

PROPOSAL 14

5 AAC 85.050. Hunting seasons and bag limits for musk oxen.

Open a hunt for muskox in a portion of Unit 18, with permits available to residents only, made available in communities closest to the herd as follows:

Current Regulation (Unit 18-remainder): ~~[NO OPEN SEASON]~~

Proposed Regulation: Unit 18-remainder - Limited, resident only, draw registration or permit hunt based on continued sustainability of various herds in Unit 18-Remainder.

Resident only draw registration or permit hunts would be made available in close proximity villages to provide maximum priority to local hunters. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge staff and management, local advisory committees, the Yukon - Kuskokwim Regional Advisory Council, and close proximity villages would identify herds, provide for a harvestable surplus of the herd(s), and initiate a regulated hunt and season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Musk oxen have migrated into the mainland from the Nelson Island and Nunivak Island herd for over forty years to various parts of Unit 18 and are becoming a common sight for berry pickers, campers, hunters, etc. Much of their current habitat is on federal lands of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. There is no current "federal priority" for subsistence hunting. The last federal/state cooperative count was conducted in 2019 resulting in an observed estimate of 174 animals in various herds. *(ADF&G 2019 Memo, available upon request from Boards Support Section.)*

I propose that the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, in cooperation with the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, provide for a limited registration/permit hunt for the Unit 18 mainland musk ox based on the continued sustainability and further population growth of the developing herd.

PROPOSED BY: Timothy Andrew

(HQ-F23-026)
