

**ALASKA BOARD OF GAME**  
**Western Arctic/Western Region Meeting**  
**National Guard Armory | Kotzebue, Alaska**  
**January 26-29, 2024**

**Meeting Summary**

The Board of Game (board) convened the Western Arctic/Western Region meeting on Friday, January 26, 2024, in Kotzebue, at the Alaska at the National Guard Armory. Seven board members were present: Chairman Jerry Burnett, Vice-Chairman Stosh Hoffman, Allen Barrette, Jake Fletcher, James Cooney, Ruth Cusack, and Dave Lorrington.

The meeting opened with introductions and board member ethics disclosure statements, followed by agency reports (see listing on page 6). Public testimony began Friday afternoon, January 26, at 3:50 and concluded Sunday, January 28, at approximately 9:30 p.m. The board heard from 53 testifiers which included seven advisory committee representatives. (See Record Copy #31 for the complete list).

Board deliberations followed the conclusion of public testimony. The board considered 42 proposals, adopting 24 including two proposals to reauthorize antlerless moose hunts and brown bear tag fee exemptions. Board action for each proposal is provided as: C = carried; CA = carried as amended; F = failed; or NA = no action.

The board meeting concluded on Monday, January 29, 2024 at approximately 4:00 p.m.

The meeting material and audio are available on the meeting website at:  
[www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo&date=01-26-2024&meeting=kotzebue](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.meetinginfo&date=01-26-2024&meeting=kotzebue).

**Regionwide & Multiple Units (6 proposals)**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 28, at 09:03: AM.*

- F**     **Proposal 1:** Open an archery-only registration permit hunt in Units 23 and 26 for resident hunters when it is determined sheep hunting can be allowed in those areas.
- CA**     **Proposal 2:** Reduce the bag limit for taking caribou in Units 21D Remainder, 22, 23, 24B Remainder, 24C, 24D and 26A to four caribou per year, only one of which may be a cow. *The board amended the proposal with RC021 as substitute language, to be applicable to the northwestern portion of Unit 23 and the southwestern portion of Unit 26A, with a resident bag limit of 15 caribou per year by registration permit only, only one of which may be a cow, and season dates of July 1 – June 30.*
- F**     **Proposal 3:** Close nonresident caribou hunting in Units 21D Remainder, 22, 23, 24B Remainder, 24C, 24D, and 26A.
- NA**     **Proposal 4:** Align caribou seasons in Unit 26A and Unit 23, and reduce the bag limit. *The board took no action due to the action on Proposals 2 and 3.*

**NA Proposal 5:** Reduce the bag limit for caribou for RC907 resident hunters in Units 23 and 26A, and change the nonresident hunt to a registration permit with additional restrictions. *The board took no action due to the action on Proposals 2 and 3.*

**C Proposal 190:** Reauthorize the current resident tag fee exemptions for brown bear in Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A.

### **Bethel Area – Unit 18 (12 proposals)**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 28, at 09:55:10 AM, following the management area overview presented by ADF&G.*

**CA Proposal 6:** Close the Mulchatna caribou herd to hunting for five to ten years in Unit 18. *The board adopted a 3-year hunting closure for Unit 18, to align with the board's three-year cycle.*

**CA Proposal 7:** Lengthen the resident only registration moose hunt RM617 in Unit 18 by two weeks to end October 15. *The board amended the proposal to change the bag limit to 1 bull, excluding bull calves. ADF&G expressed support for making permits available in Tuntutuliak under discretionary authority.*

**NA Proposal 8:** Extend season dates for moose hunting in hunt RM617 in Unit 18. *The board took no action due to the action on proposal 7.*

**C Proposal 9:** Liberalize the bag limit for moose in Unit 18.

**CA Proposal 10:** Liberalize the bag limit for moose in Unit 18. *The board amended the proposal to provide "up to 100" permits for antlerless and antlered hunts.*

**C Proposal 11:** Reauthorize the resident antlerless moose season in Unit 18.

**F Proposal 12:** Establish a minimum caliber requirement for hunting moose in Unit 18.

**CA Proposal 13:** Increase the bag and possession limits for ptarmigan in Unit 18. *The board amended the proposal to change the bag limit to 25 per day / 50 in possession.*

**F Proposal 14:** 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.

**NA Proposal 15:** Allow the subsistence take of muskox in a portion of Unit 18. *The board took no action due to the action on proposal 14.*

**C Proposal 16:** Lengthen the wolf trapping season in Unit 18 by one month to end on April 30.

**C Proposal 17:** Increase the brown bear bag limit in Unit 18.

## **Nome Area – Unit 22 (12 proposals)**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 28, at 03:55:07 PM, following the management area overview presented by ADF&G.*

- F** **Proposal 18:** Open the caribou season in a portion of Unit 22A.
- NA** **Proposal 19:** Change the trophy destruction requirements for muskox taken in Unit 22 subsistence hunts. *The board took no action because trophy destruction is a discretionary authority by ADF&G. Additionally, under miscellaneous business, the board adopted findings (RC 30) recognizing customary and traditional uses of muskox horns in subsistence hunts on the Seward Peninsula.*
- NA** **Proposal 20:** Change the bag limit for Tier II muskox hunts in Unit 22 to one muskox every two years. *The board took no action due to lack of authority because the change conflicts with the statute and regulations for providing Tier II opportunity.*
- F** **Proposal 21:** Establish season dates for the harvest of cow muskox in the TX095 and TX096 Tier II hunts in Unit 22C, beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> and ending October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- F** **Proposal 22:** Establish a minimum caliber for moose hunting in Unit 22A and a portion of Unit 22B.
- F** **Proposal 23:** Revisit the Amount Reasonably Necessary for subsistence uses for moose in Unit 22.
- CA** **Proposal 24:** Modify the winter season for moose in Unit 22A. *The board amended the season dates to 8/1 - 9/30 and 12/1 – last day of February.*
- F** **Proposal 25:** Close the nonresident moose hunting season in Unit 22C.
- F** **Proposal 26:** Lengthen the nonresident moose hunting season in Unit 22E by two weeks, to open on August 15.
- C** **Proposal 27:** Align the resident seasons for brown bear in Unit 22D and 22E with those in Unit 22B.
- CA** **Proposal 28:** Change the Unit 22D and 22E nonresident brown bear drawing permit hunt to a general season hunt. *The board amended the proposal to retain the drawing hunt and increase permits to “up to 40”.*
- CA** **Proposal 29:** Increase the number of brown bear drawing permits available in Unit 22B for DB685 to 40 permits, or change DB685 to a registration permit. *The board amended the proposal to retain the drawing hunt and increase the permits “up to 40”.*

## **Utqiagvik Area – Unit 26A (6 proposals)**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 29, at 09:15:14 AM, following the management area overview presented by ADF&G.*

- C** **Proposal 30:** Extend the trapping season to year-round for muskrat in Unit 26A.

- C** **Proposal 31:** Liberalize the moose bag limit in a portion of Unit 26A and expand the hunt area.
- CA** **Proposal 32:** Change the boundaries of the Anaktuvuk Pass Controlled Use Area and allow the City of Anaktuvuk Pass, the Nunamiut Corporation, and the Naqragmiut tribe to set the dates the CUA is in effect. *The board amended the proposal with RC 27 which sets the northern boundary to the south bank of the Colville River, the western boundary to the east bank of the Killik River (boundaries for the eastern and southern boundaries remain the same as in the proposal). The board also added a sunset clause of 9 years; removed the proposal language delegating authority outside of the department to set dates; clarified that the CUA will retain the existing dates, and that the CUA is applicable to caribou, furbearer, sheep and bear.*
- F** **Proposal 33:** Reduce the Unit 26A sheep bag limit for residents to one ram with full-curl horn or larger every four regulatory years.
- NA** **Proposal 34:** Open an archery-only registration permit hunt in portions of Unit 26A for residents only when it is determined sheep hunting can be allowed in those area. *The board took no action on the proposal due to the action on Proposal 33.*
- CA** **Proposal 35:** Change the Unit 26A and Unit 26B muskox hunt area boundaries to match federal hunt boundaries, and expand the state hunt areas. *The board amended the proposal to align the area with the area of the customary and traditional use finding with the proposed hunt boundary.*

#### **Kotzebue Area – Unit 23 (8 proposals)**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 29, at 11:15:51 AM, following the management area overview presented by ADF&G.*

- CA** **Proposal 36:** Reduce the caribou bag limit for residents in Unit 23 from five caribou per day to four caribou total, only one of which may be a cow. *The board amended the proposal with language found in RC 26 which included Unit 22, and set the resident bag limit at 15 per year, only one of which can be cow.*
- NA** **Proposal 37:** Reduce the caribou bag limit for residents in Unit 23 from five caribou per day to four caribou total, only one of which may be a cow. *The board took no action due to the action on proposal 36.*
- CA** **Proposal 38:** Close all nonresident caribou hunting in Unit 23. *The board amended the proposal to establish a nonresident only drawing hunt with up to 300 permits for Units 23 and 23 Remainder; effective regulatory year 25.*
- CA** **Proposal 209:** Establish a target hunt for musk ox in Unit 23. *The board amended the proposal to establish a Tier II subsistence permit hunt with up to four permits; season dates of June 1- Oct. 31 and a bag limit of one bull.*
- CA** **Proposal 39:** Lengthen the brown bear hunting season in Unit 23 for residents to no closed season. *The board amended the proposal to increase the nonresident bag limit to two bear.*

- NA** **Proposal 40:** Lengthen the brown/grizzly bear hunting season in Unit 23 for residents to year-round. *The board took no action due to action on Proposal 39.*
- NA** **Proposal 41:** Lengthen the brown/grizzly bear hunting season in Unit 23 for residents to year-round. *The board took no action due to action on Proposal 39.*
- C** **Proposal 42:** Consolidate the nonresident brown bear registration permits into a single, unit-wide fall registration permit and a single, unit-wide spring registration permit.

### **Miscellaneous Actions**

*The audio for board deliberations on this section begins January 29, at 03:48:25 PM.*

The board adopted findings (RC 30) providing direction to the Department of Fish and Game recognizing customary and traditional uses of muskoxen horns in subsistence hunts on the Seward Peninsula for appropriate subsistence uses as defined by the legislature.

The board amended the 2024/2025 Call for Proposals for the Central/Southwest Region to include Units 18 and 19 to cover the entire range of the Mulchatna caribou herd.

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**List of Oral Reports**

**Friday, January 26, 2024**

1. Agency Updates/Reports
2. Review of Factors in Public and Agency Predator Control for Mulchatna Caribou, 2012-2023  
Mulchatna Caribou - Tom Paragai, ADF&G
3. Mulchatna Caribou Herd Intensive Management Program Annual Update - John Landsiedel,  
ADF&G
4. Western Arctic / Western Region Overview for the Division of Wildlife Conservation – Tony  
Gorn, ADF&G
5. Regional Research Overview, ADF&G Subsistence – Helen Cold, ADF&G
6. Western Arctic Caribou Herd Harvest Assessment Program – Helen Cold, ADF&G
7. Western Arctic Caribou Herd Update and Overview – Alex Hansen ADF&G
8. Musk Ox Research, Division of Wildlife Conservation - Brynn Par, ADF&G

**Reports Provided during Deliberations**

**Bethel Area – Unit 18**

- Management Area Overview (Unit 18) – Patrick Jones, ADF&G
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**Nome Area – Unit 22**

- Management Area Overview – Sara Germain, ADF&G
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**Utqiagvik Area – Unit 26A**

- Management Area Overview – Carmen Daggett, ADF&G
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**Kotzebue Area – Unit 23**

- Management Area Overview– Christie Osburne, ADF&G