

PROPOSAL 47

5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides.

Eliminate the Unit 2 meat salvage requirement for resident black bear hunting in May as follows:

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

Proposal: Eliminate meat salvage requirement in May for black bear in Unit 2 for residents only.

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. This was due to increasingly degraded forest habitat related to past timber harvest and the increase in the wolf population from 2015-2019. The broad loss of old growth forest habitat in central and north PoW has had a notable reduction on the ability of the landscape to produce and support deer. The value of old growth forest habitat to a healthy deer population can not be overstated. This loss of quality habitat and the consequential increase in the number one predator of deer (wolves) has significantly depleted the PoW deer population.

Factors affecting the PoW deer herd are; habitat loss, wolf and black bear predation and human predation resulting from the most liberal deer hunting season in the state and likely in the US.

Our deer herd is depressed enough that we feel it is reasonable to change the meat salvage requirements for black bear hunters in Unit 2. This would incentivize residents to harvest more black bears to reduce the take of fawns by bears.

Unit 2 only has three big game animals; wolf, black bear and deer.

PoW grocery stores are limited to Craig, Klawock and Thorne Bay. This drives our grocery prices higher than other areas in Southeast AK and many other places in Alaska.

Ketchikan was recently granted a rural designation and will be able to harvest under subsistence regulations, thereby competing with residents of PoW for our deer and other resources.

Eliminating the meat salvage requirement in May for black bear in Unit 2 for residents will increase the harvest of black bear on PoW further improving the deer population. This change will hopefully be temporary until our deer herd rebounds.

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

The Craig AC members developed this proposal with input from other Unit 2 residents. We have noticed and are concerned about the steady and significant decline in deer numbers and our availability for subsistence food resources. Scientific publications depicting trends of concern about the deer of PoW can be found at www.sitkablacktaildeer.org.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(OI-F25-041)
