

PROPOSAL 253

5 AAC 85.045(a)(15). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 17A as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(15)		
Unit 17(A)		
Up to 2 moose per regulatory year only as follows: RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 moose by registration permit only; or	Aug. 25–Sept. 25 (Subsistence hunt only)	
...		
1 antlerless moose by registration permit only;	Jan. 1 – last day of Feb. (Subsistence hunt only)	
....		

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

Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board of Game (board). The goal is to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits, and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, help to meet Intensive Management objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with the opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios. The board adopted an antlerless moose hunt in 2013 after hearing many comments from heavily invested groups such as the federal Bristol Bay Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Nushagak and Togiak Fish and Game Advisory Committees, and the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge.

The Unit 17A moose management plan calls for antlerless moose hunting opportunity when the population is above 600 moose and increasing. When the population exceeds 1,200 moose, a bag limit of up to two moose is needed to provide increased opportunity and to reduce moose abundance to protect habitat. Based on the most recent survey in October 2022, the population estimate was 1,967 $\pm$ 358 moose. After further analyses, this estimate will be corrected for sightability which will result in a higher population estimate further supporting strategies for

additional harvest opportunities. The bag limit of two moose and antlerless harvest opportunity provide a mechanism to limit population growth and allow hunters to harvest surplus animals.

The moose population in subunit 17A is over objective and can sustain additional harvest. The objectives for this population include allowing it to expand into neighboring areas to provide additional harvest opportunities. This population is currently contributing to the growth of adjacent moose populations, especially to the north and west.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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