

Proposal 89

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Amend regulations to remove Unit 19A moose from Tier II subsistence management and establish a registration hunt as follows:

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

Amend regulations to remove Unit 19A moose from Tier II subsistence management and establish a registration hunt managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Proposed regulatory language:

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Unit 19A:

REGISTRATION HUNT: One bull moose; season dates, permit numbers, and any antler restrictions to be established by the department through permit conditions based on current population status and harvest objectives.

[UNIT 19A MOOSE HUNT MANAGED UNDER TIER II SUBSISTENCE HUNTING]

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

Moose populations in Game Management Unit 19A have increased to a level where additional harvest opportunity may be provided while continuing to meet conservation and subsistence needs. Recent post-hunting season composition surveys indicate adequate calf-to-cow ratios and continued population growth, suggesting the herd can support increased harvest. These indicators suggest that harvest levels could exceed the Amount Necessary for Subsistence (ANS) without compromising sustained yield.

Unit 19A has met or exceeded the lower bounds of the ANS for multiple consecutive years. When populations are consistently meeting or exceeding ANS thresholds, it indicates that the resource is sufficient to provide for subsistence needs without the need for Tier II allocation. Continued use of Tier II under these conditions is inconsistent with its intended purpose, which is to restrict access only when harvestable surplus is insufficient to meet demand.

During the March 2024 Board of Game meeting, the board reduced the size of Unit 19A while simultaneously increasing the ANS for the unit. During this same period, village populations in the region have declined. This creates a situation where the current ANS may no longer accurately reflect present subsistence demand on the resource.

In addition, the current Tier II structure may no longer be necessary to allocate opportunity. In practice, the number of applicants closely aligns with the number of permits issued, resulting in most or all applicants receiving permits. This calls into question the need for a Tier II system, which is intended to limit participation when demand exceeds available harvest.

If no change is made, Unit 19A will remain under a Tier II framework that may no longer reflect current biological conditions or actual subsistence demand, and may continue to unnecessarily limit participation.

This proposal seeks to align management with current population status and user demand by transitioning the Unit 19A moose hunt from Tier II subsistence to a registration hunt, while maintaining the department's ability to regulate harvest, adjust permit numbers annually, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Population and composition data supporting this proposal are summarized in Alaska Department of Fish and Game moose survey updates, including post-hunting season surveys conducted in 2024 and 2025

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

This proposal is being submitted by the Bethel Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Bethel Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F26-084)
