

PROPOSAL 171

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Create a new registration archery moose hunt in Unit 14C, East Fork Eklutna area as follows:

What solution do you recommend? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say?

Create a new registration archery hunt in the East Fork Eklutna with regulation and season that matches RM445.

RM*** ***One bull by bow and arrow only by permit online***

at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person available in

Anchorage, Palmer, and Soldotna beginning Aug. 1

Sept. 1 – Oct. 20



A color version of this map is available at

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook>

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

This proposal advocates for creating a new registration hunt in the East Fork Eklutna that would correspond with RM445. This proposal differs from the proposal that advocates including the East Fork in RM445 by creating a new registration hunt that would allow for more nuanced control of the harvest in that area.

RM445 is an archery only registration moose hunt in the Eklutna lake area. Over 200 hunters routinely register for the hunt and over 100 of those actually go hunting there each year. While the

area appears relatively large, there are access issues (private land and limited parking along the northeastern portion that surrounds the Eklutna river) most of the hunting pressure is confined to the more accessible area surrounding Eklutna lake and the access trail. During the hunting season the ATV traffic on the trail can be intense with many hunters and non-hunting users packed into this very popular hunting and non-hunting recreation area. I believe that the initial RM445 area map was designed to mirror the Eklutna Lake Management area. Unfortunately, this map does not include the East Fork Eklutna drainage which is a natural geographic extension of the hunt area. The inclusion of the East Fork as an archery registration hunt would allow hunters to spread out a little from the heavily used trail and I believe this change would have little to no effect on other hunters or the moose population management goals.

Currently the East Fork Eklutna falls under the Chugach State Park Management area therefore falls under the spike/fork/>50" regulation and allows rifle hunting. It's hard to tease out the numbers but based on extensive personal experience in the area this is not a well utilized area for moose hunters largely due to the lack of easy motorized access that many Eklutna area hunters prefer. Allowing the archery hunters who are already committed to the area to hunt the East Fork would help spread out hunters and would allow those who prefer to walk off the ATV trail more opportunity to spread out from the relatively narrow corridor at that end of the current hunt area.

A concern of increasing the size of RM445, as proposed separately might be that doing so would simply allow the killing for more bulls in the existing, more easily accessible area and thereby inadvertently overhunt the area. In that proposal I discussed that keeping the harvest quota unchanged would be a conservative approach unless wildlife professionals thought that the increased area could sustain a higher harvest. With this proposal of a second hunt there would be more nuanced control of the area with a second hunt. The allocation for the East Fork hunt might only be one bull moose some year.

Based on extensive experience hunting this area (I spent 29 days in there in 2023 and have spent almost that much time in there during other seasons) I think this would be a well-received addition that would increase opportunity and safety and would have very little impact on the current management goals of the registration hunt.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

No.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

(OI-F25-220)
