell

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would add two additional weeks to the current resident deer season on that portion of Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Unit 3**

| Residents and nonresidents | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| One buck | Bucks only | Oct. 15 – Oct. 31 |

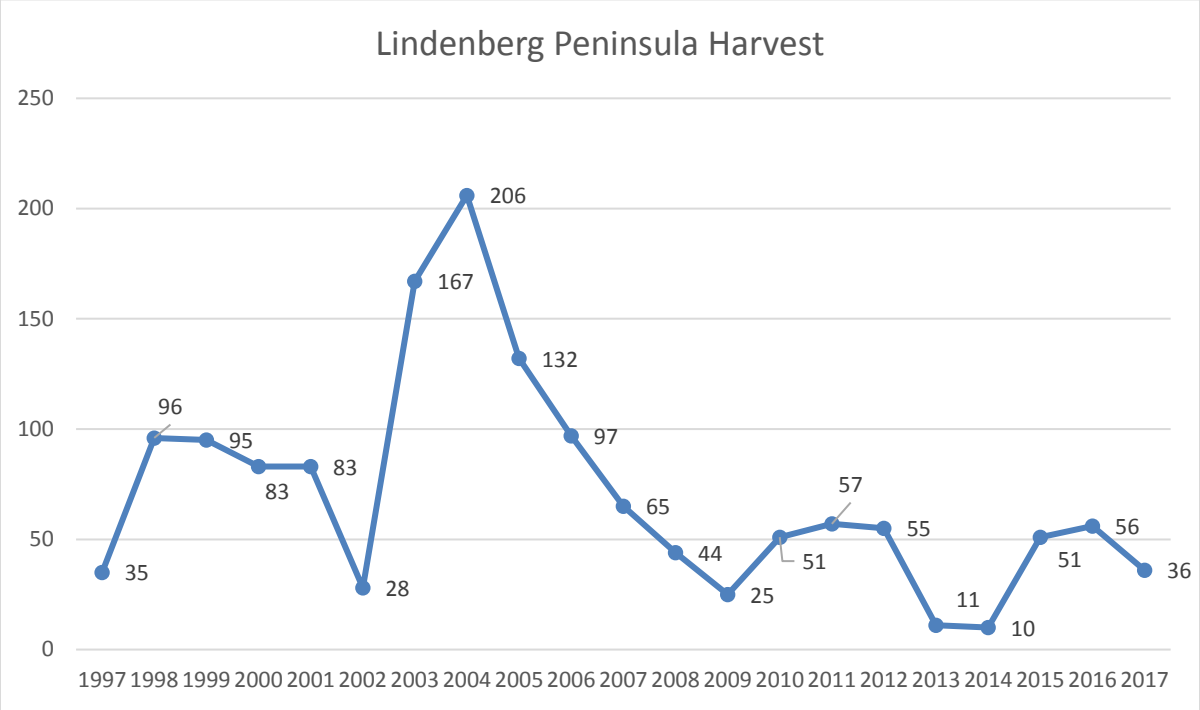
The Intensive Management population objective for Unit 3 is 15,000 deer and the harvest objective is 900 annually.

The Alaska Board of Game has made a positive subsistence finding for deer in Unit 3 with an amount necessary for subsistence of 150-175 deer annually.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED** If adopted, Proposal 46 would add an additional 16 days to the deer hunting season in the majority of Game Management Unit (Unit 3). The Department anticipates an increase in the deer harvest if this proposal is adopted. Since the season length would double, it is reasonable to expect at a minimum that harvest would double. The annual harvest the last three years (2015-2017) on the

Lindenberg Peninsula has averaged 46 bucks (Table 1). A harvest of 92 bucks (and possibly higher since the proposed season would run concurrent to the rut) would be in line with historical averages when seasons and bag limits were more liberal (Fig. 1). However, compared to the late 1990s and early 2000s when deer harvests were high, habit changes including loss of old growth winter habitat, reduced forage abundance as clearcuts regenerate into stem-exclusion second-growth forest, and competition with an expanding moose population have likely reduced habitat capability for deer in this area. New logging roads have also increased hunter access. Doubling the deer harvest in this area may not be sustainable. Success rates for the Lindenberg Peninsula generally average about 50% annually (Range 20%-70%). This is similar to all of Unit 3 combined but higher than the area described in Proposal 45.

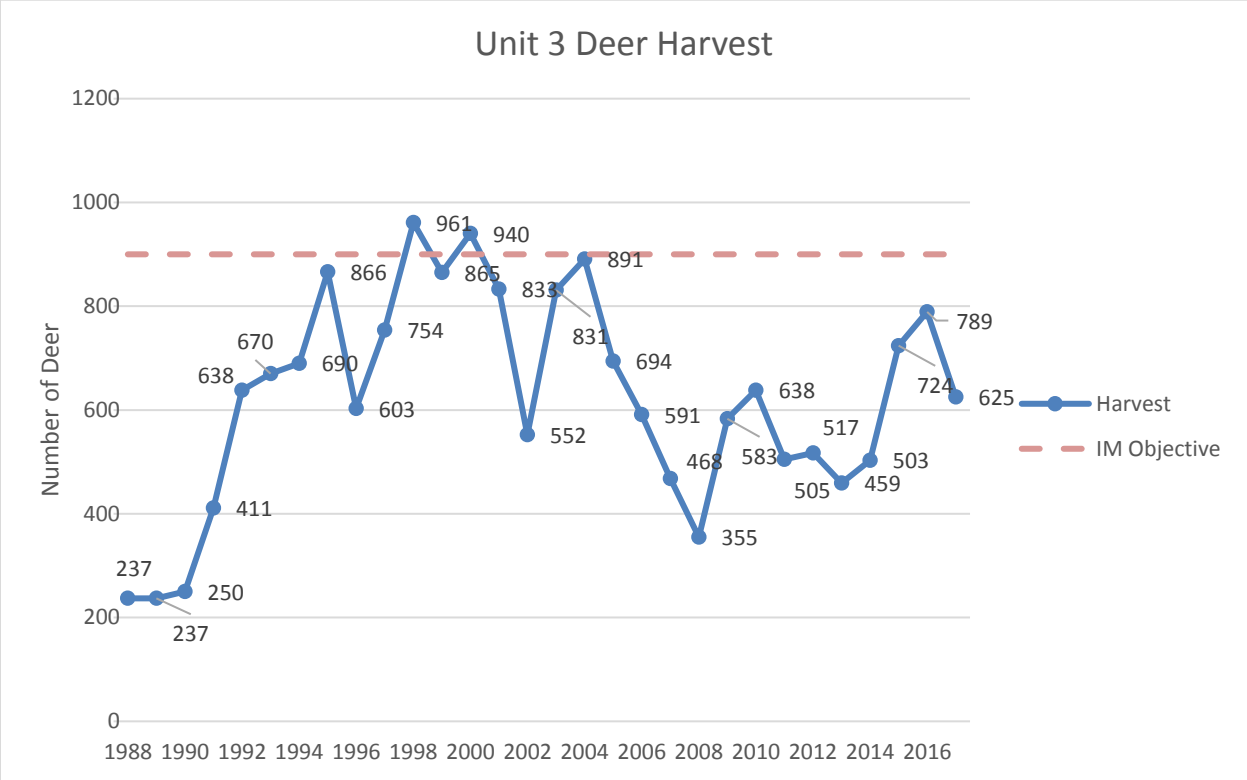
Figure 1. Lindenberg Peninsula deer harvest, 1997-2017.




**BACKGROUND:** Seasons and bag limits for deer on the Lindenberg Peninsula are more restrictive than seasons and bag limits in other island dominated management units in Southeast Alaska (e.g., Unit 4). Deer populations in Unit 3 have historically fluctuated with winter weather severity. Effects of occasional severe winters are exacerbated by forest management practices such as clear-cut logging, predation (both wolves and bears), likely competition with moose, and illegal hunting. The Board has historically adjusted seasons and bag limits in this Unit according to population and harvest trends.

Unit 3 hunters enjoyed high harvests in the late 90's and early 2000's until harvest began declining in 2005, reaching a low of 355 deer in 2008. These declines are directly related to snowfall amounts well above average from 2006-2008. Harvests remained well below IM objectives (Figure 2) and in 2013 the BOG adopted a Department proposal to reduce the resident deer season by 10 weeks, reduce the bag limit from 2 bucks to one and close the nonresident deer hunting season on the Lindenberg Peninsula (Kupreanof Island) east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage. This realigned the season and bag limits on the Lindenberg Peninsula with those of Mitkof, Woewodski and Buttersworth Islands.

Figure 2. Total Unit 3 deer harvest, 1988-2017.




Since 2013, in response to milder winter conditions, the Unit 3 the deer population appears to be trending upwards. This is seen in harvests (Fig. 1 & 2), pellet surveys (Fig. 3) aerial alpine surveys (Fig. 4) and is consistent with anecdotal reports from hunters in the field.

Figure 3. Estimated deer pellet density in Unit 3, 2013-2018.

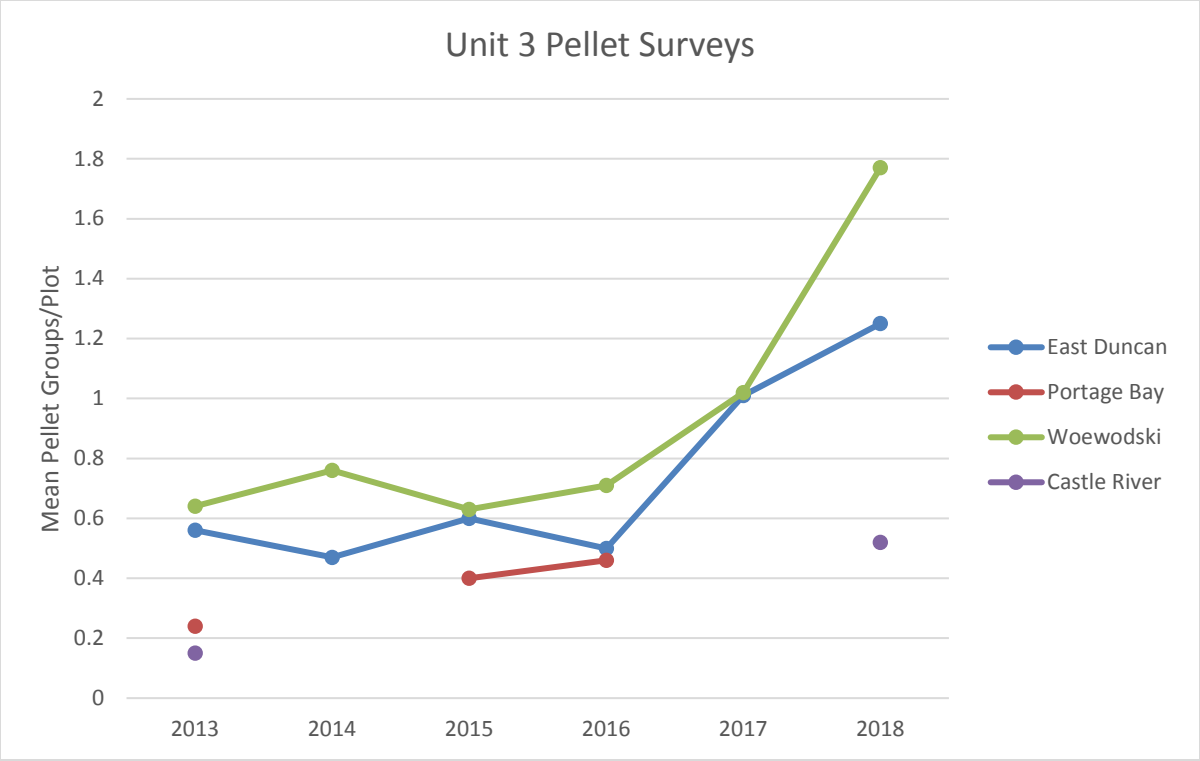
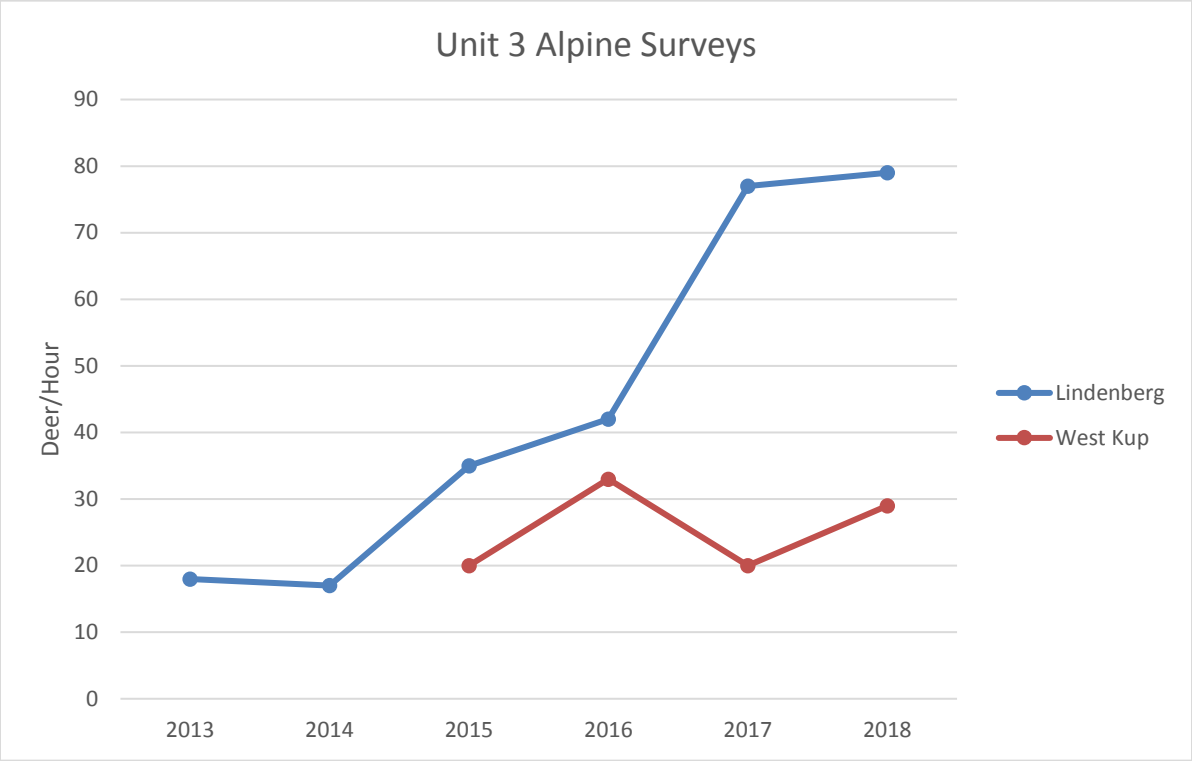

Unit 3 Pellet Surveys
Mean Pellet Groups/Plot
2
1.8
1.6
1.4
1.2
1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
2018
East Duncan
Portage Bay
Woewodski
Castle River

Figure 4. Unit 3 deer aerial alpine surveys, 2013-2018.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department recommendation is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The Unit 3 deer population has demonstrated adequate recovery in most areas to support liberalized seasons. However, the proposal would provide opportunity to hunt during the peak rut period, so the amount of additional harvest that may result from this change is unpredictable and could lead to local depletions of bucks.

If possible, the department recommends that if this proposal is adopted, that seasons and bag limits be consistent with those adopted on the Mitkof, Woewodski and Buteerworth Islands (see Proposal 45) for simplicity.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**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:

**Resident**

**Open Season**

| Units and Bag Limits | (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| Units 1, 2, and remainder of unit 3 | **No open season.** | **No open season.** |
| [1 ELK] | [AUG. 1—DEC. 31] | [AUG.1—DEC. 31] |

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would eliminate the general harvest elk season in Units 1, 2 and the Remainder of Unit 3.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

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

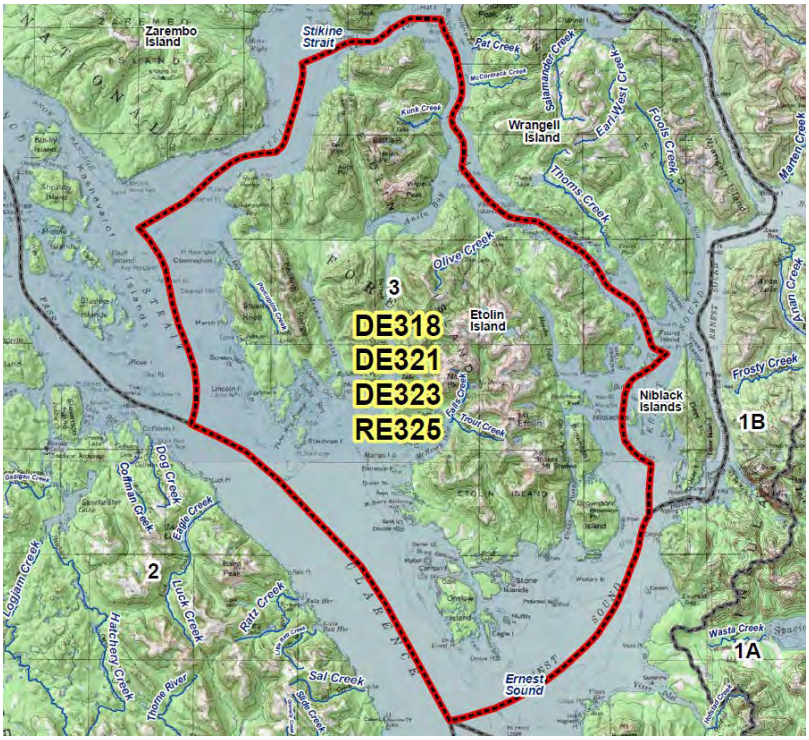
| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Unit 3, that portion bounded by a line beginning at the intersection of Stikine Strait and Clarence Strait, running southeast following the midline of Clarence Strait, down to the intersection with Earnest Sound, then northeast following the midline of Earnest Sound, excluding the Niblack Islands, to its intersection with Zimovia Strait, then northwest following the western shore-line of Zimovia Strait to its intersection with Chichagof Passage, then west along the midline of Chichagof Passage to its intersection with Stikine Strait, then west and south Along the midline of Stikine Strait, back to the point of be-ginning. | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 bull by drawing permit only, And by bow and arrow only; up To 50 permits will be issued; or | Sept. 1−Sept. 30 (General hunt only) | Sept. 1−Sept. 30 |
| 1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 250 permits will be issued; or | Oct. 1−Oct. 31 (General hunt only) | Oct. 1−Oct. 31 |
| 1 bull by registration permit only | Nov. 15−Nov. 30 (General hunt only) | Nov. 15−Nov. 30 |
| Unit 3, Zarembo, Bushy, and Shrubby islands, and the Kashevarof Islands | No open season. | No open season. |
| Units 1, 2, and remainder of unit 3 | | |
| 1 elk | Aug. 1—Dec. 31 | Aug.1—Dec. 31 |

The board has made negative customary and traditional use determinations for elk in units 2 and 3; no finding has been made in Unit 1.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** This proposal would eliminate the general season elk hunt in Units 1, 2 and the remainder of Unit 3. Elk hunting in Region 1 would be restricted to the drawing (DE318, 321 and 323) and registration (RE325) permit hunts (Figure 47-1).

(Figure 47-1. Etolin Island elk drawing hunt areas (Unit 3)




## BACKGROUND:

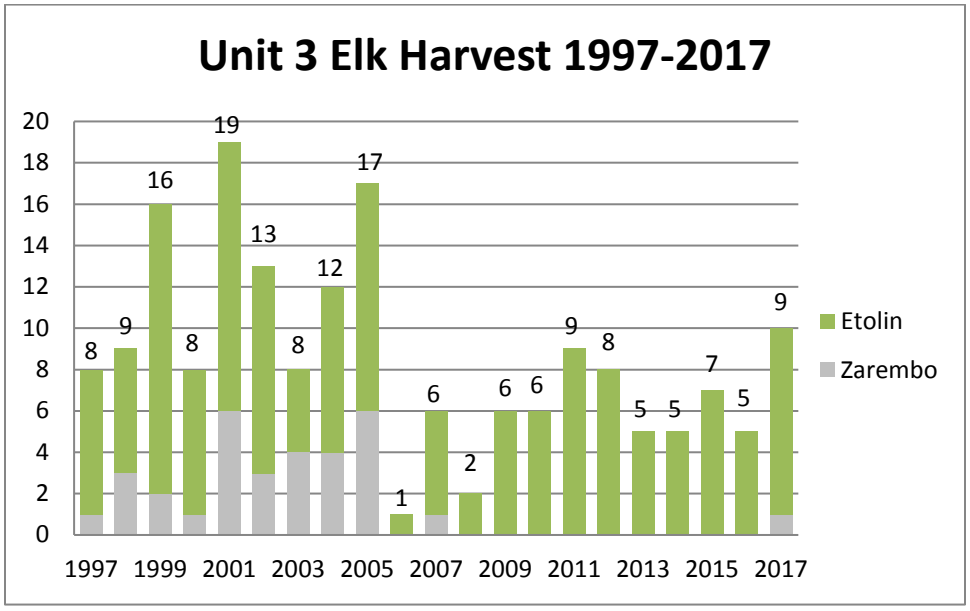
In 1987, 33 Roosevelt and 17 Rocky Mountain elk were successfully transplanted from Oregon to Etolin Island in Unit 3. Due to concerns about the potential for disease transmission and interspecific competition with native Sitka black-tailed deer, ADF&G's elk management plan called for restricting elk to Etolin Island. However, not long after the initial release a group of elk swam to and colonized neighboring Zarembo Island. At that time, the decision was made to allow elk to occupy both Etolin and Zarembo islands. Eventually the board authorized a separate hunt (currently closed) for the Zarembo Island population.

To prevent nonnative elk from colonizing other parts of the region, in 2000 the board authorized a general season elk hunt in Units 1, 2, and the remainder of Unit 3 (Aug.1−Dec 31, one elk). Although the department occasionally receives reports of elk being heard, seen, or harvested in the general season hunt area, we have been unable to verify any of the sightings or reported kill locations.

In over 30 years since elk were introduced they have not colonized lands outside Etolin and Zarembo islands. However, anecdotal reports of illegal harvest and the absence of verified elk sightings or kill locations in the general season hunt area leads the department to be concerned this hunt is being abused to facilitate taking elk from the Etolin and Zarembo islands herds outside the current bull-only drawing and registration permit hunts. The department has become less concerned about interspecific competition between exotic elk and native deer. Because it does not

appear to be needed and to eliminate the opportunity for abuse, this proposal would rescind the general season elk hunt in Units 1, 2, and the remainder of Unit 3.

Due to concerns about low elk numbers, the elk hunting season on Zarembo Island was closed by emergency order during the period 2008-2012. In 2013, following several consecutive years of emergency closures, the board permanently closed Zarembo Island to elk hunting. In a related action, and due to concerns about hunters "bootlegging" elk off of Zarembo and claiming to have harvested them elsewhere in Unit 3 during the general season elk hunt (Aug. 1−Dec. 31, one elk), the board also closed Bushy and Shrubby islands, and the Kashevarof Islands to elk hunting. If in the future one or more elk are confirmed outside the Etolin and Zarembo island complexes, a registration hunt could be enacted to target those animals consistent with the elk management plan.




**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department recommends the board **ADOPT** this proposal due to elk conservation concerns stemming from illegal harvest.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

**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** [EVERY FOUR REGULATORY YEARS], by permit, from March 15 – May 31 **and September 15 – December 31**.

**PROPOSED BY:** Max Worhatch

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would change the brown bear bag limit in Unit 3 from one bear every four regulatory years to one bear every regulatory year and add a fall season to the current registration hunt (RB075).

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

**Unit 3**

| Residents | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| One bear every four reg. years by permit. | RB075 | March 15 – May 31 |

Nonresidents
No Open Season

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in Unit 3, but has not yet made a finding of amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** The addition of a fall season and more liberal bag limit will likely result in additional brown bear harvest in Unit 3.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2004, the Board of Game adopted a proposal submitted by the Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee to establish a resident-only brown bear season within the islands of Unit 3. While the original proposal specified dates for a spring brown bear season, it failed to include dates for a fall season. The board adopted the proposal as written, resulting in a spring brown bear season, but no fall season for brown bears in the Unit 3 islands.

Unit 3 brown bears occur exclusively on those islands separated from the mainland by relatively short water crossings. The department lacks population information on Unit 3 and nearby Unit 1B mainland brown bears. Anecdotal information and staff observations indicate that small numbers of brown bears occur on Mitkof, Wrangell, Etolin, and Deer islands. We remain uncertain of the ability of these islands to support a sustainable harvest of brown bears. Population-level movement patterns among these bears are not known. We suspect that some population interchange does occur between bears in Unit 3 and those on the nearby Unit 1B mainland.

Although the number of brown bear in Unit 3 remains unknown, we believe the population is relatively low. During the 13 years (2005-2017) the spring-only season has been in effect, just 5 brown bears have been harvested by hunters in Unit 3. These include 1 bear each in RYs 2005 and 2006, 2 bears in RY2007, and 1 bear in RY2104. In addition to the 5 bears legally harvested since implementing the RB075 spring season, 2 bears have been killed illegally and 2 have been killed in Defense of Life and Property.

In addition to uncertainties about what level of harvest is sustainable, another issue of concern to the department is the high percentage of female brown bears (60%) taken in Unit 3 by hunters during the existing spring brown bear season.

Resident hunters typically display little interest in hunting brown bear as indicated by the fact that over the last 10-years resident hunters have taken an average of just 1.6 bears annually on the adjacent Unit 1B Mainland where both spring and fall seasons exist for brown bear. However, given that the dates for the proposed Unit 3 fall brown bear season (Sept. 15 – Dec. 31) coincide with hunting seasons for several other big game species, including black bear, deer, elk, moose, and wolves, establishing a fall season for brown bears in Unit 3 will likely result in increased incidental take of brown bears by hunters targeting other species.

This proposal, or ones very similar, have been sent to the board in most of the recent regulatory board cycles for Southeast Alaska. The board has not adopted the proposal primarily due to the lack of population data and the department's concern with harvesting brown bears from a population that appears to be at very low densities.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on the fall season component of this proposal because there is no conservation concern and the department can sustainably manage the bear population under current or proposed regulations**.**

The department is **NEUTRAL** to the bag limit increase component of this proposal because it is unlikely to lead to increased harvest to unsustainable levels.

Should the board want to take action on finding an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence, the department will prepare a report with several options for board discussion.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

**********

## ANALYSIS
## and
## RECOMMENDATIONS
## for

## BOARD OF GAME PROPOSALS 49 and 50

*The department is in the process of preparing draft analysis and recommendations for Proposals 49 and 50, which address drawing permits for black bears in Unit 3. The department will provide its analysis and recommendations in advance of the January 2019 Southeast Board of Game*

*meeting.*

**********

**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:

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.

**PROPOSED BY:** Zach Decker

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would eliminate the shorter sealing time limit for nonresidents who harvest Kuiu Island black bears, making this regulation consistent with the rest of Unit 3.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Unit 3** | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Residents | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| Two bears but not more than one may be a blue or glacier bear | | |
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL029-DL031 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |

Nonresidents must report to Petersburg within 5 days of taking a black bear on Kuiu Island, must seal the bear within 14 days, and may not remove the bear from Units 1-4 until sealed.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Nonresidents taking a black bear from Kuiu Island would have 30 days from date of kill to meet sealing requirements.

**BACKGROUND:**

The department has submitted Proposal 52 which seeks to remove the 5 day reporting requirement and 14 day sealing requirement for nonresident hunters harvesting black bears on Kuiu Island (see staff comments for Proposal 52), and replace it with the more standard 30 day reporting requirement and 30 day sealing requirement.

In response to conservation concerns related to a rapidly escalating harvest of black bears by nonresidents on Kuiu Island during the late 1990s and early 2000s, in RY2001 the Board of Game

established an annual nonresident guideline harvest level (GHL) of 120 bears annually on Kuiu Island. To facilitate timely harvest management and implementation of the nonresident harvest guideline, the board also imposed a 5 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. In order to provide the guides and the department with time to prepare for this regulatory change the board delayed implementation of the new drawing permit requirement until fall 2012.

As a result of these measures, the harvest of Kuiu black bears by both guided and unguided nonresidents has declined from a mean of 84 bears during RYs 2007-2009 to a mean of 51 bears per year during RYs 2012-2017 (since the draw permit DL029 has been implemented). Current black bear harvest on Kuiu Island is well below the 120 bear GHL. Therefore, ADF&G 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.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal since bear populations can be managed sustainably under the current or proposed regulations. The department recommends the board either amend this proposal to include a 30 day sealing requirement, or to **Take no Action** based on action of Proposal 52.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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**PROPOSAL 52**

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

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

Repeal the shorter harvest reporting and sealing requirement 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;]

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

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would eliminate the shorter harvest reporting and sealing time for Kuiu Island black bears, making this regulation consistent with the rest of Unit 3 and the majority of Southeast Alaska.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

| **Unit 3** | Hunts | Dates |
|---|---|---|
| Residents | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| Two bears but not more than one may be a blue or glacier bear | | |
| Nonresidents hunters using registered guides | HT | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |
| Nonresident hunters not using registered guides | DL029-DL031 | Sept 1 – June 30 |
| One bear | | |

Nonresidents must report to Petersburg within 5 days of taking a black bear on Kuiu Island, must seal the bear within 14 days, and may not remove the bear from Units 1-4 until sealed.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?**

Nonresidents taking a black bear from Kuiu Island would have 30 days from date of kill to meet sealing and harvest reporting conditions.

**BACKGROUND:** In response to conservation concerns related to a rapidly escalating harvest of black bears by nonresidents on Kuiu Island during the late 1990s and early 2000s, in RY2001 the Board of Game established an annual nonresident guideline harvest level (GHL) of 120 bears annually on Kuiu Island. To facilitate timely harvest management and implementation of the nonresident harvest guideline, the board also imposed a 5 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 RY 2007-

2009. In order to provide the guides and the department with time to prepare for this regulatory change the board delayed implementation of the new drawing permit requirement until fall 2012.

As a result of these measures, the harvest of Kuiu black bears by both guided and unguided nonresidents has fallen from a mean of 84 bears during RY 2007-2009 to a mean of 51 bears per year during RY 2012-2017 (since the draw permit DL029 has been implemented). Current harvest levels on Kuiu Island are well below the 120 bear GHL. Therefore, ADF&G 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.

**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department recommendation **NEUTRAL** on this proposal since bear populations can be managed sustainably under the current or proposed regulations.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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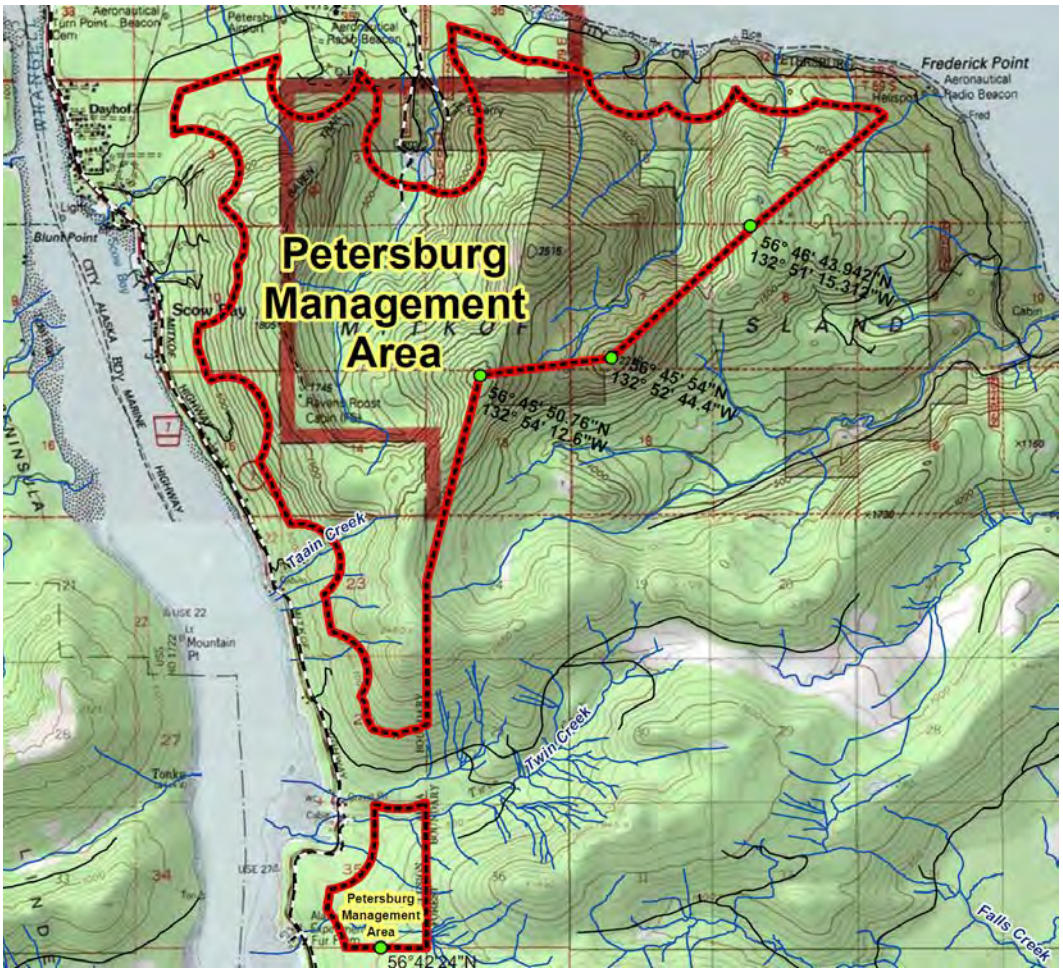
**PROPOSAL 53 – 5 AAC 95.530(24). Management Areas.**

Modify the hunting area description within the Petersburg Management Area (Figure 53-1) in Unit 3 as follows:

Replace the Petersburg Management Area description shown on page 47 of The Alaska Hunting Regulations No. 59 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.

Figure 53-1. Petersburg Management Area.




**PROPOSED BY:** Dan McMahon

**WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?** This proposal would change the ¼ mile restrictions within the Petersburg Management area to 100 yards for the purpose of big game hunting by bow and arrow. While the management area is in place for all big game, this proposal effectively only addresses deer because there are few other big game species harvested in the area.

**WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?**

5 AAC 92.530(24) the Petersburg Management Area:

(A) the area consists of 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, R90E, 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 56° 42' 24" N and at least one-quarter mile from any airport property, dwellings, businesses, highways, roads or streets within the corporate city limits;

(B) the area is open to hunting by bow and arrow only, and small game may be taken by falconry;

**Unit 3: Petersburg Management Area**

| Residents and Nonresidents | Dates |
|---|---|
| Two bucks *by bow and arrow only* | Oct 15 – Dec 15 |

**Unit 3: that portion of Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage**

| Residents | Dates |
|---|---|
| One buck | Oct 15 - Oct 31 |
| Nonresidents | No open season. |

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 3, and a finding of 150–175 deer as reasonably necessary for subsistence.

**WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?** Archery hunters in the Petersburg Management Area would be able to hunt slightly closer to the city center. The department does not expect a significant increase in harvest of deer though there likely would be some. Currently the area outside of ¼ mile of any airport, highway, road or street within the corporate city limits is not within the Petersburg Management Area and therefore the season closes October 31 with a bag limit of one buck. By reducing the boundary from ¼ mile to 100 yards it will extend the season in much of this area, increase the bag limit, and make the use of other methods, such as crossbows, unlawful.

**BACKGROUND:** The Petersburg Management Area was originally adopted by the board at the request of the Devil's Thumb Archers at the November 2002 meeting. The impetus of this proposal was the October 2001 passage of Petersburg Municipal Code 10.20.020 (Figure 53-2) which prohibited the discharge of weapons within the corporate city limits. This ordinance created a de-facto archery only hunting area. At the time the department was in favor of the proposal because the city ordinance was adopted due to public safety concerns associated with the discharge of firearms in proximity to populated areas. Reinforcing the archery only provision in the municipal code with a state regulation-required IBEP certification further addressed public safety concerns and decreased the likelihood of wounding animals.

Because of natural and human related deer food, prohibitions on discharging firearms, and relative safety from predators, deer are abundant within the city limits. The Petersburg Area Office deals with nuisance deer and deer/vehicle collisions regularly.

Currently deer populations are increasing on Mitkof Island and adoption of this proposal is anticipated to result in a relatively small increase in harvest.

Figure 53-2. Petersburg City Ordinance.

**10.20.020 Discharge of firearms and other weapons.**

A. It is unlawful for any person to shoot, release, throw or otherwise discharge any firearm or other weapon: i) at or in the direction of a residential dwelling or other building with reckless disregard for a risk of physical injury to a person; ii) from, on or across a street, road or highway; or iii) from a vehicle while the vehicle is being operated and under circumstances manifesting substantial and unjustifiable risk of physical injury to a person or damage to property with the following exceptions:

1. Approved use of a firearm, as defined under state law, at a borough firing range;
2. Archery practice may be conducted, utilizing inanimate targets, while employing all necessary reasonable and prudent safety measures to prevent projectiles from going outside or beyond a target; and
3. Ranges approved by the borough shall be allowed the use of mechanical moving targets.

B. For purposes of this section, "other weapon" shall be defined as any weapon, other than a firearm, including bow and arrow, crossbow, spear, throwing knife, sling shot, blow gun, high powered pellet gun, bb gun, and any similar weapon, capable of being launched, or of launching, a projectile, and likely to cause death or serious physical injury to any person struck by the weapon or projectile.

(Ord. No. 2014-05, § 3, 3-3-2014)

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**DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:** The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Based on increasing deer numbers on Mitkof Island and the small increase in harvest anticipated with adoption of this proposal there is no biological concern.

**COST ANALYSIS**: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

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