

PROPOSAL 40

5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.

Reduce the nonresident bag limit for deer in Unit 2 from four bucks to one as follows:

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

Proposal: The Klawock Advisory Committee proposes to change the deer harvest in Unit 2 to: One buck for nonresidents.

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

The Sitka Blacktail deer population on Prince of Wales Island (PoW) crashed in 2017, 2018 & 2019 mainly due to the increase in wolf population from 2015-2019. Between 1985 and 2001 the wolf harvest on PoW ranged from 18-132 wolves and the season length was Dec. 1-March 31 with no closures and no limit.

In 1993, the 1st petition to list the Alexander Archipelago wolves under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was filed and Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) defeated it.

In 2011, a 2nd petition was filed and ADF&G countered with a wolf management change in 2015 to avoid the listing.

In 2015, wolves on PoW were managed under a quota system resulting in the following harvest:

2015: 7 total wolves harvested
2016: 30 total wolves harvested
2017: 62 total wolves harvested
2018: 46 total wolves harvested

The 2018 deer season was dramatic for many of us. We saw more wolf scat with deer bones/hair in it than we saw deer. Nearly every mountain, road, beach, etc. had wolf scat on it and our deer were very hard to find since so many died from wolves.

In 2019, ADF&G changed wolf management to its current format of a variable season length which resulted in the harvest of 164 wolves. This jump in wolf harvest triggered the 3rd petition to list the Alexander Archipelago wolves under the ESA in July of 2020.

With a lot of effort, ADF&G defeated the petition and has continued to manage wolves under its current format of a tight season length to control the take.

Currently, ADF&G has a handle on wolf management but PoW still suffers from a depressed deer herd and every deer is important until our herd rebounds. Nonresidents hunters come to PoW for the opportunity to harvest a large male buck. They do not come here specifically for the meat, but rather for the experience and the chance at a trophy Sitka Blacktail deer.

Our deer herd is struggling and residents heavily rely on venison to feed our families. PoW only has one good eating big game animal.

We feel a one buck bag limit for nonresidents is justified and prudent until our deer population rebounds.

Respectfully,

The Klawock Fish & Game Advisory Committee

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

PROPOSED BY: Klawock Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F25-019)
