

## **PROPOSAL 204**

### **5 AAC 85.030(a)(6). Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.**

Increase the nonresident bag limit for deer in Unit 8 Remainder to two bucks as follows:

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

#### **Remainder of Unit 8**

##### **RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

Three deer; however, only bucks may be taken before Oct. 1  
Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

##### **NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**

**Two bucks** [One buck]  
Aug. 1 - Dec. 31

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

The current regulation restricts nonresident hunters to harvesting only one buck deer annually on Kodiak Island, while Alaska residents may harvest up to three deer of either sex. This regulation lacks biological justification, as the Sitka blacktail deer population on Kodiak is stable, productive, and resilient. There is no data indicating that nonresident harvest poses a conservation concern. The regulation should be updated to reflect actual population dynamics and to align with the sustainable yield principles guiding Alaska's game management.

Nonresidents are an important stakeholder group in Alaska's wildlife management system. They contribute significant revenue through license/tag sales, transport, lodging, and guiding services. Limiting them to one buck per year—despite healthy deer numbers—artificially restricts opportunity and economic benefit to the region.

Recent harvest data and field reports show that the deer population on Kodiak Island has rebounded strongly from previous harsh winters and continues to produce strong fawn recruitment and mature buck age classes. There is no indication that increasing the nonresident limit from one to two bucks would pose a conservation threat, especially as the regulation would still prohibit doe harvest by nonresidents.

The proposed two-buck limit maintains a conservative and biologically sound approach:

- It allows increased opportunity while continuing to protect breeding-age does.
- It better reflects the productivity of the unit and brings nonresident opportunity closer to that of residents (who are allowed three deer, including does).

If the regulation remains unchanged, nonresident opportunity remains artificially limited, economic contributions to local businesses will remain suppressed, and the management framework will continue to be misaligned with the actual status of the deer herd on Kodiak Island.

This proposal is a modest, biologically justified increase in harvest opportunity. It helps align regulation with current herd conditions, better serves the hunting public, and increases the economic benefit to Kodiak communities—all while remaining within a sustainable framework.

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

**PROPOSED BY:** Austin Atkinson (OI-F25-048)  
\*\*\*\*\*