

Proposal 37

5 AAC 85.045(20). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Establish a resident registration permit hunt for moose in 22E as follows:

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

Open Season	Resident	
	(Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Units and Bag Limits		
(20)		
...		
Unit 22(E)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 bull <u>by registration permit only</u> ; or	Aug. 1 – Dec. 31	
1 antlered bull <u>by registration permit only</u>	Jan. 1 – Mar. 15	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued		Sept. 1 – Sept. 14
...		

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

Moose abundance in Unit 22E has historically persisted at low densities. Fall composition surveys completed in the area during 2014-2022 indicate that the high bull:cow ratio has been slowly declining and as of the latest survey, completed in 2022, is now at the management objective of 30 bulls:100 cows. Though the bull:cow ratio is at management objectives, declines in the bull:cow ratio warrant a better understanding of hunter harvest patterns in the area.

The Unit 22E hunt area is remote and not immediately accessible along the Nome Road system. Such challenges have historically limited hunter participation and harvest in the area; however, participation from residents who do not reside in Unit 22E has increased over the last 5 years, likely due to the Unit 22D Remainder hunt area restrictions incorporated in regulatory year (RY) 2020. The number of

resident hunters participating in the Unit 22E moose hunt has increased from an average of 24 permits issued annually RY10-RY19 to 39 permits annually RY20-RY25. As a result of this increased participation by residents, the number of nonresident DM855 permit numbers have been reduced annually since the hunt was established in RY23.

A lack of data on resident harvest complicates management of the Unit 22E moose population. More accurate reporting would provide the department with data necessary for management of the Unit 22E moose hunt. Elsewhere in Unit 22, the department has implemented registration permit hunts with harvest quotas (e.g., RM840) in hunt areas immediately accessible along the Nome Road System in order to maintain harvest at sustainable levels. Unit 22D Remainder was added as a hunt area of RM840 in RY2020. These registration permit hunts have reporting requirements of up to 48 hours upon a successful harvest and have been instrumental in better understanding hunter harvest in the area.

The proposed regulatory changes would improve harvest reporting in the area as well as provide the department with the tools necessary to maintain harvest at sustainable levels. The department is not proposing changes to season dates or bag limits and does not plan to incorporate a quota with this permit at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F26-034)
