

PROPOSAL 18

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

Establish a fall, drawing permit hunt for elk on Zarembo, Bushy, Shrubby and Kashevarof Islands in Unit 3 as follows:

Section 5 AAC 85.035 - Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk.

Unit 3, Zarembo, Bushy, Shrubby Islands, and the Kashevarof Islands **UP TO 5 permits will be issued, 1 bull by drawing permit only; Sept. 15 - Oct. 15** [No open season].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? That portion of Unit 3 that includes Zarembo, Bushy, Shrubby and the Kashevarof Islands is currently closed to elk hunting. Elk dispersed to the area following the Etolin Island introductions and were hunted previously, however numbers were deemed too low to sustain a hunt in 2008. Recently elk sightings and observations in the area have led some to believe the herd is indeed growing and capable of sustaining a limited opportunity bull-only hunt. A limited draw hunt allowing up to five bull permits would allow some opportunity to this resource that is otherwise off limits and in competition for food resources with native deer populations. While a number lower than five permits is the most likely starting place, allowing the department room to adjust up or down on a yearly basis as more is learned about the herd and hunter observations are taken into consideration will be vital to a successful herd and hunt.

Further, the earliest any-weapon season for elk in the state is currently September 25 in Unit 8. Nearby Etolin Island has a bow and arrow only season for elk during the month of September, but any weapon seasons are conducted in October and November. If a Zarembo, Bushy, Shrubby, and Kashevarof Islands season is adopted, there is interest for an earlier season structure including a significant portion of the month of September.

PROPOSED BY: Kaleb Baird

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