

Proposal 94

5 AAC 92.540. Controlled Use Areas.

Amend the 40 HP restriction in Holitna–Hoholitna Controlled Use Area to 115 HP as follows:

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

Recommended solution: Increase the horsepower limit from 40 hp to 115 hp to allow safe operation with both prop and jet drives commonly used by Unit 18 hunters.

Regulatory language Draft:

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(B) the Holitna-Hoholitna Controlled Use Area:

(i) the area consists of the waters of the Holitna River downstream from Kashegelo, the Titnuk River (Creek) downstream from Fuller Mountain and the Hoholitna River downstream from the confluence of the South Fork and main Hoholitna River;

(ii) the area is closed to the use of any boat equipped with an inboard or outboard motor with an aggregate horsepower in excess of the manufacturer's rating of [40] 115 horsepower for hunting big game, including the transportation of big game hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of big game, from August 1 through November 1; however this provision does not apply to the transportation into the area of game meat that has been processed for human consumption.

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

The Holitna-Hoholitna Controlled Use Area in Unit 19 currently limits boat motors to 40 horsepower. This restriction creates serious safety and access problems for residents of Unit 18 who must travel long distances on the Kuskokwim River system to reach traditional hunting areas in the Holitna and Hoholitna drainages.

Hunters from Unit 18 regularly use larger motors for safe travel due to strong currents, unpredictable weather, heavy loads of gear and meat, and long round-trip distances. When switching from a propeller to a jet unit — a common practice in shallow or changing river conditions — horsepower is significantly reduced. A 40 hp limit does not provide enough power once converted to a jet, forcing underpowered boats and creating safety risks.

ADF&G already effectively manages harvest in the area through check stations in the Upper Holitna-Hoholitna Management Area, bag limits, seasons, and other tools. If nothing is changed, Unit 18 residents will continue to be practically excluded from these historically used hunting grounds, reducing equitable opportunity and food security for rural families.

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

I developed this proposal based on my direct experience as a Unit 18 hunter and discussions with other residents who travel the Kuskokwim and Holitna rivers. Many of us run propeller drives for the main river travel and then switch to jet units when river conditions change. The current 40 hp limit does not account for this common and necessary practice. I have not yet coordinated with my local Advisory Committee but plan to do so.

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(OI-F26-121)
