

**ACR 9** – Change the hunting season dates for brown bear in Unit 9B.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Jason Johnston

**CITE THE REGULATION THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS ACR IS HEARD.**  
5 AAC 85.020(8) Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

**WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS? STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM.** Recently, the Board of Game (BOG) shortened the season length for brown bear hunting in Unit 9 due to low population and concerns of overharvest. I would like the Board of Game consider separating Unit 9B from this season reduction and return the season to September 20 through October 21. Based on my personal field observations and experience as an Assistant Guide, guiding brown bear hunts in Unit 9B, population does not seem to have decreased in the past five years. Also, hunting pressure for bears in Unit 9B is much less than other subunits due to National Parkland, native corporation land, and that Unit 9B is a generally unpopularized location. Also, bears den earlier due to the colder inland climate in Unit 9B as compared with coastal Unit 9, which translates to dramatic negative effects for harvest of available bears, even though a healthy population exists. Also due to the interior influence in climate, dangerous weather conditions tend to proliferate after October. 1, creating unnecessarily dangerous conditions for hunters and guides in an area that is accessed by plane for hunting. The local ADF&G office is in support of this differentiation for subunit 9B from the remainder of Unit 9.

**WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU PREFER?**

Unit 9(B)...Residents and nonresidents

1 bear every 4 regulatory years by registration permit only. September 20 – October 21 (Odd years only) May 10 – 31. (Even years only)

**STATE IN DETAIL HOW THIS ACR MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:**

- 1) **To correct an error in regulation.** ADF&G's intent was for shortened seasons for Units 9C, 9D, and 9E, the southern portion of the Alaska Peninsula. This was expanded to include all of Unit 9 during deliberations and went unnoticed.
- 2) **To correct an effect of a regulation that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.** Brown bear population trends and denning season are different in Unit 9B. Reduction in harvest is not necessary and creates an unnecessary dangerous condition for hunters, guides and transporters.
- 3) **Does the request identify a biological concern for the population or a threat to meeting objectives for the population?** Bear numbers are high in Unit 9B, so current harvests help maintain health in a population that may otherwise become overpopulated, prone to disease and other overpopulation related mortality.
- 4) **Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected event or effect that would otherwise restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional wildlife uses, as defined in AS 16.05.258(f)?** No, there is an extended season (Sept. 1 –

May 31) for resident subsistence hunters and a year-round, near-village registration hunt for resident participation.

- 5) **Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected resource situation where a biologically allowable resource harvest would be precluded by delayed regulatory action and such delay would be significantly burdensome because the resource would be unavailable in the future?** Bear population is currently healthy in Unit 9B (per ADF&G) and harvest reduction is not merited. If immediate action is not taken, hunters who have already booked guided hunts for September 2019 must be cancelled.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED PRIOR TO THE REGULAR CYCLE?** Unnecessary loss of bear hunting opportunity for hunters in Unit 9B for several years. Unnecessary loss of revenue for guides, transporters and lodges in an area that depends heavily on this market as an economic staple.

**STATE WHY YOUR ACR IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.** Season length for residents and nonresidents is the same for biennial hunts, with guided nonresidents typically taking 75 – 100 % of the harvest. In addition, residents have subsistence hunt RB502 (Sept. 1 – May 31) and near-village RB525 (year-round). Total harvest with biennial hunts open is typically 20 – 60 bears in Unit 9B, and less than 5 when resident-only seasons are open.

**IF THIS REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE.** Not allocative.

**STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACR.** Resident hunter and assistant guide.

**STATE WHETHER THIS ACR HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AS AN ACR, AND IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF GAME MEETING.** No.