

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
STAFF COMMENTS
SOUTHCENTRAL REGION PROPOSALS
ALASKA BOARD OF GAME MEETING
SOLDOTNA, ALASKA
MARCH 17-22, 2023



The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Game meeting, March 17-22, 2023 in Soldotna, Alaska, and are prepared to assist the public and board. The stated staff comments should be considered preliminary and subject to change, if or when new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral testimony presented to the board.

PROPOSAL 55 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reduce resident cow permits and nonresident bull permits for Southcentral Region units.

PROPOSED BY: Erik Anderson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce resident cow permits and nonresident bull permits for Southcentral Region units by issuing a minimal amount of nonresident bull draw permits and decreasing the amount of resident cow permits issued. Number of permits issued would need to be determined by the board.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 6, GMU 14(C) and GMU 15 can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) ... Unit 6(A), all drainages into The Gulf of Alaska from Cape Suckling to Palm Point ...		
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 bull by drawing Permit only; up to 5 drawing permits may be issued ...		Sept. 1 – Nov.30
(6) Units and Bag Limits	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 Resident Open season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	No open season Nonresident Open Season
(6) Remainder of Unit 7 1 bull with spike or 50-inch Antlers or antlers with 3 or More brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
(12) ...		
Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area	Sept 1—Mar 31 (General hunt only)	Sept 1—Mar 31
1 moose by regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood Management Area	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area		
1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Nov. 30

...

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

1 moose per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike-fork
antlers or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with
3 or more brow tines on one
side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 30

1 antlerless moose by
drawing permit only; up
to 60 permits may be
issued; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit only,
by bow and arrow only; up to
10 permits may be issued

Oct. 20—Nov. 15

No open season

...

(13)

Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop
Wildlife Management Area

1 bull with spike-fork antlers
by drawing permit
only; up to 30 permits
may be issued; or

Sept. 15—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

Sept. 15—Sept. 30

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(A), that portion
east of the Mystery Creek
Road and the Pipeline Road.
and north of the Sterling High-
way

1 bull per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

with 3 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway: or

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	Aug. 22—Aug. 29
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1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
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1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
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Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season
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1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	
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1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be is-	Oct. 20—Nov. 20	
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sued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

...

There is a negative intensive management (IM) finding for moose in Units 6A, 6B, 6C, 7, and 15B. The IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose. The IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose. The IM population objective for moose in Unit 15C is 3,000-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose.

Unit 6 has a negative C&T finding for moose, and Unit 7, 14C, and a large portion of Unit 15C are all within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose. There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose. The rest of Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area has a negative C&T finding for moose.

However, in addition to the nonresident component, this proposal is requesting changes to drawing permits, and no hunts on moose populations with a positive C&T finding in these units are drawing hunts (see tables 55-1, 55-2, and 55-3).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would be reduced opportunity for Alaskan resident hunters if there was a reduction in the number of resident cow permits issued and reduced opportunity for nonresident moose hunters if the number of nonresident bull permits were reduced.

BACKGROUND:

There were no nonresident bull permit hunts, and no resident antlerless permits issued by the state in Unit 6 during RY 2022.

Unit 14C had numerous drawing hunts for moose in 2022 that both residents and nonresidents could apply for. These included 4 bull-only hunts (68 permits issued with 27 bulls harvested), 3 either-sex hunts (50 permits issued 19 cows and 5 bulls harvested), and one late season antlerless hunt (3 permits issued and 1 cow killed). For these 8 hunts the department can issue up to 185 permits. During 2022, 121 permits were issued with a harvest of 32 bulls and 20 cows.

In addition to those 8 moose drawing hunts in 14C, there was 1 bull drawing hunt open to residents and nonresidents where 40 of the up to 60 permits were issued and with a harvest of 17 bulls; 2 bull only draw hunts open to residents and nonresidents where 20 of the up to 100 permits were issued and with a harvest of 4 bulls; 1 bull drawing hunt open to residents and nonresidents where 3 of the up to 25 permits were issued and with a harvest of 0 bulls; 1 antlerless drawing hunt open to residents only where 35 of the up to 70 permits were issued and with a harvest of 12 cows; 2 antlerless drawing hunt open to residents only where 10 (5 for each hunt) of the up to 120 (60 for each hunt) permits were issued and with a harvest of 8 cows; and 2 antlerless drawing hunts open to residents and nonresidents where 13 (8 for one and 5 for the

other) of the up to 100 (50 for each hunt) permits were issued and with a harvest of 4 cows and 2 bulls.

In Unit 15 during 2022, there was 1 cow drawing permit hunt open to residents and nonresidents, where 50 of the up to 100 permits were issued and with a harvest of 29 cows.

The proponent talks about increasing numbers of people and moose/vehicle collisions, and as a result would like the number of permits issued for resident-only cow hunts to be reduced, and the number of permits for nonresident drawing hunts to be reduced. The number of moose hit by vehicles varies annually based on numerous factors, including weather, visibility, road conditions, vehicle speeds, vehicle volume, and snow depth. The annual average recorded number of moose killed on Matanuska Valley roads during Regulatory Years 2010-2019 was 303 (range 226-359). For Anchorage during this same time period, the annual average was 99 (range 70-119), and for the Kenai Peninsula the average was 223 (range 168-264). The system used to document road killed moose was changed during Regulatory Year 2020 so the most recent 10 year period where data were recorded in a consistent manner was used.

Table 55-1. Bull-only drawing hunts open to nonresidents.

Bull Drawing Hunts Open to Nonresidents								
Hunt	GMU Description	Season	Maximum Permits	Total Permits Issued	Male Killed	Female Killed	Bag Limit	Allowable Residency
DM210	7 & 14C, head of Turnagain Arm	08/20/2022 - 09/30/2022	60	40	17	0	Bull	Both
DM422	14C, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson	09/01/2022 - 01/15/2023	185*	15	7	0	Bull	Both
DM424	14C, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson	09/01/2022 - 11/15/2022	185*	40	16	0	Bull	Both
DM428	14C, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson	09/01/2022 - 09/30/2022	185*	10	4	0	Bull	Both
DM430	14C, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson	10/15/2022 - 11/15/2022	185*	3	1	0	Bull	Both
DM446	14C, Ship Creek Drainage above JBER	09/01/2022 - 09/15/2022	50**	10	1	0	Bull	Both
DM447	14C, Ship Creek Drainage above JBER	09/16/2022 - 09/30/2022	50**	10	3	0	Bull	Both
DM448	14C, Birchwood Management Area	09/01/2022 - 09/30/2022	25	3	0	0	Bull	Both
* A total of 185 permits may be issued in the JBER Management Area								
** A total of 50 permits may be issued in the Ship Creek drainage								

Table 55-2. Antlerless drawing hunts open to residents.

Antlerless Drawing Hunts Open to Residents								
Hunt	GMU Description	Season	Maximum Permits	Total Permits Issued	Male Killed	Female Killed	Bag Limit	Allowable Residency
DM211	7 & 14C, head of Turnagain Arm	08/20/2022 - 10/10/2022	70	35	0	12	Antlerless	Resident
DM423	14C, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson	09/01/2022 - 01/15/2023	185*	3	0	1	Antlerless	Both
DM441	14C, Knik River & Hunter Creek	09/01/2022 - 09/30/2022	60**	5	0	5	Antlerless	Resident
DM443	14C, Peters & Little Peters Creek	09/01/2022 - 09/30/2022	60**	5	0	3	Antlerless	Resident
DM466	14C, Anchorage Management Area	11/01/2022 - 11/30/2022	50***	8	1	3	Antlerless	Both
DM467	14C, Anchorage Management Area	11/01/2022 - 11/30/2022	50***	5	1	1	Antlerless	Both
* A total of 185 permits may be issued in the JBER Management Area								

Table 55-3. Either sex drawing hunts open to residents.

Either Sex Drawing Hunts Open to Residents								
Hunt	GMU Description	Season	Maximum Permits	Total Permits Issued	Male Killed	Female Killed	Bag Limit	Allowable Residency
DM421	14C, JBER Qualified Disabled Veterans	09/01/2022 - 01/15/2023	185*	5	2	0	Either Sex	Both
DM426	14C, JBER Qualified Disabled Veterans	12/15/2022 - 01/15/2023	185*	20	2	12	Either Sex	Both
DM427	14C, JBER	12/15/2022 - 01/15/2023	185*	25	1	7	Either Sex	Both
* A total of 185 permits may be issued in the JBER Management Area								

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** this proposal. If this proposal were adopted, it would unnecessarily reduce opportunity for both residents and nonresidents to harvest moose. The department can alter the number of permits issued with “Up to a number of permits” authority provided by the Alaska Board of Game. Permit numbers are routinely modified depending on the status of the hunted population; these populations are monitored annually or on a 2-3 year cycle.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department, but may reduce the number of hunters applying for these permits, which could result in lost revenue.

PROPOSAL 56 – 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Prohibit taking of big game from boats in Units 6, 7, and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Dave Lyon

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would make it illegal to take big game from a boat in Units 6, 7, and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

AS 16.06.940. Definitions.

...

(35) “take” means taking, pursuing, hunting, fishing, trapping, or in any manner disturbing, capturing, or killing or attempting to take, pursue, hunt, fish, trap, or in any manner capture or kill fish or game;

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

...

(9) from a boat in Units 1 – 5; however, a person with physical disabilities as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

...

(12) shooting back bear from a boat in Unit 6(D); however, a person with physical disabilities as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

...

5 AAC 92.990. Definitions.

...

(9) “big game” means black bear, brown bear, bison, caribou, Sitka black-tailed deer, elk, mountain goat, moose, muskox, Dall sheep, wolf, and wolverine; “big game”, for the purposes of a youth hunt, does not include bison or muskox;

(10) “boat” means a vehicle, vessel, or watercraft operated in or on water deep enough to float it at rest and includes hovercraft, airboats, personal watercraft, and amphibious vehicles;

...

Unit 7 and the majority of Unit 15 are within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. There are various positive C&T findings in Unit 15 outside the NSA (Kalgin Island moose, lower Unit 15C moose and goats, wolves, wolverines), as well as various positive C&T findings in Unit 6 outside the Valdez Nonsubsistence Area (black bears, deer, goats, wolves, wolverine).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make it illegal to take any big game animal (as defined above) from a boat throughout all of Units 6, 7, and 15. This would apply to all inland ponds, lakes, rivers, and streams, as well as saltwater portions of these Units. This would include conveyances like canoes and rafts, as well as motorized watercraft. This may reduce hunting opportunity considering the statutory definition of “take”.

Federal regulations also allow take from a boat in these units as long as the boat is not under power, so adoption of this proposal would result in state and federal regulations being out of alignment, which may make enforcement difficult.

BACKGROUND: There is no indication that taking big game animals (with the caveat that black bears cannot be taken from a boat in 6D without a permit issued by the department) from a boat is causing any biological concern for the big game populations in Units 6, 7 and 15.

Research on subsistence patterns of access indicates hunters from Cordova take black bears on occasion while boating or fishing in the spring. Small boats, such as skiffs, are used to reach Hawkins and Hinchinbrook islands for deer hunting, or for goat hunting in other areas of Unit 6.

In Unit 15C, economic opportunity briefly increased for local communities after 1989 the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, and many subsistence users were able to purchase boats and motors capable of sailing on Southcentral marine waters. Boats are widely used by Lower Unit 15C residents, as well as other Alaskans, to access subsistence hunting opportunities.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The department does not have data for the number of hunters who shoot big game from a boat, but some have done so, according to household surveys. There has been some debate of whether shooting from a boat increases the potential for wounding loss, but the department has no evidence one way or another for Units 6, 7, and 15.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 57 – 5 AAC 92.090. Unlawful methods of taking fur animals; exceptions.

Allow the use of dogs to track and retrieve dead or wounded fur animals in Units 6 - 8, 14C, and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Harris

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the use of dogs to track and retrieve dead or wounded fur animals in Units 6-8, 14C, and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.090. The following methods and means of taking fur animals under a hunting license are prohibited, in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

- (1) By using a trap, snare, net, fish trap, or dog, except that in Unit 20(D) a dog may be used to hunt coyotes after registering with the department and the department may use its discretionary authority under 5 AAC 92.052 as needed;

...

5 AAC 92.990. Definitions.

...

(31) “fur animal” means a beaver, coyote, arctic fox, red fox, lynx, flying squirrel, ground squirrel, or red squirrel that has not been domestically raised; “fur animal” is a classification of animals subject to taking with a hunting license;

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If this proposal were adopted it would add language to 5 AAC 92.090 to allow the use of a dog to track and retrieve dead or wounded fur animals in Units 6-8, 14(C), and 15. Trappers would be able to use dogs to retrieve wounded fur animals. The use of a dog may result in increased success in locating wounded fur animals. Well trained hunting dogs are a tool that can be used, and, with technological advances (e.g., GPS collars), make tracking dogs, and presumably furbearers, more successful.

BACKGROUND: The board has authorized the use of dogs to track wounded big game, to hunt black bears under the authority of a permit issued by the department, and to hunt coyotes in Unit 20D (5 AAC 92.090). In addition, dogs are used routinely to hunt small game, upland birds, and waterfowl to accomplish the results the author is seeking in this proposal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is methods and means in nature. The proposal does not ask to allow dogs to take furbearers, but to retrieve wounded fur animals. The difference in language is important. Division staff routinely receive calls from the public who are concerned about dogs harassing wildlife. Simply allowing dogs to hunt or harass fur animals without specific conditions to ensure ethical hunting and trapping and the humane take of fur animals is contrary to the mission of the Division of Wildlife Conservation. The board may wish to consider allowing dogs to be used to retrieve wounded furbearers as well.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 58 – 5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements. Require hunter orientation for hunting goat in Southcentral Region units

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require all mountain goat hunters in Units 6, 7, 8, 14(C), and 15 review goat education information and take a quiz on determining male from female goats.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Currently there are no requirements for mountain goat education prior to hunting across Southcentral Alaska and there are no goat education requirements currently as part of 5 AAC 92.003. At the Board of Game meeting in Ketchikan in January 2023 the board voted to require all goat hunters in Units 1-5 take an online orientation course prior to goat hunting, which will be effective July 1, 2023.

There is a positive C&T finding for mountain goats in Units 6C and 6D with an ANS of 15-26, a positive C&T finding in Units 7 and 15C outside of the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area with an ANS of 7-10, and a negative C&T finding in Unit 8. Unit 14C is within the NSA.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted the proposal may help hunters select male mountain goats by requiring them to review information on determining visual differences between male and female goats and then take a quiz to demonstrate their understanding of identifying features of male mountain goats. Mountain goat populations are sensitive to female harvest. With improved male/female identification the intent is a reduction in female harvest resulting in additional hunting opportunity.

BACKGROUND: All goat hunting opportunities in Units 6, 7, 8, 14(C), and 15 are managed through registration or drawing permits. The number of permits available are based on “goat points” or in some cases the number of goats available. A billy is assigned 1 point, and a nanny is assigned 2 points in an attempt to encourage hunters to harvest billies. Mountain goat harvest is managed by assigning points according to the number of goats estimated in aerial surveys. Points available are calculated from the latest survey data and the number of permits issued is based on historical hunter success data. There are also numerous hunts with an unlimited number of permits available, but the season may close when a predetermined number of “goat points” are harvested. During the RY 2022 season, permits were issued for 34 drawing hunts and 38 registration hunts throughout the Southcentral Region. The department uses its discretionary

permit authority to require hunters take the online goat orientation and quiz for four of those hunts, which include hunts on populations with positive C&T findings.

Overall, there are no concerns with the goat populations in Units 6, 7, 8, 14(C), and 15. Managers can adjust the number of permits issued annually based on the most recent survey data.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The department supports hunter education efforts. Using discretionary permit authority, the department can require orientation and quizzes as a permit condition. If adopted, the record should show that the board considered impacts to normally diligent subsistence hunters and how the regulations continue to provide them with a reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting a goat for subsistence uses.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 59 – 5 AAC 85.040 Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Change the RG231 to an archery only hunt for goat in Unit 6 for certified bowhunters.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify RG231 hunt to create an archery only hunt starting September 22 for goats in Unit 6C for certified bowhunters.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

In Units 6C and 6D the season dates are Sept 15-Jan 31, however the department uses its discretionary authority to reduce the seasons to Oct 1- Jan 31 as a permit condition.

1 goat by registration permit only; however, if a nanny is taken, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat in Unit 6 for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited.

There is a positive C&T finding for goats in Unit 6C and 6D with an ANS of 15-26.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would create an exclusive hunting opportunity for archery hunters. This proposal would not likely impact the goat population because the department will continue to manage within Maximum Allowable Harvest (MAH) in goat points. Non-archery hunters would no longer be able to access the easiest goat hunting opportunity for road-based hunters.

BACKGROUND: Goats are the only native ungulate to this area and have a long history of subsistence uses. The current hunt areas in Unit 6 were established in 1998 to allow for more precise and responsive hunt management. Registration hunts in Unit 6 are managed by

emergency order when maximum allowable harvest levels are reached. While the season has closed by emergency order in 3 of the last 5 years, the 5-year average season length is 60 days.

Since 1998, this hunt has occurred in 20 of 24 years with an average of 7 goat points available. The hunt was closed RY10-RY13 in response to high nanny take in RY07 and RY08 and a subsequent perceived decline in the population. In 2014, goat hunter education became mandatory for goat hunters in specific areas, including RG231. Additionally, in 2015 the board adopted the regulation that prohibits hunting in Unit 6 again for 5 years after a nanny is taken.

An average of 10 hunters per year participate and an average of 6 goat units are taken. None of the harvest records in RG231 have indicated that archery was the utilized method of take. Nearly all harvest is by Alaska residents because nonresidents must be guided for mountain goat hunts and no commercial use permits are available from the U.S. Forest Service.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal it will need to determine if the new regulations will continue to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department or private parties.

PROPOSAL 60 – 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. Create an archery only deer hunt in Unit 6 for resident and nonresident certified bowhunters only.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Create an archery only deer hunt for certified bow hunters only during November 1-November 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Unit 6

Resident hunters:

5 deer August 1-December 31, Only bucks may be taken before October 1

Nonresident hunters:

4 deer August 1-December 31, Only bucks may be taken before October 1

The intensive management (IM) population objective for deer in Unit 6 is 24,000–28,000 deer and the IM harvest objective is 2,200-3,000 deer.

There is a positive C&T finding for deer in Unit 6 with an ANS of 1,000-1,250.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would create an exclusive hunting opportunity for archery hunters during the peak of rutting behavior. Non-archery hunters would have a shorter season and lose prime opportunity. There would likely be no effect on the overall deer population as a result of this proposal passing. Adoption of the proposal may reduce reasonable opportunity for subsistence hunters due to shortening the non-archery season and limiting the allowable methods and means.

BACKGROUND: Sitka black-tailed deer in Unit 6 are at the extreme northern limit of their range (Cowan 1969). The population usually thrives because of mild, maritime climate conditions on islands in Prince William Sound (PWS) (Shishido 1986). The most important factors limiting the deer population are snow depth and snowpack duration (Reynolds 1979). A series of mild winters allows deer to increase and disperse to less favorable habitat, and the population does decline during severe winters when food is inaccessible. Regardless of management actions taken, weather will primarily influence population trajectory.

Generous season and bag limits allow for high harvest in years where winter kill is anticipated to be high. However, the remote nature of most of PWS, difficult fall weather, and rugged terrain creates challenges for hunters and probably keeps harvest low in most areas.

Statewide, bowhunters account for 1-3% of the harvest annually. The five-year average of harvest taken by bow hunters is 1% in PWS. Monthly harvest by bow is not available.

The peak of rutting behavior occurs in November in most years. Not coincidentally, in most years more deer are taken in November than in any other month (Table 60-1). During the first two weeks of November, deer become more responsive to calls and overall bucks become more active.

Table 60-1. Unit 6 deer harvest chronology percent by month, Southcentral Alaska, regulatory years^a 2017–2021.

Regulatory year	Harvest chronology percent by month							n
	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Unk	
2017	12	3	32	33	19	1	1	1,476
2018	9	3	27	34	27	0	0	1,749
2019	8	3	33	38	17	0	0	2,142
2020	10	3	33	31	23	0	0	1,692
2021	6	2	17	24	51	0	0	2,560

^a A regulatory year begins 1 July and ends 30 June: e.g., regulatory year 2017 = 1 July 2017–30 June 2018.

This population has established intensive management objectives. They can be found online at

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/research/wildlife/speciesmanagementreports/pdfs/deer_2016_2026_smr_gmu_6.pdf

The average harvest for the last 10 years (RY12-RY21) is 1,863 deer. The lowest harvest during this time was 618 in RY21 and the highest harvest was 2,959 in RY16. Buck harvest has been between 57 and 81%, with an average of 66%

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal due to its allocative nature but **OPPOSES** loss of opportunity given weather is the most significant factor impacting Sitka black-tailed deer abundance. If the proposal is adopted, given the season reduction and the methods and means restriction, the board will need to communicate how it determined if a reasonable opportunity for subsistence will continue to be provided.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 61 – 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. Lower the resident and nonresident general season bag limit for deer in Unit 6.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Harris

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reduce the bag limit for deer in Unit 6 from five to three for residents, and from four to two for nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units 6 August 1-December 31

Resident hunters

Five deer

Only bucks may be taken before October 1

Nonresident hunters

Four deer

Only bucks may be taken before October 1

The intensive management (IM) population objective for deer in Unit 6 is 24,000–28,000 deer and the IM harvest objective is 2,200-3,000 deer.

There is also a positive C&T finding for deer in Unit 6 with an ANS of 1,000–1,250.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would likely be no effect on the overall deer population as a result of this proposal being adopted. Although few hunters harvest more than 1 or 2 deer, some hunters, especially Alaska residents, harvest more. Adoption of the proposal may reduce reasonable opportunity for subsistence hunters.

BACKGROUND: Sitka black-tailed deer in Unit 6 are at the extreme northern limit of their range (Cowan 1969). The population usually thrives because of mild, maritime climate conditions on islands in Prince William Sound (PWS) (Shishido 1986). The most important factors limiting the deer population are snow depth and snowpack duration (Reynolds 1979). A series of mild winters allows deer to increase and disperse to less favorable habitat, only to decline during severe winters when food is inaccessible. Regardless of management actions taken, weather will primarily influence population trajectory.

Generous season and bag limits allow for high harvest in years where winter kill is anticipated to be high. However, the remote nature of most of PWS, difficult fall weather, and rugged terrain creates challenges for hunters and probably keeps harvest low in most areas.

The average harvest for the last 10 years (RY12-RY21) is 1,863 deer. The lowest harvest during this time was 618 in RY21 and the highest harvest was 2,959 in RY16. Buck harvest has been between 57% and 81%, and the average 66%

Changes in bag limits are likely to have a disproportionate impact on Unit 6 residents over other user groups, limiting a reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting deer for subsistence uses. Unit 6 residents take a smaller portion of the harvest (38%) but are more likely to fill a higher bag limit. The five-year average (RY17-RY21) number of deer killed per Unit 6 hunter was 1.6, while deer killed per nonlocal Alaskan hunter was 1.06 (Figure 61-1). Nonresidents hunters averaged 0.53 deer per hunter during the same timeframe. The reason nonresidents don't often harvest more than one deer is probably due to the cost of the big game tag (\$300) that must be purchased per animal and the cost of transporting meat home.

In some years, when weather concentrates deer on the beach, the number of deer taken per hunter increases substantially, particularly among Unit 6 residents. Many hunters value this opportunity to put meat in the freezer with the expectation that if a large winter kill occurs, deer hunting may be more difficult the following year. Few nonlocal hunters are taking more than two deer, even in large snow years.

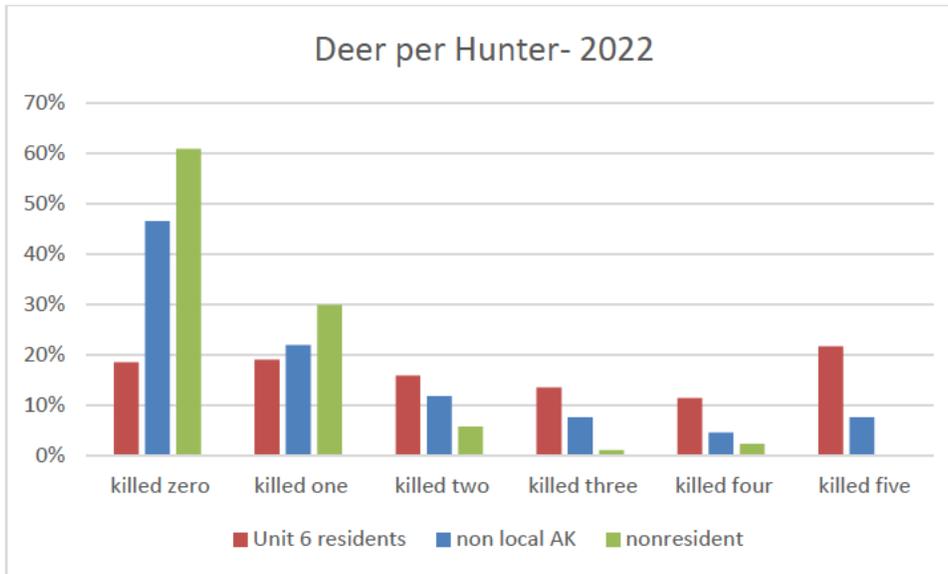


Figure 61-1. Percent of hunters, by residency, who report taking 0-5 deer, RY2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it is a reduction in opportunity that is not necessary from a biological standpoint. Winter severity is the most significant factor impacting Sitka black-tailed deer abundance. If the proposal is adopted, the board will need to determine if a reasonable opportunity for subsistence will continue to be provided.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 62 – 5 AAC 085.045(a)(4). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Re-establish an antlerless moose season in Unit 6C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Adoption of this proposal would ensure that the department has the necessary tools to manage the Unit 6(C) moose population within objectives.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(4)

...

Unit 6(C)	Sept. 1–Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 40 permits for bulls and up to 20 permits for antlerless moose may be issued		
1 moose by registration permit only	Nov. 1–Dec. 31	No open season
...		

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 6C.

The board made a negative customary and traditional use finding for moose in all of Unit 6.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would allow an antlerless hunt in Unit 6(C) if needed. Resident hunters would be able to continue to harvest antlerless moose during hunts administered by ADF&G on state-managed lands in Unit 6.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. During 2020 and 2021, the Copper River Fish and Game Advisory Committee did not meet to reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt and the hunt expired.

The population objective is 600–800 moose. Population objectives were increased in 2017 in consultation with the local advisory committee and are documented in the most recent moose Management and Operational Plan:

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/research/wildlife/speciesmanagementreports/pdfs/moose_2015_2020_smr_gmu_6.pdf.

A population survey completed during March 2018 yielded an estimate of 677 moose, 32% of which were calves. This population is aggressively harvested to maintain it within population objectives. The department manages this hunt cooperatively with the U. S. Forest Service and the available antlerless harvest quota in Unit 6C is currently harvested under a federal subsistence season. The department has not held the state antlerless hunt since the 1999–2000 season. A state hunt for antlered bull moose (DM167) is held each year, in addition to the federal subsistence hunts. Quota adjustments on both the federal and state side appear to have been successful at keeping the population within its objectives.

In 2013, a registration hunt was established that could be used to harvest moose, including antlerless moose, if the federal subsistence hunt is not held or it does not result in the desired amount of harvest. Continuation of the antlerless hunts is a necessary tool to achieve population objectives.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to reauthorize antlerless harvests in Unit 6.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 63 – 5 AAC 85.020 Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Lengthen the brown bear season in Unit 6D, excluding Montague Island.

PROPOSED BY: Wayne Woods

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the brown bear season to start October 1 to align with the antlerless deer season. This would apply to all of Unit 6D except Montague Island.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Remainder of Unit 6(D):

1 bear every 4 regulatory year October 15-May 25.

Brown bears in Unit 6 have a negative C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The proposer believes that bears are currently shot in defense of life and property by deer hunters and are not salvaged. Aligning the seasons would result in those bears being legally taken and salvaged. This proposal would allow for the harvest of brown bears while they are still likely concentrated on salmon streams. Hunters could harvest a bear while hunting deer in the any deer season. Aligning the deer and bear seasons could reduce complexity and would allow DLP bears to be kept if a brown bear tag is in possession.

BACKGROUND:

Brown bear populations have never been estimated empirically in Unit 6. Various attempts have involved unreliable metrics that are difficult to interpret, such as track/den metrics, minimum count data, or harvest data extrapolations. The department monitors harvest for big changes but also acknowledges that harvest can be influenced by gas prices, marketing pressure by guides, and other economic factors.

Prior to 1970, brown bear seasons in Unit 6 started September 1 simultaneous to many other seasons. In 1966, the spring season was shortened from June 30 almost annually by Emergency Order until 1970 when the season end was set at May 25. In 1970, the brown bear season in the fall was also reduced to October 10. All these adjustments were based on concerns of high and unsustainable harvest (Griese 1990).

By the mid-1980s, concern had grown about the status of dusky Canada geese. Among the primary threats that were identified, nest predation by brown bears was responsible for considerable mortality. In 1984, the brown bear season returned to a September 1 start, presumably to align the season with Unit 6B to reduce regulatory complexity and because the fall contribution to harvest was considered minor (Reynolds 1985). In 1987, the season for brown bears was changed for Unit 6 to September 1- May 31 to better match the dusky Canada goose nesting and brooding period.

Montague Island was identified as an area of concern within Unit 6D in 1989. While other portions of the unit and subunit had increasing or stable harvest, harvest on Montague was declining. The Board of Game acted on declining harvest and suggestive survey data and closed the season on Montague in 1994, creating the Unit 6D remainder hunt area. Since then, Montague has been managed with shorter seasons and/or permit requirements.

In the early 1990s, brown bear seasons were shortened in response to increasing hunting pressure and a suspected declining population (Griese 1991). In 1992, the brown bear season in Unit 6D excluding Montague (henceforth Unit 6D remainder) was reduced to October 1 - May 31. The fall season in Unit 6D was further reduced in 1994 to October 15-May 15 due to concerns of overharvest (Nowlin 1995).

In Unit 6A, Unit 6B, and Unit 6C, seasons and bag limits were liberalized again in 1997 to allow for 1 bear per year due to predation concerns on dusky Canada geese and moose calves. In Unit 6D, the season was lengthened to May 25, where it has remained. It is unclear what the lengthening of the season was in response to since harvest was at a low point.

Brown bears may be easier to hunt earlier in the season when they are still utilizing salmon streams. Bear hunting does not begin in Kodiak (GMU 8) until October 25. This season was supported by Deacy, et al. 2016 which documented bears' use of salmon in river systems until late October. Late season salmon runs in PWS have not been studied but are believed to be like Kodiak in strength and timing.

Using data from 1984-1993, when seasons were earlier in Unit 6D, and removing harvest from Montague, we can estimate the possible impact of lengthening the fall season. If an October 1 start was used during this time, harvest in the first half of October would account for about 50% of the total harvest. The ten-year (RY12-21) average fall harvest in Unit 6D remainder was 2-3 bears. Therefore, the increase in season length might result in 4-6 bears annually in the fall harvest. Fall harvest for the last 10 years has made up only 20% of the harvest. However, the total harvest for RY20 and RY21 were the fifth and ninth highest harvests in the last 40 years (Table 63-1). Harvest has been increasing for the last 10 years except for in RY19 which was affected by the COVID-19 related bear hunting closures (Table 63-2).

Table 63-1: Reported brown bear harvest in Unit 6D Remainder RY81-RY21.

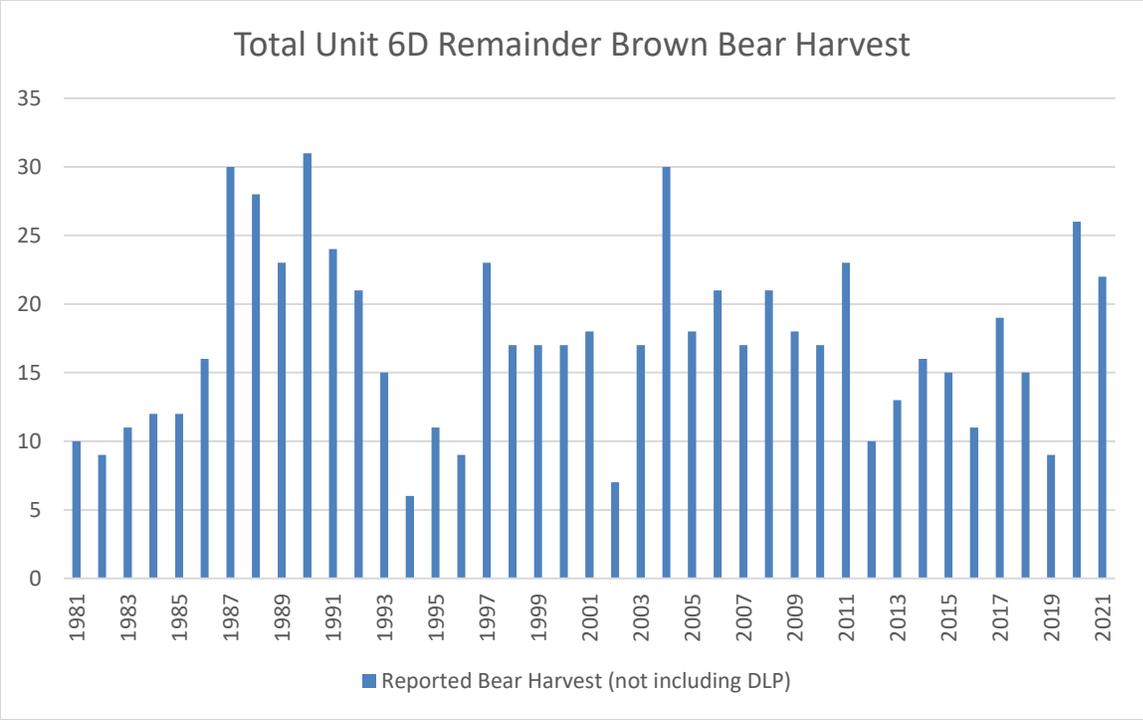
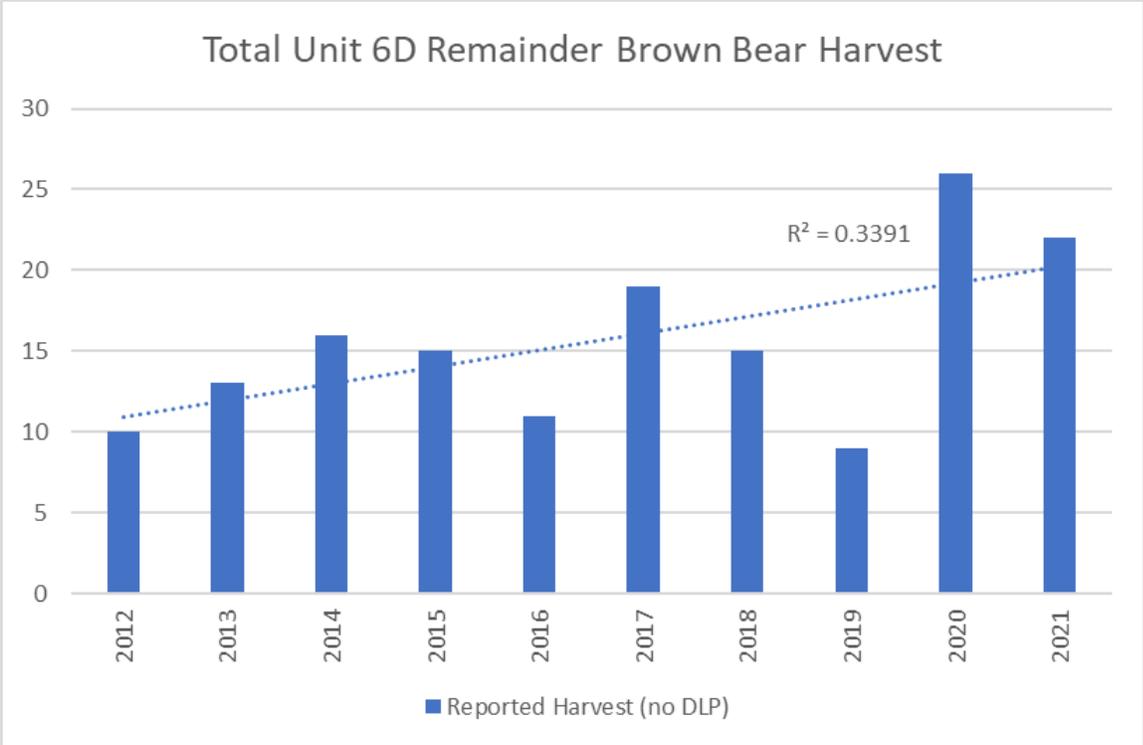


Table 63-2: Reported brown bear harvest in Unit 6D Remainder RY12-RY21.



October is a popular month for deer hunters: it's when about 31% of the deer harvest is taken. However, much of this effort is probably concentrated later in the month as deer are pushed to lower elevations with the onset of snow and are more influenced by rutting behavior.

There have been 30 kills in defense of life and property (DLP) in the fall since 1981. Of those, 11 (37%) occurred in the first half of October. The annual average number of DLP kills was higher (0.92 bears per year) in 1981-1993, the period where the season was open earlier, than from 1994-present (0.64 bears per year) when the season started October 15. This suggests that the later season did not lead to more bears being taken as DLP. The number of bears that are killed by deer hunters and not reported is not known but is believed to be low.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is OPPOSED to this proposal because recent harvest is high and potentially increasing. While the fall harvest makes up a small percentage of the total harvest, changing seasons when recent harvest is above average and with no biological justification could result in a need to continually change regulations if the harvest continues to increase. This creates a confusing situation for users with limited benefit. No population data exist for brown bears in this area, which warrants a somewhat conservative approach to managing them.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 64 – 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping; or 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Change the minimum jaw spread for trapping land otter in Unit 6, or align mink and otter seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Facteau

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Align mink and otter seasons, change minimum jaw spread to 5 1/8 " or get rid of jaw spread requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 84.27 Trapping seasons and bag limits

(7) Mink

Units 6,9,10,11,13 and 17	November 10-last day of February	No limit
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(9) Otter, land

Units 6,9-11, 13,14(A), 14(B), and 16-18	November 10- March 31	No limit
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5 AAC 92.095 Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions

The following methods and means of taking furbearers under a trapping license are prohibited, in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

(a)(4) taking land otter with a steel trap having an inside jaw spread of less than five and seven-eighths inches during any closed mink and marten season in the same game management unit.

Both mink and otter have positive C&T findings in Alaska, outside the nonsubsistence areas, with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If seasons are adjusted, it would either reduce the otter opportunity by one month or increase the mink season by one month. Extending the mink season to match otter season would result in misalignment again with weasel and marten seasons. Additionally, a longer season would allow for trapping when females are pregnant and more vulnerable to capture.

Changing or removing the minimum jaw spread requirement would allow trappers to use traps that are safer and easier to manage. It could result in more mink or marten harvest. This would also create an exemption from what is currently a statewide provision.

BACKGROUND: Mink populations are unmonitored in Unit 6, like nearly all parts of the state. Sealing is not required so harvest is not monitored as part of the sealing process. Harvest pressure is believed to be light with trappers taking mink incidentally with other aquatic furbearers.

Mink season closed January 31 until 2001 when it was changed to the end of February to match the weasel and marten seasons. This makes it the longest mink season in the southeastern or southcentral regions of the state.

Otter populations are also unmonitored in Unit 6. They have received some attention in Prince William Sound (PWS) due to the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill which appears to have led to increased mortality of river otters. Estimates in PWS have ranged from 0.28-0.80 otters per km of coastline (Testa et al. 1994). Other portions of Unit 6 probably have lower densities because of less opportunity to forage on marine resources.

Otter harvest in Unit 6 has been declining for about ten years. The five-year average of harvest is 40% of the ten-year harvest level. This decline could be related to population decline but is more likely related to decreasing effort and increasing fuel prices, as has been observed statewide. The otter season in Unit 6 is also the longest season in the southeastern or southcentral regions of the state by a month or more.

Traps with a jaw spread of less than 4 inches for otters are preferred by many trappers for ease of setting and efficacy. However, minimum jaw spread requirements were set statewide to be in

effect during times when the otter season is closed yet mink and marten seasons are open. The intent of this regulation is to avoid incidental take of the smaller species during a closed season and the resulting forfeiture of those furs.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on trap sizes, however changing the statewide regulation for one unit could lead to complexity in regulations. The department is **OPPOSED** an exemption for Unit 6 from the statewide jaw spread restrictions because of the unnecessary increase in complexity given statewide size restrictions, and statewide regulations should be deliberated at statewide meetings. The department is **OPPOSED** to lengthening the mink season because the proposed season would extend into a time when mink are pregnant and more susceptible to trapping, which could increase take beyond sustainable levels. In addition, the department lacks harvest data to monitor or compare harvest over time because mink are not sealed. The department is **OPPOSED** to reducing the otter season because there is no biological justification for the reduction in opportunity. If the proposal is adopted, the board will need to determine if a reasonable opportunity for subsistence will continue to be provided.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 65 – 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goats.

Establish a fall registration goat hunt for residents and nonresidents in that portion of Unit 8 on the Aliulik Peninsula.

PROPOSED BY: Lance Kronberger

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to establish a new registration hunt area, a unique hunt season, and a separate bag limit for goats on a portion of the Unit 8 RG480 registration hunt area on the Aliulik Peninsula. If adopted, this proposal would create a new registration hunt area for goats on the Aliulik Peninsula, comprised specifically of Kodiak (bear) Hunt Area 07. The new hunt area would have reduced season dates from September 1– November 15 and would reduce the bag limit from 2 goats as currently allowed in RG480 to 1 goat. The hunt area would continue to be open to both residents and nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

...

Resident

Units and Bag Limits	Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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...

(4)
Unit 8, that portion of Kodiak Island south and west of a line extending along the Spiridon River, following the North Fork of the Spiridon to its headwaters, then going southwest following the spine of the island over Koniag Peak to the headwaters to the south fork of Midway Creek, then downstream on Midway Creek to Midway Bay.

2 goats by registration permit only, only 1 of which may be a billy; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited.

Aug. 20 – Mar. 31
(General Hunt Only)

Aug. 20 – Mar. 31

There is a negative C&T finding for goats in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal is attempting to reduce the number of goats harvested on the Aliulik Peninsula in order to increase the billy to nanny ratio in the area. If adopted, this proposal would increase the complexity of the Kodiak goat hunting regulations by creating a separate season, separate hunt area, and a separate bag limit for this area. Limiting harvest to 1 goat per hunter is likely to have little effect on overall harvest because very few hunters harvest 2 goats in this area.

Implementing a 1 goat bag limit while reducing the hunting season from 7.5 months (Aug 20–Mar 31; 224 days) to 2.5 months (Sep 1–Nov 15; 76 days) would presumably reduce harvest in the area but may compromise the department’s management objective to reduce or stabilize population growth in hunt area RG480.

BACKGROUND: Hunt area RG480 encompasses the southwestern half of Kodiak Island and is comprised primarily of public lands with smaller inholdings of private lands. The Akhiok-Kaguyak Native Corporation owns sections of land in RG480 on the southern tip of Kodiak Island, specifically areas contained within Kodiak (bear) Hunt Area 07 on the Aliulik Peninsula. Hunting in RG480 is currently open from August 20–March 31 by registration permit. Beginning in 2013, RG480 had a bag limit of 2 goats and, beginning in 2020, one of the 2

harvested goats is required to be a nanny. The southern portion of Aliulik Peninsula has very little suitable goat habitat and is comprised primarily of flat bench lands with tundra vegetation, lakes, shallow ponds, and intermittent alder and willow patches. The northern portion of the peninsula includes more suitable goat habitat with more rugged topography that includes rolling hills, wide valleys, and mountains with moderate to steep relief. Mountain goats were initially identified on the Aliulik Peninsula in the early 2000s and primarily occur in the Japanese Bay area of the peninsula with smaller groups occasionally observed near Cape Kiavak and the head of Kaguyak Bay. Recent goat surveys identified 76 goats (59 adults, 17 kids) in 2017, 45 goats (35 adults, 10 kids) in 2018, 101 goats (78 adults, 23 kids) in 2019, 99 goats (73 adults, 26 kids) in 2020, and 74 goats (50 adults, 24 kids) in 2022. No survey of RG480 was conducted in 2021. However, it is important to note these numbers reflect actual goats counted and do not account for undetected goats because no sightability correction factor was applied.

From RY16-RY20, on average there were 122 goat hunters (range 110-139) on the Aliulik Peninsula (Table 65-1) of which 61 were successful (range 52-70). Average annual harvest consisted of 36 males and 25 females with most goats harvested in Oct (28.8%), Nov (22.2%), and March (21.6%).

Table 65-1. – Goat harvest on Aliulik Peninsula, 2016–2020.

Goat Harvest on Aliulik Peninsula

	Total			Successful			Harvest			
	Total Hunters	Total Days Hunted	Avg. Days Hunted	# Successful Hunters	Total Days Hunted	Avg. Days Hunted	Males	Females	Unknown	Total
2020	113	451	4	68	276	4.1	41	27	0	68
2019	110	376	3.4	61	183	3	30	30	1	61
2018	134	540	4.1	52	179	3.5	30	22	0	52
2017	139	666	4.8	70	262	3.7	50	20	0	70
2016	115	548	4.8	55	230	4.2	28	27	0	55
5-yr Mean	122.2	516.2	4.22	61.2	226	3.7	35.8	25.2	0.2	61.2

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is OPPOSED to this proposal to establish a new registration hunt area, a unique hunt season, and a separate bag limit for goats in the Aliulik Peninsula portion of the Unit 8 RG480 registration hunt area because it would presumably

reduce harvest in the area and may compromise the department's management objective to reduce or stabilize population growth in the hunt area.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 66 – 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goats. Create an archery only, resident goat hunt within the RG480 hunt area in Unit 8.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to establish a separate archery only mountain goat registration hunt within the RG480 hunt boundary in Unit 8.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

...

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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...

(4)
Unit 8, that portion of Kodiak Island south and west of a line extending along the Spiridon River, following the North Fork of the Spiridon to its headwaters, then going southwest following the spine of the island over Koniag Peak to the headwaters to the south fork of Midway Creek, then downstream on Midway Creek to Midway Bay.

2 goats by registration permit

Aug. 20 – Mar. 31

Aug. 20 – Mar. 31

only, only 1 of which
may be a billy; the taking of
nannies with kids is prohibited.

(General Hunt Only)

There is a negative C&T finding for goats in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would establish a separate archery only registration hunt area within the current RG480 hunt boundary. No changes would occur to season dates or bag limits. If adopted, this proposal could potentially reduce harvest in the newly formed hunt area since archery only hunts often have lower hunter success rates. A reduction in harvest would compromise the department's management objective to reduce or stabilize population growth in the RG480 hunt area.

BACKGROUND: Registration goat hunt RG480 encompasses the southwestern half of Kodiak Island and includes an estimated 2,000 mountain goats. The goat population has increased rapidly since introduction, expanding throughout much of the island. Hunting regulations have been liberalized in recent years to encourage hunter participation and slow population growth. Hunting in RG480 is currently open from August 20–March 31 by registration permit. Beginning in 2013, RG480 has a bag limit of 2 goats and, beginning in 2020, one of the 2 harvested goats is required to be a nanny. Permits are available on-line and at selected department offices. Resident and nonresident hunters may participate, but nonresidents must be accompanied by an Alaska-licensed guide or a resident relative within second degree of kindred. Over the last 5 years (RY16-RY20), on average 1,421 permits were issued annually for RG480 with an average harvest of 218 goats. The 5 years prior (RY11-RY15), on average 945 permits were issued annually with an average harvest of 170 goats. Liberalized harvests and season modifications have resulted in a relatively stable goat population in the eastern portion of the hunt area, but goat numbers continue to increase slightly in the western portion.

Although there is currently no archery-only goat hunt in registration goat hunt area RG480, there is an archery-only goat hunt on the Kodiak Road System (RG478 and RG479). Over the last 6 years (2016-2021), excluding 2020 where no road system registration hunt occurred, there have been an average of 99 permits (range 56-141) issued annually to archery hunters on the road system. On average, there were 29 archery hunters afield each year, harvesting 8 goats annually (range 4-14). Harvest by archery hunters occurs primarily in November and December with 71.1% and 28.9% of the harvest occurring during these months, respectively. Archery hunters have an average success rate of 25.4%.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to create a separate archery only registration hunt area in the goat registration hunt area (RG480) because of the allocative nature of this proposal. The department is **OPPOSED** to the reduction in harvest because it may compromise the department's management objective to reduce or stabilize population growth in the hunt area.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 67 – 5 AAC 85.040(a)(4). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goats. Decrease the number of tags for the DG478 and DG479 goat hunts in Unit 8, to provide opportunity for the weapons-restricted, late season registration hunts.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal would decrease the number of drawing tags on the Kodiak Road System (DG478/DG479) to potentially allow for increased registration permits during the weapons-restricted late season hunts (RG478/RG479).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 8 1 goat by drawing permit only; up to 500 permits may be issued; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited; or	Aug. 20 - Oct. 25 (General hunt only)	Aug. 20 - Oct. 25
1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited	Nov. 1 - Jan. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season.

There is a negative C&T finding for goats in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would decrease the number of drawing permits available for the road system drawing hunt and potentially allow for increased late season weapons-restricted hunting opportunities.

BACKGROUND: Kodiak goats have undergone remarkable population growth since being introduced to Kodiak Island in the early 1950s, with recent population estimates exceeding 3,500. As goats continue to thrive, management objectives have shifted from promoting expansion and growth to slowing or stabilizing population growth. On the Kodiak road system, there are 2 goat hunting areas (DG/RG478/488 and DG/RG479/489) managed using a drawing and registration permit hunt structure. Both areas are comprised of a drawing hunt followed by a

registration hunt (when needed). Registration goat hunts in these areas are currently restricted to archery only (RG478/RG479) or primitive weapons (RG488/RG489) and are open only to Alaska residents. If harvest quotas are not met during the drawing hunt, an archery-only registration hunt will open, and permits will become available at the Kodiak ADF&G office or online. Although some registration hunts have not opened because quotas were met during the drawing hunt, there have been no emergency orders issued closing a registration hunt in RG478 or RG479 after they have opened.

Goat harvest quotas are established annually for each hunt area based on goat distribution and abundance estimates. Harvest quotas for hunt areas DG/RG478 and DG/RG479 typically range between 15%–20% of the most recent minimum count for each area, with quotas for the last 5 years ranging from 39-74 for hunt area 478 and 21-30 for hunt area 479 for both drawing and registration hunts combined.

On average over the last 5 years, there have been 16 and 10 goats available for harvest in the RG478 (Range 0-33) and RG479 (Range 0-18) registration hunts, respectively, following the drawing hunt.

On average over the last 5 years, there have been 13 and 7 goats remaining/unharvested in the harvest quota for RG478 and RG479, respectively, at the end of the archery only season. In 2019, the Board of Game adopted a proposal to add a primitive weapon, road system, registration goat hunt from Dec 16–Jan 31 for RG478 (RG488 – primitive weapons) and RG479 (RG489 – primitive weapons); however, only 1 goat has been harvested during that hunt since its inception (1 goat in RG489).

Over the last 5 years (2017-2021), excluding 2020 when no road system registration goat hunt occurred, there have been an average of 83 permits (range 56-104) issued annually to archery only hunters on the road system. On average, there were 27 archery hunters afield each year, harvesting 8 goats annually (range 4-14). Harvest by archery hunters occurs primarily in November and December with 71.1% and 28.9% of the harvest occurring during these months, respectively. Archery hunters have an average success rate of 25.1%.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: Because of the allocative nature of this proposal the department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to decrease the number of mountain goat drawing tags on the Kodiak Road System to allow for an increase in registration goat permits during the weapons-restricted hunt. This department does not have any conservation concerns with the proposal as written, and the proposal will likely not result in a substantial change in goat harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 68 – 5 AAC 85.025(a)(2). Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou. Modify the Unit 8, caribou hunting season from a general season harvest ticket to a registration hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the Unit 8 caribou hunting season from a general season harvest ticket to a registration hunt.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

...

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 8	Aug. 1 – Jan.31	Aug. 1 – Jan. 31
1 caribou		

There is a negative C&T finding for caribou in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal changes the Kodiak Island GMU 8 caribou hunt from a general season harvest ticket to a registration hunt. Administering the hunt as a registration permit allows the department to utilize its discretionary permit authority to maintain harvest at sustainable levels. If adopted, the department will establish an annual harvest quota and implement a 5-day reporting requirement (in person or by phone) to the ADFG Kodiak office following the completion of the hunt. Implementation of a 5-day reporting requirement will provide the department near real time harvest information and provide the opportunity to close the hunt promptly when the harvest quota is reached.

BACKGROUND: All caribou on Kodiak originate from the introduction of 32 domestic reindeer in 1924. The reindeer were brought to Lazy Bay on the south end of Kodiak Island near the Village of Akhiok in 1892 to provide Native Alaskans additional commercial and subsistence opportunities. The herd ranged in the Cape Alitak and Olga Lakes area that provided the best reindeer habitat on Kodiak. Despite various political and biological issues that arose with reindeer in other areas of the state, reindeer on Kodiak were thriving and reached a peak of about 3,000 animals by 1950. The herd declined in size following a catastrophic cabin fire in the early

1950s, which spread and destroyed hundreds of acres of prime reindeer forage. The herd escaped during the fire, releasing an estimated 1,200 animals into the wild. After the fire, most herders did not attempt to reclaim the reindeer and they persisted on the landscape for decades. During 1960–2000, state and federal management of the herd was passive, neither attempting to sustain or eliminate them. By having no closed season or bag limit, all hunters could take as many animals as they wanted as long as they obtained a caribou harvest ticket before hunting, salvaged all the meat for human consumption, and did not hunt on the same day they had been flying. During that time, the herd settled into a favored range along the Ayakulik and Sturgeon rivers and stabilized at about 250–350 animals. In 2002, the Alaska Board of Game authorized same-day-airborne hunting and the reported harvest of feral reindeer increased as lodges and transporters began marketing hunts. The increased pressure on the herd prompted concerns of overharvest and in 2009 the board passed a proposal that not only reinstated the prohibition on same-day-airborne hunting, but also established a management objective to sustain the herd at 200–500 animals. At this time, the feral reindeer were also officially reclassified as “caribou” by the board for game for management purposes.

The Kodiak Island caribou herd has been consistently estimated at roughly 350-400 animals from 2009 thru 2018. However, recent surveys suggest the population has declined to around 250-300 individuals. In addition, recruitment rates appear to have declined significantly, with the most recent surveys estimating an average adult:calf ratio at between 1-10 calves per 100 adults, raising considerable concerns regarding recruitment and sustainability of the population. Caribou harvest was relatively consistent between 2002 and 2014, with an average annual harvest of approximately 19 animals per year. However, beginning in 2015 the interest and resulting harvest of caribou on Kodiak more than doubled, with an average annual harvest of 41 caribou per year from 2015-2021 (range 31–50). The widespread interest in hunting caribou on Kodiak continues to increase as documented by the increased number of hunters participating in the hunt. From 2002-2014 there were an average of 36 hunters participating in the caribou hunt annually and from 2015-2021 there were an average of 73 hunters participating in the hunt annually, more than twice the historical average. Modifying the caribou hunt from a general season harvest ticket to a registration hunt with a 5-day reporting requirement will provide the department the ability to monitor the hunt closely and issue emergency closures as appropriate. The ability to closely monitor harvest will aid the Department in achieving and maintaining the caribou herd at a management objective of 350-500 animals.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to modify the Unit 8 caribou hunting season from a general season harvest ticket to a registration hunt and implement a 5-day reporting requirement (in person or by phone) to the ADFG Kodiak office following the completion of the hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 69 – 5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk. Exclude Kodiak Island from the hunt area for elk in Unit 8 Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Sibrel

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would exclude Kodiak Island from the hunt area for elk in Unit 8 Remainder by modifying the definition of elk area “Unit 8 Remainder” to remove Kodiak Island and include only the areas on Afognak Island.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk.

...

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
...		
Remainder of Unit 8		
1 elk by drawing permit only; up to 500 permits may be issued	Sept. 25 – Oct. 22 (General hunt only)	Sept. 25 – Oct. 22
1 elk by registration permit only	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30

There is a negative C&T finding for elk in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal modifies the “Unit 8 Remainder” elk hunting boundary to exclude Kodiak Island from the “Remainder” elk hunting area. This proposal would prevent elk harvest opportunities on Kodiak Island to allow for elk to become established on the island. This proposal is attempting to establish a Roosevelt elk population on Kodiak Island to allow for increased future elk hunting opportunities once the population becomes established and a harvestable surplus is available. Allowing Roosevelt elk to become established on Kodiak Island may result in hybridization with the privately-owned, domestic herd of Rocky Mountain elk that currently exist on Kodiak

thereby compromising the genetic integrity of the pure strain Roosevelt elk herd. In addition, there are some concerns regarding the potential for disease transmission between the domestic Rocky Mountain elk herd and the wild Roosevelt elk.

BACKGROUND: In 1928, under a goat-elk exchange program with the State of Washington, 8 elk calves (3 males and 5 females) were captured from Ho Valley on the Olympic Peninsula and shipped to Kodiak Island, Alaska. Because of grazing concerns from local ranchers, elk were removed from the Kodiak Island and released near Litnik Bay on Afognak Island in the spring of 1929. The population thrived thru the 1930s and 1940s and by the early 1950s the Afognak population was estimated at 300 animals with 2 elk observed for the first time on nearby Raspberry Island after swimming across the Raspberry Straits.

Similar to most cervids, elk are powerful swimmers. Hollow hair and ample fat provide buoyancy while swimming, and insulates them from hypothermia in cold water environments. Elk are proficient swimmers and have been documented swimming across lakes, rivers, and deep-sea ocean straits.

After becoming established on Afognak and Raspberry islands, Roosevelt elk were and are occasionally observed on Kodiak Island. Around 2017 a local pilot reported and photographed a Roosevelt elk swimming in Karluk Lake and, around that same time, another resident reported observing “a few” elk near the Kupreanof Peninsula on the Kodiak mainland. However, reports of Roosevelt elk on Kodiak Island are not common and the frequency of this occurring is undetermined.

In addition to Roosevelt elk occasionally occupying Kodiak Island, there is also a domestic herd of Rocky Mountain elk that reside on a grazing lease near Narrow Cape on the Kodiak Road System. Unfortunately, there are concerns regarding the domestic Rocky Mountain elk population. The unmarked, privately-owned Rocky Mountain elk herd historically and consistently have not been contained within the boundaries of the state grazing lease and are often observed roaming unrestrained across the landscape. On multiple occasions over the past 10 years, the department has observed and documented Rocky Mountain elk roaming off the state grazing lease with little or no effort by local ranchers to contain them. This lack of containment has led to concerns regarding disease transmission and hybridization between the domestic Rocky Mountain herd and Kodiak’s wild Roosevelt elk population.

Allowing the colonization of Roosevelt elk on Kodiak Island could potentially increase hunting opportunities once the population becomes established; however, the establishment of Roosevelt elk on Kodiak also increases the potential for hybridization to occur between the 2 genetically distinct populations, thereby jeopardizing the genetic integrity of Kodiak’s pure Roosevelt elk population. Because most of the historical Roosevelt elk populations in North America have been hybridized with other elk species, the Kodiak Archipelago remains one of the last strongholds for this genetically unique population. Allowing the hybridization of Rocky

Mountain and Roosevelt elk would not only jeopardize the genetic purity of the Roosevelt elk herd but may also reduce the appeal to many hunters who travel to Kodiak Island to specifically hunt this unique strain of elk, the largest elk species in the world.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is OPPOSED to this proposal to exclude Kodiak Island from the Unit 8 Remainder hunt area in order to prevent hybridization and disease transmission between the wild Roosevelt elk population and the Rocky Mountain elk population on mainland Kodiak Island.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 70 – 5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk. Modify the Unit 8, Raspberry Island hunting season and bag limit by changing the antlerless elk drawing hunt to an antlerless registration hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would modify the Unit 8, Raspberry Island elk hunting season and bag limit by changing the drawing hunt for antlerless elk to a registration hunt.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
Unit 8, Raspberry Island	Oct. 1–Oct. 22 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1–Oct. 22
1 bull elk by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits will be issued		
1 antlerless elk by drawing permit only; up to 200 permits will be issued	Oct. 23–Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 23–Nov. 30

...

There is a negative C&T finding for elk in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal will aid the department in achieving and maintaining the management objectives for the Raspberry Island elk population by allowing additional harvest opportunities for resident and nonresident hunters.

BACKGROUND: Elk were first observed on Raspberry Island in 1951 when 2 elk swam across Raspberry Island Straits from nearby Afognak Island. During the 1950s the Raspberry Island elk herd flourished and by 1965 the herd expanded to an estimated 250 animals (62% cows) at which time it experienced the first significant population decline. By the late 1960s population counts hovered around 30-50 animals island-wide. Following the population decline the herd slowly recovered during the 1970s, increasing to an estimated 125-150 animals by the early 1980s. By the mid to late-1980s the herd once again reached an estimated 250 animals (74% cows), at which time it experienced another decline before eventually stabilizing around 140-150 animals. By the mid 1990s the population increased to ~220-250 elk (67% cows) before again declining and stabilizing around 100-150 elk. This cyclic population fluctuation occurred again around 2018 when the population approached 250-275 animals (88% cows) before decreasing to ~200 animals.

It is unclear what happens to individual elk during these population declines, but it is possible they relocate to another area of the archipelago since there is no evidence to suggest anything traumatic or distressing occurred, such as a significant die off. Although the reasoning behind these reductions is unclear and little is known about the island's carrying capacity, it appears the Raspberry Island population is most stable around 150-200 individuals. To provide additional hunting opportunities and increase harvest while limiting the population to lower, more stable estimates the Department has provided increased hunting opportunities with little success.

Elk hunting opportunity in the Raspberry Island hunt area is provided through an early season drawing permit hunt for bull elk (DE702) with an open season October 1-October 12, a mid-season drawing permit hunt for bull elk (DE704) with an open season October 11-October 22 and a late season drawing permit hunt for cow elk (DE706) with an open season October 23-Nov 30. Population estimates for individual elk herds on Afognak Island are based on minimum count aerial surveys completed annually in early fall (August-September). Elk population estimates in the Raspberry Island hunt area averaged 250 elk RY2017-RY2021. Harvest from the area averaged 19 elk annually during this period. Annual draw permit issuance for DE702 and DE704 was 12 permits per hunt RY2017-RY2020, after which permit issuance was reduced to 6 permits per hunt. Permit issuance for DE706 has increased through time from 60 permits in RY2017 to 150 permits in RY2021 in response to poor participation rates and low success rates by permitted hunters. The average annual harvest of elk from this area RY2017-RY2021 was 19 elk, the

average annual harvest objective during this period was 22 elk, the total annual harvest was below the harvest objective for the area in 3 of the last 5 years.

Historically, only a small percentage of Raspberry Island antlerless drawing permit winners actually hunt. On average, over the last ten years (2012-2021) 41% of the antlerless drawing winners participated in the hunt while 57% of hunters with bull permits participated in the hunt. In addition, hunter success varies considerably between bull hunts (DE702, DE704) and cow hunts (DE706) with the most recent 5-year average for hunter success at 82%, 62%, and 20% respectively. Interestingly, the estimated number of bulls on Raspberry Island has stayed relatively consistent over time with drastic fluctuations primarily observed within the cow population. Multiple attempts have been made to decrease the cow population (by increasing the number of antlerless drawing permits) with little to no results. Providing additional opportunities to harvest antlerless elk through a registration hunt will aid the department in achieving and maintaining the management objective of 150-200 elk with a 20-25:100 bull:cow ratio.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to modify the Unit 8, Raspberry Island hunting season and bag limit by changing the antlerless elk drawing hunt to a registration hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 71 – 5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk. Establish a drawing permit hunt for elk, open to take by bow and arrow only in Unit 8, Southwest Afognak.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish an early season archery only drawing permit hunt for elk on the Southwestern portion of Afognak Island in Unit 8, with up to 10 permits available.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
...		
Unit 8, Southwest Afognak,		

that portion of Afognak Island and adjacent islands south and west of a line from the head of Back Bay (58° 05.3' N. lat., 152° 45.7' W. long.) to Hatchery Peak (58° 07.2' N. lat., 152° 47.5' W. long.), to the head of Malina Bay (58° 09.3' N. lat., 152° 51.0' W. long.)

1 elk by drawing permit only; up to 500 permits will be issued	Sept. 25 – Oct. 22 (General hunt only)	Sept. 25 – Oct. 22
1 elk by registration permit only	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30

...

There is a negative C&T finding for elk in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Providing additional hunting opportunity through the administration of an early season archery only drawing permit hunt for elk would redistribute a portion of the hunting opportunity that would otherwise be provided through the current hunt administration. Relatively low success rates for archery hunters means the hunt would likely result in little additional harvest. With only 10 permits available, the additional hunters in the field before the regular season would likely not be disruptive to later season hunters.

BACKGROUND: Afognak Island elk are managed using established harvest guidelines for individual herds and a 10 percent harvest objective for the overall elk population. A harvest objective is established annually for each herd based on available biological information to provide a sustainable level of harvest and maintain a stable to slightly increasing population. Elk hunting opportunity in the Southwest Afognak hunt area is provided through an early season drawing permit hunt for bull elk (DE711) with an open season September 25-October 9 and a late season draw permit hunt for cow elk (DE713) with an open season October 8-October 22. If the harvest objective for the area is not met during the drawing permit seasons, additional hunting opportunity is provided through a registration permit hunt for elk of either sex (RE755) October 23-November 30. The registration permit hunt is subject to emergency order closures when the combined harvest from drawing and registration permit hunts reaches established harvest objectives.

Population estimates for individual elk herds on Afognak Island are based on minimum count aerial surveys completed annually in early fall (August-September). Elk population estimates in the Southwest Afognak hunt area averaged 234 elk RY2017-RY2021. Harvest from the area averaged 23 elk annually during this same time frame. Annual draw permit issuance for DE711 was 15 permits and 120 for DE713. During RY2017-RY2019, a registration permit hunt was offered in the area with an average annual reported harvest of 13 elk. The harvest objective for the area was met during the draw permit hunt in RY2020-RY2021 and the registration permit hunt was closed prior to the start of the season. The hunting opportunity provided by the current hunt administration allows for the harvest of elk from this area to reach the harvest objective annually.

Most of the land within the hunt area is privately owned by the Afognak Native Corporation. Public access to portions of the hunt area is unrestricted, other areas require elk hunters to obtain a land use permit and an elk hunting endorsement. Camping in the area around Afognak Lake is only authorized for Afognak Native Corporation shareholders.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to establish an archery only drawing permit hunt for elk in Unit 8, Southwest Afognak because of the allocative nature of this proposal, and the department has no conservation concerns with the slight increase in harvest and additional hunters in the field.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 72 – 5 AAC 85.035. Hunting seasons and bag limits for elk. Establish a drawing permit hunt for elk, open to take by bow and arrow only in Unit 8, Raspberry Island.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish an early season archery only drawing permit hunt for elk on Raspberry Island in Unit 8, with up to six permits available.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(2)

Unit 8, Raspberry Island	Oct. 1 – Oct. 22 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1 – Oct. 22
1 bull elk by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits will be issued		
1 antlerless elk by drawing permit only; up to 200 permits will be issued	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 23 – Nov. 30

...

There is a negative C&T finding for elk in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Providing additional hunting opportunity through the administration of an archery only drawing permit hunt for elk would redistribute a portion of the hunting opportunity that would otherwise be provided through the current hunt administration. Relatively low success rates for archery hunters means the hunt would likely result in little additional harvest. With only 6 permits available, the additional hunters in the field before the regular season would likely not be disruptive to later season hunters.

BACKGROUND: Afognak Island elk are managed using established harvest guidelines for individual herds and a 10 percent harvest objective for the overall elk population. A harvest objective is established annually for each herd based on available biological information to provide a sustainable level of harvest and maintain a stable to slightly increasing population. Elk hunting opportunity in the Raspberry Island hunt area is provided through an early season drawing permit hunt for bull elk (DE702) with an open season October 1-October 12, a mid-season drawing permit hunt for bull elk (DE704) with an open season October 11-October 22 and a late season drawing permit hunt for cow elk (DE706) with an open season October 23-Nov 30.

Population estimates for individual elk herds on Afognak Island are based on minimum count aerial surveys completed annually in early fall (August-September). Elk population estimates in the Raspberry Island hunt area averaged 250 elk during RY2017-RY2021. Harvest from the area averaged 19 elk annually during this period. Annual draw permit issuance for DE702 and DE704 was 12 permits per hunt RY2017-RY2020, after which permit issuance was reduced to 6 permits per hunt. Permit issuance for DE706 has increased through time from 60 permits in RY2017 to 150 permits in RY2021 in response to poor participation rates and poor success rates by permitted hunters. The average annual harvest of elk from this area from RY2017-RY2021 was

19 elk, the average annual harvest objective during this period was 22 elk, and the total annual harvest was below the harvest objective for the area in 3 of the last 5 years.

The department has determined that additional hunting opportunity for the harvest of cow elk may be provided on Raspberry Island and submitted Proposal 70 to change the administration of hunts for cow elk from a drawing permit to a registration permit hunt. A change in hunt administration is anticipated to result in increased participation by permit holders resulting in additional harvests of cow elk on Raspberry Island.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to establish an archery only drawing permit hunt for elk in Unit 8, Raspberry Island because of the allocative nature of this proposal, and the department has no conservation concerns with the slight increase in harvest and additional hunters in the field.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 73 – 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. Reduce the bag limit for deer in Unit 8, Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Stig Yngve

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the bag limit for deer in Unit 8, Remainder to two deer per year for residents and one deer per year for nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(6)
Unit 8, that portion of Kodiak Island north of a line from the head of Settlers Cove to Crescent Lake (57° 52' N. lat., 152° 58' W. long.), and east of a line from the outlet of Crescent Lake to Mount Ellison Peak and from

Mount Ellison Peak to Pokati Point at Whale Passage, and that portion of Kodiak Island east of a line from the mouth of Saltery Creek to the mouth of Elbow Creek, and adjacent small islands in Chiniak Bay

1 buck; or	Aug. 1 – Oct. 31	Aug. 1 – Oct. 31
1 deer, by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only	Nov. 1 – Nov. 14	Nov. 1 – Nov. 14
Remainder of Unit 8	Aug. 1 – Dec. 31	Aug. 1 – Dec. 31
3 deer; however, only bucks may be taken before Oct. 1		

There is a positive C&T finding for deer in Unit 8, and an ANS of 3,600–4,100 deer.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the bag limit from three deer to two deer in the Remainder of Unit 8 (non-road system) and could decrease deer harvest in that area. A decreased bag limit will likely have minimal impact on the overall population; however, a decreased bag limit may result in reduced harvest in easily accessible areas of the island, which may provide increased opportunity for additional hunters, but which may also restrict reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting deer for subsistence uses.

BACKGROUND: Deer are an important subsistence, economic, and recreational resource throughout the Kodiak Archipelago. Venison has surpassed marine mammals as a primary source of mammalian protein for community residents, and income generated from services provided from resident and nonresident deer hunters is a major factor in the local economy.

Although hunting is an important consideration, deer mortality in Unit 8 is thought to be primarily driven by winter severity. Unlike areas where they originated (southeast Alaska); much of the archipelago lacks dense coniferous forests which provide thermal cover, reduced snow depth, and vegetative forage during harsh winters. As a result, the deer population on the Kodiak archipelago is primarily affected by weather patterns and fluctuations in winter severity.

Annual winter mortality is assessed by searching for and examining deer carcasses in known coastal wintering areas. Winter conditions and physical appearance of deer are evaluated using aerial surveys. Local hunters and guides provide anecdotal information on deer mortality, body

condition, and general appearance throughout the season. The Unit 8 deer population experienced substantial winter mortality during the harsh winter of 2018-2019, with an estimated 25-30% loss of the overall population and up to a 60-70% reduction in some of the harder hit areas of the island. Recent surveys and reports from hunters and guides indicate the deer population throughout the archipelago continues to recover. Anecdotal reports suggest recovery of the deer population in the western and interior portions of the island and along the road system is occurring slower than other areas of the island. Broad recovery of the deer population commonly occurs after 3-4 seasons with moderate winter conditions.

Over the last 10 years (RY12-RY21), an average of 3,800 hunters have entered the field annually with an average success rate of 69%. Successful hunters harvested approximately 1.8 deer/year, with an average annual harvest of 4,759 deer, of which 83% are male. Between RY12 and RY21, on average 49% of hunters harvested one deer, 26% of hunters harvested two deer, and 25% of hunters harvested three deer. Most deer harvest occurs during the months of October, November, and December, with 10-year averages totaling 25.5%, 43.7%, and 17.7% of the annual harvest, respectively.

Nonresidents comprise about 23% of deer hunters annually (average ~900) of which approximately 66% of those who hunt are successful, resulting in an average 10-year, non-resident harvest of 873 deer/year (Range 250–1,468). However, the total number of nonresident hunters appears to fluctuate with weather (i.e., winter severity) and deer population forecasts. Nonresident hunter participation decreases significantly following harsh winters when deer hunting forecasts are bleak. Residents comprise 77% of deer hunters, of which ~70% of those who hunt are successful. Although harvest of deer is an important consideration, hunter harvest is presumed to have minimal impact on the overall population size. A decreased bag limit is likely to have minimal impact on the overall population but may result in reduced harvest in easily accessible areas of the island, which may provide increased opportunity for additional hunters and may increase population recovery times in some areas of the island following harsh winters, but which also may impact a hunter's reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting deer for subsistence uses.

The current federal subsistence season for Unit 8 deer has a bag limit of three deer and season dates of August 1-January 31; however antlerless deer may be taken only from Oct 1 – Jan 31.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal to reduce the bag limit to two deer per year for residents and one deer per year for nonresidents in the remainder of Unit 8. Winter severity is the primary driver of Kodiak area deer abundance and deer populations can recover relatively quickly with a series of mild winters. If the board adopts this proposal, the record should show they considered the new regulations will continue to provide a hunter with a reasonable opportunity of success in harvesting a deer for subsistence uses.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 74 – 5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides. Require that meat must be left on the bone when hunting deer in Unit 8.

PROPOSED BY: Stig Yngve

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require that all deer harvested in Unit 8 must remain bone-in until processed at a land-based location.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

*Note: There are no species-specific salvage requirements for Sitka black tailed deer.

5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides. (d) A person taking game not listed in (a) of this section shall salvage for human consumption all edible meat, as defined in [5 AAC 92.990](#). In addition,

(1) for moose and caribou taken before October 1 in Unit 9(B), Unit 17, Unit 18, those portions of Unit 19(A) within the Holitna/Hoholitna Controlled Use Area, and Unit 19(B), the edible meat of the front quarters and hindquarters must remain naturally attached to the bone until the meat is transported from the field or is processed for human consumption;

(2) for caribou taken before October 1 in Unit 21(A), the edible meat of the front quarters and hindquarters must remain naturally attached to the bone until the meat has been transported from the field or is processed for human consumption;

(3) for moose taken before October 1 in Units 13, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 25, for caribou taken before October 1 in Units 13, 19, 21(A), 21(E), 23, 24, and 25(A), and for bison taken before October 1 in Units 19, 21(A), and 21(E), the edible meat of the front quarters, hindquarters, and ribs must remain naturally attached to the bone until the meat has been transported from the field or is processed for human consumption;

(4) repealed 7/1/2009;

(5) repealed 7/1/2009.

(6) for moose and caribou taken under a community subsistence harvest permit in the area described in 5 AAC 92.074(d), the edible meat of the front quarters, hindquarters, ribs, brisket, neck and back bone must remain naturally attached to the bone until the meat has been transported from the field or is processed for human consumption.

5 AAC 92.990. Definitions) In addition to the definitions in AS 16.05.940, in 5 AAC –4 - 5 AAC 92, unless the context requires otherwise,

...

(26) “edible meat” means, in the case of a big game animal, except a bear, the meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters, hindquarters, and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters; ...

...

(65) "processed for human consumption" means prepared for immediate consumption or prepared in such a manner, and in an existing state of preservation, as to be fit for human consumption after a 15-day period;

There is a positive C&T finding for deer in Unit 8, and an ANS of 3,600–4,100 deer.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, hunters would be prohibited from processing meat for human consumption while aboard a boat. If passed as written the new regulation will also create confusion for hunters because salvage requirements will be inconsistent with existing meat-on-the-bone salvage requirements for other species, and further complicated by the location of processing.

BACKGROUND: Sitka black-tailed deer are classified as big game animals for which all edible meat must be salvaged including all the neck meat; all of the chest meat (brisket); all the meat of the ribs; front quarters as far as the distal joint of the radius-ulna (knee); hindquarters as far as the distal joint of the tibia-fibula (hock); and all the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters (backstraps and tenderloins). There are no species-specific salvage requirements for Sitka black-tailed deer.

In some areas of Alaska, the salvage requirements for moose, caribou, and bison require the meat of the front quarters, hind quarters and meat of the ribs be salvaged on the bone and the practice of boning meat in the field is prohibited for these portions of edible meat. Most of these regulations require salvage in this manner prior to October 1 and are intended to promote proper meat care.

As currently written this proposal would require hunters to salvage Sitka black-tailed deer with meat on the bone but does not limit the application of this requirement to specific portions of edible meat, as in other species. What constitutes a land-based facility for the purposes of processing game for human consumption is currently not defined.

The total estimated harvest of deer from Unit 8 averaged 4,595 deer annually from RY2017-RY2021, of which an average of 52% were harvested on a hunt in which the hunter accessed the hunt area by boat, 30% by airplane and 7% by highway vehicle. Whether or not the boat used to access an area was of sufficient size for the hunter to process harvested game for human consumption while aboard is not reported to the department through the harvest ticket reporting system nor through household surveys.

The department urges hunters in Unit 8 to quarter harvested deer in the field and carry it away from the kill site. It is common practice to bone out the meat of the spine and neck when quartering deer to be salvaged in this manner. The practice of dragging deer whole out of the field is strongly discouraged. Bears commonly scavenge on the viscera and other parts of harvested game not required to be salvaged. The scent trail that is created by dragging deer may lead to conflicts with bears, particularly if the scent trail leads back to a permanent dwelling or temporary camp.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to require all deer harvested in Unit 8 remain bone-in until processed at a land-based location. If the board adopts this proposal the department would like clarification for which parts of the edible meat are required to have the bone in. The board may also want to consider an allowance for meat that is processed for human consumption in field camps, cabins, etc. The board may want to consider if adopting these complicated salvage requirements will pose a burden for subsistence users.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 75 – 5 AAC 92.130(f). Restrictions to bag limit. Count brown bear wounded by hunters in Unit 8 against the bag limit of one bear every four calendar years.

PROPOSED BY: Stig Yngve

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require that brown bears wounded by hunters in Unit 8 count against the bag limit of one bear every four calendar years in Unit 8 only.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.130. Restrictions to bag limit.

...

(f) In Units 1 – 5 and Unit 8, a black or brown bear wounded by a person counts against that person’s bag limit for the regulatory year in which the bear is taken. However, in Units 1 – 5 and Unit 8, a brown bear wounded by a person does not count against that person’s one bear every four regulatory years bag limit established in 5 AAC 92.132.

...

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may decrease the number of wounded/dead bears because hunters would be more considerate of shot selection and shot placement. In addition, hunters/guides may conduct a more thorough and proper search for a wounded bear and apply greater effort in their search. However, this may also encourage unscrupulous hunters/guides from reporting a wounded animal that is unable to be found to avoid losing future hunting opportunities.

Amending this proposal to require that a wounded bear count against the hunters “one bear every four calendar years” limit may reduce the number of wounded bears each year since hunters would be more likely to conduct a thorough and proper search for the wounded animal and be more considerate of shot selection. However, because Kodiak bear permits are highly competitive and very difficult to obtain, this regulation may also discourage unprincipled hunters and guides from reporting bears that were wounded and unable to be located.

Also, as written the proposal requests the wounded bear apply to the one bear every four regulatory years in Unit 8 only; however, in the issue statement the proposal also requests the wounded bear apply to the hunter’s bag limit the same as if the bear was harvested and recovered, which is a discrepancy the board will need to address.

BACKGROUND: In 2007, a regulation was proposed by the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee and supported by the Kodiak Unified Bear Subcommittee (KUBS) that requires a wounded bear count against a hunter’s bag limit for the current regulatory year in which the hunt is being conducted. The regulation was proposed to maintain a high ethical standard with regard to Kodiak bear hunts and to minimize wounding loss of bears.

Kodiak bear hunts are considered one of the premiere hunts in the world and are one of Kodiak’s foremost trophy hunts. The current regulation was initially adopted to encourage ethical hunting, promote ethical shot selection, and reduce wounding loss. The current regulation continues to be supported by the Kodiak Advisory Committee and the Kodiak Unified Bear Subcommittee and has gained widespread acceptance on Kodiak.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to require that brown bear wounded by hunters in Unit 8 count against the bag limit of one bear every four calendar years. If the board adopts the proposal the department would like clarification on whether the change would be applicable to Unit 8 only or if the change would also be applicable in all areas with a one bear every four regulatory year bag limit. The proposal may result in fewer bears being wounded and lost because presumably hunters would be more cognizant of the penalties for wounding and losing an animal, however the current regulations provide adequate conservation protection for the population.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 76 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Lengthen the brown bear registration hunt seasons for RB230 and RB260 in Unit 8.

PROPOSED BY: Jason Bunch

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would lengthen the fall brown bear registration hunt season for RB230 by adding the month of December to the season; and would lengthen the spring brown bear registration hunt season for RB260 by adding the month of March to the season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
(7)		
Unit 8, that portion of Kodiak Island and adjacent Islands, including all drainages into Chiniak, Anton Larsen, and northeast Ugak (east of Saltery Creek drainage) Bays	Oct. 25 – Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 25 – Nov. 30 Apr. 1 – May 15
	Apr. 1 – May 15 (General hunt only)	
1 bear every 4 regulatory years by registration permit only		

...

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The intent of this proposal is to reduce brown bear conflict with local ranchers and residents of Kodiak by reducing the brown bear population on the road system by implementing an extended hunting

season. However, because there are multiple areas on the Kodiak road system where hunting is not allowed (e.g., US Coast Guard property, Kodiak Island Borough water supply reservoirs) the effectiveness of this approach is likely to be minimal in reducing brown bear conflict.

If adopted this proposal may result in increased hunter success and increased brown bear harvest on the Kodiak Road System because the hunting season would be extended by 30 days (60% increase) in the spring and 31 days (57% increase) in the fall, allowing hunters more opportunity to hunt. However, with the extension of the brown bear season into the late winter denning period, the possibility of hunters seeking out easily identifiable dens during the winter to harvest bears exists. Additionally, because some female bears with dependent young are known to exit the den at various times throughout the winter and they may leave their young behind, the possibility of female bears with young being harvested during the winter would increase with the adoption of this proposal.

Further, with the recent inception of the “Kodiak Bear Aware” web page, a publicly accessible web page used to track bears in and around town, it is possible hunters will attempt to harvest bears identified on social media. Lastly, because most bears involved in human-bear conflicts in and around Kodiak town are nocturnal, the effect of this proposal is unlikely to effectively reduce human-bear conflicts.

BACKGROUND: Kodiak bear hunts are considered one of the premier hunts in the world and are one of Kodiak’s foremost trophy hunts. The Kodiak bear population has been managed to promote a healthy, stable population that produces trophy-quality males while providing sustained hunting opportunities for hunters. One of the primary objectives of Kodiak’s bear management strategy is to limit human-caused mortality of female bears while maintaining a population that will sustain an annual harvest composed of at least 60% males. In addition, this strategy attempts to limit human-bear conflict in and around the city of Kodiak by providing unlimited registration hunts on the road system. This strategy has been successful: Kodiak consistently produces some of the largest brown bears in the world while providing high-quality, sustained hunting opportunities and while reducing human-bear conflicts on the Kodiak Road System.

The Kodiak brown bear registration hunt that occurs on the Kodiak road system is split into 2 seasons: a spring hunt that runs from April 1–May 15, and a fall hunt that runs from October 25–November 30. On average, during RY2016-RY2021 (Excluding RY2019) there were 220 registration permits (144 in fall; 77 spring) issued annually on the road system. Hunter success rates for registration hunts vary by season, but over the last 5 years success rates have averaged 7.9% in the fall and 10.9% in the spring. Successful fall hunters participating in the registration hunt spend an average of 5.0 days in the field before harvesting a bear, while spring hunters spend an average of 6.8 days in the field. On average, 74.4% of bears harvested during fall are harvested during October 25–November 6; 19.9% are harvested during November 7–November 18; and 5.8% are harvested during November 19–November 30. On average, 2.2% of bears

harvested during spring are harvested during April 1–April 15, 38.8% are harvested during April 16–April 30; and 59.0% are harvested during May 1–May 15. In the last 5 years, Kodiak registration bear hunts averaged 4 females and 7 males harvested in the fall (approximately a 64% male harvest) and 2 females and 7 males harvested in the spring (approximately an 82% male harvest).

Over the last 5 years (2017-2021), the department received a total of 576 (47 major, 284 moderate, 245 minor) human–bear conflict reports on the Kodiak road system, with an average of 115 reports (9 major, 57 moderate, 49 minor) received annually. However, the recent adoption (2020) of local solid waste ordinances requiring bear resistant containers in areas of Kodiak City with increased bear activity have greatly reduced human–bear conflicts. The continued replacement of non-bear resistant solid waste containers with bear-resistant containers continues to reduce conflicts in and around town and has greatly reduced bear observation reports within Kodiak City.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal to lengthen the brown bear registration hunt seasons in Unit 8 for RB230 to October 25 – December 31 and RB260 to March 1 – May 15 because the recent changes to solid waste ordinances appear to be having a positive effect on human–bear conflicts and the department is opposed to increasing the potential harvest of sows with cubs created by the longer fall season.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 77 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts. Eliminate brown bear permits the following season, when a female bear is taken in Unit 8.

PROPOSED BY: Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would eliminate brown bear permits the following season, when a female bear is taken in Unit 8 as follows:

In Unit 8, if a resident or nonresident hunter kills a female brown bear in Kodiak bear management units 8-16 (which occur in the southwestern portion of Kodiak Island and coincide with hunt areas), the department will eliminate a permit from the hunt area in which the harvest occurred during the next regulatory year. Permits will be eliminated from the corresponding nonresident or resident allocation, during the spring or fall season respectively.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Section 5 AAC 92.061 – Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.

(23) In the Unit 8 general brown bear drawing permit hunt, the department shall issue permits, and a hunter may apply for a permit, as follows:

- (1) the department shall issue a maximum of 40 percent of the drawing permits to nonresidents and a minimum of 60 percent to residents; each guide may submit the same number of nonresident applications for a hunt as the number of permits available for that hunt;

...

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would eliminate one (1) brown bear permit from the drawing for every female bear that was shot in hunt areas 8-16 the preceding year. The permit would be removed from the hunt area the female was killed in and would be removed from the residency allocation (resident vs. nonresident) from which the bear was harvested. For example, if a resident shoots a female bear in hunt area 9 during spring RY23, one resident permit will be removed from hunt area 9 during spring RY24. Similarly, if 2 non-residents shoot 2 female bears in hunt area 16 in fall RY23, 2 nonresident permits will be removed from hunt area 16 in fall RY24. This proposal is intended to discourage and reduce female harvest in southwest Kodiak Island due to concerns regarding a potentially declining brown bear population in that portion of Kodiak Island. If adopted, this proposal would likely reduce female brown bear harvest in southwest Kodiak Island.

Due to the timing of the drawing application period and permit winners being announced, this proposal as written creates some logistical challenges. For example, if a resident harvests a female in the spring of 2023 which results in the need to reduce the number of permits available in the spring of 2024, those permit winners for the spring of 2024 will already have been announced in February of 2023. As written, the proposal would require the department to contact a permit winner and revoke their permit. During the Nov/Dec 2022 application period residents and nonresidents accompanied by resident relatives apply for hunts that take place in the fall of 2023 and the spring of 2023; during the same application period nonresidents accompanied by Alaska-licensed guides apply for hunts that take place in the spring of 2023 and the fall of 2022. The effect of the regulation will impact residents and nonresidents accompanied by resident relatives differently than it will impact nonresidents accompanied by Alaska-licensed guides.

BACKGROUND: Recent brown bear population surveys conducted by the department in cooperation with the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge suggest the brown bear population in southwest Kodiak Island is experiencing a decline. Recent results from collaborative Intensive Aerial Surveys (IAS) indicate the bear density in the Sturgeon River survey area had decreased significantly compared to historical estimates. In 2019, a comprehensive survey was conducted and a total of 55 independent bears were observed, resulting in an estimated density of 102 independent brown bears/1,000 km². This estimate was similar to the previous year's (2018)

density estimate of 113 independent brown bears/1000 km², but significantly less than previous estimates (e.g., 2007 [231; $p = 0.0029$], 1998 [227; $p = 0.0003$], 1992 [190; $p = 0.0111$], and 1987 [293; $p = 0.0003$]). The estimated density of independent bears recorded in 2019 was less than half the estimated mean density of four previous surveys during 1987-2007 ($102/235 = 43\%$) and was only 58% ($102/175$) of the lowest accepted management target prescribed for southwestern Kodiak Island as identified in the Kodiak Brown Bear Management Plan. Decreased bear density observed during recent surveys could be associated, in part, to changes in composition or rates of hunter harvest of single adult bears. However, this seems improbable since harvest composition and harvest rates have not changed substantially in the Sturgeon River area over the last 20 years. It's plausible the apparent decrease in bear density may be a result of reduced quality and quantity of forage, which could compromise nutritional condition and reproductive success as well as cub and subadult survival. Although reasons for the apparent decline are unclear, the department, in cooperation with our federal partners, is investigating potential reasons for the decline, including resource availability and distribution.

As outlined in the Kodiak Brown Bear Management Plan and to manage this important resource conservatively, efforts should be made to reduce harvest in areas exhibiting a potential population decline. Because female harvest has direct impacts on recruitment and population sustainability, efforts should be made to reduce female harvest in the Sturgeon River area.

During the early 1990s similar concerns arose regarding the brown bear population in portions of southwest Kodiak. At that time, supporting the recommendation of the Kodiak Advisory Committee and local agency personnel, the Board of Game adopted special provisions for Unit 8 brown bear hunts in this portion of the island. The hunting provisions (5 AAC 92.061 (5)) stated,

“...in the Deadman Bay, Dog Salmon River, South Olga Lakes, Red Lake, Frazer Lake, Karluk Lake, Halibut Bay, Sturgeon River, and North Karluk River permit hunt areas, for each female bear with a skull length (posterior sagittal crest to center of upper incisors) of less than 15 inches or with a skull width (zygomatic breadth) of less than nine inches harvested in a regulatory year by a guided nonresident hunter, one permit will be deducted from the next regulatory year's nonresident allocation for the area in which that bear was taken.”

These skull restriction provisions were in effect from RY94-RY06 and were applied only to non-resident drawing permits in Kodiak bear management areas 8-16. During the 13 years that regulation was in effect (RY94-RY06) a total of 37 sows were harvested by nonresident hunters: 19 had skulls below the minimum size identified in regulation. The 13 years prior to the adoption of this proposal (RY81-RY93), 233 female bears were harvested (127 resident harvests, 106 non-resident harvests) in this area. Although the effect and success of these female skull size restrictions is difficult to assess, it was widely believed this prior regulation (RY94-RY06) had a positive effect on the population. It was rescinded on July 1, 2007.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to eliminate a brown bear permit the following season from the management unit in which the harvest occurred, when a female bear is taken in hunt areas 8-16. The department has additional options to address potentially declining bear abundance. If the board adopts the proposal, the department would like the board to discuss and provide direction to the department regarding the logistical challenges with the timing of the hunts and the application period.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 78 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.
Require all hunters to apply for Unit 8 brown bear drawing permits.

PROPOSED BY: Resident Hunters of Alaska

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require all hunters to apply for Unit 8 brown bear drawing permits by removing the ability to issue permits over the counter after the alternate list is exhausted and would also prevent permits from being issued over the counter as undersubscribed permits.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.

(a) In the Unit 8 general brown bear drawing permit hunt, the department shall issue permits, and a hunter may apply for a permit, as follows:

- (1) the department shall issue a maximum of 40 percent of the drawing permits to nonresidents and a minimum of 60 percent to residents; each guide may submit the same number of nonresident applications for a hunt as the number of permits available for that hunt;
- (2) the department shall enter, in a resident drawing, each application from a resident and each application from a nonresident accompanied by a resident relative who is within the second degree of kindred; for each season, the department shall issue a maximum of four permits to nonresident hunters accompanied by a resident relative who is within the second degree of kindred; however, the department may not issue, within one calendar year, more than one of these permits per individual hunt, as described in the permit hunt guide published each year by the department;
- (3) the department shall enter, in a guided nonresident drawing, each complete application from a nonresident who will be accompanied by a guide; the department may enter an application and issue a drawing permit for the general hunt only to a successful nonresident applicant who presents proof at the time of application that the applicant will be accompanied by a guide, as required under AS 16.05.407 or 16.05.408;
- (4) the following provisions apply to a guided nonresident drawing under this section:

- (A) an applicant for a guided nonresident drawing permit may apply for one such permit for all hunts and one such permit for spring hunts;
- (B) after the successful applicants have been selected by drawing, the department shall create an alternate list by drawing the remaining names of applicants for a specific hunt and placing the names on the alternate list in the order in which the names were drawn;
- (C) if a successful applicant cancels the guided hunt, the person whose name appears first on the alternate list for that hunt shall be offered the permit; if an alternate applicant cancels the guided hunt, the permit must be offered in turn to succeeding alternate applicants until the alternate list is exhausted;
- (D) if a guided nonresident drawing permit is available, but the alternate list is exhausted, the permit becomes available, by registration at the Kodiak ADF&G office, to the first applicant furnishing proof that the applicant will be accompanied by a guide;

5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures. The department may apply any or all of the following additional conditions to a permit hunt, when necessary for management of the species hunted:

...

(23) except as otherwise provided, if a drawing permit hunt is undersubscribed, surplus permits may be made available at the division of wildlife conservation office responsible for management of the applicable hunt. Surplus permits are not subject to the limitations in 5 AAC 92.050(2) and (4)(F);

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would require all prospective hunters to file a draw permit application and pay the application fee during the application period. Hunters who do not submit an application during the regular application period would be ineligible to receive a permit over the counter.

BACKGROUND: Hunters interested in brown bear hunting on Kodiak Island can participate in a Kodiak brown bear hunt 2 different ways: either by participating in a registration hunt on the Kodiak Road System or by entering into the statewide drawing process. As outlined in the “Alaska Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement”, nonresident hunters wanting to participate in a Kodiak drawing hunt must meet certain requirements prior to being entered into the draw. Similar to residents, nonresident hunters must obtain or have applied for an Alaskan big game hunting license prior to applying for a hunt. In addition, nonresident hunters are required to obtain the services of an Alaska-licensed guide and must have a signed guide-client contract before or at the time of application. Once a nonresident has obtained the services of an Alaska registered guide the hunter can apply online. As outlined in the Alaska Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement, hunters, “...must apply online...” and “There is NO REFUND of application or

license fees”. Furthermore, in addition to the purchase of a hunting license, there is a fee each time a hunter applies for a drawing hunt as identified in the Alaska Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement. The cost for applying for a brown bear hunt is \$5. It is unclear who and how many nonresident hunters or their guides do not put hunters’ names into the drawing and pay the required fees. However, this is more likely to occur with hunters hunting in Exclusive Guide Use Areas. Exclusive Guide Use Areas are areas in which only certain guides are permitted to take non-resident bear hunters (resident hunters are still allowed to hunt in these areas). Guided non-resident hunters wishing to hunt in these areas are only permitted to hunt with the exclusive guide registered for that area. Because some hunt areas are entirely comprised of an Exclusive Guide Use Area in which only one guide is allowed to take clients, some guides choose not to submit hunt applications for their clients in these areas, and instead rely on 5 AAC 92.061(4)(D) which allows the permits to be made available on a first come, first served basis.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to require that all nonresidents or their guides must file a draw permit application and pay the fee during the application period to have an opportunity to hunt. Given the complexities of drawing brown bear hunts in Unit 8, proposals addressing permit issuance are allocative. This proposal does not create nor address a conservation concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 79 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.
Transfer under-subscribed nonresident brown bear permits for Unit 8 to the resident allocation.

PROPOSED BY: Christopher Wallstrum

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would transfer undersubscribed nonresident brown bear permits for Unit 8 to the resident allocation for the current year or for the next regulatory year.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.

(a) In the Unit 8 general brown bear drawing permit hunt, the department shall issue permits, and a hunter may apply for a permit, as follows:

...

(4) the following provisions apply to a guided nonresident drawing under this section:

- (A) an applicant for a guided nonresident drawing permit may apply for one such permit for all hunts and one such permit for spring hunts;
- (B) after the successful applicants have been selected by drawing, the department shall create an alternate list by drawing the remaining names of applicants for a specific hunt and placing the names on the alternate list in the order in which the names were drawn;
- (C) if a successful applicant cancels the guided hunt, the person whose name appears first on the alternate list for that hunt shall be offered the permit; if an alternate applicant cancels the guided hunt, the permit must be offered in turn to succeeding alternate applicants until the alternate list is exhausted;
- (D) if a guided nonresident drawing permit is available, but the alternate list is exhausted, the permit becomes available, by registration at the Kodiak ADF&G office, to the first applicant furnishing proof that the applicant will be accompanied by a guide;

...

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would transfer any undersubscribed non-resident Kodiak brown bear drawing permits to the resident drawing allocation, either within the same year as an alternate, or the following year by adding an additional permit. Transferring undersubscribed non-resident permits to resident hunters within the same year may result in increased resident opportunity and increased harvest since Alaska residents may be available to participate in the hunt. Transferring undersubscribed non-resident hunts to residents the following year has a greater potential to increase resident participation and possibly harvest because it would allow a full year for resident hunters to prepare and plan for the hunt. However, because undersubscribed hunts are typically low in number, the potential additional harvest would likely be minimal and have little impact on the overall population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 8 is comprised of 31 Kodiak brown bear drawing hunt areas open to both resident and nonresident hunters through an application process. Non-resident hunters who are citizens of the United States are required to be personally accompanied in the field by an Alaska-licensed guide or be accompanied by a relative within second degree of kindred that is 19 years of age or older when hunting Kodiak brown bears. Residents and guides (on behalf of their non-resident clients) may apply for a Kodiak brown bear drawing permit to hunt in any of the 31 hunt areas. Resident applicants can apply for up to 6 hunts and may apply for the same hunt more than once. Guided non-residents may only apply once for a single fall brown bear hunt and only once for a spring brown bear drawing hunt. In addition, guides may only submit as many hunt applications for their clients as there are permits available for that hunt.

If a hunt area receives fewer applicants than available permits, the drawing hunt area is considered 'undersubscribed'. When undersubscribed Kodiak brown bear permits are available

for a hunt area, the Kodiak department office will issue the remaining permits on a first-come, first-served basis starting on a pre-determined date prior to the hunt (the date is published annually in the drawing hunt supplement and typically occurs 1-2 months prior to start of the hunt). Undersubscribed hunts for Kodiak brown bears are not common: in the past 10 years (20 brown bear seasons), 9 hunt areas were undersubscribed and 18 brown bear drawing permits were made available on a first-come, first-served basis.

It is important to note there are several brown bear hunt areas on Kodiak that are either entirely or partially comprised of an Exclusive Guide Use Area. Exclusive Guide Use Areas are areas in which only certain guides are permitted to take non-resident bear hunters (resident hunters are still allowed to hunt in these areas). Guided non-resident hunters wishing to hunt in these areas are only permitted to hunt with the exclusive guide registered for that area. Because some hunt areas are entirely comprised of an Exclusive Guide Use Area, in which only one guide is allowed to take clients, some guides choose not to submit hunt applications for their clients in these areas. Unfortunately, this can lead to confusion when hunters seeking information about their odds of being drawn for a specific hunt area use the Alaska Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement (i.e., percent applications drawn). Exclusive guide use hunt areas in which guides do not submit their client applications appear to have very few or no applications submitted for the area and appear to be undersubscribed. However, these permits are most often allocated to clients of guides with exclusive guiding privileges and no permits are available for these areas.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to transfer undersubscribed nonresident brown bear permits for Unit 8 to the resident allocation because of the allocative nature of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 80 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.

Adjust the allocation for Unit 8 brown bear permit hunts, DB101 - DB193,

PROPOSED BY: Christopher Wallstrum

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would adjust the allocation for Unit 8 brown bear permit hunts DB101 - DB193 by requiring that permits for any Kodiak hunt draw area DB101 - DB193 are not allocated to non-residents over the current average, 35%, for an individual hunt.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts.

(a) In the Unit 8 general brown bear drawing permit hunt, the department shall issue permits, and a hunter may apply for a permit, as follows:

(1) the department shall issue a maximum of 40 percent of the drawing permits to nonresidents and a minimum of 60 percent to residents; each guide may submit the same number of nonresident applications for a hunt as the number of permits available for that hunt;

(2) the department shall enter, in a resident drawing, each application from a resident and each application from a nonresident accompanied by a resident relative who is within the second degree of kindred; for each season, the department shall issue a maximum of four permits to nonresident hunters accompanied by a resident relative who is within the second degree of kindred; however, the department may not issue, within one calendar year, more than one of these permits per individual hunt, as described in the permit hunt guide published each year by the department;

(3) the department shall enter, in a guided nonresident drawing, each complete application from a nonresident who will be accompanied by a guide; the department may enter an application and issue a drawing permit for the general hunt only to a successful nonresident applicant who presents proof at the time of application that the applicant will be accompanied by a guide, as required under AS 16.05.407 or 16.05.408;

(4) the following provisions apply to a guided nonresident drawing under this section:

(A) an applicant for a guided nonresident drawing permit may apply for one such permit for all hunts and one such permit for spring hunts;

(B) after the successful applicants have been selected by drawing, the department shall create an alternate list by drawing the remaining names of applicants for a specific hunt and placing the names on the alternate list in the order in which the names were drawn;

(C) if a successful applicant cancels the guided hunt, the person whose name appears first on the alternate list for that hunt shall be offered the permit; if an alternate applicant cancels the guided hunt, the permit must be offered in turn to succeeding alternate applicants until the alternate list is exhausted;

(D) if a guided nonresident drawing permit is available, but the alternate list is exhausted, the permit becomes available, by registration at the Kodiak ADF&G office, to the first applicant furnishing proof that the applicant will be accompanied by a guide;

There is a negative C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 8.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Current regulations require a minimum of 60% of the Kodiak brown bear drawing permits be issued to Alaska residents while a maximum of 40% of drawing permits be issued to non-residents. In practice, the distribution of permits averages closer to 65% of permits being issued to residents and 35% of permits issued to nonresidents. If the allocation of permits and distribution of hunters (resident and nonresident) remains consistent with historical averages, the effect of this proposal is likely to be minimal. However, if a significantly higher percentage of residents participate in Kodiak bear drawing hunts compared to historical averages, an increase in female harvest is likely.

BACKGROUND: The Kodiak brown bear population has a long history of producing some of the largest bears in the world. The population has been managed to promote a healthy, stable population that consistently produces high-quality trophy males while providing sustained hunting opportunities for hunters. One of the primary objectives of Kodiak’s bear management strategy is to limit human-caused mortality of female bears while maintaining a population that will sustain an annual harvest composed of at least 60% males. Although the current regulations require a minimum 60%, maximum 40% split between resident and non-resident permits, respectively, in practice the distribution of permits is variable, but averages closer to 65% of permits issued to residents while 35% of permits are issued to nonresidents. The average participation rate for resident and non-resident hunters over the past 5 years (RY17-RY21) was 51.6% and 87.4%, respectively. Additionally, harvest data for the previous 5-years (RY17-RY21), show that residents and non-residents have an overall (combined spring and fall seasons) success rate of 45.0% and 61.6%, respectively.

Non-residents, on average, harvest fewer females than residents during brown bear drawing hunts (27.2 vs 12.4 annually for residents and non-residents, respectively, during the last 5 years).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to adjust the allocation for Unit 8 brown bear permit hunts so any Kodiak brown bear draw permit area DB101 - DB193 cannot be allocated over the current average 35% of the tags in an individual hunt. This proposal does not create nor address a conservation concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 81 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Require all snares set on the Kodiak road system to include breakaway mechanisms.

PROPOSED BY: Humane Society of Kodiak Board of Directors

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require all snares on the Kodiak Road System to have a breakaway mechanism (of a designated minimum poundage) on the loop end of the snare and the snare cable and anchor must be stronger than the breakaway mechanism.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations specific to the use of snares in Unit 8.

There is a positive C&T finding for furbearers in Unit 8 with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable portion of the population.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would require all snares used for trapping on the Kodiak Road System be outfitted with a breakaway mechanism attached on the loop end of the snare, which would reduce the number of non-target species captured and detained in snares, and would reduce the severity of injuries inflicted by animals captured by non-relaxing or non-breakaway snares. Trappers would be required to outfit all snares with breakaway mechanisms, which may be time consuming and require additional costs, although presumed costs are anticipated to be minimal since most breakaway mechanisms are relatively inexpensive.

BACKGROUND: Snaring is one of the oldest methods used to capture wild animals and has evolved significantly with the creation of braided cable, swivels, locking mechanisms, and other components to increase efficiency and productivity. In some areas and in some states, the use of snares has been restricted due to public concern over snares capturing non-target species. In response to these concerns there has been a recognized need and an effort to develop and improve breakaway lock mechanisms to avoid injury to non-target species.

On Kodiak Island, trapping season is open year around for some species (squirrel, marmot), but most trapping, particularly snaring, does not occur until November, December, and January when fox, beaver, and river otter seasons are open, since these species are the most desirable. Despite most snaring occurring during the fall and winter months, over the past 5-7 years the department has received multiple calls of brown bears caught in foot snares initially set to capture foxes. Since 2016 the department has observed and/or handled 2 bears and 2 deer caught in foot snares and has dispatched 2 additional bears due to significant injuries inflicted by foot snares not equipped with breakaway mechanisms. The department also receives complaints of domestic animals caught in snares along the Kodiak Road System, particularly in popular, high traffic areas. Although trapping and snaring is a popular pastime for many residents of Kodiak, recent incidents along the Kodiak Road System have resulted in a public plea to adopt additional regulations that provide a safety mechanism for non-target species caught in snares.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to require all snares set on the Kodiak Road System to include breakaway mechanisms.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 82– 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Expand the Unit 14C northeast sheep drawing hunt area to include the East Fork Eklutna hunt area.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage prior drawing permit hunt areas for Dall sheep (DS127, DS128, DS129)

to the DS124, DS125, DS126, and DS224 hunt areas covering the northeast portion of Unit 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current Dall sheep hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(7) Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only	Sept. 1 - Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years		Sept. 1 - Oct. 31
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 - Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	
1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Oct. 1 - Oct. 10 (General hunt only)	

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or

Aug. 10 - Oct. 31

1 ram by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 - Oct. 10

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, harvest would be minimal and would not impact the overall Dall sheep population within the upper Eklutna River drainage.

BACKGROUND: The number of Dall sheep observed in the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage during minimum count sheep surveys (2016-2022) can be found in Table 82-1. Drawing permit hunts in this area were last issued with a full-curl or ewe only bag limit. The harvest from drawing permit hunts DS124, DS125, DS126, and DS224 (to which this proposal would add the East fork of the Eklutna drainage) can be found in Table 82-2. Currently, the only harvest of Dall Sheep in the East Fork of the Eklutna River drainage is in the drawing permit archery hunts DS140 and DS240. Drawing permit archery hunts DS141 and DS241 take place in the West Fork of the Eklutna River drainage. Harvest taking place in the Eklutna River drainage from these hunts can be found in Table 82-3.

The drawing permit hunts in the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage were closed in 2011 due to the low number of sheep observed during aerial minimum count surveys.

Table 82-1. The number of Dall sheep observed in the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2016-2022.

Regulatory Year	Full Curl rams	Sublegal rams	Ewes	Lambs	Total sheep
2016	0	4	9	3	16
2017	0	2	4	2	8
2019	1	0	3	0	4
2021	3	5	6	4	18
2022	1	11	27	3	42

Table 82-2. The number of Dall sheep harvested in the DS124/125/126/224 drawing permit hunts within the Northeast portion of Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2018-2022.

Regulatory Year	DS124 Harvest	DS125 Harvest	DS126 Harvest	DS224 Harvest
2018	1	0	1	1
2019	1	0	0	1
2020	1	0	0	1
2021	0	1	1	1
2022	0	1	1	1

Table 82-3. The number of Dall sheep harvested within the Eklutna River drainage in the DS140/DS240 (both East Fork and West Fork) and DS141/DS241 (West Fork only) archery-only drawing permit hunts in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2018-2022.

Regulatory Year	DS140/DS240 Harvest	DS141/DS241 Harvest
2018	2	2
2019	1	3
2020	1	0
2021	0	1
2022	0	2

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department SUPPORTS this proposal because it will provide additional opportunity without negatively impacting the population. Recent surveys indicate there is not a sufficient number of full-curl rams to warrant opening any new drawing permit hunts using a rifle and targeting full-curl rams, although adding more area to an existing hunt area, as this proposal advocates, could spread hunting effort out.

As another option, the department supports adding the area in question to the current DS141 and DS241 archery-only drawing permit hunts, because there are numerous reports of hunter crowding in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage and this would provide additional area for archery hunters to spread out. This would also provide some additional opportunity under the any ram, archery-only hunt structure.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 83– 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Reopen the late rifle hunt for sheep in Unit 14C and redistribute the existing permits.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would re-open the closed Dall sheep drawing permit hunts (DS139 and DS239) in Unit 14(C) from September 18 through September 30. However, rather than providing additional permits for the hunt, this proposal would redistribute permits from other Unit 14(C) drawing permits [DS132 (1 permit), DS137 (1 permit), and DS138 (2 permits)], while also eliminating the non-resident DS232 drawing permit (1 permit). The current and proposed number of drawing permits can be found in Table 83-1. Reopening the late season rifle hunt would allow hunters to use aircraft to spot sheep because the hunt occurs later in the year than the prohibition is in effect.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current Dall sheep hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; Or 1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or 1 ram by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total		Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

...
Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would redistribute sheep drawing permits from one hunt area to several smaller hunt areas. Also, the proposed season dates fall outside the current period when using aircraft to spot sheep is not allowed, which would likely result in an increase in sheep harvest.

Table 83-1. The current and proposed number of permits for the DS132, DS137, DS138, DS139, DS232, and DS239 Dall sheep drawing permit hunts within Unit 14(C).

Hunt Number	Current # permits	Proposed # permits
DS132	6	5
DS137	8	7
DS138	8	6
DS139	0	4
DS232	1	0
DS239	0	1

BACKGROUND: The department has minimum count information on the number of Dall sheep within the former DS139/DS239 hunt area (all of Unit 14(C) sheep hunt areas, except within the Eklutna River drainage and the DS123 drawing permit hunt area); however, these permits were closed in 2011 after observing a decline in Dall sheep numbers. The number of Dall sheep observed during aerial surveys in Unit 14(C) can be found in Table 83-2, and the harvest of sheep during the most recent 5 years that DS139 and DS239 were open to hunting (2006-2010) are provided in Table 83-3.

Table 83-2. Total number of Dall sheep observed within Unit 14(C) during aerial surveys regulatory years 2010-2022.

Regulatory Year ^a	Full Curl rams	Sublegal rams	Ewe-likes	Lambs	Total sheep ^b
2010	55	276	659	180	1170
2011	42	293	599	116	1051
2013	47	287	523	85	948
2014	29	277	586	170	1062
2015	41	244	561	200	1054
2016	46	233	540	149	968
2017	30	259	601	179	1069
2019	27	264	712	168	1208
2021	42	239	762	215	1309
2022	36	292	678	126	1133

^a Years where a survey was not completed are not listed.

^b Total includes unclassified rams and unidentified sheep.

Table 83-3. Number of Dall sheep harvested in the DS139 and DS239 drawing permit hunts within Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2006-2010, before closure of the hunts in 2011.

Regulatory Year	# Permits	Hunters	Harvest
2006	30	29	11
2007	30	26	18
2008	20	16	3
2009	20	18	3
2010	19	8	3

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal as currently written. Full-curl regulations are generally sufficient, and harvest and population history in GMU 14C supports that the current regulations are working as intended.

Importantly, the existing draw hunt structure in GMU 14C both distributes hunters across a small geographic area and gives the opportunity to harvest large rams under enjoyable hunting conditions, in addition to ensuring that the population is not overharvested.

Because the proposed DS 139/239 permit includes most open areas in GMU 14C, and does not limit hunters to a single drainage or area like most other sheep permits in GMU 14C, the potential exists for one area within GMU 14C to be heavily harvested if a number of hunters were to concentrate in that area. While the full curl regulation presumably protects the larger herd, hunting and harvest pressure could be increased on a small segment of that population. Given recent population declines statewide as well as in GMU 14C, and a correspondingly lower number of rams available for harvest, the department does not support this proposal as it could potentially increase harvest pressure on a small segment of the GMU 14C sheep population. Additionally, the proposed hunt structure would result in part of the season falling outside of the aerial sheep-spotting closure from August 10 through September 20.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 84 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Create a new archery only drawing hunt for Dall sheep in the Eklutna River drainage in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a new archery-only Dall sheep drawing permit hunt with an earlier season (August 5 through August 12) than provided through the current DS141/DS241 drawing permit hunts (September 1 through September 30) or the DS140/DS240 hunts (October 1 through October 10) but that would retain the same hunt area

as the current DS141/DS241 permits. The proposed season dates would also allow hunters to use aircraft to spot sheep because the hunt occurs earlier in the year than the prohibition is in effect.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current Dall sheep hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the 2022-2023 *Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(7) Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only	Sept. 1 - Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years		Sept. 1 - Oct. 31

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, the total number of permits available would not be increased, but instead this hunt would require redistributing a portion of the tags from the DS141 hunt to this new hunt. As proposed this hunt would start earlier than any other sheep season in the state, excluding the youth sheep hunting season. Additionally, this hunt would fall outside of the aerial sheep-spotting closure period that runs August 10 through September 20. Lastly, this hunt would only be an eight-day season, instead of the 30 days currently allocated to the DS141/DS241 drawing permit hunts. Otherwise, expected harvest would be minimal and would likely not impact the overall Dall sheep

population in the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C). The ability for sheep hunters to locate sheep from the air, combined with the additional hunting opportunity would likely result in an increase in sheep harvest, which is unwarranted considering the current state of the sheep population in the area.

BACKGROUND: The department has minimum count information (Table 84-1) and harvest data (Table 84-2) on the number of Dall sheep within the Eklutna River drainage.

Table 84-1. Total number of Dall Sheep observed during aerial surveys in the Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2016-2022.

Regulatory Year ^a	Full Curl rams	Sublegal rams	Ewes-likes	Lambs	Unidentified	Total sheep
2016	5	29	102	22	0	158
2017	2	31	96	31	0	160
2019	4	25	98	27	0	158
2021	7	44	135	41	1	228
2022	6	33	164	37	0	240

^a Years where a survey wasn't completed are not listed.

Table 84-2. Number of Dall Sheep harvested within the Eklutna River drainage under the DS141/DS241 and DS140/DS240 archery-only drawing permit hunts in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2018-2022.

Regulatory Year	# Permits	DS141/DS241 Harvest	# Permits	DS140/DS240 Harvest
2018	25	2	60	2
2019	25	3	60	1
2020	25	0	60	0
2021	25	1	60	0
2022	25	2	60	0

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal. There is not currently a sufficient number of rams to warrant providing additional permits. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. If the board decides to adopt this proposal, the department suggests the early season be August 10 – 31.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 85 – 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goats. Create an archery only drawing hunt for goats in Unit 14C within the drainage of the West Fork of the Eklutna River.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only drawing permit hunt for mountain goats in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C) from September 1 through October 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current mountain goat hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.040 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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...

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 goat by registration permit only; however, goats may be taken from Aug. 16 through Aug. 31 by bow and arrow only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Aug. 16 - Nov. 30
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 goat by registration permit only, and by bow and arrow only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited; or

Aug. 16 - Aug. 31

1 goat by drawing permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Sept. 1 - Oct. 15

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The proposal would provide additional mountain goat hunting opportunity. This hunt boundary would fall within the Eklutna Lake Management Area, which is designated as an archery-only

hunting area. If adopted, the department would issue one permit and the resulting harvest would not impact the overall population.

BACKGROUND: The department has minimal information on the number of mountain goats in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage; however, mountain goats are opportunistically counted during aerial minimum count surveys for sheep. The number of mountain goats observed during sheep surveys does not suggest there are a sufficient number of goats to open a new drawing permit hunt solely in the West Fork of the Eklutna River drainage. The number of mountain goats observed in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage during sheep surveys can be found in Table 85-1. Currently, there is a drawing permit hunt for mountain goats in the East Fork of the Eklutna River drainage, with a low number of permits available, resulting in low harvest (Table 85-2). The department has no data to show how much, if any, movement of mountain goats from one fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage to the other takes place.

Table 85-1. Total number of mountain goats observed during sheep surveys in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2016-2022.

Regulatory Year ^a	Adults	Kids	Total Goats
2016	5	1	6
2017	12	3	15
2019	15	4	19
2021	17	2	19
2022	25	5	30

^a Years where surveys were not completed are not listed.

Table 85-2. Number of mountain goats killed in the DG852 mountain goat drawing permit hunt within the East Fork of the Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2018-2022.

Regulatory Year	# Permits	Hunters	Harvest
2018	4	4	2
2019	3	3	1
2020	3	3	1
2021	3	3	2
2022	3	3	2

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because there are not a sufficient number of goats to warrant creation of a new hunt. If a hunt were opened, the department would issue one permit and advocate that the hunter try to take a male goat. Expected harvest would be minimal and would not impact the overall mountain goat population within the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14(C).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 86– 5 AAC 85.045 (5). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(5) ...		
Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage		

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with nonresident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued

Aug. 20—Oct. 10
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by drawing permit only;
 up to 60 permits for bulls
 will be issued in combination
 with resident hunts

Aug. 20—Oct. 10

...

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 7, and the IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 moose and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose.

Units 7 and 14C are located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area at a population level low enough to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. The moose population will be healthier and more productive due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages. Antlerless moose hunts also provide extra opportunity to harvest moose.

BACKGROUND: The moose population in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area has a history of rapid increase following mild winters, and sharp reductions during severe winters. The number of permits issued (Table 86-1) depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality. A December 2021 aerial composition count of moose in the Twentymile, Portage, and Placer River drainages found 185 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 36 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 19 calves per 100 cows. This is an increase when compared to the December 2020 count, which found 153 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 30 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 14 calves per 100 cows, and the December 2016 count which found 153 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 30 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 18 calves per 100 cows. This may indicate an upward trend for this population, providing additional evidence to support maintaining antlerless hunts. Since 2016, harvest and roadkill numbers have also remained relatively steady.

Table 86-1. Moose harvest in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Bull Permits	Antlerless Permits	Bulls Harvested	Cows Harvested
2017	30	30	16	6
2018	31	30	13	6
2019	30	30	13	10
2020	30	30	15	11
2021	30	30	14	9

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain antlerless hunts in Units 7 and 14(C). These hunts have been successful in creating additional moose hunting opportunities with little or no controversy. In addition, the harvest of antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at a level to avoid die-offs during harsh winters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 87 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Establish a general moose season open for take by bow and arrow only, in Unit 14C Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal would open an archery only season from Aug. 22- Aug. 29 in the Remainder of Unit 14(C), with the legal animal being one bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least one side.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
5 AAC 85.045		
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, Only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1-Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1-Sept. 30
1 antlerless moose by	Sept. 1-Sept. 30	No open season.

drawing permit only; (General hunt only)
 up to 60 permits may be issued; or

1 bull by drawing permit only, Oct. 20-Nov. 15 No open season.
 by bow and arrow only; up to (General hunt only)
 10 permits may be issued

...

The IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 moose and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would allow the take of moose that meet general season antler restrictions by archery only in the Remainder of Unit 14(C) from Aug. 22-Aug. 29. The proposal would provide additional early season hunting opportunity, and the increase in harvest is not expected to be significant and will not negatively impact moose abundance in 14C remainder.

BACKGROUND: In 2021, a moose survey was conducted in Unit 14(C). Drainages flown were Twentymile/Placer/Portage, Peters Creek, Lake George/Hunter Creek, Thunderbird Creek, JBER/Ship Creek, and Eklutna. A total of 1,032 moose were seen. Composition counts provided a calf:cow ratio of 17 calves per 100 cows and a bull:cow ratio of 37 bulls per 100 cows for all areas surveyed combined. Composition counts only provide a minimum number of moose within a particular area. Both the bull:cow ratios and the minimum counts are similar to or higher than found in surveys conducted within the last 10 years. Moose harvest in the remainder of Unit 14(C) has ranged from 12-23 (Table 87-1) from 2017-2021.

Table 87-1. The number of moose harvested in the Remainder of Unit 14(C) from RY17-RY21.

Regulatory Year	# of moose harvested
2017	23
2018	15
2019	12
2020	14
2021	17

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to increase opportunity where additional harvestable surplus is available. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. The moose population in Unit 14(C) is at a healthy level and

can likely withstand additional harvest. If adopted, large changes in the overall moose harvest in Unit 14(C) are not expected.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 88 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Change the registration moose hunt, RM445, in the Chugach State Park Management Area in Unit 14C to an archery only hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal would restrict the harvest of moose in the Chugach State Park (CSP) Management Area (excluding Ship Creek drainage) to the use of bow and arrow only during the open season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.045, 5 AAC 92.530, and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.045

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, Only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1-Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1-Sept. 30
...		

5 AAC 92.530

...

(5) the Chugach State Park Management Area:

- (A) the area consists of that portion of Chugach State Park outside of the Eagle River, Anchorage, and Eklutna Management Areas;
- (B) the area is open to hunting under regulations governing Unit 14(C), except as follows:
 - (i) black bear hunting is open from September 1 through May 31, for one bear only;
 - (ii) no hunting is allowed for squirrel, wolf, wolverine, coyote, and unclassified game;
 - (iii) small game hunting is prohibited in the Tokle Creek drainage (Arctic Valley Ski Area);
 - (iv) brown bear hunting is open by drawing permit only from September 1 through May 31;

The IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 moose and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would restrict moose hunting to bow and arrow only in the Chugach State Park Management Area (excluding Ship Creek drainage) during the general season. Adoption of this proposal reduces overall moose hunting opportunity in Unit 14C.

BACKGROUND: A combined 2021 aerial composition count of the JBER Management Area and the Ship Creek drainage [the area that provides the most hunting opportunity in Unit 14(C)] found 301 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 44 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 20 calves per 100 cows. In 2020, a survey of the same area found a total of 242 moose with bull:cow and calf:cow ratios of 30:100 and 25:100, respectively. Compared to the 2013 survey, which found 225 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 39 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 20 calves per 100 cows, little change has occurred. In addition, harvest numbers have remained relatively steady, suggesting the population level has likely not changed dramatically (Table 88-1). At this population level, there are fewer reports of human-moose conflicts, moose-vehicle collisions, and winter mortalities.

Additionally, Unit 14(C) moose have been identified in 5 AAC 92.108 as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use. Restricting a portion of moose hunting in Unit 14(C) to archery only will likely decrease the overall harvest and may move the Unit's harvest out of the harvest objectives set under intensive management.

Table 88-1. The number of moose harvested in the Chugach State Park Management Area from RY17-RY21.

Regulatory Year	# of moose harvested
2017	10
2018	9
2019	10
2020	12
2021	15

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the reduction of harvest and **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between archery and non-archery hunters. If adopted, a decrease in the overall moose harvest in Unit 14(C) is expected.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 89 – 5 AAC 85.045 (12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.045

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12)		
...		
Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management	Sept 1—Mar 31 (General hunt only)	Sept 1—Mar 31

Area

1 moose by regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood Management Area

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 30

1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area

Sept. 1—Nov. 30
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 30

1 bull by registration permit only

Oct. 1—Nov. 30
(General hunt only)

Oct. 1—Nov. 30

...

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 30

3 or more brow tines on one side; or

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits may be issued; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 30
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 10 permits may be issued

Oct. 20—Nov. 15

No open season

...

The IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 moose and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Adoption of this proposal is necessary for antlerless hunts in Unit 14(C) to continue. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in Unit 14(C) at a population level low enough to reduce conflicts with residents, over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. Maintaining moose numbers at appropriate numbers promotes healthier animals due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages.

BACKGROUND: A combined 2021 aerial composition count of the JBER Management Area and the Ship Creek drainage [the area that provides the most hunting opportunity in Unit 14(C)] found 301 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 44 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 20 calves per 100 cows. In 2020, a survey of the same area found a total of 242 moose with bull:cow and calf:cow ratios of 30:100 and 25:100, respectively. Compared to the 2013 survey, which found 225 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 39 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 20 calves per 100 cows, little change has occurred. If anything, there may be an upward trend, making it even more vital to maintain antlerless hunts. In addition, harvest numbers have remained relatively steady, which may indicate that population level has not changed dramatically (Table 89-1). At this population level, we have received fewer reports of human-moose conflicts, moose-vehicle collisions, and winter mortalities.

Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The number of antlerless permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality.

Table 89-1. Cow moose harvest in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017–2021.

Regulatory Year	Either Sex Permits	Antlerless Permits	Cows Harvested
2017	50	26	28
2018	50	26	22
2019	50	26	19
2020	50	26	24
2021	50	26	24

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to reauthorize antlerless hunts in Unit 14(C). These hunts have been successful in providing additional moose hunting opportunities in the state’s largest human population center with little controversy. In addition, the harvest of antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at a level that minimizes conflicts, moose-vehicle collisions, and winter die-offs, while still maintaining hunting opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 90 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Establish a primitive weapons hunt or any weapons hunt for black bears in the West Fork of Eagle River drainage in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a black bear primitive weapons hunt in the South Fork Eagle River drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunt regulations for Game Management Units (GMU’s) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015, 5 AAC 92.530, and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)	No closed season. (General hunt only)	No closed season.
1 bear		

5 AAC 92.530. Management Areas.

...

(2) the Eagle River Management Area:

(A) the area consists of the Eagle River drainage upstream from the Glenn Highway in Unit 14(C);

(B) the area is closed to hunting, except

(i) sheep hunting by permit;

(ii) black and brown bear hunting by permit; before hunting a bear, a person wishing to hunt must complete a hunter safety course for which a certification of completion is issued;

(iii) small game may be taken by archery, shotgun, falconry, crossbow, or muzzleloader by permit;

(iv) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small-game points), and falconry only;

(v) goat hunting by permit;

Currently, there are two open areas for black bear hunting in the Eagle River Management Area: RL450 (Lower Eagle River) and RL460 (Upper Eagle River).

The RL450 hunt is that portion of Unit 14(C) south of Eagle River between the ridge immediately east of the South Fork drainage and the confluence of Eagle River and Icicle Creek. The boundary along Eagle River is the south bank of the main channel. The south boundary is the crest of the ridge between Eagle River and the South Fork of Eagle River. The current season dates are September 1- May 31; there is a 1 bear bag limit; and this hunt is limited to bow and arrow, crossbow, or muzzleloader only.

RL460 is a registration hunt in the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage. The current season dates are September 1- June 15 with a 1 bear bag limit; this is a non-weapons restricted hunt.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would increase black bear hunting opportunity in Unit 14C. Any increase in 14C black bear harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The current harvest within the Eagle River Management Area has been small given that the weapons restricted hunt, RL450, has not seen any harvest in the last five years (Table 90-1).

Table 90-1. The number of black bears harvested in RL450 and RL460, regulatory years 2017-2021.

	Harvest	
	RL450	RL460
2017	0	3
2018	0	5
2019	0	11
2020	0	2
2021	0	5

Immediately adjacent to both sides of the Eagle River Management Area is the Chugach Management Area, which is open to black bear harvest under general season from September 1-May 31.

The department does not have information on the number of black bears in Unit 14(C); however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about nuisance bears. Black bear harvest can be found in Table 90-2.

Table 90-2. Number of black bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	14	16	4	0	36	70
2018	15	10	4	0	43	72
2019	3	1	3	0	71	78
2020	17	9	4	1	80	111
2021	13	3	4	0	55	75

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** an increase in opportunity where additional harvestable surplus is available and the proposal does not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups, and if adopted the board will need to determine exactly which weapons will be allowed for the hunt because there is currently no distinction or definition of “primitive weapons”. Harvest is expected to be minimal and to not impact the overall black bear population in Unit 14(C). Current regulation allows for the department to create this hunt without specific regulatory change, so the department is seeking input from the Board. Additionally, all the land in the Eagle River Management Area outside of private in-holdings is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the Eagle River drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons. If adopted, the department recommends creating a drawing hunt with a limited number of permits available, given the location of the hunt area.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 91 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Add bow and arrow to the legal means of take for the DL455 black bear hunt in Unit 14C, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add archery as an allowable method of take in hunt DL455.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
5 AAC 85.015		
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area		
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued	Sept. 1-June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1- June 15
...		
5 AAC 92.530		

(1) the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area:

(A) the area consists of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Military Reservation;

(B) the area is open to the taking of big game by permit only; small game, unclassified game, and fur animals in areas designated by the base commander; the department will set conditions under 5 AAC 92.050; a person wishing to hunt small game must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course.

(C) up to 25 percent of the drawing permits will be issued to applicants who are qualified disabled veterans and qualified disabled active-duty military personnel; an applicant under this subparagraph must either

(i) possess a United States military physician's affidavit stating that the applicant has a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability; or

(ii) be certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as having incurred a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would allow hunters to use bow and arrow to hunt within DL455. Because the number of hunters is controlled by the number of permits issued, there will be no significant changes in harvest.

BACKGROUND: The DL455 hunt on JBER was adopted by the board in 2015 and subsequently modified to extend the season in 2019. To get range control approval for the hunt, the method of take agreed upon was shotgun; also, hunters were required to take and pass a proficiency shoot. Since its inception, 10 black bears have been harvested in this hunt. Since 2017, 43% of the hunters who were awarded this permit hunted.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and the proposal will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. and is allocative in nature. If bow and arrow is added to the legal method of take for this hunt, no significant change in harvest is expected. This hunt takes place on JBER and would require JBER to agree to allowing bow and arrow for this hunt. Hunters would have to be bow certified, and will be required to take a proficiency test to participate in this hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 92 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Add bow and arrow to the legal means of take for the DL457 black bear hunt in Unit 14C, McHugh Creek area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add archery to the allowable method of take for hunt DL457.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Unit 14(C), that portion Known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1-May 31 (General hunt only)	
1 bear by drawing permit only, weekdays only; up to 20 per- mits may be issued in the McHugh Creek area and up to 20 permits may be issued in the Upper Campbell Creek area		
...		

5 AAC 92.530

- ...
- (3) the Anchorage Management Area
 - (B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that
 - (i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;
 - (ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;
 - (iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;
- ...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would allow hunters to use bow and arrow to hunt within DL457. Because the number of hunters is controlled by the number of permits issued, there will not be significant changes in harvest.

BACKGROUND: The DL457 hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage was adopted by the Board in 2019. Since its inception only one black bear has been harvested in this hunt. Hunter effort for this hunt is 50%, with 3 hunters going into the field and hunting since 2020.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it does not create any biological concern and is allocative in nature. If bow and arrow is added to the legal method of take for this hunt, no significant change in the harvest is expected. Hunters will have to be bow certified, and will be required to take a proficiency test to participate in this hunt. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 93 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Allow certified bowhunters to participate in DL455 and DL457 black bear hunts in Unit 14C, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson and McHugh Creek areas.

PROPOSED BY: Bryce Eckroth

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add archery as an allowable method of take for hunts DL455 and DL457.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
5 AAC 85.015		
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area		
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued	Sept. 1-June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1- June 15
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area		
1 bear by drawing permit only,	Sept. 1-May 31 (General hunt only)	

shotgun, or muzzleloader only;
weekdays only; up to 20 permits may be issued in the
McHugh Creek area and up to
20 permits may be issued in
the Upper Campbell Creek
area

...

5 AAC 92.530

(1) the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area:

(A) the area consists of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Military Reservation;

(B) the area is open to the taking of big game by permit only; small game, unclassified game, and fur animals in areas designated by the base commander; the department will set conditions under 5 AAC 92.050; a person wishing to hunt small game must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course.

(C) up to 25 percent of the drawing permits will be issued to applicants who are qualified disabled veterans and qualified disabled active-duty military personnel; an applicant under this subparagraph must either

(i) possess a United States military physician's affidavit stating that the applicant has a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability; or

(ii) be certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as having incurred a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability;

...

(3) the Anchorage Management Area

(B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that

(i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;

(ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;

(iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would allow hunters to hunt with bow and arrow in DL455 and DL457,

providing more opportunity for archery hunters. Because the number of hunters is controlled by the number of permits issued, there will be no significant change in harvest.

BACKGROUND: The DL455 hunt on JBER was adopted by the board in 2015 and subsequently modified to extend the season in 2019. To get range control approval for the hunt, the method of take agreed upon was shotgun; also, hunters were required to take and pass a proficiency test. Since its inception, 10 black bears have been harvested in this hunt. Since 2017, 43% of the hunters who were awarded this tag hunted.

The DL457 hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage was adopted by the board in 2019. Since its inception, only one black bear has been harvested in this hunt. Hunter effort for this hunt is 50%, with three hunters going into the field and hunting since 2020.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and the proposal will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. If bow and arrow is added to the legal method of take for these hunts, no significant change in harvest is expected. These hunts occur in separate portions of Unit 14(C): JBER and Chugach State Park. In the case of DL455, JBER would have to agree to allow bow and arrow for this hunt. For DL457, hunters would still be required to take a proficiency test to participate in the hunts. All bow hunters must be certified. Additionally, park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 94 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Open a black bear archery only drawing hunt in the McHugh Creek hunt area in the Unit 14C, Anchorage Management Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matt Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a weekday only archery drawing hunt for black bears in the DL457 hunt area of the McHugh Creek drainage. Season dates would be September 1-May 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

...

Unit 14(C), that portion Known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1-May 31 (General hunt only)	
---	---------------------------------------	--

1 bear by drawing permit only,
shotgun, or muzzleloader only;
weekdays only; up to 20 per-
mits may be issued in the
McHugh Creek area and up to
20 permits may be issued in
the Upper Campbell Creek
area

...

5 AAC 92.530

...

- (3) the Anchorage Management Area
 - (B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that
 - (i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;
 - (ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;
 - (iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would result in additional black bear hunting opportunity by creating an archery only drawing permit black bear season in the DL457 hunt area that would run from September 1-May 31, weekdays only. While this would be a new hunt, harvest is expected to be negligible because the department can control the number of bears taken by the number of permits issued.

BACKGROUND: Much of Unit 14(C) is open to black bear hunting, but much of it is in areas of the unit that are difficult to access. There is interest in creating additional hunting opportunities closer to Anchorage.

Currently, the only black bear hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage is DL457. This hunt was adopted by the board in 2019. This hunt was passed with season dates of September 1- May 31. However, to get the special use permit issued for McHugh, ADF&G agreed to shorten the season to the current season dates of October 1-October 31. Since its inception, only one black bear has been harvested in this hunt. Hunter effort for this hunt is 50%, with 3 hunters going into the field and hunting since 2020. The hunt conditions can be found in Table 94-1 below.

Table 94-1. The current hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for hunt DL457 in Unit 14(C).

DL457	
Season Dates:	October 1- October 31
Bag Limit:	1 black bear (except sows with cubs)
Hunt Conditions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in/Check out
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekday only
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shotgun or muzzleloader only
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required to take and pass proficiency test
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Hunter or muzzleloader education required
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsalvageable remains must be moved 100 yards from any trail

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and the proposal will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. Additionally, all land in the McHugh Creek drainage is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 95 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Open a resident only, limited registration black bear archery hunt in McHugh Creek hunt area in the Unit 14C Anchorage Management Area.

PROPOSED BY: Matt Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a limited registration, weekday only, black bear archery hunt for residents in the DL457 hunt area of the McHugh Creek drainage. Season dates would be September 1-May 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Unit 14(C), that portion Known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1-May 31 (General hunt only)	
1 bear by drawing permit only, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; weekdays only; up to 20 per- mits may be issued in the McHugh Creek area and up to 20 permits may be issued in the Upper Campbell Creek area		
...		

5 AAC 92.530

...

(3) the Anchorage Management Area

(B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that

(i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;

(ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;

(iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would provide additional black bear hunting opportunity by creating a resident only archery registration hunt in the DL457 hunt area that would run from September 1- May 31. While this would be a new hunt, harvest is expected to be negligible because the department can control the number of bears taken by the number of permits issued.

BACKGROUND: Much of Unit 14(C) is open to black bear hunting, but much of it is in areas of the unit that are difficult to access. There is interest in creating additional hunting opportunities closer to Anchorage.

Currently, the only black bear hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage is DL457. This hunt was adopted by the board in 2019. This hunt was passed with season dates of September 1- May 31. However, to get the special use permit issued for McHugh, ADF&G agreed to shorten the season to the current season dates of October 1-October 31. Since its inception only one black bear has been harvested in this hunt. Hunter effort for this hunt is 50%, with 3 hunters going into the field and hunting since 2020. The hunt conditions can be found in Table 95-1 below.

Table 95-1. The current hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for hunt DL457 in Unit 14(C).

DL457	
Season Dates:	October 1- October 31
Bag Limit:	1 black bear (except sows with cubs)
Hunt Conditions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in/Check out • Weekday only • Shotgun or muzzleloader only • Required to take and pass weapons proficiency test • Basic Hunter or muzzleloader education required • Unsalvageable remains must be moved 100 yards from any trail

If adopted, the department recommends the board make this a drawing hunt. This will allow for better control of the hunt and hunters in this area. This is of particular concern given the high visibility of hunting in this area. Additionally, a limited registration hunt is difficult to administer whether it is online or in person.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and the proposal will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups.. Additionally, all land in the McHugh Creek drainage is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 96 – 5 AAC 85.015 and 5 AAC 92.530. Create an archery only black bear registration hunt in Unit 14(C) on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER) for hunters who draw the archery only moose drawing permit in the same location.

PROPOSED BY: Matthew Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow hunters who draw archery moose tags on JBER the ability to obtain a registration black bear archery permit for the same season dates and areas as the archery moose permit.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015. Seasons and bag limits for black bear.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area 1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued	Sept. 1-June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1- June 15

...

5 AAC 85.045. Seasons and bag limits for moose.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12) ...		
Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area 1 moose by regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued	Sept 1—Mar 31 (General hunt only)	Sept 1—Mar 31

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would give every JBER archery moose hunter the option to obtain an archery only registration black bear permit for the same hunt area and season dates as their moose permit. An increase in black bear harvest can be expected based on the number of moose drawing permits awarded annually.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there is one black bear hunt on JBER, DL455. This hunt was established in regulatory year 2016 and the season date extended in 2019 to September 1- June 15. To get Range Control approval for the hunt, the method of take agreed upon was shotgun and that hunters had to take and pass a proficiency test. Since its inception, 10 black bears have been harvested in this hunt. Since 2017, 43% of the hunters that were awarded this tag hunted.

Currently, there are five archery only drawing moose permit hunts on base with three different seasons and in two separate portions of JBER (Table 96-1).

Table 96-1. The current archery only drawing moose tags on JBER, season dates, permit numbers, and hunt areas.

Hunt Number	Season Dates	Number of Permits RY21	Hunt Area
DM424	Sept. 1- Nov. 15	40	Richardson portion of JBER
DM426	Dec. 15- Jan. 15	20	Richardson portion of JBER
DM427	Dec. 15- Jan. 15	25	Richardson portion of JBER
DM428	Sept. 1- Sept. 30	10	Elmendorf portion of JBER
DM430	Oct. 15- Nov. 15	3	Elmendorf portion of JBER

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This proposal seeks a new approach to permit allocation. The department questions if this can legally be done considering the equal access clause in Alaska’s Constitution and defers to the Department of Law for comments. Additionally, based on the increased number of moose drawing permits available, an increase in the number of black bears harvested on JBER is expected if the proposal is adopted. If the proposal is adopted, the department recommends registration permits be available only during the fall season (DM424, DM428 and DM430) because bears will not be active during the winter seasons. State hunting regulations apply on JBER, but methods and means, seasons, and number of permits are to be determined jointly for hunts on the base.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 97 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Establish a primitive weapons hunt or an any weapons hunt in the South Fork of Eagle River drainage in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a primitive weapons brown bear hunt in the South Fork Eagle River drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.020, 5 AAC 92.530, and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Eklutna Lake Management Area within Chugach State Park	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by		

drawing permit only; by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued

...

5 AAC 92.530

...

(2) the Eagle River Management Area:

(A) the area consists of the Eagle River drainage upstream from the Glenn Highway in Unit 14(C);

(B) the area is closed to hunting, except

(i) sheep hunting by permit;

(ii) black and brown bear hunting by permit; before hunting a bear, a person wishing to hunt must complete a hunter safety course for which a certification of completion is issued;

(iii) small game may be taken by archery, shotgun, falconry, crossbow, or muzzleloader by permit;

(iv) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small-game points), and falconry only;

(v) goat hunting by permit;

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would allow the hunting of brown bears in the South Fork drainage of Eagle River, excluding that area within ½ mile of a developed facility, and resulting harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in the population; however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. Brown bear harvest in Unit 14(C) can be found in Table 97-1.

Table 97-1. Number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups and if adopted the board will need to determine exactly which weapons will be allowed for the hunt because there is currently no distinction or definition of “primitive weapons”. Harvest is expected to be minimal and to not impact the overall brown bear population in Unit 14C. Additionally, all the land in the Eagle River Management Area outside of private in-holdings is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the Eagle River drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

If adopted, the department recommends a drawing hunt be established with a limited number of permits available, given the location of the hunt area.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 98 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Open a brown bear hunt within the Rainbow Creek drainage in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a hunt for brown bears in the Rainbow Creek drainage, excluding those areas within ½ mile of the Seward Highway and within ½ mile of a developed facility.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunting regulations for Unit 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.020, 5 AAC 92.530, and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Eklutna Lake Management Area within Chugach State Park	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
...		

5 AAC 92.530

...

(3) the Anchorage Management Area

(B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that

- (i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;
- (ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;
- (iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would create a hunt for brown bears in the Rainbow Creek drainage, excluding those areas within ½ mile of the Seward Highway and within ½ mile of a developed facility, and resulting harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in Unit 14(C); however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. Brown bear harvest can be found in Table 98-1.

Table 98-1. Number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups.. Harvest is expected to be minimal and to not impact the overall brown bear population in Unit 14C. Additionally, all land in the Rainbow Creek drainage outside of private in-holdings is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of firearms within the Rainbow Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons. If adopted, the board should consider adding Rainbow Creek to the hunt area for DB470 rather than starting a new hunt in the Rainbow Creek drainage, which is a relatively small area.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 99 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Open an archery only drawing hunt for brown bear in Unit 14C, the McHugh Creek area for residents and nonresidents.

PROPOSED BY: Matt Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only brown bear drawing hunt in same hunt area as a drawing black bear hunt (DL457) in the McHugh Creek drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Eklutna Lake Management Area within Chugach State Park	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
...		

5 AAC 92.530

...

(3) the Anchorage Management Area

(B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that

- (i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;
- (ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;
- (iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would create an archery only brown bear drawing hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage from September 1-May 31, weekdays only, and resulting harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in Unit 14C; however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. Brown bear harvest can be found in Table 99-1.

Table 99-1. Number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

Currently, the only bear hunting that is open in McHugh Creek drainage is the black bear hunt DL457. See Table 99-2 for the current hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for DL457.

Table 99-2. The current hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for hunt DL457 in Unit 14(C).

DL457	
Season Dates:	October 1- October 31
Bag Limit:	1 black bear (except sows with cubs)
Hunt Conditions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in/Check out 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekday only 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shotgun or muzzleloader only 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required to take and pass proficiency test 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Hunter or muzzleloader education required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsalvageable remains must be moved 100 yards from any trail 	

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. Harvest is expected to be minimal and to not impact the overall brown bear population in Unit 14C. Additionally, all land in the McHugh Creek drainage is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 100 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Establish an archery only drawing hunt for brown bear in Unit 14C, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson area, with a bag limit of one bear every four regulatory years.

PROPOSED BY: Matt Moore

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery brown bear drawing hunt on JBER, open to both residents and nonresidents, with season dates of September 1 – May 31 and a bag limit of one bear every four regulatory years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.020, 5 AAC 92.530, and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Resident Open Season Units and Bag Limits	Nonresident open (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Season
5 AAC 85.020 ...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year ...	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage 1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Eklutna Lake Management Area within Chugach State Park 1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued ...	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31

5 AAC 92.530

- (1) the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area:
 - (A) the area consists of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Military Reservation;

(B) the area is open to the taking of big game by permit only; small game, unclassified game, and fur animals in areas designated by the base commander; the department will set conditions under 5 AAC 92.050; a person wishing to hunt small game must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course.

(C) up to 25 percent of the drawing permits will be issued to applicants who are qualified disabled veterans and qualified disabled active-duty military personnel; an applicant under this subparagraph must either

(i) possess a United States military physician's affidavit stating that the applicant has a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability; or

(ii) be certified by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as having incurred a 50 percent or greater service-connected disability;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would create additional opportunity by establishing an archery only brown bear drawing hunt for residents and nonresidents from September 1- May 31 in the JBER Management Area. The bag limit would be 1 bear every 4 regulatory years. While this would be a new hunt, harvest is expected to be negligible because the department can control the number of bears taken by the number of permits issued.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in Unit 14(C); however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. Brown bear harvest can be found in Table 100-1.

Table 100-1. Number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. Currently, there is no brown bear hunting in the JBER Management Area and JBER would have to approve the hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 101 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the general season for brown bear, open for take by bow and arrow only, in Unit 14C Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the brown bear season in the Remainder of Unit 14C and restrict it to archery only for the month of June.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would provide additional brown bear hunting opportunity by extending the brown bear season in the Remainder of Unit 14(C) to June 30, with the June portion of the season being archery only. Resulting harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in Unit 14(C); however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. Brown bear harvest can be found in Table 101-1 and the brown bear harvest in the Remainder of 14(C) can be found in Table 101-2.

Table 101-1. Total number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

Table 101-2. Number of brown bears killed in the Remainder of Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Harvest
2017	4
2018	2
2019	2
2020	2
2021	3

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to provide additional opportunity when additional harvestable surplus is available, and will not create any biological concerns. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between user groups. If adopted, this would be the longest season for bears in Unit 14(C). Harvest is expected to increase slightly due to the longer season; however, the additional harvest is expected to be minimal and would not impact the overall brown bear population in Unit 14C.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 102 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.
 Lengthen the season for brown bear in Unit 14C Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Landon Albertson

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the brown bear hunting season in the Remainder of Unit 14(C) by two weeks.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current brown bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would provide additional brown bear hunting opportunity by extending the brown bear hunting season in the Remainder of Unit 14(C) to June 15. Resulting harvest is expected to be negligible.

BACKGROUND: The department does not have information on the number of brown bears in the population; however, there are indications that the population is healthy based on hunter success, observations of animals in the field, and the number of reports received by the department about human/bear conflicts. The Unit-wide brown bear harvest can be found in Table 102-1 and the Remainder of Unit 14(C) brown bear harvest can be seen in Table 102-2.

Table 102-1. Total number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

Table 102-2. Number of brown bears killed in the Remainder of Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021

Regulatory Year	Harvest
2017	4
2018	2
2019	2
2020	2
2021	3

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department SUPPORTS this proposal. If adopted, this would be the longest bear season in Unit 14C. Harvest is expected to increase slightly due to the longer season; however, the additional harvest is expected to be minimal and would not impact the overall brown bear population in Unit 14C.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 103 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear; 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear; 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures; and 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas. Establish a bear bait hunt in Unit 14C, the McHugh Creek drainage area for black and brown bear.

PROPOSED BY: Phillip Calhoun

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow the baiting of brown and black bears in the McHugh Creek drainage.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations relevant to this proposal can be found in 5 AAC 85.015, 5 AAC 85.020, 5 AAC 92.044, 5 AAC 92.530 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

**Resident Open Season
Units and Bag Limits**

Unit 14(C), that portion
Known as the Anchorage
Management Area

**Nonresident open
(Subsistence & General Hunts) Season**

Sept. 1-June 15
(General hunt only)

1 bear by drawing permit only, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; weekdays only; up to 20 permits may be issued in the McHugh Creek area and up to 20 permits may be issued in the Upper Campbell Creek area

...

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
...		
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Eklutna Lake Management Area withing Chugach State Park	Sept.1-May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1-May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		

...

5 AAC 92.044

(1) a person may establish a black bear bait station, or a black and brown bear bait station in Units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14(A),14(B), that portion of the remainder of 14(C), excluding Glacier Creek drainage outside of the Chugach State Park, 15, 16, 18, 19(A), 19(D), 20(A), 20(B), 20(C), that portion of 20(D) north of the Tanana River, 20(E), 20(F), 21(C), 21(D), 23, 24(C), 24(D), and 25(D), only if that person obtains a permit.

...

5 AAC 92.530

...

(3) the Anchorage Management Area

(B) the Anchorage Management Area is closed to hunting, except that

- (i) moose hunting is allowed by permit only;
- (ii) small game and waterfowl may be taken by falconry, except that waterfowl may not be taken in the Ship Creek drainage west of Post Road;
- (iii) deleterious exotic wildlife may be taken by air rifle with rifled barrel, bow and arrow (with blunts or other special small game points), and falconry only;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would allow the establishment of a single bait station for the take of brown and black bears in the McHugh Creek drainage from May 1 through June 15 by registration permit, with up to 6 certified users allowed to hunt over the bait station. The location of the bait station would be approved by ADF&G. Adoption of this proposal would open the area to brown bear hunting.

BACKGROUND: Much of Unit 14(C) is open to black and brown bear hunting, but much of it is in areas that are difficult to access. There is an interest in creating additional hunting opportunities closer to Anchorage.

Currently, the only bear hunt in the McHugh Creek drainage is the black bear hunt DL457. This hunt was adopted by the board in 2019. Since its inception, only one black bear has been harvested in this hunt. Hunter effort for this hunt is 50%, with 3 hunters going into the field and hunting since 2020. The hunt conditions can be found in Table 103-1 below.

Table 103-1. The current hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for hunt DL457 in Unit 14(C).

DL457	
Season Dates:	October 1- October 31
Bag Limit:	1 black bear (except sows with cubs)
Hunt Conditions	
•	Check in/Check out
•	Weekday only
•	Shotgun or muzzleloader only
•	Required to take and pass weapons proficiency test
•	Basic Hunter or muzzleloader education required
•	Unsalvageable remains must be moved 100 yards from any trail

Additionally in 2019, the Board opened the Remainder of Unit 14(C), excluding the Glacier Creek drainage, to the baiting of bears. See the below Table 103-2, and Table 103-3 for the Unitwide brown and black bear harvest.

Table 103-2. Total number of brown bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	7	0	0	0	6	13
2018	7	3	1	0	3	14
2019	0	1	0	0	3	4
2020	4	1	1	0	4	10
2021	0	4	1	1	3	9

Table 103-3. Number of black bears killed in Unit 14(C), regulatory years 2017-2021.

Regulatory Year	Agency Kills	DLPs	Roadkill	Railroad	Hunter Kills	TOTAL
2017	14	16	4	0	36	70
2018	15	10	4	0	43	72
2019	3	1	3	0	71	78
2020	17	9	4	1	80	111
2021	13	3	4	0	55	75

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it does not create any biological concern and involves methods and means. Additionally, all of the land in the McHugh Creek drainage is Chugach State Park land. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the McHugh Creek drainage, so this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons.

If interested in adopting this proposal, the board will need to address several required administrative issues. Currently there is no brown bear hunt in this area. The board will need to create a new hunt for black bears, and a new hunt for brown bears, and establish seasons dates for both. The board will also need to determine if it will be a registration hunt or a drawing hunt, and will also need to determine if the current DL457 permit winners will be able to hunt over bait as well. The department does not currently limit the number of bait stations allowed in an area and will need guidance from the board regarding how to administer this new hunt.

Additional harvest as a result of this proposal passing is expected to be negligible and will not impact the overall brown or black bear populations in Unit 14C.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 104 – 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping and 5 AAC 85.060. Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals. Close Chugach State Park and Glacier Creek drainage in Unit 14C to lynx hunting and trapping.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close lynx hunting and trapping in Chugach State Park and the Glacier Creek drainage in the Remainder of Unit 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current lynx hunting and trapping regulations can be found in 5 AAC 84.270 and 5 AAC 85.060. Additionally, they can be found in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations* and *2022-2023 Alaska Trapping Regulations*.

5 AAC 84.270, Furbearer trapping

Species and Units	Open Season	Bag limit
(5) Lynx		
...		
Units 7, 11, and 13 – 16	Nov. 10 – Last day of Feb.	No limit; season may be closed by emergency order

5 AAC 85.060(4), Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) Lynx		
...		
Units 6, 7, 11, and 13-16	Nov. 10 – Feb. 28 (General hunt only)	Nov. 10 – Feb. 28
2 lynx		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal if adopted would close the hunting and trapping take of lynx in Chugach State Park and in the Glacier Creek drainage. If adopted, the proposal will reduce lynx harvest opportunity, and would likely have little to no effect on the lynx population.

BACKGROUND: Lynx populations in Unit 14C cycle over a 9-11 year period, responding mainly to the abundance of snowshoe hares. During this time lynx numbers throughout the unit increase and subsequently decrease. As a result of this boom-bust cycle, lynx harvest and non-hunting mortality in the Unit fluctuate in a similar manner (Table 104-1).

Table 104-1. Unit 14(C) lynx hunting and non-hunting mortality for RY2017-2021.

Year	DLP	Hunting	Trapping	Other^A
2017^B	-	-	-	1
2018^B	3	-	-	2
2019^B	1	-	-	3
2020	4	5 (2C,3R) ^C	7 (4C,3R) ^C	2
2021	3	-	2 (0C,2R) ^C	4
Total:	11	5	9	12

^A: Includes road-kills and illegal take.

^B: Hunting and trapping closed by EO per lynx harvest tracking strategy adopted by the board in 1992.

^C: “C” = Chugach State Park; “R” = Remainder of 14C.

Within Unit 14C only a few areas are open to the take of lynx. For trapping this includes the remainder of Chugach State Park (which consists of the area within the park outside of the Eagle River, Eklutna, and Anchorage Management Areas), the Birchwood Management Area, and the Remainder of Unit 14C. For hunting, lynx can be harvested in the remainder of Chugach State Park and the Remainder of Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the loss of lynx hunting and trapping opportunity. Given the small harvest of lynx in Unit 14C (when the season is not closed by EO) and the difficulty of access into the Unit, the department does not have a biological concern with leaving the hunting and trapping seasons open. The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation between consumptive and non-consumptive users.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 105 – 5 AAC 92.052 (19) Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures. Limit hunters to one big game registration permit at a time in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Young

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would add Units 7 and 15 to the areas in the state in which a person may be limited to one big game registration permit at a time.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as defined in:

5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures. The department may apply any or all of the following additional conditions to a permit hunt, when necessary for management of the species hunted:

(19) a person may be limited to one big game registration permit at a time in Units 1, 17, 20(E), 22, and 23

...

There is a positive C&T finding for goats in Units 7 and 15C, outside the nonsubsistence area, with an ANS of 7-10.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Hunters would be limited to holding one registration permit in Units 7 and 15 (Kenai Peninsula) at a time. This proposal would increase hunting opportunity by allowing more hunters to obtain 1 registration permits that are limited by number as determined by the board. This proposal would limit an individual hunter's opportunity by restricting them to holding only one registration permit at a time as written. For example, a hunter that obtains registration brown bear permit RB300 in early August would not be able to obtain registration moose permit RM572 for Kalgin Island until

the first permit was reported on. It is unknown how harvest would be affected but there is no biological concern should harvest increase due to the adoption of this proposal.

There are no registration hunts in Unit 7 that provide subsistence opportunity because that unit is entirely within the NSA. In addition, this proposal would not affect the 15C Tier II moose hunt, because a Tier II permit is not a registration permit.

However, there is one big game registration hunt in Unit 15 that provides subsistence opportunity: for moose on Kalgin Island (RM572). If adopted as written, a subsistence hunter who wanted to hold both a goat and a Kalgin Island moose registration permit at the same time would not be permitted to do so.

BACKGROUND: In game management units 7 and 15 a limited number of registration goat hunts open each year with a limited number of permits available. Permits are available on a first come, first served basis online or at offices in Anchorage, Palmer, Homer, or Soldotna. The number of permits available each year is dependent upon opportunity left over from the earlier draw season. The late registration season duration is 14 days. Multiple hunters pick up registration permits for more than one goat hunt area each year. In some years, individuals have received up to 3 permits. Since these permits are limited in number, when a hunter picks up multiple permits, opportunity for goat hunting is being taken away from other hunters. No hunters in the past 10 years have hunted more than one registration goat hunt in a single season when the individual has picked up more than one permit.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it does not create or address a biological issue. However, the department **SUPPORTS** the increased goat hunting opportunity that would be created by this proposal by allowing more hunters to participate in goat hunting. To make the regulations more consistent with existing regulations, and to ensure reasonable opportunity for hunting for other big game species with positive C&Ts in Unit 15C continues to be provided, the department recommends the proposal be amended by limiting an individual to one registration permit per species at a time in Units 7 and 15.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 106 – 5 AAC 92.540(4)(B) Controlled use areas. Modify the restrictions for using ATVs to hunt moose in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: John Reich

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area by either 1. Removing the motorized vehicle restriction; 2. Restricting all-terrain vehicle (ATV) use to every other week; or 3. Restricting ATV use every 3 days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows

5 AAC 92.540 **Controlled use areas.** In the following areas, access for hunting is controlled as specified:

(4) (B) the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area:

(i) the area consists of Unit 15(C)

(ii) the area is closed to the use of any motorized vehicle except an aircraft or boat for moose hunting, including the transportation of moose hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of moose from September 16 through September 19 and September 22 through September 25; however, this provision does not apply to the use of a motorized vehicle on a highway maintained by the state or borough or on the gravel portions of Oilwell, Brody, and Tustumena Lake Roads or a driveway used for direct access to a primary residence or business;

(iii) during the periods specified in (ii) of this subparagraph a hunter who travels by motorized vehicle on the Unit 15(C) highway system and then leaves and travels off that highway system in that motorized vehicle may not hunt moose, including transporting moose hunters, their hunting gear or parts of moose, or in any other manner initiate or participate in moose hunting activities, until after the hunter returns the motorized vehicle to the Unit 15(C) highway system; upon returning the motorized vehicle to that highway system, the hunter may initiate or participate in legal moose hunting activities so long as the hunter leaves the motorized vehicle on the Unit 15(C) highway system;

...

The Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal will provide for easier access to hunt areas, but it may also result in user conflict. Because this hunt is managed by antler restrictions, no biological impact to the moose population is expected from this proposal.

BACKGROUND: The Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area was established by the board in 1985. It was originally established to increase bull:cow ratios in motorized-accessible areas near trails. The establishment of the spike, fork, 50 inch, or 3 or more brow tines on one side regulation in 1987 removed the biological concern for which this regulation was established. Since 1987, bull:cow ratios have been managed by adjusting antler restrictions. The department does not have a biological concern regarding the removal of the motorized closure.

Initially, the vehicle restriction was from Sept. 11–20. In 1994, the board created a window to allow vehicle use for moose hunting from Sept. 15–16 to address the issue of meat spoilage. The current vehicle restriction is from Sept. 16–19 and 22–25 to reflect the change in season dates to Sept. 1–25. The restriction does not impact using motorized transportation for activities other than moose hunting. Since other activities are not affected by this restriction, motorized traffic still occurs, creating an enforcement issue.

Eliminating the LKCUA has been discussed at past board meetings. Some residents and local advisory committees have supported the restriction because it is thought to decrease conflicts between ATV and non-ATV users, while others want to see the restriction removed. The LKCUA does not limit the use of boats or planes for moose hunting, nor does it limit the use of motorized vehicles on state- or borough-maintained highways or graveled portions of Oilwell, Brody, and Tustumena Lake roads.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because this is an allocative issue with no biological concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 107 – 5 AAC 92.540(4)(B) Controlled use areas. Exempt qualified disabled veterans from the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area restrictions.

PROPOSED BY: Robert Ward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow a veteran with a service-connected disability of 50% or more to receive an exemption to the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area restriction.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.540 **Controlled use areas.** In the following areas, access for hunting is controlled as specified:

(4) (B) the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area:

(i) the area consists of Unit 15(C)

(ii) the area is closed to the use of any motorized vehicle except an aircraft or boat for moose hunting, including the transportation of moose hunters, their hunting gear, or parts of moose from September 16 through September 19 and September 22 through September 25; however, this provision does not apply to the use of a motorized vehicle on a highway maintained by the state or borough or on the gravel portions of Oilwell, Brody, and Tustumena Lake Roads or a driveway used for direct access to a primary residence or business;

(iii) during the periods specified in (ii) of this subparagraph, a hunter who travels by motorized vehicle on the Unit 15(C) highway system and then leaves and travels off that highway system in that motorized vehicle may not hunt moose, including transporting moose hunters, their hunting gear or parts of moose, or in any other manner initiate or participate in moose hunting activities, until after the hunter returns the motorized vehicle to the Unit 15(C) highway system; upon returning the motorized vehicle to that highway system, the hunter may initiate or participate in legal moose hunting activities so long as the hunter leaves the motorized vehicle on the Unit 15(C) highway system;

...

This area is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Veterans with a service-connected disability of 50% or greater would be allowed to use motorized vehicles within The Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area from September 16 through 19 and September 22 through 25 to hunt moose. User conflicts may occur as additional motorized use in the CUA increases. In addition, if adopted, this proposal will be a departure from established criteria for Methods and Means Exemptions.

BACKGROUND: The Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area was established by the board in 1985. It was originally established to increase bull:cow ratios in motorized accessible areas near trails. The establishment of the spike/fork-50 inch regulation in 1987 removed the biological concern for which this regulation was established. Since 1987, bull:cow ratios have been managed through manipulation of antler restrictions. The department does not have a biological concern regarding the removal of the motorized closure.

Initially, the vehicle restriction was from Sept. 11–20. In 1994, the Board created a window to allow vehicle use for moose hunting from Sept. 15–16 to address the issue of meat spoilage. The current vehicle restriction is from Sept. 16–19 and 22–25 to reflect the change in season dates to Sept. 1–25. The restriction does not impact using motorized transportation for activities other than moose hunting. Since other activities, both hunting and nonhunting, are not affected by this restriction, motorized traffic still occurs, creating an enforcement issue. Eliminating the LKCUA has been discussed at past Board meetings. Some residents and local Advisory Committees have supported the restriction because it is thought to decrease conflicts between ATV and non-ATV users, while others want to see the restriction removed. The LKCUA does not limit the use of boats or planes for moose hunting nor does it limit the use of motorized vehicles on state or borough-maintained highways or graveled portions of Oilwell, Brody, and Tustumena Lake roads, or driveways used for direct access to a primary residence or business.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. If adopted, it will not create any conservation concerns if established antler restrictions are used as the legal bull moose bag limit.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 108 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Make all sheep hunts in Units 7 and 15 registration hunts.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require all general season and drawing sheep hunts to be administered as registration permit hunts.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows:

5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) Unit 7, that portion south of the Sterling Highway, west of the Seward Highway, and north and east of Kenai Lake; up to 50 permits may be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or Larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
Units 7 and 15(A), those portions east of Fuller Lake trail, south of Dike Creek, and a straight line from the source of Dike Creek, east through the Divide south of Trout Lake, to Juneau Creek, west of Juneau Creek, and north of the Sterling Highway; up to 10 permits May be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or Larger, drawing permit only	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, Remainder of Unit 13, remainder of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), Remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and		

19(D)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; Aug. 10—Sept. 20

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years Aug. 10—Sept. 20

...

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 are located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? All hunts in Unit 7 and 15 would become registration permit hunts. This would eliminate the draw hunt areas of Round Mountain and Crescent Lake, opening them to registration hunts and all hunters. The remainder of the Kenai Peninsula would change from a harvest ticket hunt to a registration hunt. The new registration hunts could either be managed as limited entry registration hunts, similar to late season Kenai mountain goats hunts, or be unlimited as determined by the hunt manager. Hunts can be closed when harvest limits are reached under managers' discretion by emergency order. If adopted, this proposal is not expected to have a biological effect because harvest is currently managed under full curl regulations.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s. All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula, including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because the current hunt structure is adequate for managing Kenai sheep populations. Harvest is regulated by full curl management, negating concerns of harvest negatively impacting sheep population levels.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 109 – **5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.** Close sheep hunting on the Kenai Peninsula, Unit 15.

PROPOSED BY: Rockwell Bates

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? As written, this proposal would close all sheep hunting in Unit 15. However, through discussions with the proponent, they intended to close sheep hunting for the entire Kenai Peninsula, so the analysis below is if this proposal were to close Units 7&15 to all sheep hunting by state regulation.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows:

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) Unit 7, that portion south of the Sterling Highway, west of the Seward Highway, and north and east of Kenai Lake; up to 50 permits may be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
Units 7 and 15(A), those portions east of Fuller Lake trail, south of Dike Creek, and a straight line from the source of Dike Creek, east through the divide south of Trout Lake, to		

Juneau Creek, west of Juneau Creek, and north of the Sterling Highway; up to 10 permits may be issued

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, drawing permit only Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only Aug. 10—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, remainder of Unit 13, remainder of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and 19(D)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; Aug. 10—Sept. 20

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years Aug. 10—Sept. 20

...

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would close all sheep hunting in Units 7 and 15 by state regulation, unnecessarily eliminating hunting and harvest opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s (Figure 109-1). All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl

management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula, including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year.

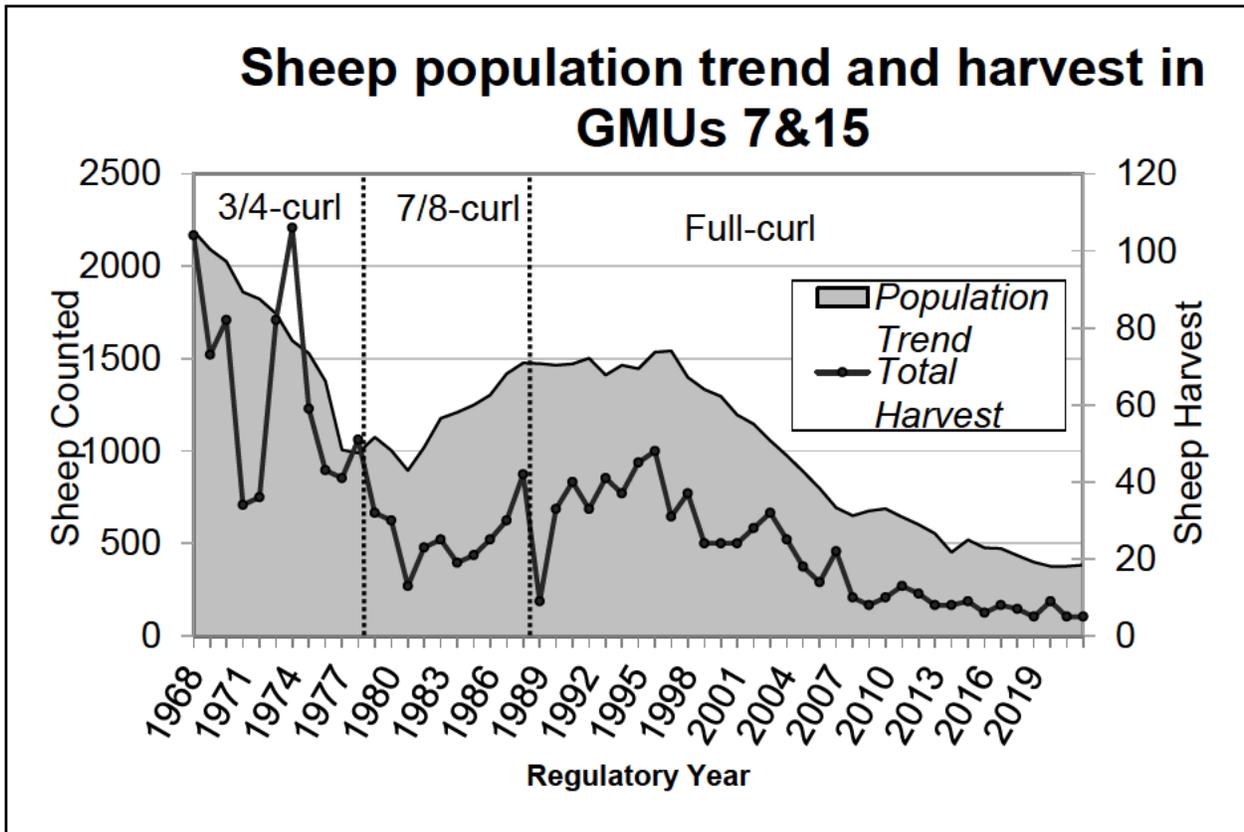


Figure 109-1. Sheep population trends and harvest in GMUs 7 and 15, 1968 to 2022, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it would reduce sheep hunting opportunity. Since Kenai sheep are under full curl management, there is no biological justification for a closure at this time.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 110 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Create an archery only registration hunt and youth hunt for sheep in Unit 7 Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? As written this proposal would establish a new registration sheep hunt for unit 7 with season dates of August 1–5 for certified youth bow hunters and August 10–September 20 for all certified bow hunters, with a bag limit of 1 ram full curl or larger. This proposal would eliminate the current general season sheep hunt in Unit 7 and create registration archery only season.

The proponent clarified his proposal after submission stating that he would like all current sheep hunts to be closed and registration archery hunts established to replace the current hunt structure.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows:

5 AAC 85.055 **Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) Unit 7, that portion south of the Sterling Highway, west of the Seward Highway, and north and east of Kenai Lake; up to 50 permits may be issued	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	Aug. 10—Sept. 20
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	Aug. 10—Sept. 20
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	Aug. 10—Sept. 20
Units 7 and 15(A), those portions east of Fuller Lake trail, south of Dike Creek, and a straight line from the source of Dike Creek, east through the divide south of Trout Lake, to Juneau Creek, west of Juneau Creek, and north of the Sterling Highway; up to 10 permits may be issued	Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	Aug. 10—Sept. 20

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, drawing permit only Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only Aug. 10—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, remainder of Unit 13, remainder of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and 19(D)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; Aug. 10—Sept. 20

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or Aug. 1—Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years Aug. 10—Sept. 20

...

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal is likely to reduce the number of sheep hunters pursuing sheep on the Kenai Peninsula in the short term, which will likely reduce harvest. If harvest is decreased, over time it may lead to an increase in the number of legal rams on the landscape. Adoption of this proposal is not likely to lead to additional harvest because no additional harvest opportunity has been identified in this area under full curl regulation.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s (Figure 110-1). All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain

and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula, including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year. Only 1 sheep harvest by bow and arrow has been documented on the Kenai since harvest reporting began documenting method of take in 2004.

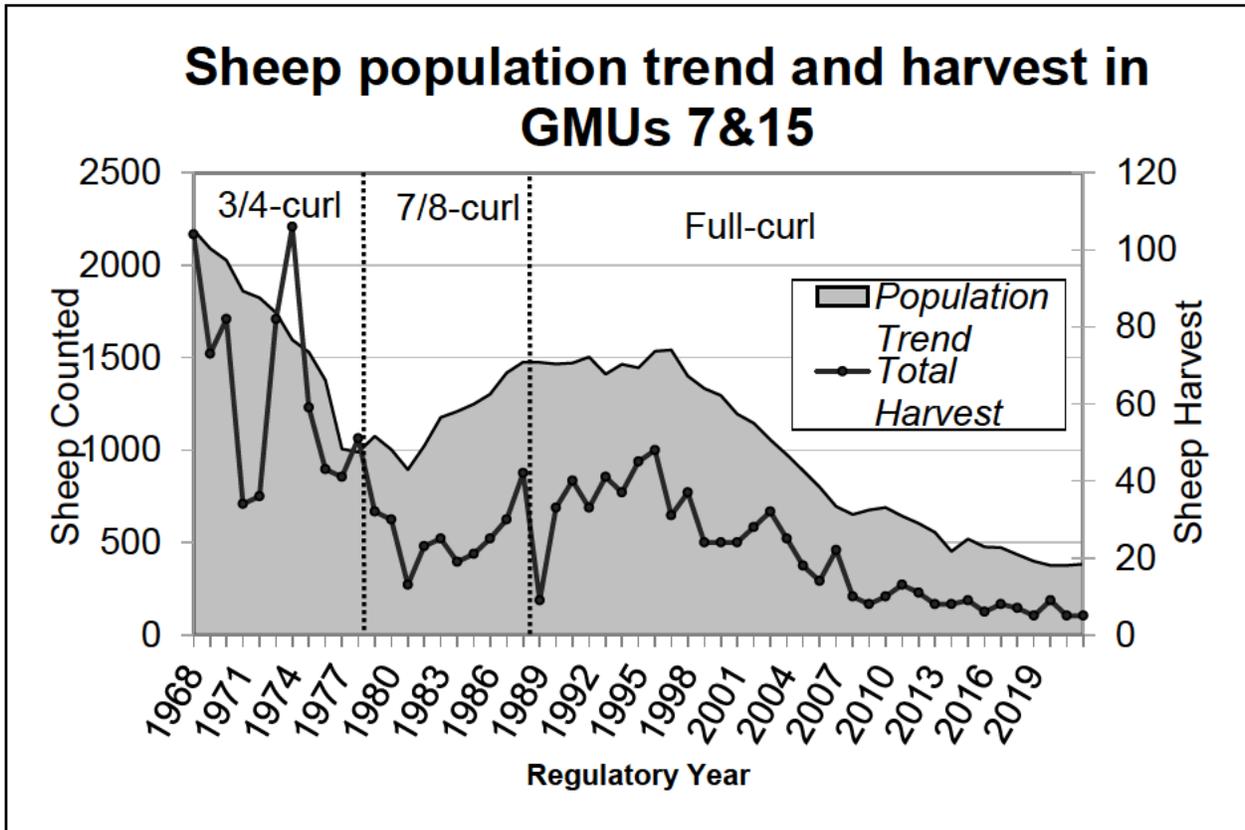


Figure 110-1. Sheep population trends and harvest in GMUs 7 and 15, 1968 to 2022, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocative issue and the method under which sheep are harvested does not create a biological concern. Sheep are managed under full curl regulation, currently negating concerns of harvest affecting the trajectory of sheep populations.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 111 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Create an archery only, registration sheep hunt for residents and nonresidents in Units 7 and 15 Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a new archery-only sheep hunt in Units 7 & 15 with the season dates of Aug. 1–5.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows:

5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
<p>(4) Unit 7, that portion south of the Sterling Highway, west of the Seward Highway, and north and east of Kenai Lake; up to 50 permits may be issued</p>		
<p>RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only</p>	<p>Aug. 10—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)</p>	
<p>NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only</p>		<p>Aug. 10—Sept. 20</p>
<p>Units 7 and 15(A), those portions east of Fuller Lake trail, south of Dike Creek, and a straight line from the source of Dike Creek, east through the divide south of Trout Lake, to Juneau Creek, west of Juneau Creek, and north of the Sterling Highway; up to 10 permits may be issued</p>		
<p>RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or</p>	<p>Aug. 10—Sept. 20</p>	

larger, drawing permit only	(General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, remainder of Unit 13, remain- der of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and 19(D)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or	Aug. 1—Aug. 5	
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger;	Aug. 10—Sept. 20	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or		Aug. 1—Aug. 5
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years		Aug. 10—Sept. 20

...

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal is not likely to lead to additional harvest because no additional harvest opportunity has been identified for this area under full curl harvest regulations. The proposed season dates would directly overlap the current youth sheep hunt season, likely leading to increased competition, and hunters would be able to use aircraft to spot sheep during the open season. The ability to use aircraft to spot sheep is likely to result in increased harvest.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s (Figure 111-1). All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of

legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula, including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year. Only 1 sheep harvest by bow and arrow has been documented on the Kenai since harvest reporting began documenting method of take in 2004.

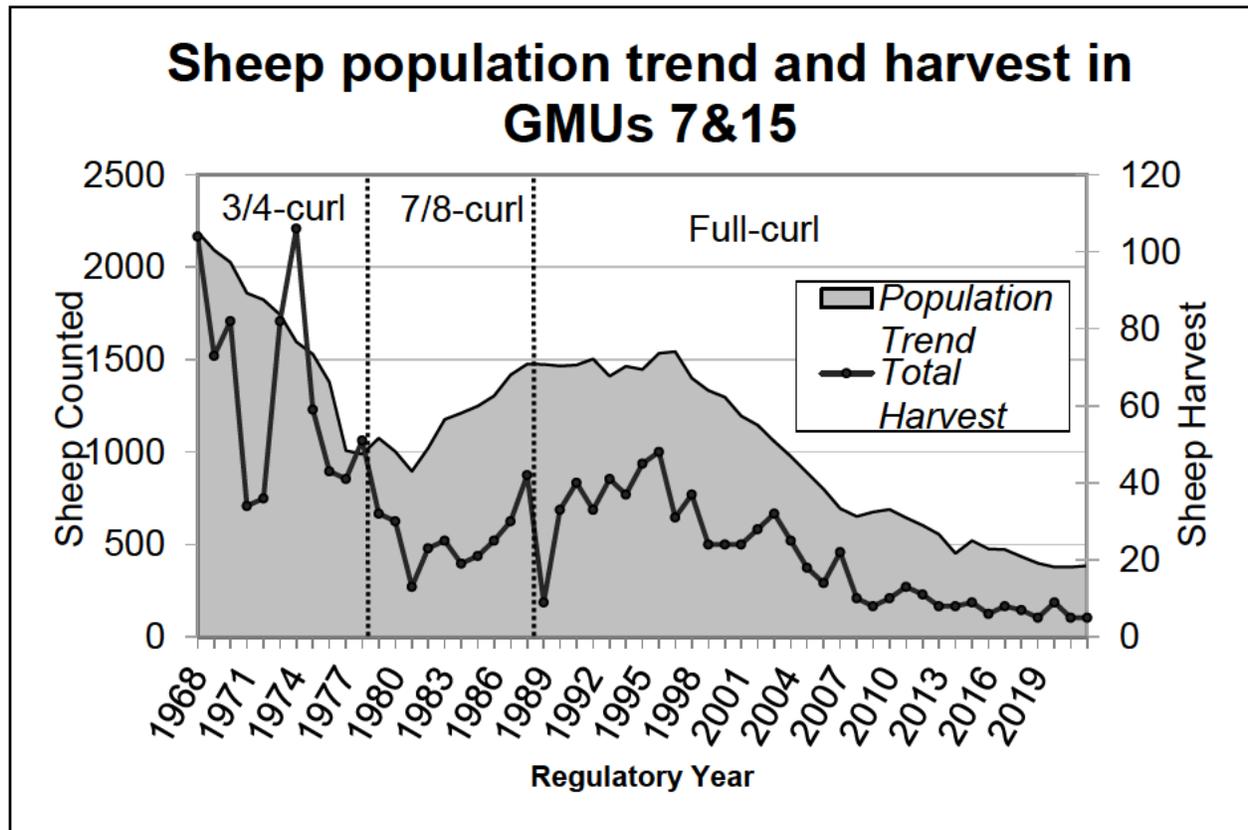


Figure 111-1. Sheep population trends and harvest in GMUs 7 and 15, 1968 to 2022, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. If adopted, this proposal will conflict with the youth hunt by allowing all bow hunters into the area at the same time as the youth season. Youth hunts were designed to get young hunters into the field at a time when crowding was not an issue. This proposal will also allow all archery sheep hunters to spot sheep using aircraft.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 112 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a bow-only general season harvest ticket sheep hunt in Unit 15 with season dates of Sept. 21–Oct. 5.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows

5 AAC 85.055 **Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4)		
Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, remainder of Unit 13, remain- der of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and 19(D)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or	Aug. 1—Aug. 5	
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger;	Aug. 10—Sept. 20	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or		Aug. 1—Aug. 5
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
...		

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would establish a new bow and arrow only registration sheep hunt in Units 7 and 15 with season dates of Sept. 21–Oct. 5 and a bag limit of 1 ram, full curl or larger. Adoption of this

proposal is not likely to lead to additional harvest because no additional harvest opportunity has been identified in this area under full curl regulation. It will, however, extend the time hunters are in the field, possibly causing additional stress to declining populations.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s (Figure 112-1). All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula, including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year. Only 1 sheep harvest by bow and arrow has been documented on the Kenai since harvest reporting began documenting method of take in 2004.

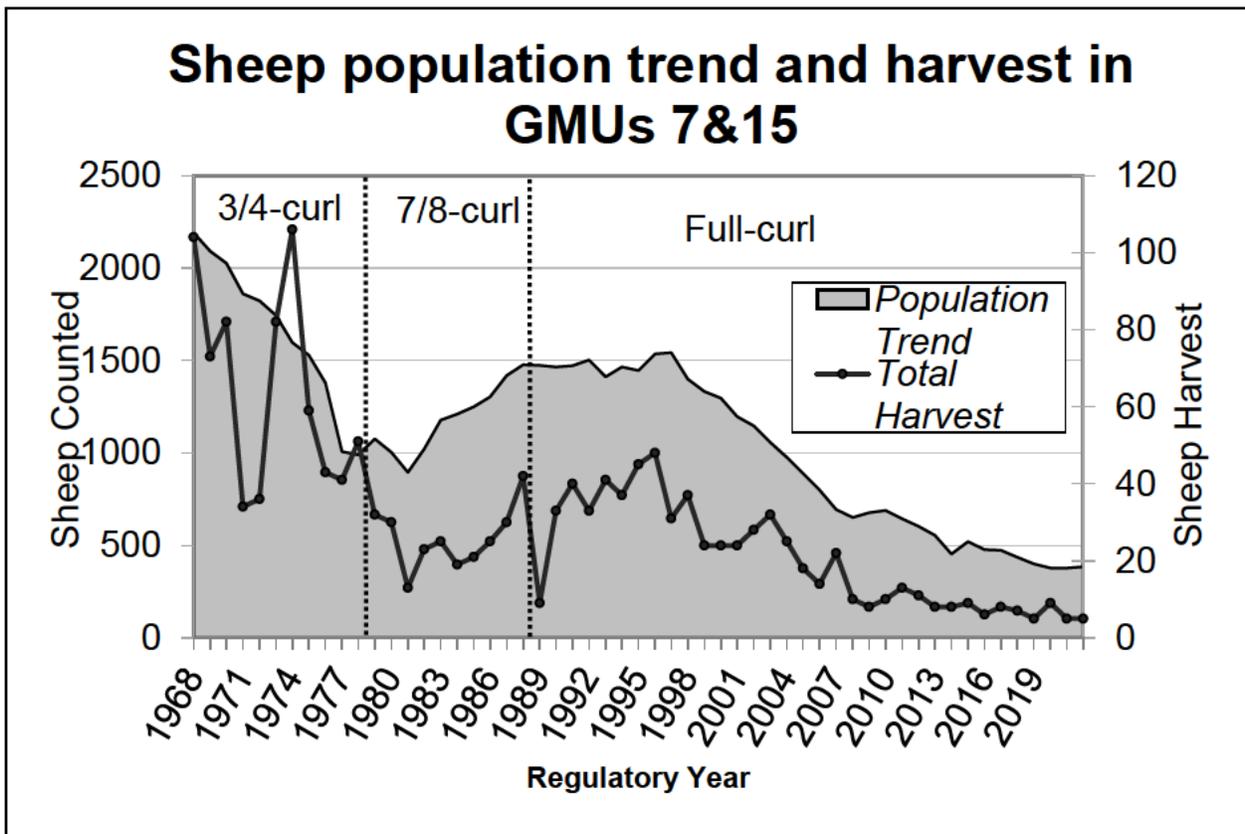


Figure 112-1. Sheep population trends and harvest in GMUs 7 and 15, 1968 to 2022, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** the addition of hunting opportunity on a declining population but is **NEUTRAL** on the method of harvest.

Full curl management is successful in protecting sheep populations given current hunting effort, pressure, and harvest levels in most mountain ranges and situations. However, Proposals 112 asks to increase harvest opportunity and hunting pressure on a small population of sheep on the Kenai Peninsula, in Game Management Units 7 and 15 by opening an additional two week archery season from Sept. 21-October 5, after the regular season has closed.

The department is biologically opposed to increasing hunting pressure and/or harvest on sheep at this time. Sheep populations have declined, and the Kenai sheep population has declined equally or greater in magnitude compared to other areas in the state. In fact, the department has chosen not to issue drawing hunt sheep tags in two areas in GMU 7 due to a lack of available rams observed during recent summer surveys.

Small, semi-isolated bands of sheep like many of those in GMUs 7 and 15 may be at additional risk when compared to populations in larger mountain ranges due to a lack of connectivity with other sheep. Preliminary GPS collar data on Kenai rams suggests that they do not move between adjacent mountain blocks despite only being separated by short distances.

While archery sheep hunts add little to overall harvest numbers, we are concerned that an additional two weeks of hunting pressure and the associated potential disturbance could potentially compromise overwinter survival and/or reproductive success for some animals. During late September and Early October, aerial observations of collared rams, and GPS collar data from rams and ewes, indicate that sheep preferentially utilize lower elevations to maximize food intake which could increase their vulnerability to harvest. Additional hunters in the field, even if harvest is not accomplished, could move animals out of productive habitat to escape terrain and compromise their ability to obtain sufficient body reserves for rut and overwinter survival.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 113 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a bow-only general season harvest ticket sheep hunt in Unit 7 with season dates of Sept. 21–Oct. 5.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are as follows:

5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4)		
Remainder of Unit 7, Unit 9, remainder of Unit 13, remain- der of Unit 14(A), Unit 14(B), remainder of Unit 15, and Units 16, 19(A), 19(B), and 19(D)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or	Aug. 1—Aug. 5	
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger;	Aug. 10—Sept. 20	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or		Aug. 1—Aug. 5
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years		Aug. 10—Sept. 20
...		

All sheep habitat in Units 7 and 15 is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal is not likely to lead to additional harvest because no additional harvest opportunity has been identified in this area under full curl regulation. It will, however, extend the time hunters are in the field, possibly causing additional stress to declining populations.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep numbers on the Kenai Peninsula have declined by approximately 80% since the 1960s (Figure 113-1). All state harvest on the Kenai Peninsula is under full curl management. The current state hunt structure includes two draw hunt areas: Round Mountain and Crescent Lake. These areas have not been open to harvest in recent years due to a lack of legal rams available for harvest and low sheep numbers, as seen during minimum count surveys. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 are managed under a general season harvest ticket hunt. Few sheep are harvested each year. The 5-year average annual harvest for the Kenai Peninsula,

including federal subsistence harvest, is six sheep per year. Only 1 sheep harvest by bow and arrow has been documented on the Kenai since harvest reporting began documenting method of take in 2004.

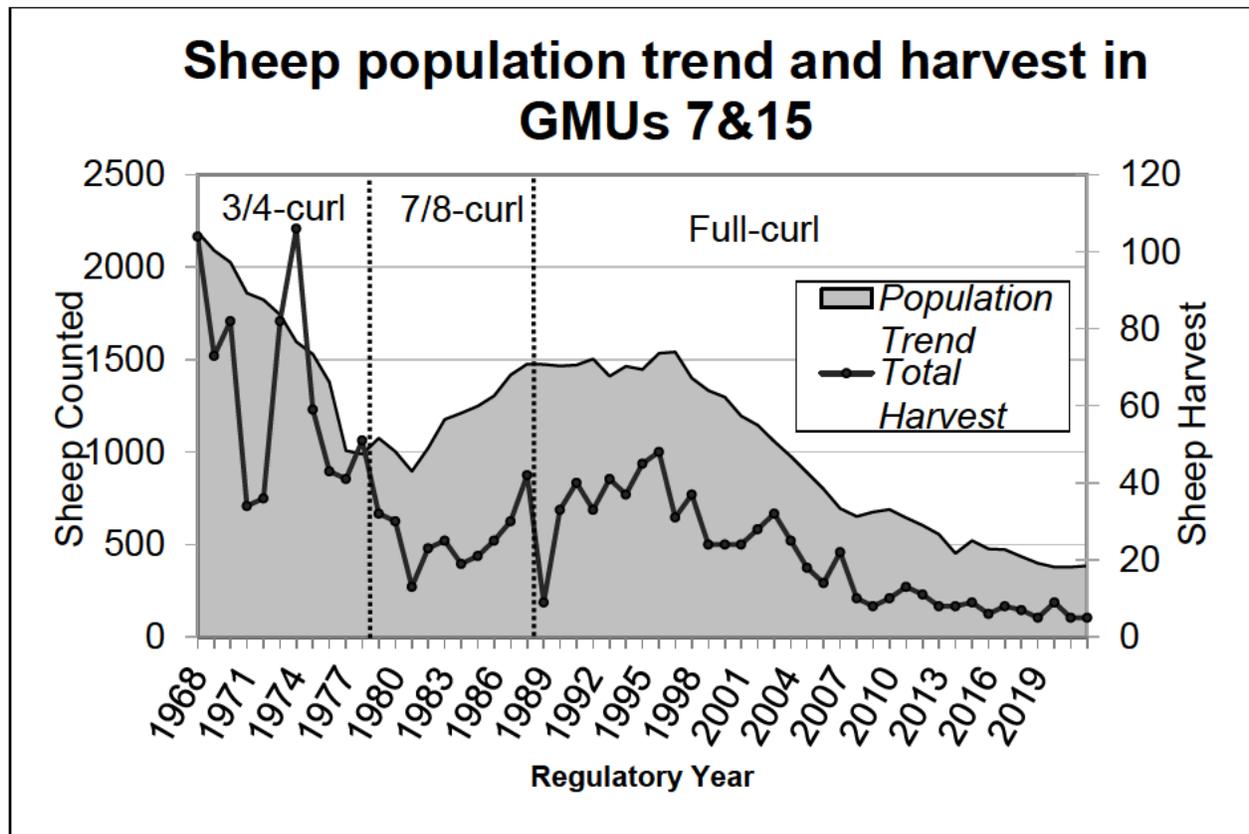


Figure 113-1. Sheep population trends and harvest in GMUs 7 and 15, 1968 to 2022, Kenai Peninsula, Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** an additional hunting season during a time when sheep are vulnerable to seasonal disturbance but is **NEUTRAL** on the method of harvest.

Full curl management is successful in protecting sheep populations given current hunting effort, pressure, and harvest levels in most mountain ranges and situations. However, Proposals 112 asks to increase harvest opportunity and hunting pressure on a small population of sheep on the Kenai Peninsula, in Game Management Units 7 and 15 by opening an additional two week archery season from Sept. 21-October 5, after the regular season has closed.

The department is biologically opposed to increasing hunting pressure and/or harvest on sheep at this time. Sheep populations have declined, and the Kenai sheep population has declined equally or greater in magnitude compared to other areas in the state. In fact, the department has chosen

not to issue drawing hunt sheep tags in two areas in GMU 7 due to a lack of available rams observed during recent summer surveys.

Small, semi-isolated bands of sheep like many of those in GMUs 7 and 15 may be at additional risk when compared to populations in larger mountain ranges due to a lack of connectivity with other sheep. Preliminary GPS collar data on Kenai rams suggests that they do not move between adjacent mountain blocks despite only being separated by short distances.

While archery sheep hunts add little to overall harvest numbers, we are concerned that an additional two weeks of hunting pressure and the associated potential disturbance could potentially compromise overwinter survival and/or reproductive success for some animals. During late September and Early October, aerial observations of collared rams, and GPS collar data from rams and ewes, indicate that sheep preferentially utilize lower elevations to maximize food intake which could increase their vulnerability to harvest. Additional hunters in the field, even if harvest is not accomplished, could move animals out of productive habitat to escape terrain and compromise their ability to obtain sufficient body reserves for rut and overwinter survival.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 114 – 5 AAC 85.040(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Change the RG331 goat hunt in Unit 7 to an archery only hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change registration mountain goat hunt RG331 in Unit 7 to an archery only hunt.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.040(3) are:

Units and Bag Limits (3)	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 7 and Remainder of Unit 15	Aug.10–Oct. 15 (General hunt Only) Nov.1–Nov. 30 (General hunt Only)	Aug. 10–Oct. 15 Nov. 1–Nov. 30

1 goat by drawing permit only;

in the Aug.10–Oct. 15 season (up to 500 permits will be issued), or 1 goat by registration permit only in the Nov.

1–Nov. 30 season; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

...

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would change the RG331 goat hunt in Unit 7 from an unrestricted weapons hunt to a bow and arrow only hunt. Permits for the RG331 hunt area are not currently being issued because of population levels below the minimum count threshold. If this proposal was adopted to modify the hunt to an archery-only permit (RG332), minimum goat counts in this area would continue to limit permit issuance, regardless of weapons restrictions. No additional hunting or harvest opportunity will be provided by the proposed regulatory change.

BACKGROUND: In 2001 the Board of Game established the current hunt structure for the Kenai Peninsula goat population with an early draw season of Aug.10–Oct. 15 and a late season registration hunt of Nov. 1–Nov. 30 that opens only if harvest opportunity still exists after the close of the draw permit season. This system was established due to conservation concerns. Since the establishment of the current system, RG331 has not opened for a late season hunt. For an area to be eligible to open in the late season a minimum of 100 goats must be seen during the most recent survey. RG331 has never had a minimum count of 100 animals since surveys began in the 1960s (Table 114-1).

Table 114-1. RG331 hunt area mountain goat survey data.

Year	Adults	Kids	Total Goats	% Kids
2011	69	12	81	15
2014	29	9	38	24
2017	43	10	53	19
2018	42	8	50	16
2022	46	7	53	13

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Changing the method of take would have no biological effect on the population and is unlikely to have any effect on opportunity based on hunt history

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to private parties or the department.

PROPOSAL 115 – 5 AAC 85.040(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Divide all Unit 15C goat drawing hunts into two seasons.

PROPOSED BY: Dave Lyon

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would split all drawing goat hunts into an early (Aug. 10–Sept. 15) and late (Sept. 16–Oct. 15) season for the Kenai Peninsula.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.040(3) are:

Units and Bag Limits (3)	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 7 and Remainder of Unit 15	Aug.10–Oct. 15 (General hunt Only) Nov.1–Nov. 30 (General hunt Only)	Aug. 10–Oct. 15 Nov. 1–Nov. 30

1 goat by drawing permit only; in the Aug.10–Oct. 15 season (up to 500 permits will be issued), or 1 goat by registration permit only in the Nov. 1–Nov. 30 season; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

...

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. Unit 15C outside the NSA has a positive C&T finding for goats, and an ANS of 7-10. However, this proposal would not apply to the registration hunts that provide the subsistence opportunity.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would split all drawing goat hunts into an early (Aug. 10–Sept. 15) and late (Sept. 16–Oct. 15) season for the Kenai Peninsula. Furthermore, it would allow hunters to draw the same hunt area 2

years in a row under different season dates because they would effectively be different hunts. This proposal would not initially affect the number of permits issued for a specific hunt area. If a season change began to significantly affect harvest success, then it is possible that permit allocation would be adjusted. The proposed season change will shorten the amount of time a particular hunter has to hunt a given permit, which could affect hunter participation and success.

BACKGROUND: In 2001, the Board of Game established the current hunt structure for the Kenai Peninsula goat population with a draw permit season of Aug.10–Oct. 15 and a late season registration hunt of Nov. 1–Nov. 30 that opens only if harvest opportunity still exists after the close of the draw permit season. This system was established due to conservation concerns. Thirty-one separate draw areas currently exist for the peninsula (DG331–347, DG351–364) of which an average of 22 are open to hunting in a given year. The five-year average annual draw season harvest is 91 goats with a 20% nanny take (Table 115-1).

Table 115-1. Five year average annual goat harvest by hunt area, RY 2017-2021.

Hunt	M	F	Unk	Total	% F	Permits issued	# Hunted	% Success
331	1	0	0	1	17	4	2	56
332						no hunt		
333						no hunt		
334	4	0	0	4	0	8	6	58
335						no hunt		
336						no hunt		
337						no hunt		
338	1	1	0	2	47	8	7	41
339	2	1	0	2	25	8	3	58
340						no hunt		
341	2	1	0	3	28	6	5	70
342	2	0	0	3	11	7	5	53
343						no hunt		
344	1	0	0	2	17	8	4	40
345	6	1	0	8	19	26	14	56.25
346	7	1	1	8	15	37	20	44
347	2	2	0	5	43	16	11	55
351	1	0	0	1	40	11	4	35
352	5	1	0	6	9	27	10	64
353						no hunt		
354	2	0	0	2	25	7	4	42
355						no hunt		
356	3	2	0	4	39	13	8	53
357	1	0	0	2	17	9	4	32

358	1	0	0	2	20	10	5	47
359	3	1	0	4	35	22	10	48
360	7	2	0	9	23	39	22	35
361	2	1	0	3	35	24	14	27
362	3	1	0	4	19	17	11	48
363	7	1	0	9	14	30	13	67
364	1	0	0	1	0	23	8	7

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is unlikely to be a biological effect from splitting the season dates. Permit allocations for each hunt area would be split equally between the proposed seasons.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 116 – 5 AAC 85.040(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Change the regulation to clarify goat hunters in Unit 15C are restricted from taking goat on the Kenai Peninsula for five years if a nanny is harvested.

PROPOSED BY: Seldovia Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify codified language so that if a nanny is harvested in RG364, RG365, RG374, and RG375, the hunter is prohibited from hunting goats on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.040(3) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(3) Unit 15(C), that portion beginning at the mouth of Jakalof Creek, then southwesterly along the shore of Kachemak Bay to the mouth of the Port Graham River, then southeasterly up the Port Graham River approximately 6 miles, then southerly up the south fork to the divide, then easterly across		

the divide to the main drainage that flows into Windy Bay, then southeasterly down the creek to Windy Bay, then easterly along the shoreline to the mouth of Rocky River, then northerly up Rocky River and Windy River to the divide separating Windy River from Jakalof Creek, then across that divide to Jakalof Creek, then down Jakalof Creek to the point of origin

1 goat by drawing permit only; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Aug.10—Oct. 15
(General hunt Only)

No open season.

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited; or

Aug.10—Oct. 15

No open season.

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Nov.1—Nov. 30

No open season.

Unit 15(C), that portion beginning; at the mouth of the Port Graham River, then southeasterly up the Port Graham River approximately 6 miles, then southerly up the south fork to the divide, then easterly across the divide to the main drainage that flows into Windy Bay, then southeasterly down the Creek to Windy Bay, then along the southern shore of Windy Bay, then westerly along the shore of the Gulf of Alaska and around the tip of the Kenai Peninsula and easterly to the

point of origin

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
Nov. 1–Nov. 30

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
No open season

Unit 7 and Remainder of Unit 15

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
(General hunt only)
Nov. 1–Nov. 30
(General hunt only)

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
Nov. 1–Nov. 30

1 goat by drawing permit only in the Aug. 10–Oct. 15 season (up to 500 permits will be issued), or 1 goat by registration permit only in the Nov. 1–Nov. 30 season; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

...

There is a positive C&T finding for goats in Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area with an ANS of 7-10 goats.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If a hunter harvested a nanny in RG364, RG365, RG374, or RG375 the hunter would be prohibited from hunting goats on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years. Hunters will have to be more vigilant when taking a goat. If adopted this proposal could restrict a hunter's reasonable opportunity for success in taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for subsistence uses for five years.

BACKGROUND: At the 2019 Board of Game meeting the board restructured the Seldovia (RG364) and English Bay (RG365) mountain goat hunts, establishing a new hunt (DG364) for the Seldovia area, and separating the late seasons of RG364 and RG365 into RG374 and RG375 to aid the department in the distribution of tags and the tracking of hunts in these management areas. When these new hunts were established, the board did not clarify that hunters taking a female goat would be prohibited from hunting for five years in Units 7 and 15. This penalty would also apply to new hunts.

Since 2009, the public, including the communities of Seldovia, Nanwalek, and Port Graham, have been under the impression that if a hunter harvested a nanny in these hunt areas, the hunter became ineligible to hunt goats in Units 7 and 15 for 5 regulatory years. The regulation wording available on page 87 of the 2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations reads “If a nanny is taken, the hunter is prohibited from hunting any goats in Units 7 & 15 for 5 regulatory years”. The local communities understand the importance of limiting harvest to billies to conserve female goats that will ultimately provide more opportunity. They also encourage their hunters to avoid harvesting nannies. The guide contract with the Port Graham and English Bay Corporations for the guide operating in this area stipulates a maximum allowable harvest of 2 nannies in any given year and the guide, as a rule, does not allow clients to harvest nannies.

In the last 10 years (2012–2021), no nanny harvest has been reported from the Seldovia hunt area. Seldovia residents harvested 56% of the goats taken in this unit, and non-local Alaskan residents harvested 44%. The majority of harvest for the English Bay hunt area has come from nonresidents (57%) in the last 10 years. Residents from Port Graham and Nanwalek have harvested 8% of the goats in RG365 in the last 10 years and only 1 of these was a nanny. Non-local Alaskan residents harvested 35% in the hunt area

Clarifying the codified language will not affect the way regulations for these hunts have been perceived by the public.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Conserving female goats in the hunt area will provide ongoing opportunity for harvest and clarifying the penalty for taking nanny goats is in the best interest of the department and the public. If adopted, the record should reflect that the board considered how the new regulation continues to provide a normally diligent hunter with a reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting a goat for subsistence uses.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 117 – 5 AAC 85.040(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Implement the penalty for taking nannies in the RG364, 365 and 374 goat hunts in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would clarify codified language so that if a nanny is harvested in RG364, RG365, RG374, and RG375 the hunter is prohibited from hunting goats on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in

5 AAC 85.040(3) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
<p>(3) Unit 15(C), that portion beginning at the mouth of Jakalof Creek, then southwesterly along the shore of Kachemak Bay to the mouth of the Port Graham River, then southeasterly up the Port Graham River approximately 6 miles, then southerly up the south fork to the divide, then easterly across the divide to the main drainage that flows into Windy Bay, then southeasterly down the creek to Windy Bay, then easterly along the shoreline to the mouth of Rocky River, then northerly up Rocky River and Windy River to the divide separating Windy River from Jakalof Creek, then across that divide to Jakalof Creek, then down Jakalof Creek to the point of origin</p>	<p>Aug.10—Oct. 15 (General hunt Only)</p>	<p>No open season.</p>
<p>1 goat by drawing permit only; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited</p>	<p>Aug.10—Oct. 15</p>	<p>No open season.</p>
<p>1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited; or</p>	<p>Nov.1—Nov. 30</p>	<p>No open season.</p>
<p>1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited</p>		

Unit 15(C), that portion beginning; at the mouth of the Port Graham River, then southeasterly up the Port Graham River approximately 6 miles, then southerly up the south fork to the divide, then easterly across the divide to the main drainage that flows into Windy Bay, then southeasterly down the Creek to Windy Bay, then along the southern shore of Windy Bay, then westerly along the shore of the Gulf of Alaska and around the tip of the Kenai Peninsula and easterly to the point of origin

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
Nov. 1–Nov. 30

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
No open season

Unit 7 and Remainder of Unit 15

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
(General hunt only)
Nov. 1–Nov. 30
(General hunt only)

Aug. 10–Oct. 15
Nov. 1–Nov. 30

1 goat by drawing permit only in the Aug. 10–Oct. 15 season (up to 500 permits will be issued), or 1 goat by registration permit only in the Nov. 1–Nov. 30 season; however, if a nanny is taken in either season, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

...

There is a positive C&T finding for goats in Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area with an ANS of 7-10 goats.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? As the proposal is written, if a hunter harvested a nanny in RG364, RG365, or RG374, the hunter would be prohibited from hunting goats on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years.

The proposer however, intended for the proposal to state, if a hunter harvested a nanny in RG364, RG365, RG374, or RG375 the hunter would be prohibited from hunting goats on the Kenai Peninsula for 5 regulatory years.

Hunters will have to be more vigilant when taking a goat. If adopted this proposal could restrict a hunter's reasonable opportunity for success in taking a goat on the Kenai Peninsula for subsistence uses for five years.

BACKGROUND:

At the 2019 Board of Game meeting the board restructured the Seldovia (RG364) and English Bay (RG365) mountain goat hunts, establishing a new hunt (DG364) for the Seldovia area, and separating the late seasons of RG364 and RG365 into RG374 and RG375 to aid the department in the distribution of tags and the tracking of hunts in these management areas. When these new hunts were established, the board did not clarify that hunters taking a female goat would be prohibited from hunting for five years in Units 7 and 15. This penalty would also apply to new hunts.

Since 2009, the public, including some residents of the communities of Seldovia, Nanwalek, and Port Graham, have been under the impression that if a hunter harvested a nanny in these hunt areas, the hunter became ineligible to hunt goats in Units 7 and 15 for 5 regulatory years. The regulation wording available on page 87 of the 2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations reads "If a nanny is taken, the hunter is prohibited from hunting any goats in Units 7 & 15 for 5 regulatory years". Many residents of these local communities understand the importance of limiting harvest to billies to conserve female goats that will ultimately provide more opportunity. They also encourage their hunters to avoid harvesting nannies. The guide contract with the Port Graham and English Bay Corporations for the guide operating in this area stipulates a maximum allowable harvest of 2 nannies in any given year and the guide, as a rule, does not allow clients to harvest nannies.

In the last 10 years (2012–2021), no nanny harvest has been reported from the Seldovia hunt area. Seldovia residents harvested 56% of the goats taken in this unit, and non-local Alaskan residents harvested 44%. The majority of harvest for the English Bay hunt area has come from nonresidents (57%) in the last 10 years. Residents from Port Graham and Nanwalek have harvested 8% of the goats in RG365 in the last 10 years and only 1 of these was a nanny. Non-local Alaskan residents harvested 35% in the hunt area

Clarifying the codified language will not affect the way regulations for these hunts have been perceived by the majority of the public.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Conserving female goats in the hunt area will provide ongoing opportunity for harvest and clarifying the penalty for taking nanny goats is in the best interest of the department and the public. If adopted, the record should reflect that the board considered how the new regulation continues to provide a normally diligent hunter with a reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting a goat for subsistence uses.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 118 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose in Unit 15. Change the general season, resident bag limit for moose in Unit 15 to include bulls with fork antlers.

PROPOSED BY: Laine Lahndt

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would legalize the take of fork antlered moose in Unit 15 during the general harvest moose season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling High- way		

1 bull per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

1 bull with spike-fork
antlers or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with 3 or
more brow tines on one side by
drawing permit only; up to 25
permits may be issued in com-
bination wit Unit 7, that por-
tion west of the Resurrection
Creek Trail and north of the
Sterling Highway: or

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only
as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side, by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

only;

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year,
by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only
as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side, by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

Aug. 22—Aug. 29

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers with
3 or more brow tines on one
side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(C), that portion
southwest of a line from
Point Pogibshi to the point of
land between Rocky Bay and
Windy Bay.

Aug. 25—Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt
only)

No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence
hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion
south of the south fork of the
Anchor River and northwest of
Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or
antlers with 3 or more brow
tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side;

...

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15C near Nanwalek and Port Graham (southwest of a line from Pt. Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky and Windy bays), with an ANS of 5-6. The rest of Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area has a negative C&T finding for moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would add fork antlered moose into the general season bag limit in game management Unit 15, which would increase the harvest of bulls in Unit 15, thus decreasing bull:cow ratios and possibly leading to bull:cow ratios below described management objectives.

BACKGROUND: The spike-fork-50 inch or 3 brow tine regulation was first implemented in Alaska on the Kenai Peninsula in 1987. Before implementing this regulation, managers predicted that the spike-fork segment of the yearling bull population would be a minority of the yearling bulls. In other words, a majority of the yearling bulls would be protected by the regulation, which would allow for ample bull recruitment. However, bulls with a spike-fork configuration appeared to be a majority of the yearling bulls, based on the harvest and fall composition counts. Fork bulls typically made up over 50% of the annual bull harvest. In GMU 15C inside the nonsubsistence area, where a majority of the current Kenai harvest occurs, this appeared to restrict yearling bull recruitment, leading to a long-term decline in bull numbers, and eventually culminating in only 9 bulls:100 cows in the fall 2010 composition count. This decline influenced the board to restrict harvest opportunity by changing the bag limit in 2011 to only bulls with 50-inch or 4 brow tines, which caused an 89% decline in the harvest on the Kenai from 2010 to 2011 (417 vs. 46 bulls harvested). After recent liberalizations, the current regulation of spike-50 inch or 3 brow tines, along with limited any-bull permits in GMUs 15B and 15C (DM508-518), allows the department to provide harvest opportunity with what appears to be stabilized bull:cow ratios at or slightly above management objectives (20–25 bulls per 100 cows) (figures 118-1 and 118-2 below). The data reported below is for 15C bull:cow ratios only as it is the most consistently collected and complete dataset over time.

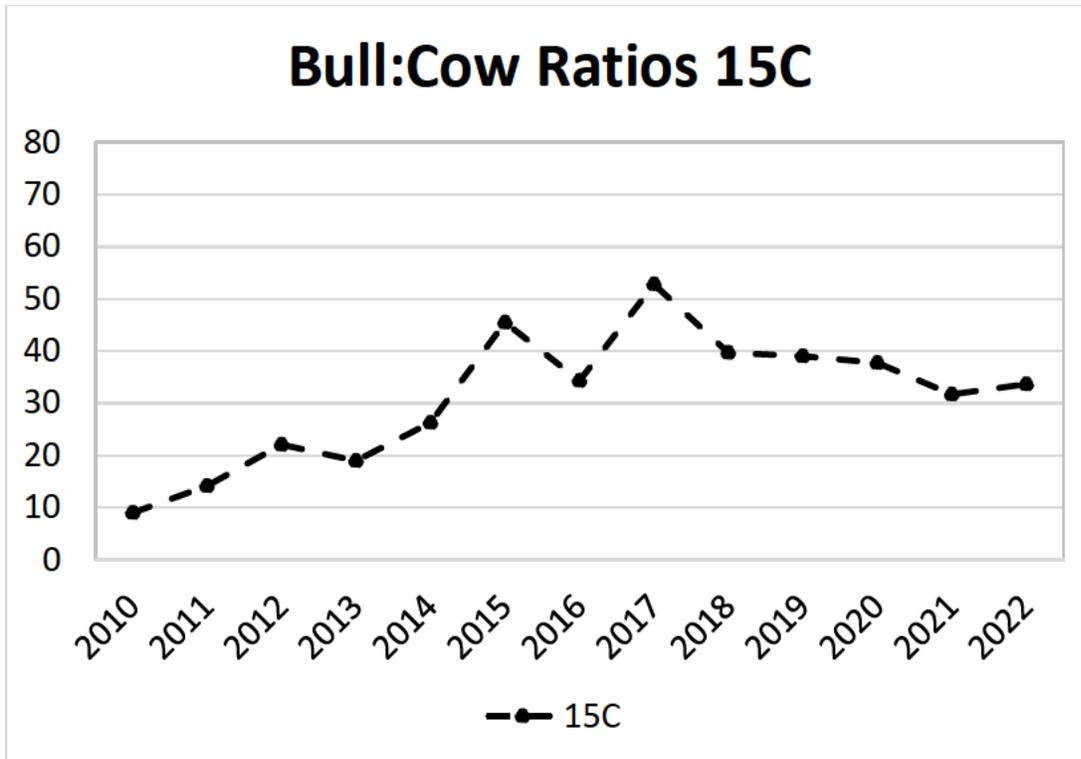


Figure 118-1: Unit 15C bull:cow ratios, 2010-2022.

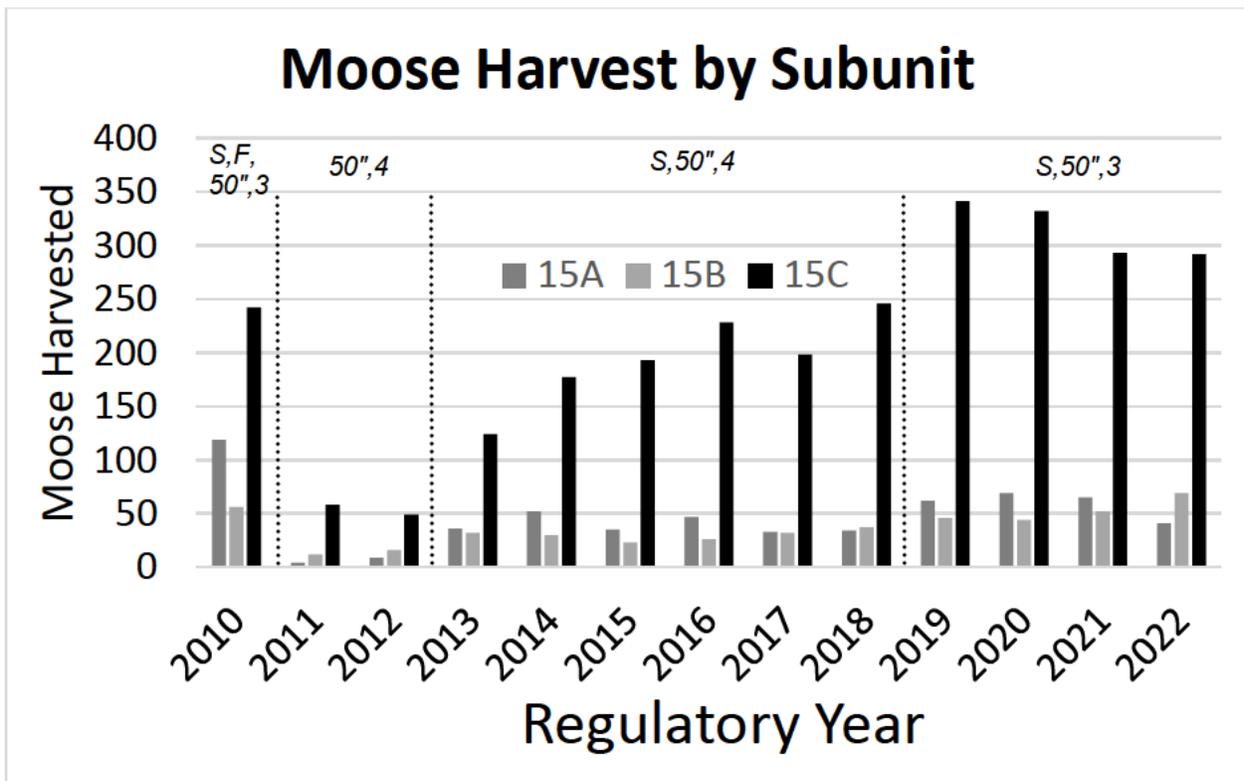


Figure 118-2. Moose harvest by subunit, 2010-2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal. Although allowing fork harvest may increase hunter harvest in the short term, a decline in bull:cow ratios as observed leading to the 2011 regulatory change (50” inch spread, 4 brow tines) will likely restrict hunter opportunity and harvest as observed in previous regulatory changes. Such dramatic regulatory changes may also impede the department’s ability to evaluate the factors influencing hunter harvest and reduce the ability to provide predictable hunter opportunities and consistent sustainable harvest. The department is concerned that increased harvest may negatively impact bull:cow ratios. Most forked antlered bull moose are yearlings and harvesting this age class can also impact recruitment. Because the majority of moose hunting is managed by harvest ticket, if adopted, the department will have to develop a process in which seasons can be closed by EO once a determined harvest level has been met, and this could result in a loss of hunting opportunity.

It is also important to note that regulations regarding antler restrictions in Units 7 and 15 have been altered 4 times since 2010 which creates challenges in discerning effects of regulations from natural variation in hunter harvest, survey results, and moose population dynamics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 119 – 5 AAC 85.045(6). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Create an archery only moose hunt in Unit 7 Remainder for both residents and nonresidents.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bow Hunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a bow and arrow only moose hunt in Unit 7 with season dates of Aug. 22–29 and a bag limit of one bull moose with a spike on at least one side, 50 inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(6) are:

The hunting seasons and bag limits for moose in Remainder of Unit 7 are as follows:

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Units and Bag Limits		
(6)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open season	Nonresident Open Season

(Subsistence and
General Hunts)

(6) Remainder of Unit 7	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
1 bull with spike or 50-inch Antlers or antlers with 3 or More brow tines on one side; or		
1 bull by drawing permit only; ...	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 7.

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing a bow and arrow only moose season in the remainder of Unit 7. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 7 does not currently have an archery only moose season. Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only seasons. Archery harvest currently makes up less than 2% of moose harvest in GMU 7 and is around 20% in both Units 15A and 15B where archery only seasons exist (Figure 119-1). Moose harvest in Unit 7 is minimal (Figure 119-2). The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B match those proposed here of Aug. 22–29.

Figure 119-1.

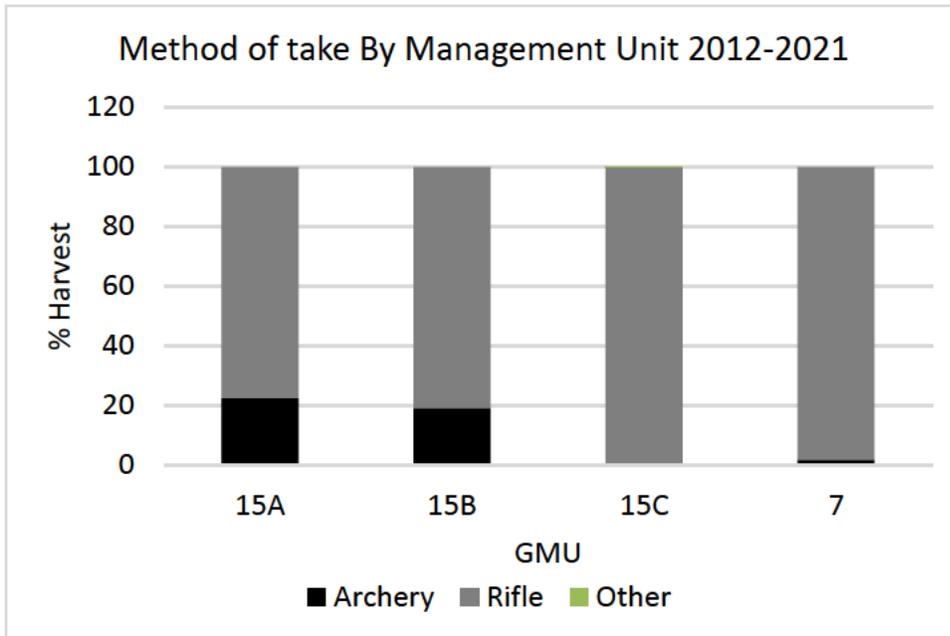
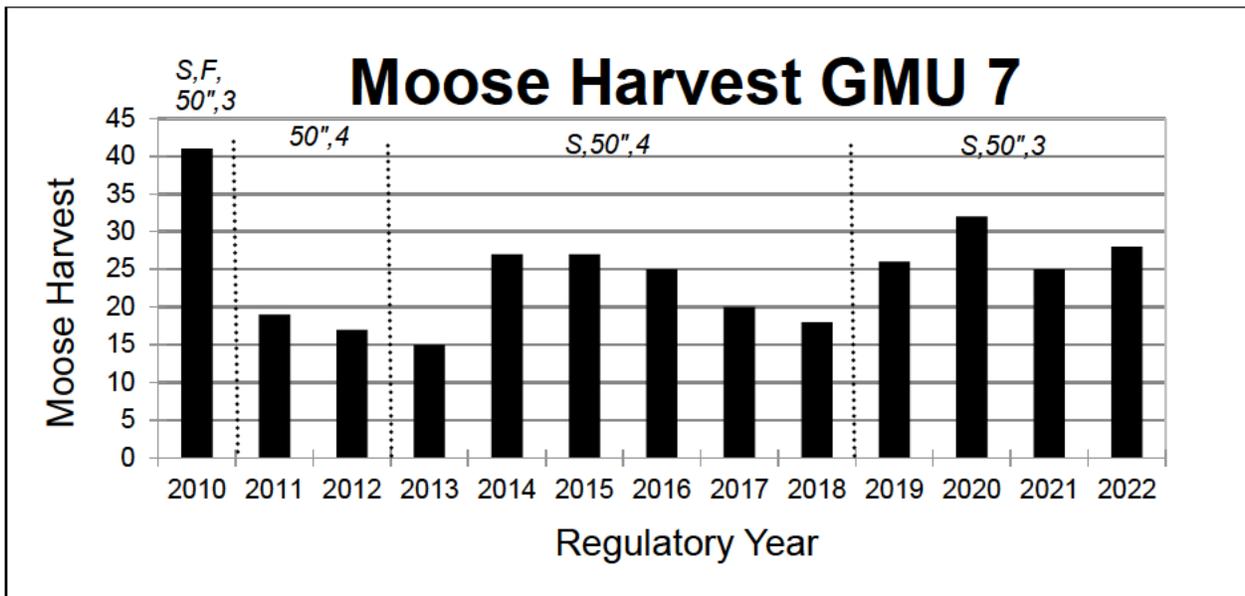


Figure 119-2.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on the allocative aspects of this proposal, as well as on this proposal because it does not create any biological concerns. Success in archery only hunts is generally low and while harvest is likely to increase it is not expected to have a significant impact on the population. In addition, antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal,

the department recommends the board consider amending it to include the other portions of Unit 15C to align seasons and bag limits to simplify the regulations.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 120 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). **Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.** Open an archery, fall moose hunt in Unit 15.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Deiman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only moose hunt in Unit 15 with season dates of Aug. 15–30 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50-inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling High- way		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29	No open season

50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or	(General hunt only)	
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway; or	Oct. 10—Nov. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 10—Nov. 10
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Remainder of Unit 15(A)		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island		
1 moose per regulatory year,	Aug. 20—Sept. 20	Aug. 20—Sept. 20

by registration permit only

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	Aug. 22—Aug. 29
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1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
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1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
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Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season
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1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)
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1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited;	Oct. 20—Nov. 20
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up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers, across the Windy River/Jakolof Creek divide, then down Jakolof Creek to its mouth, including the islands between the eastern most point of Jakolof Bay and the eastern most point of Rocky Bay. The remainder of Unit 15 is in the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would increase moose hunting opportunity by extending the current archery only moose season in Units 15A and 15B by 8 days and creating a new archery only moose season in Unit 15C with season dates of Aug. 15–30 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50 inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 120-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 120-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 120-3).

Figure 120-1.

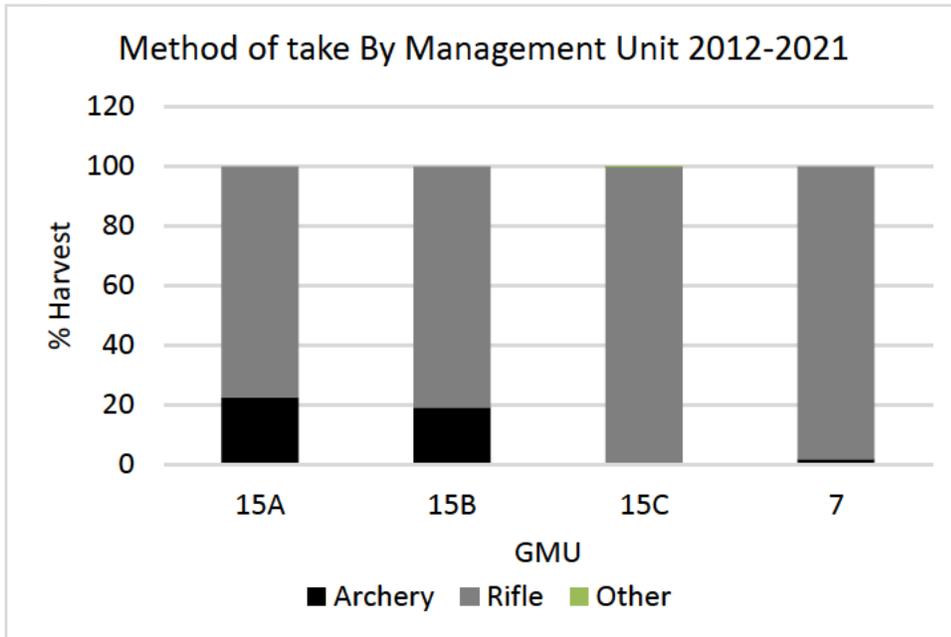


Figure 120-2.

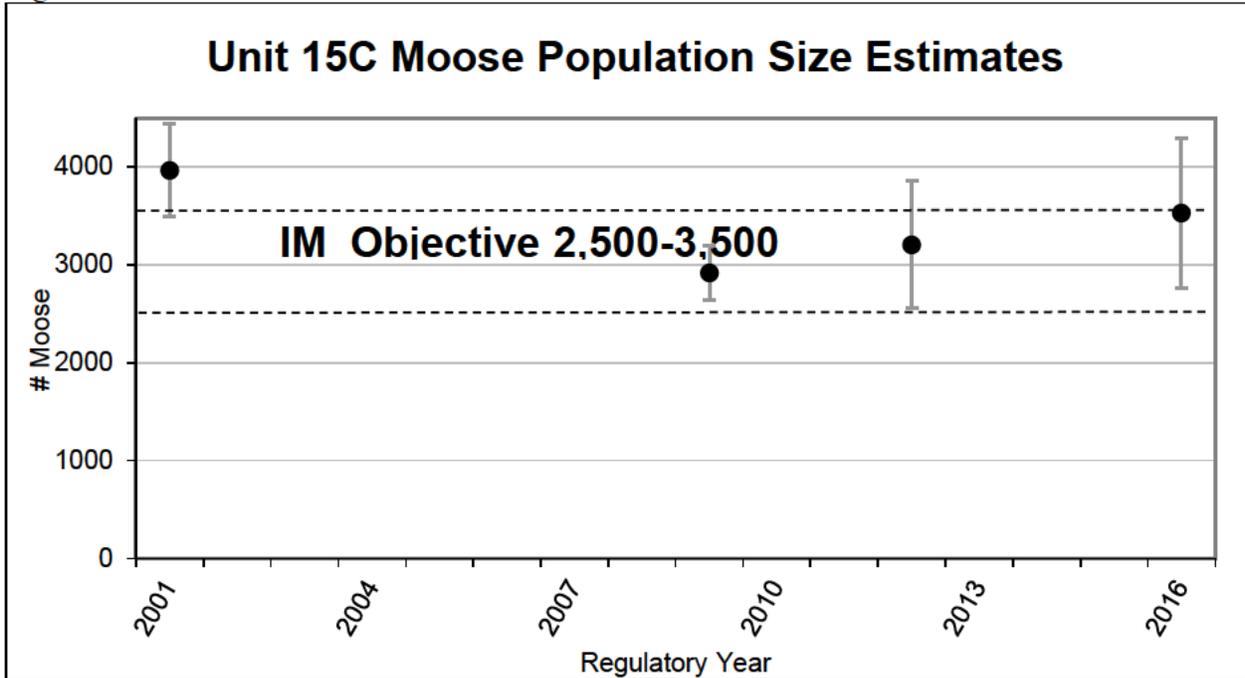
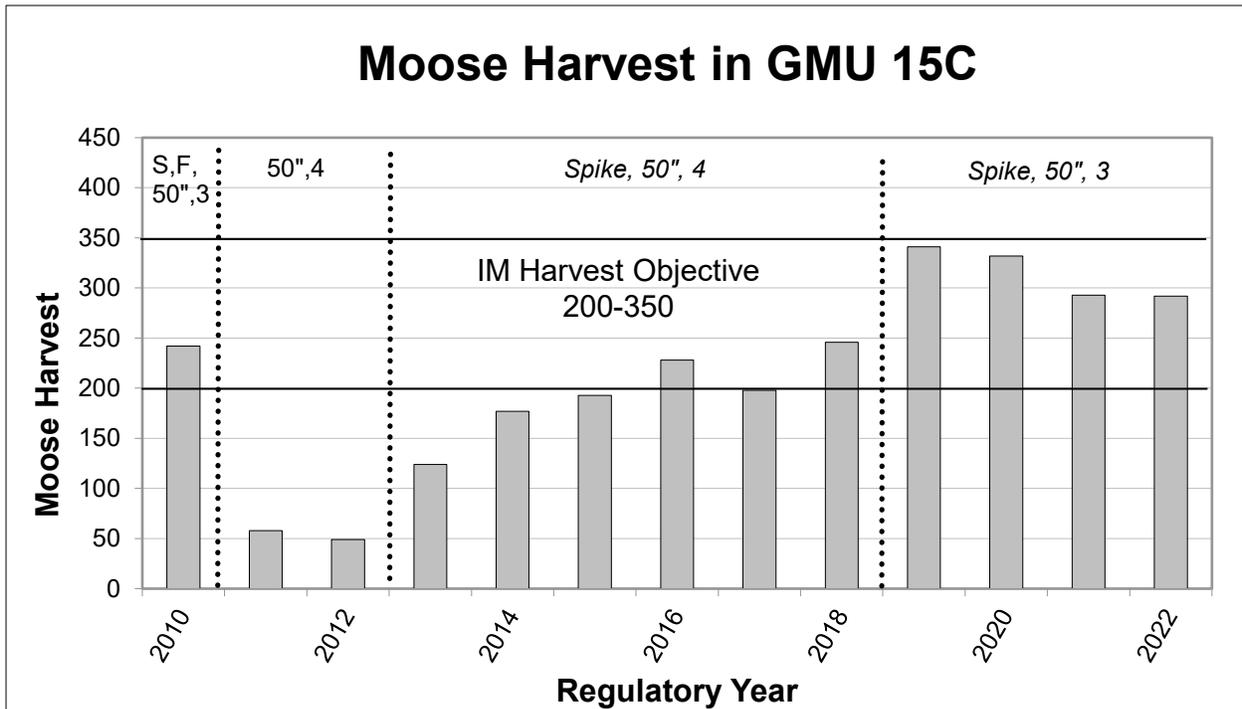


Figure 120-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department SUPPORTS the additional opportunity provided in this proposal and recommends the board amend the proposal by opening an archery only season in Units 7 remainder and 15C in the state designated nonsubsistence area to match the current season dates of the established archery only season in Unit 15A and 15B of Aug. 22–29 with bag limits that mirror the current resident and nonresident bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low, and animals taken during early archery seasons would have been vulnerable to harvest during the general season. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

The department is NEUTRAL on the allocative aspects of this proposal and it does not create any biological concerns. Success in archery only hunts is generally low and while harvest is likely to increase it is not expected to have a significant impact on the population. In addition, antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal, the department recommends the board consider amending it to align all archery seasons and bag limits in Units 7 and 15 to simplify regulations and reduce complexity for the public.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 121 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish an early archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C to align with Units 15A and 15B.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C in the state designated nonsubsistence area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in

5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or		
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling Highway		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season

with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway; or

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	Aug. 22—Aug. 29
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit		
Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or	Oct. 20—Nov. 20	
1 bull by drawing permit only or;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers, across the Windy River/Jakolof Creek divide, then down Jakolof Creek to its mouth, including the islands between the eastern most point of Jakolof Bay and the eastern most point of Rocky Bay

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing a harvest ticket archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C in the state designated nonsubsistence area. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND:

Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 121-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 121-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 121-3).

Figure 121-1.

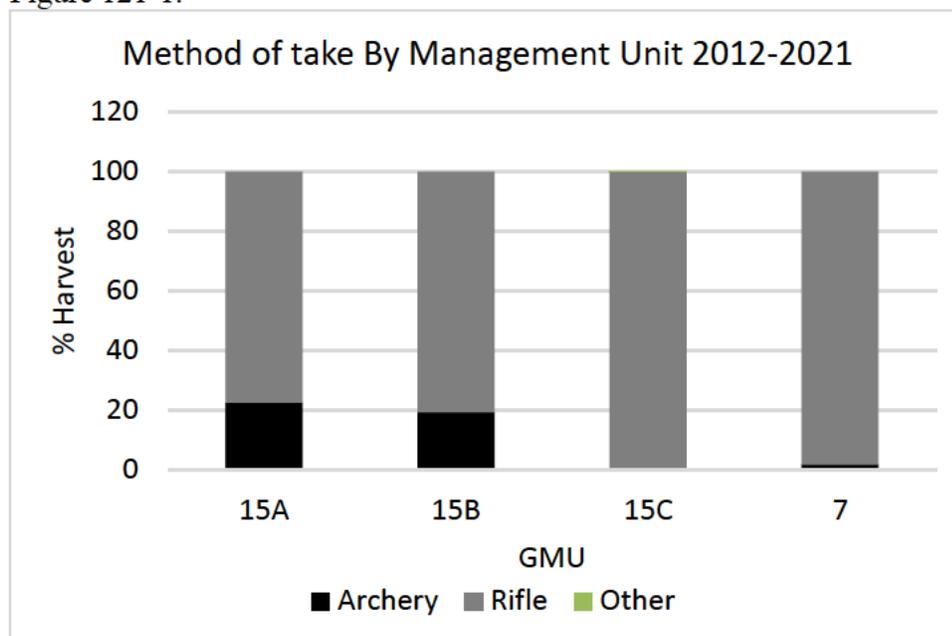


Figure 121-2.

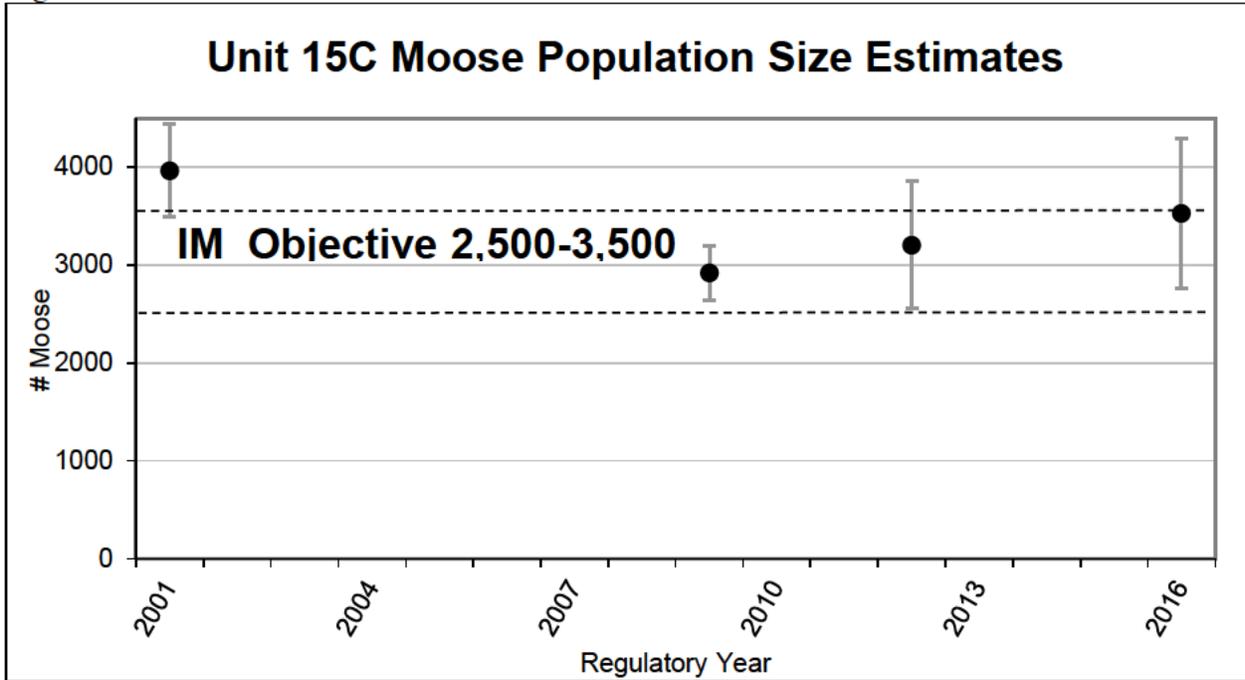
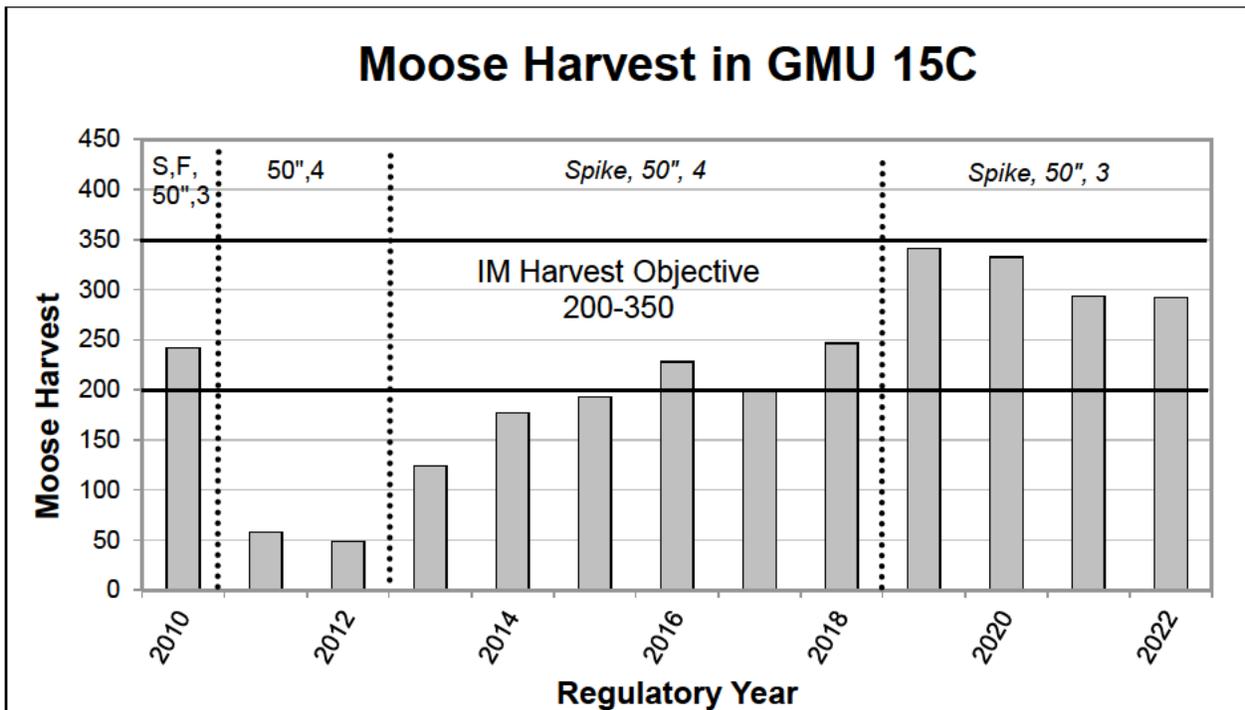


Figure 121-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the board amend the proposal by including Unit 7 remainder. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low, and animals taken during early archery seasons would have been vulnerable to harvest during the general season. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 122 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish an early, archery only registration moose hunt in Unit 15C to align with Units 15A and 15B.

PROPOSED BY: Joe Brewer

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C with season dates of Aug. 22–29 in the state designated nonsubsistence area; this would align with the current archery hunt in Units 15A and 15B.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in

5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek		

Road and the Pipeline Road.
and north of the Sterling High-
way

1 bull per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

1 bull with spike-fork
antlers or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with 3 or
more brow tines on one side by
drawing permit only; up to 25
permits may be issued in com-
bination wit Unit 7, that por-
tion west of the Resurrection
Creek Trail and north of the
Sterling Highway: or

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only
as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side, by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

one side; or

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

Aug. 22—Aug. 29

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.

Aug. 25—Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or (General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only, Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only; Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side;
...

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing a registration archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C with season dates of Aug. 22–29 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50-inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 122-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 122-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 122-3).

Figure 122-1.

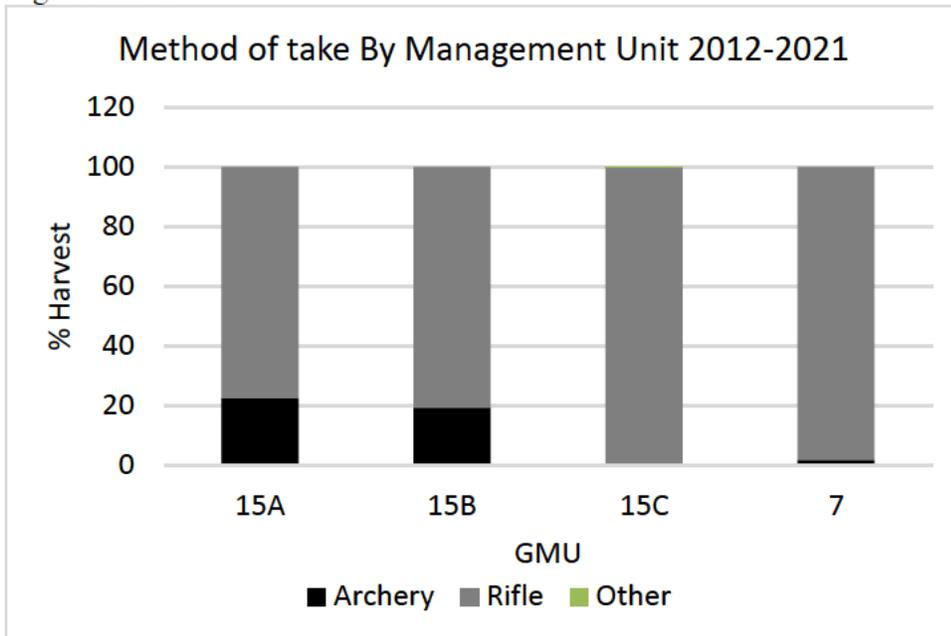


Figure 122-2.

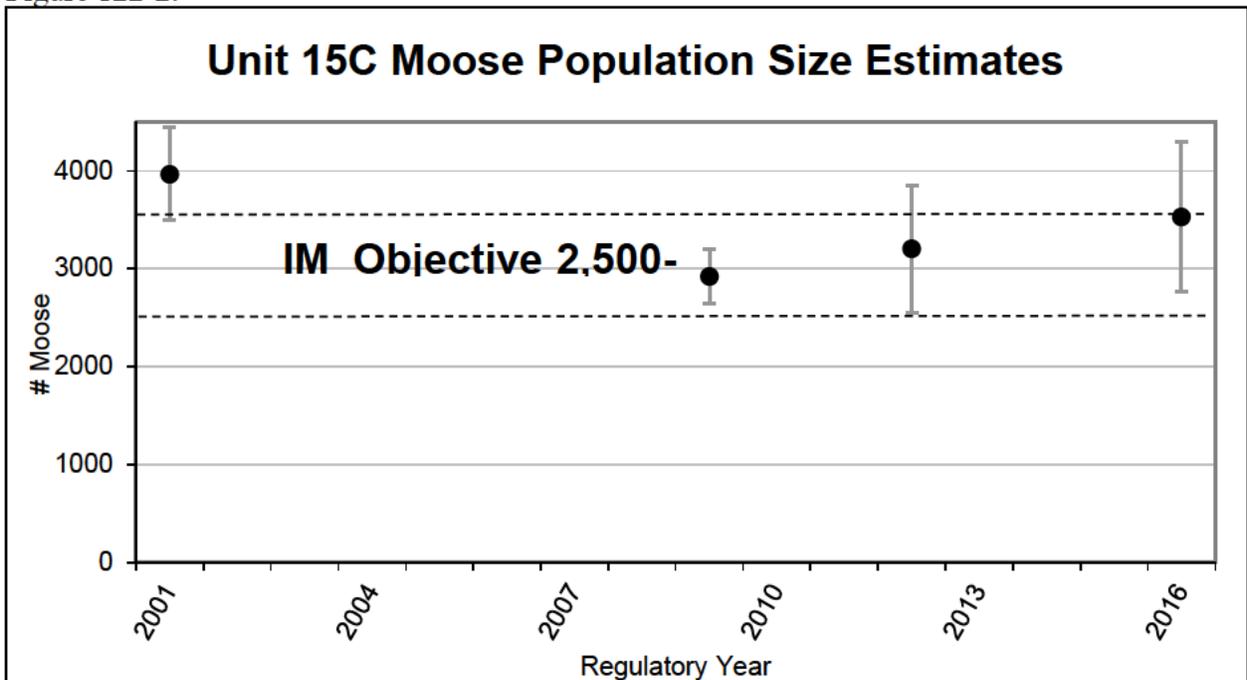
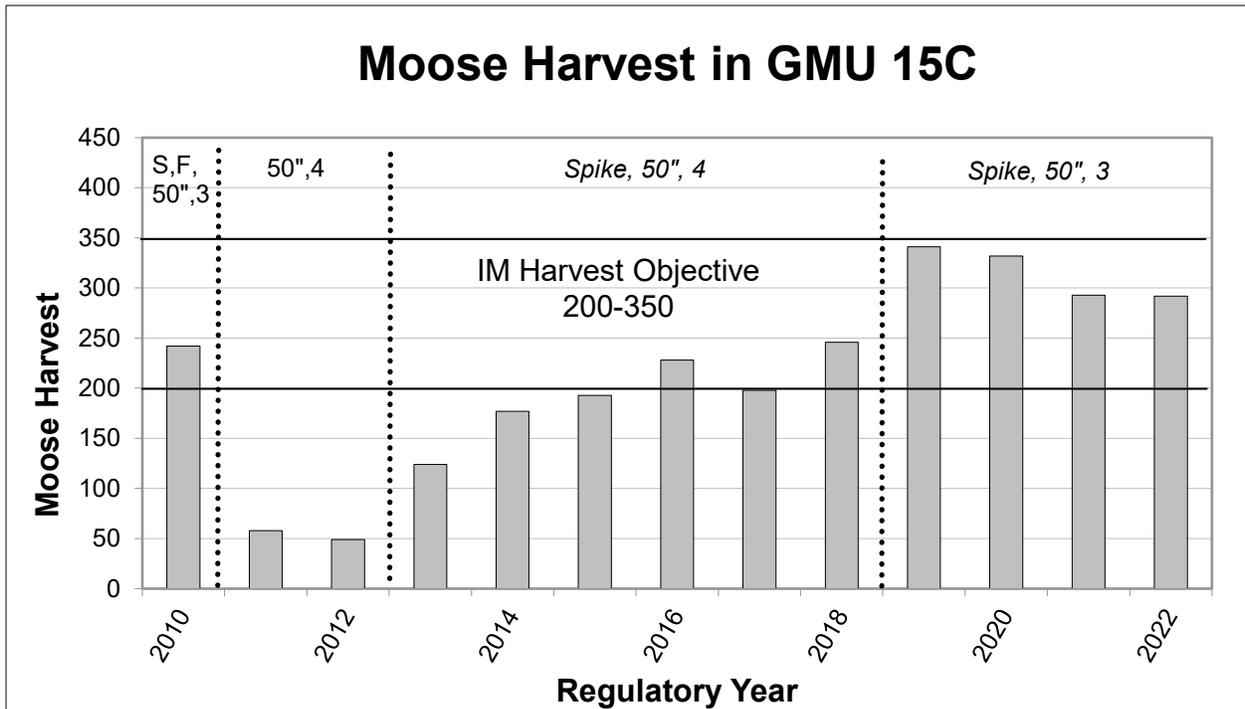


Figure 122-3.



The proponent clarified the proposal and would like a season in Unit 15C that mirrors the current general season hunts in Units 15A and 15B with season dates of Aug. 22–29 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50-inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the board amend the proposal by including Unit 7 remainder. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror the current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 123 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish an archery only, fall moose hunt in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Dave Hahn

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create an archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C in the designated state nonsubsistence area with season dates of Aug. 10–29 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50-inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit		
Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or	Oct. 20—Nov. 20	
1 bull by drawing permit only or;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	
1 moose by targeted permit	Oct. 15—Mar. 31	

only,

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only; Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; Sept. 1—Sept. 25
...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers,

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing an archery only harvest ticket moose hunt in Unit 15C. with season dates of Aug. 10–29 and a bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50-inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 123-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 123-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 123-3).

Figure 123-1.

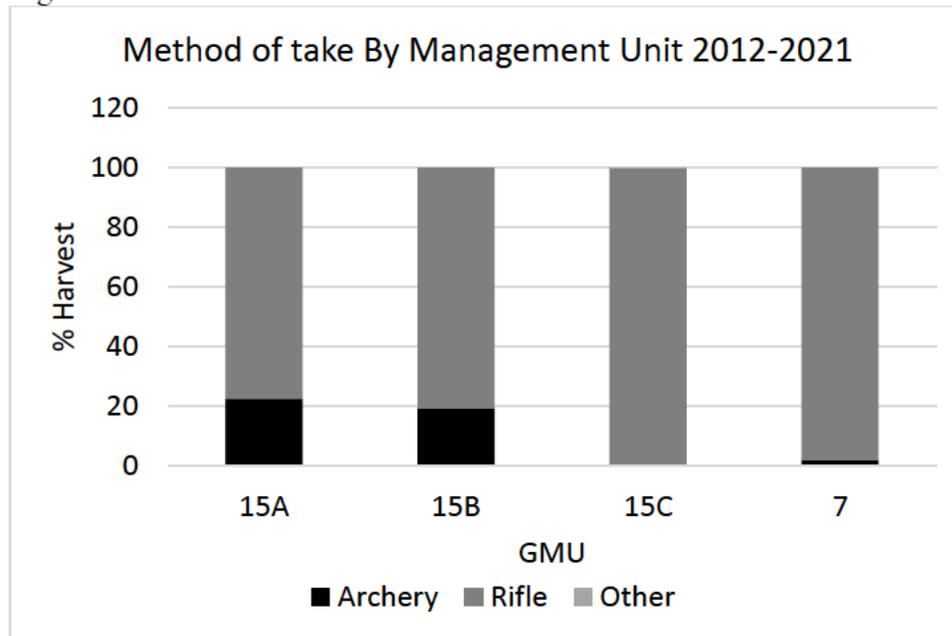


Figure 123-2.

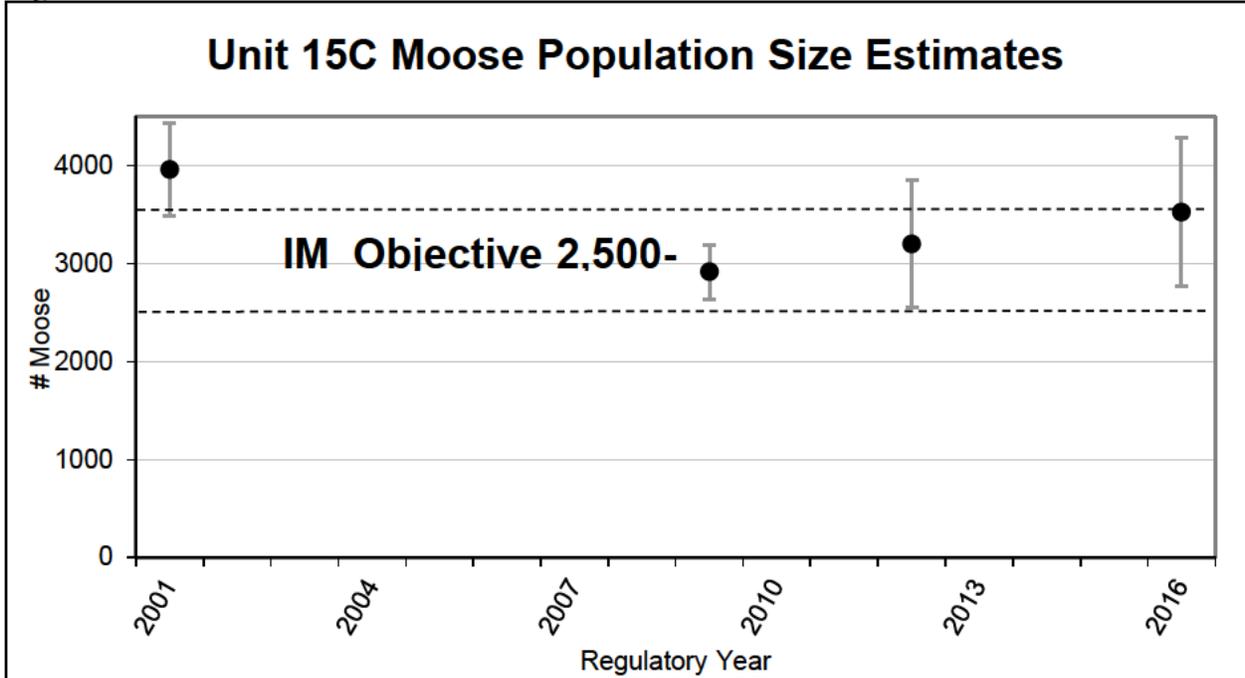
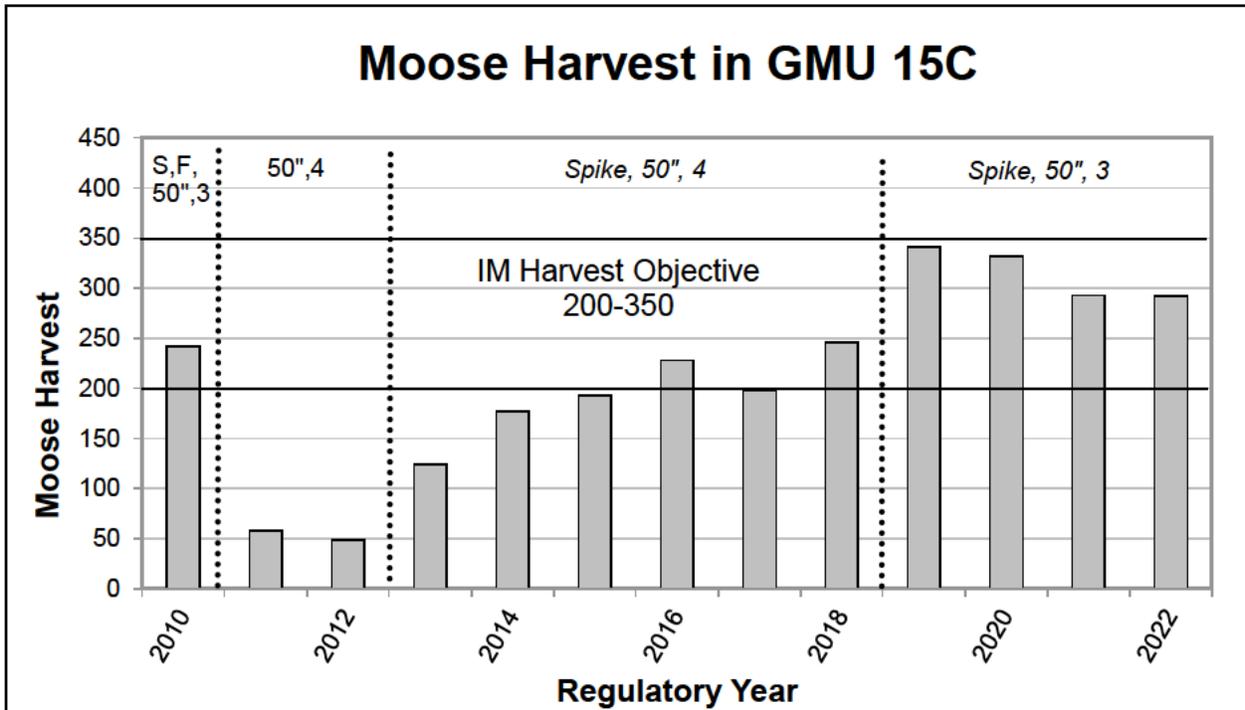


Figure 123-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the

board amend the proposal by including Unit 7 remainder and modifying the season dates to Aug. 22–29 to match the existing archery only season in Units 15A and 15B. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror the current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 124 - 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish a general moose season open for take by bow and arrow only, in Unit 15C Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?

Establish a general moose season open for take by bow and arrow only, in Unit 15C Remainder as follows:

Unit 15C Remainder

Residents

One bull with a spike on at least one side or 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side, by bow and arrow only Aug. 22–Aug. 29

Nonresidents

One bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side, by bow and arrow only Aug. 22–Aug. 29

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)
1 bull by drawing permit only or;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
1 moose by targeted permit only;	Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; ...	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
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There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

The majority of Unit 15C remainder is in the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. There is a positive C&T finding for moose in that portion of Unit 15C that is southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, with an ANS of 5-6 moose. The remainder of this southernmost portion of Unit 15C has a negative C&T finding for moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing an archery only general season harvest ticket moose hunt in Unit 15C Remainder, with season dates of Aug. 22–29 with a resident bag limit of one bull with a spike on at least one side, 50 inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side and a nonresident bag limit of one bull with 50 inch antlers, or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 124-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent

population estimates (Figure 124-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 124-3).

Figure 124-1.

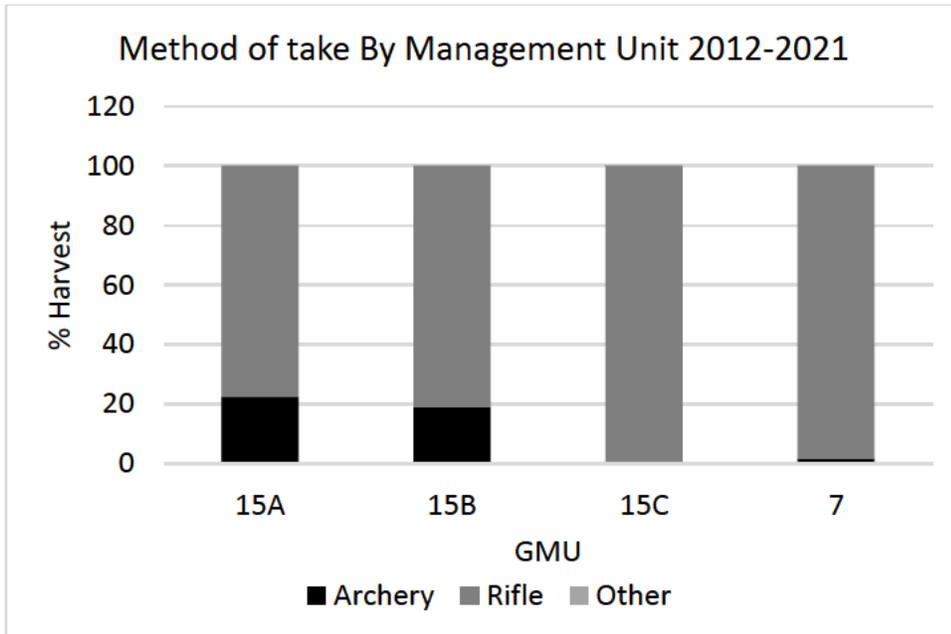


Figure 124-2.

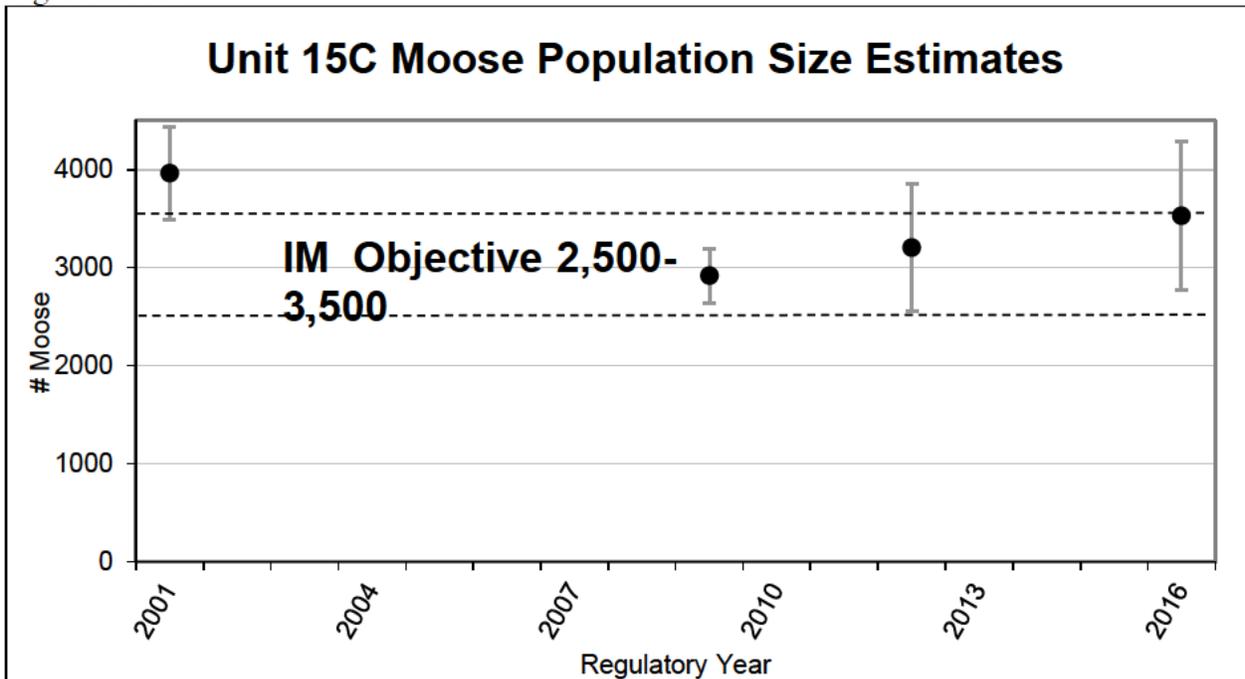
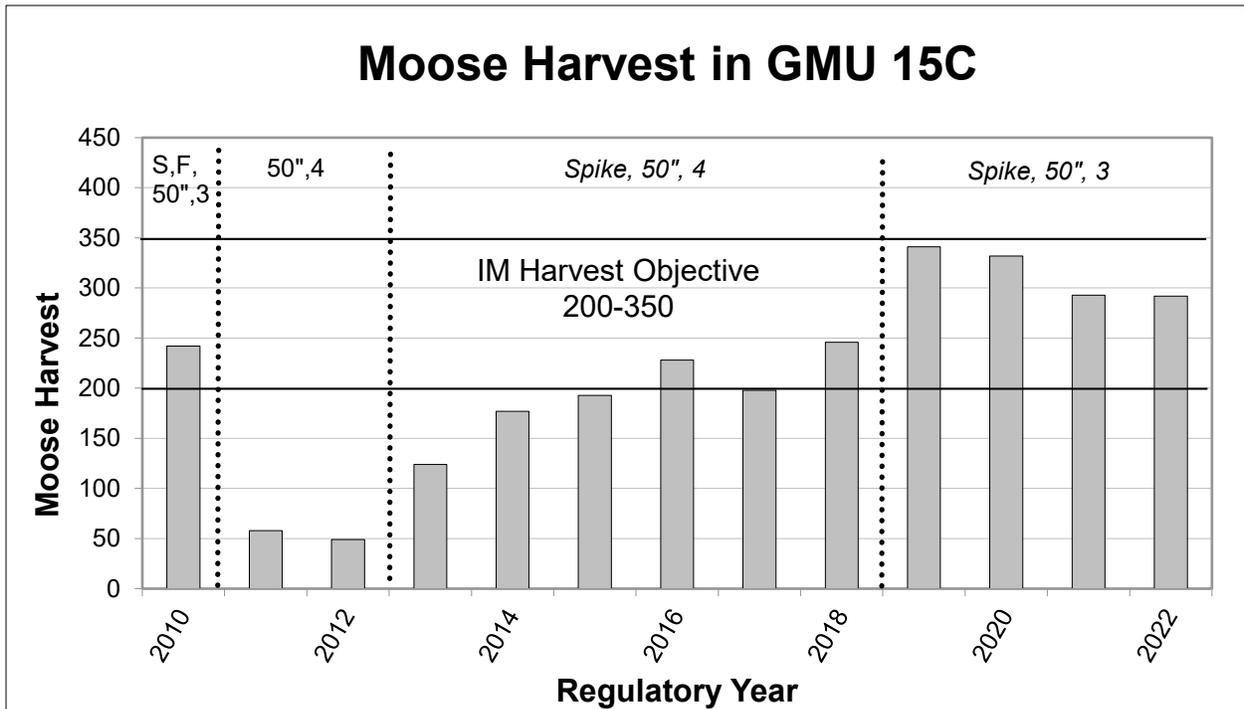


Figure 124-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the board amend the proposal by including Unit 7 remainder and modifying the designated area to include all portions of 15C inside of the state designated nonsubsistence area. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low, and animals taken during early archery seasons would have been vulnerable to harvest during the general season. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 125 - 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish a fall archery hunt for moose in Unit 15C to align with Units 15A and 15B.

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish a fall archery only hunt for moose in Unit 15C to align with Units 15A and 15B as follows:

Add a taking one bull with spike-fork, three brow tines and 50-inch antlers between Aug. 22–Aug. 29 in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or		
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling Highway		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by	Oct. 10—Nov. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 10—Nov. 10

drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway; or

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

Aug. 22—Aug. 29

1 bull with spike or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.

Aug. 25—Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

tines on one side; or

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers,

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing an archery only general season harvest ticket moose hunt in Unit 15C. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 125-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 125-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 125-3).

Figure 125-1.

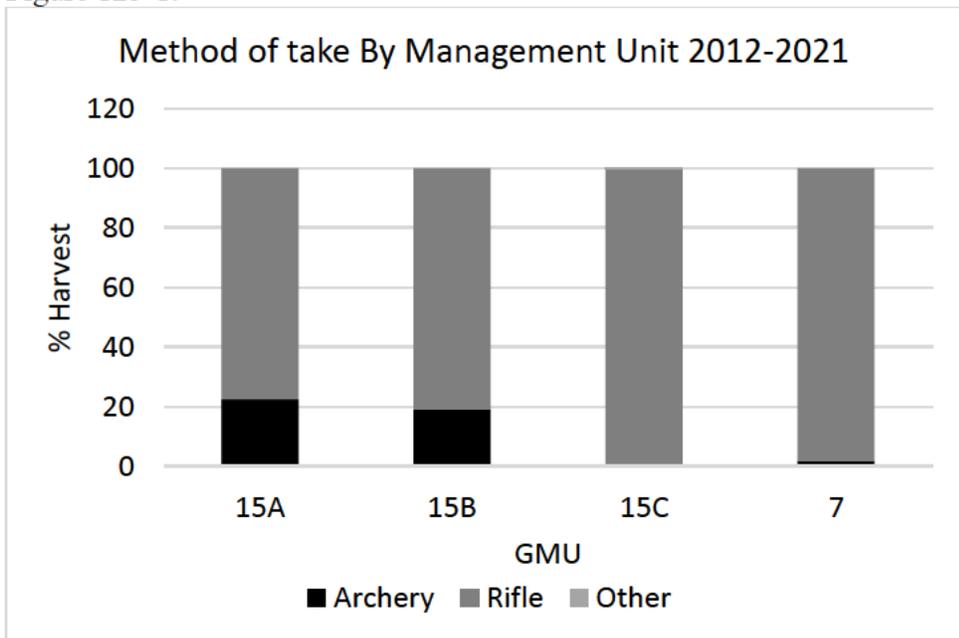


Figure 125-2.

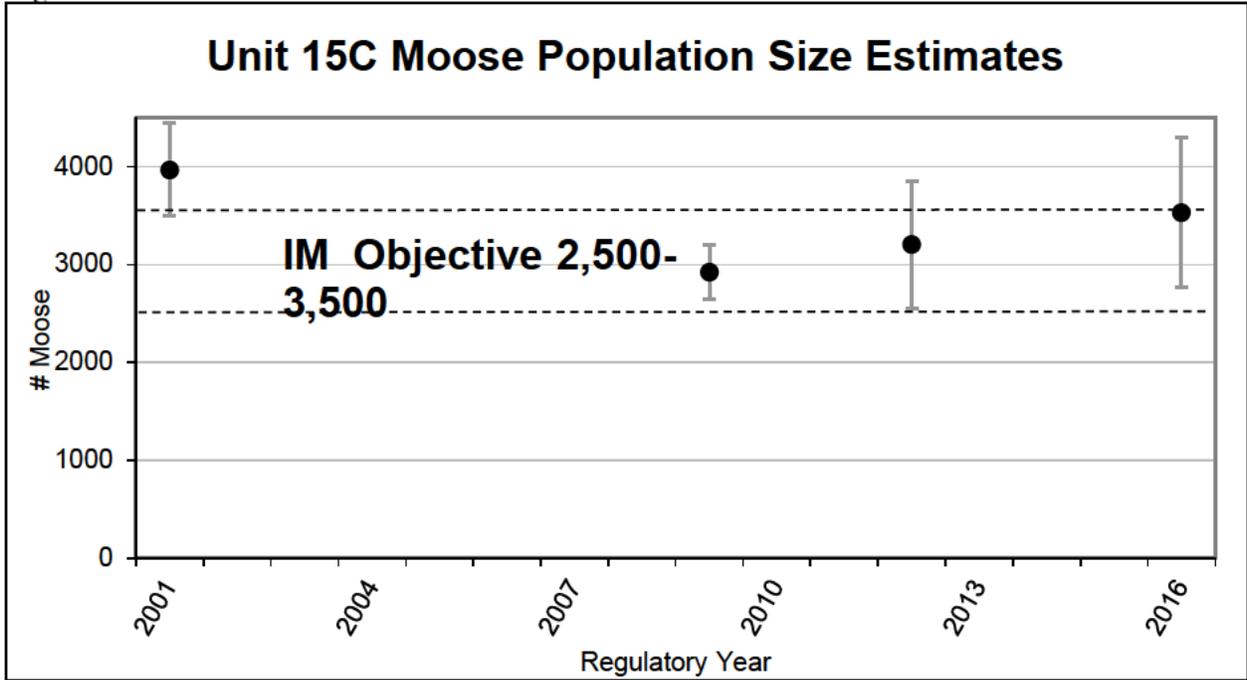
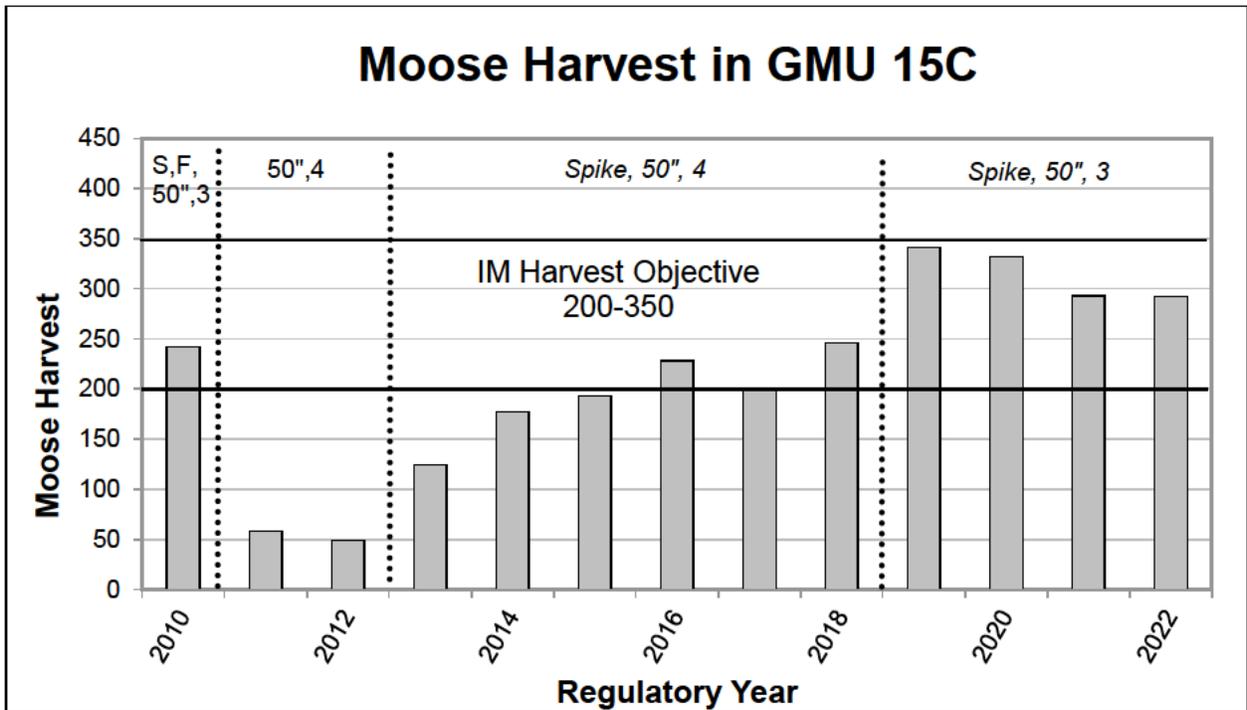


Figure 125-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the board amend the proposal by including Unit 7. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror the current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low, and animals taken during early archery seasons would have been vulnerable to harvest during the general season. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 126 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish an early archery moose hunt in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: David Lama

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish an early archery only moose hunt in Unit 15C in the state designated nonsubsistence area with the same season dates as Units 15A and 15B.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling Highway		

1 bull per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

1 bull with spike-fork
antlers or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with 3 or
more brow tines on one side by
drawing permit only; up to 25
permits may be issued in com-
bination wit Unit 7, that por-
tion west of the Resurrection
Creek Trail and north of the
Sterling Highway: or

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only
as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side, by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by drawing permit

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

only;

Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island

1 moose per regulatory year,
by registration permit only

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Aug. 20—Sept. 20

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year, only
as follows:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers
with 3 or more brow tines on
one side, by bow and arrow
only; or

Aug. 22—Aug. 29
(General hunt only)

Aug. 22—Aug. 29

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or antlers with
3 or more brow tines on one
side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit
only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(C), that portion
southwest of a line from
Point Pogibshi to the point of
land between Rocky Bay and
Windy Bay.

Aug. 25—Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt
only)

No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence
hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion
south of the south fork of the
Anchor River and northwest of
Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or
50-inch antlers or
antlers with 3 or more brow
tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only;

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

with 3 or more brow tines on
one side;

...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15A is 3,000-5,000 and the IM harvest objective is 180-350 moose; there is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B, and the IM population objective for Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with an ANS of 2 moose.

There is a positive C&T for moose in Unit 15C, that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

There is a negative finding for moose in Unit 15C, that portion north and east of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay, and south and west of a line beginning at the mouth of Rocky River, up the Rocky and Windy Rivers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would create additional moose hunting opportunity by establishing an archery only harvest ticket moose hunt in Unit 15C with season dates of Aug. 22 - Aug. 29. Given existing low harvest rates for early season archery hunts, the department expects harvest to be minimal with no overall effect on the population.

BACKGROUND: Unit 15C does not currently have an archery only moose season and archery harvest currently makes up less than 0.5% of moose harvest in 15C (Figure 126-1). Units 15A and 15B are the only areas on the Kenai Peninsula with archery only moose seasons and archery harvest averages around 20% of the harvest in both units. The current season dates in Unit 15A and 15B are August 22-29. Moose numbers have been stable to increasing across the most recent population estimates (Figure 126-2). Moose harvest has been relatively stable and within intensive management objectives since the board adopted the current harvest regulations (Figure 126-3).

Figure 126-1.

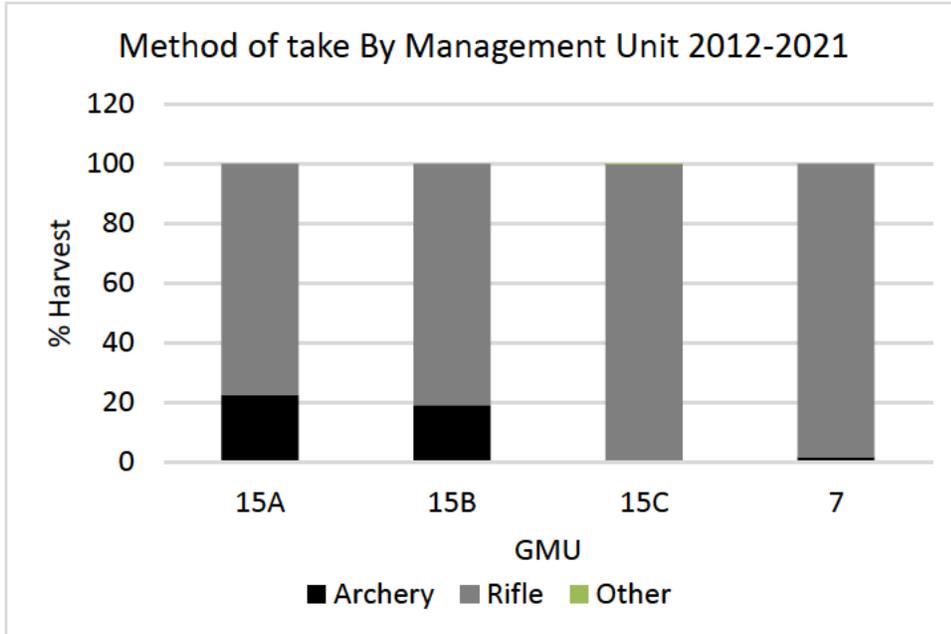


Figure 126-2.

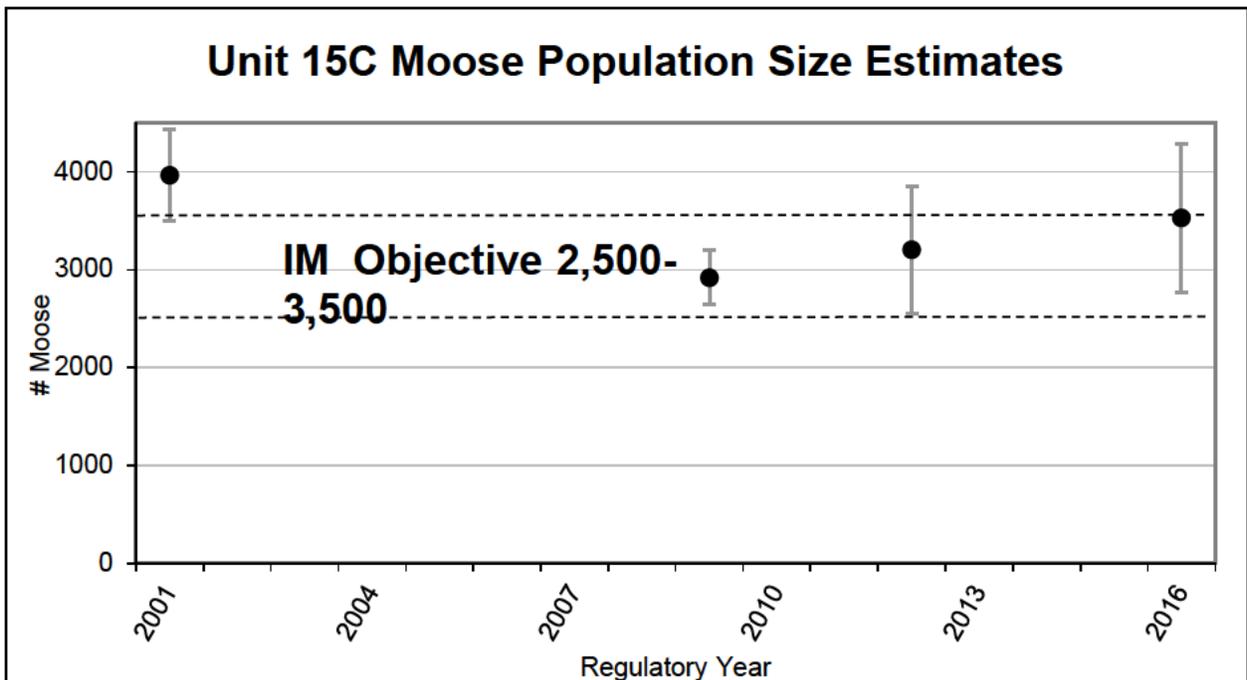
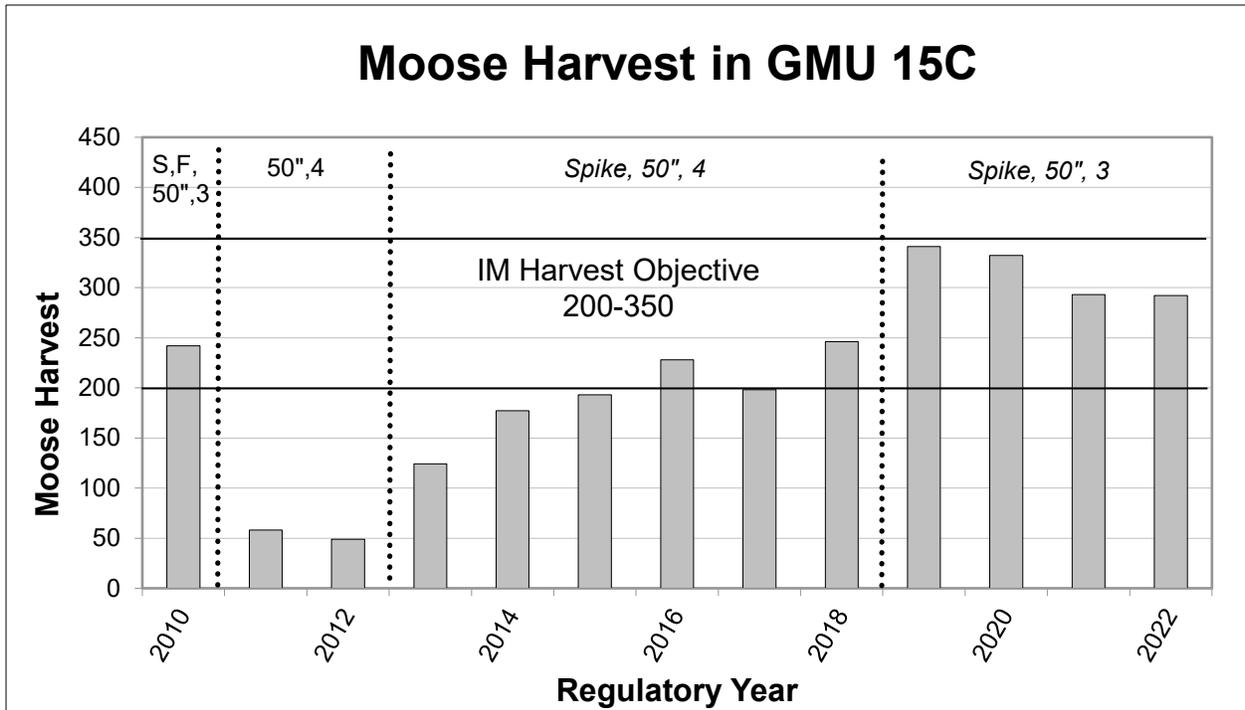


Figure 126-3.



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal the department recommends the board amend the proposal by including Unit 7. Resident and nonresident bag limits should mirror the current general season harvest ticket bag limits in Units 7 and 15C. This will simplify regulations and is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on harvest rate because archery success rates are generally low. Antler restrictions will ensure adequate bull moose numbers for breeding.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 127 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Extend the TM549 moose hunting season in Unit 15C, Southwest of Point Pogibshi.

PROPOSED BY: Chugach Regional Resources Commission

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the season opening date in the Unit 15C Tier II hunt (TM549) to Sept. 1 from the current date of Aug. 25 and add a late season opening from Nov. 1–Nov. 15. The overall season length would increase by 8 days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.045(13) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.	Aug. 25—Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

...

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

This area has a positive customary and traditional use finding with an ANS of 5–6 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would extend the current TM549 moose hunting season, providing additional hunting opportunity, and reduce confusion by aligning the opening date with the Unit 15C general moose season opening date.

BACKGROUND: Tier II subsistence hunt TM549 was established for that portion of 15C southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay in 1990. Season dates were to be announced and the bag limit was 1 bull. In 1991, season dates for this Tier II hunt were set for Sept. 1–30 with no bag limit change. These season dates and bag limit remained in effect until 2005 when the season dates were changed to Aug. 20–Sept. 20. The season dates were once again changed in 2011 to Aug. 25–Sept. 30 and the bag limit remained 1 bull.

Hunters from Port Graham have commonly requested a season extension for this hunt since it was established. Since 2012 a season extension has been requested every year by either phone or written request. A season extension has been granted in some years, including 2005, 2010, 2013, and 2022. Season extensions were provided in years when no harvest of moose occurred during normal season dates. Additional factors, such as documented low salmon returns, were considered. Moose harvest has averaged 2 bulls for the last 10 years but has dropped to 1 bull in the last 5

years. In 2022, TM549 had 17 applications received and 4 Tier II permits were awarded, for a success rate of 24%.

The TM549 hunt area is heavily forested and difficult to survey due to weather conditions and visual obscuration. The three most recent surveys were conducted in 2011, 2015, and 2017. Minimal numbers of moose were seen during all surveys and timing of surveys was variable. Moose seen per hour suggest a possible increase between 2015 and 2017 but survey conditions were better during 2017 efforts (Table 127-1).

Table 127-1. Survey of moose in TM 549 area.

Date	Total Moose	Bull:Cow	% Calves	moose/ hour
3/18/11	10	-	20	7
12/4/15	31	41	19	8
11/21/17	48	48	10	14

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department recommends AMEND and ADOPT for this proposal. By amending the proposal to extend the late season dates to November 1-30, future requests for season extensions should not be needed.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 128 – 5 AAC 85.045.(a)(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 15C.

This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt for the Homer bench land (DM549) and the targeted hunt (AM550).

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt for the Homer Bench and the targeted antlerless hunt along the Sterling Highway in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 85.045 are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

(13)

...

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1–Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt: or

Oct. 20–Nov. 20

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15–Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1–Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt

Oct. 20–Nov. 20

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

These hunts are within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Peninsula Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The antlerless moose season for the Homer Bench (DM549) and the targeted hunt (AM550) along the Sterling Highway in 15C would be reauthorized for the 2022–2023 hunting season. This harvest

will help minimize human–moose conflicts and winter kill deaths of moose due to limited habitat on the Homer Bench.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. The Homer Bench in Unit 15C, which encompasses the hunt boundary of DM549, often holds high moose densities in winters when deep snow pushes the moose down into human populated areas. Even without deep snow, moose die due to malnutrition, and negative interactions with humans are also common as moose become more aggressive in their search for food around human residences.

In February 2017, a GSPE census was conducted in the northern portion of Unit 15C (north of Kachemak Bay) that produced a population estimate of 3,529 moose (95% CI: range 2,769–4,289), of which 19% (95% CI: 14–24) were calves. When compared to the 2013 GSPE estimate of 3,204 ± 650, the 2017 estimate suggests the 15C moose population is stable or increasing slightly. Fall composition counts in 15C in November of 2022 provided a bull ratio of 34 bulls:100 cows. Fifty permits were issued in each of the last 10 years, resulting in an average annual harvest of 25 cows per year.

The purpose of AM550 is to allow for the harvest of moose along the Sterling Highway in Unit 15C during winters with deep snow accumulation that result in moose congregating near the Sterling Highway, which pose a significant threat to highway vehicles. On average, 63 known animals are killed each year in vehicle collisions in Unit 15C. The department will decide when and where permits will be issued during the hunt period. The hunt is administered through a registration permit and up to 100 moose may be taken. The number of permits issued each year will depend on conditions, and it is possible no permits will be issued in some years. This hunt was established in 2015 and no permits have been issued to date.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Local residents are in favor of a limited antlerless moose harvest that provides additional opportunity and helps to limit habitat degradation and wildlife conflicts.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the Department.

PROPOSAL 129 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Expand the hunt area boundaries for the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Expand the hunt area boundaries for the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 15C as follows:

Expand the boundaries of the Homer antlerless moose hunt as follows: Beginning at the mouth of Deep Creek then easterly along Deep Creek to Caribou Lake to the outlet of Fox Creek, then south along Fox Creek to the mouth of Fox Creek.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only, Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only; Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

There IM population objective for moose in Unit 15C is 2,500-3,500 and the IM harvest objective is 200-350 moose.

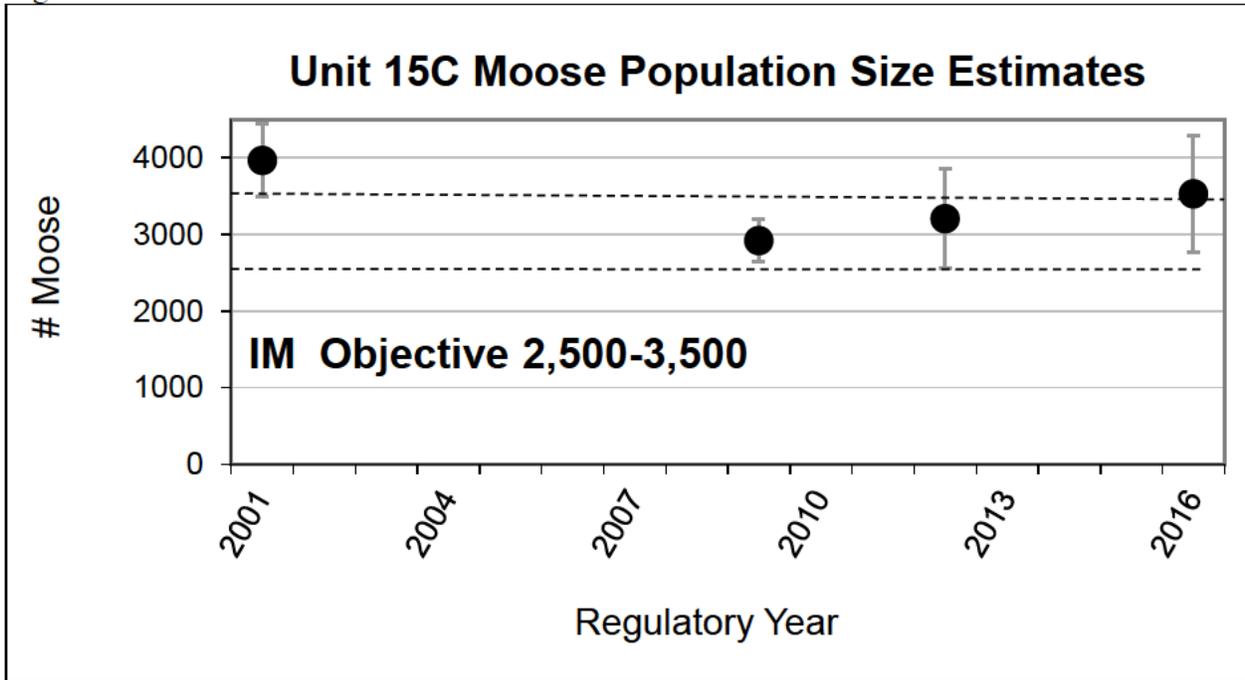
This hunt is in the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the hunt area for DM549 from the current boundary south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay. By increasing the hunt area hunters will have additional access to hunt moose. An increase in harvest is not expected because the number of drawing permits can be controlled.

BACKGROUND: The DM549 antlerless hunt was established in 1995. The rationale for establishing this hunt was to provide additional opportunity to harvest moose and to reduce browse pressure and human moose conflicts in the Homer bench area when moose migrated to that area during the fall/winter. Fifty drawing permits have been offered annually for an area comprising approximately 109 sq. miles (approximately 20% Native corporation land, 8% local government, 36% other private land, 34% state land, 3% other). However, lack of access to public land is commonly cited as a concern with this hunt by the public. Despite a perceived lack of accessibility, the 10-year average success rate of hunters who participated is 65% (41–78%). The 10-year average annual harvest is 25 moose. The proposed expansion of the DM549 cow hunt area would be to approximately 513 sq. miles (21% Native corporation land, 8% local government, 23% other

private land, 43% state land, 5% other) with likely improved accessibility due to inclusion of multiple networks of state-maintained roads and trails. As a draw hunt, the Department can alter the number of available permits annually to ensure appropriate harvest levels and to correct for habitat overbrowsing and decreased moose nutritional condition. The moose population in 15C has been stable to increasing over the three most recent moose censuses and within or above population objectives (Figure 129-1).

Figure 129-1



DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department SUPPORTS this proposal because it increases hunt accessibility.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 130 – 5 AAC 92.118. Intensive Management Plans IV. Renew and update the Unit 15C Intensive Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would renew and update the Unit 15C Intensive Management Plan.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 92.118, and recommended changes are listed below:

(c) Unit 15(C) Predation Control Area. The Unit 15(C) Predation Control Area is established and consists of all lands within Unit 15(C) north of Kachemak Bay including the Fox River Flats (1,171 square miles); state and private lands are approximately 856 square miles;

(1) this is a continuing **habitat enhancement and predator** control program that was first established by the Board of Game (board) in 2012 for wolf control; it is [CURRENTLY] designed to increase moose **abundance** [NUMBERS] and harvest by **improving habitat and** reducing predation on moose by wolves and is expected to [MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO ACHIEVING] **maintain** the intensive management (IM) objectives in Unit 15(C);

(2) moose and wolf objectives are as follows:

(A) moose IM population objectives for Unit 15(C) as established in 5 AAC 92.108 are 2,500 - 3,500 moose. This objective is within the range of historic population estimates; the bull-to-cow objective is 20 - 25:100 for Unit 15(C);

(B) the moose harvest objectives for Unit 15(C) is 200 - 350 moose; which is eight percent of the low population objective and 10 percent of the high population objective;

(C) the department has determined that wolves can be removed from public and private lands within the control area to the extent possible without affecting the sustainability of the wolf population in Unit 15(C) because the control area is approximately 33 percent of Unit 15(C) and does not include all lands that the wolf population occupies;

(3) findings concerning populations and human use are as follows:

(A) **repealed** ___ / ___ / ___;

(B) wolf predation is likely **a factor in the failure to achieve moose population and harvest objectives** [AN IMPORTANT CAUSE OF THE FAILURE TO ACHIEVE THESE OBJECTIVES];

(C) a reduction in wolf predation in Unit 15(C) may make progress toward achieving the Unit 15(C) IM harvest objectives for moose;

(D) reducing wolf predation **is likely to be effective and feasible using** [HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE UTILIZING] recognized and prudent active management techniques and based on scientific information;

(E) reducing wolf numbers is likely to be effective given land ownership patterns if conducted by department personnel;

(F) **repealed** ___ / ___ / ___;

(4) authorized methods and means are as follows:

(A) hunting and trapping of wolves by the public in the Unit 15(C) Predation Control Area during the term of the program will occur as provided in the hunting and trapping regulations set out elsewhere in this title, including the use of motorized vehicles;

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may issue public aerial shooting permits or public land and shoot permits as a method for wolf removal under AS 16.05.783;

(C) department personnel will be allowed to conduct aerial wolf removal using aircraft under AS 16.05.783.

(5) time frame is as follows:

(A) through **June 30, 2029** [JULY 1, 2022], the commissioner may authorize the removal of wolves in the Unit 15(C) Predation Control Area;

(B) annually the department shall, to the extent practicable, provide to the board a report of program activities conducted during the preceding 12 months, including implementation activities, the status of the moose and wolf populations, and recommendations for changes, if necessary to achieve the objectives of the plan.

- (6) the commissioner will review, modify, or suspend program activities as follows:
- (A) when the mid-point of the IM population and harvest objectives for the moose population are achieved;
 - (B) if, after three years, the harvest of wolves is not sufficient to make progress towards the IM population objectives for wolves;
 - (C) wolf predation control activities may be suspended:
 - (i) if, after three years, there is no detectable increase in the total harvest of moose in the control area;
 - (ii) if, after three years, any measure **such as twinning rates and short-yearling mass,** consistent with significant levels of nutritional stress in the moose population is identified;
 - (iii) when the moose population and harvest objectives within Unit 15(C) have been met; or
 - (iv) if the population exceeds a density of 3.0 moose per square mile;

(7) The department may plan and execute habitat enhancement projects in areas identified for improvement based on evidence at the landscape or population level through prescribed burns, wildfire, or mechanical means. Habitat enhancement is intended to increase the potential moose carrying capacity in the Unit 15(C) Predation Control Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The Unit 15C Intensive Management Plan would be renewed and updated. The reauthorized and updated plan expands intensive management by specifically including habitat manipulation to benefit the moose population to provide for additional harvest.

BACKGROUND: Since establishment of Unit 15C Intensive Management Objectives in 2000, moose population abundance has been estimated 4 times using the Geospatial Population Estimation technique. These estimates have been above or within population objectives: 2002 – 3,965 moose, 2010 – 2,919 moose, 2013 – 3,204 moose, and 2017 – 3,529 moose. Between regulatory years 2000/2001 and 2010/2011 moose harvest was within harvest objectives, with antler configuration relations of bulls with 50-inch antler spread and bulls with spike or fork antler configurations (S/F-50). In response to reportedly low bull:cow ratios, the board restricted antler configuration regulations beginning in regulatory year 2011/2012 to bulls with a 50-inch antler spread or those with 4 or more brow tines (50/4) with subsequent periodic alleviations of antler point configurations beginning in regulatory years 2013/2014 to include bulls with spike antler configurations (spike, 50/4), and 2019/2020 to include bulls with 3 or more brow tines

(spike, 50/3). With increased antler restrictions, intensive management objectives were not met during regulatory years 2011/2012–2019/2020 but have been within objectives since the most recent antler configuration liberalizations began in regulatory year 2019/2020.

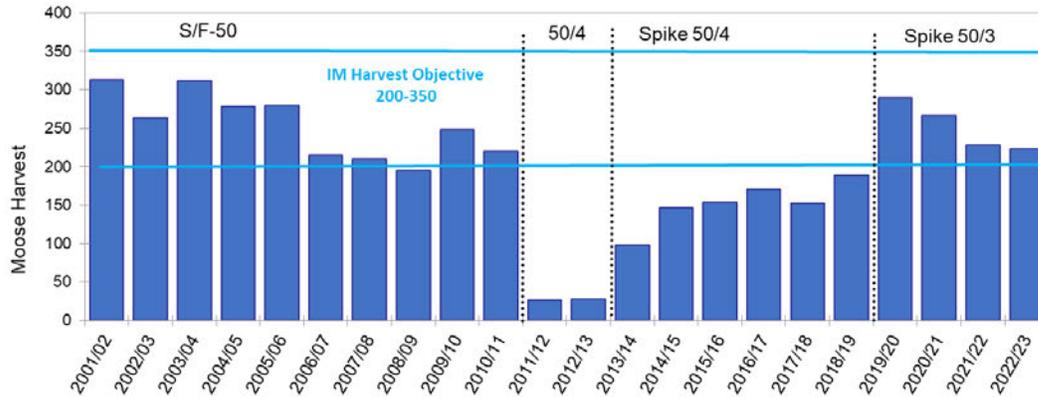


Figure 130-1. Moose harvest by regulatory year in Unit 15C. Legal antler configurations separated by vertical dotted lines with configurations above. Intensive management harvest objectives denoted in light blue text and horizontal lines.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to renew the IM plan and add habitat enhancement to the plan. The department is currently investigating habitat enhancement options but is not planning to implement predator control until control is needed based on moose abundance and harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 131 – 5 AAC 85.045(13). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season on Kalgin Island in Unit 15B.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt for Kalgin Island in Unit 15B.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 85.045 are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

(13)

...

Unit 15(B), Kalgin Island		
1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only	Aug. 20–Sept. 20	Aug. 20–Sept. 20

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 15B.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 15B (Kalgin Island) with ANS of 2 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The antlerless moose season for Kalgin Island (RM572) in Unit 15B would be reauthorized. This hunt will help to maintain moose populations within sustainable levels on Kalgin Island, provide subsistence opportunity, maximize other harvest opportunity, and decrease the chance of high winterkill due to a lack of suitable forage.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the board. The current regulation for hunting moose on Kalgin Island in Unit 15B allows hunters to harvest antlerless moose with the goal of reducing the population to the management objective of 20-40 moose.

In response to concerns that the moose population on Kalgin Island had exceeded the island’s carrying capacity, and due to deteriorating habitat conditions, the board established a drawing permit hunt for antlerless moose in 1995. In a further attempt to reduce the number of moose on the island, the board established a registration hunt for any moose in 1999. Despite these measures to reduce moose numbers, the moose population has remained relatively high and continues to remain within or exceed the management objective.

During the most recent moose survey (February 2022), department staff counted 30 moose on Kalgin Island, with below optimal count conditions. In the last 10 years, an average of 92 permits were issued for this hunt; of which 86 permittees hunted, with an annual harvest of 30 moose.

The "any moose" registration hunt is recommended to reduce moose numbers on this predator-free island population. A registration hunt also allows the department to continue gathering biological information from specimens provided by successful hunters. The difficult hunting conditions and limited access likely minimize the danger of overharvest. Additionally, if needed, the department can manage this permit hunt in-season, allowing for a change in the number of permits provided or closure of the hunt.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. This hunt helps to control the moose population on Kalgin Island to keep it within sustainable limits and provides additional harvest opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to private parties or the department.

PROPOSAL 132 – 5 AAC 92.171(b). Sealing of horns and antlers. Remove the antler sealing requirement for moose harvested on Kalgin Island and from the TM549 Tier II subsistence area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would remove the antler sealing requirement from both the TM549 Tier II subsistence hunt and the Kalgin Island registration hunt (RM572).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 92.171

(b)

A person may not alter, possess, transport, or export from the state, the antlers of a moose taken in any hunt in Units 7 (excluding the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area) and 15, unless the antlers have been permanently sealed by a department representative within 10 days after the taking, or a lesser time if designated by the department.

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, successful moose hunters in the TM549 and Kalgin Island hunts no longer have to seal antlers. The current regulation focuses on the legality of bull moose taken in antler restricted hunts. The bag limits for TM549 and Kalgin Island do not have any antler restrictions. As a result of this proposal passing, confusion for hunters participating in TM549 and RM572 would be removed.

BACKGROUND: During the 2010 Board of Game meeting the board passed a regulation requiring all antlers from moose harvested on the Kenai Peninsula be sealed by a department representative. When this regulation was established, the Tier II subsistence moose hunt (TM549) was unintentionally included, and Kalgin Island was within a different game management unit. The department does not see a need for antlers from these hunts to be sealed. The harvest that occurs in TM549 has traditionally been limited to the communities of Port Graham and Nanwalek and moose do not leave the communities after harvest. The bag limit is one bull. Kalgin Island

RM572 has a bag limit of one moose. If the department determines that antler sealing is needed for these hunts in the future, sealing can be listed as one of the permit requirements.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Continued sealing of antlers in these two hunts is not warranted and removing the requirement will result in less burden on the hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 133 – 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.
Prohibit the taking of black bear from boats in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would prohibit the take of black bears from boats in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 92.085 are:

The following methods and means of taking big game are prohibited in addition to prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

(9) from a boat in Units 1 — 5; however, a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940 may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

(12) shooting black bear from a boat in Unit 6(D); however a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

There is a positive C&T for black bears in Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai nonsubsistence area, with an ANS of 20-60 black bears.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

If this proposal were adopted as written it would be illegal to shoot a black bear from a boat in Unit 15C. It is unknown what effect the proposed regulation would have to the black bear population, hunters, or on a hunter's reasonable opportunity for success in taking a black bear for subsistence uses because the number of bears shot or wounded from a boat are unknown. Population estimates for black bears are also lacking.

BACKGROUND: Boats are the most common form of transportation used to harvest black bears in Unit 15C, representing 69% of transportation used in the last 5 years. The majority of black bear harvest occurs south of Kachemak Bay in the spring when bears are close to the shoreline. A common hunting tactic is to cruise the shoreline until a bear is spotted. The

proportion of bears shot from a boat is unknown, as is the proportion of animals wounded each year. The increased probability of wounding loss has been recognized by the board in deliberation of regulations in Units 1—5 and Unit 6D. The 5-year average annual black bear harvest for 15C is 224 bears, of which 24% are females. Management objectives are to remain below a 30% take of females in the most recent 3 years. Although a new harvest record was reached in 2020 at 341 animals, the most recent 3-year harvest of females was 25%.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because there is no biological concern. Black bear harvest levels are currently sustainable. Because current regulations are presumed to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence, should the board adopt this proposal, the record should show that the board has decided that the new regulations continue to provide a reasonable opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 134 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear season in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would extend the brown bear season in Units 7 and 15 by opening the season 20 days earlier in the fall and by closing it one month later in the spring.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

registration permit only

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the use of bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30 (for black bears) which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season (brown bear season dates for Units 7 and 15 are September 1 – May 31).

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July.

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Units 7 and 15 by 20 days in the fall and one month in the spring. The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, thereby reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. This included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 134-1). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 134-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 134-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (no. 02-05-22) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 134-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 134-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014 when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit occurs during the spring season with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

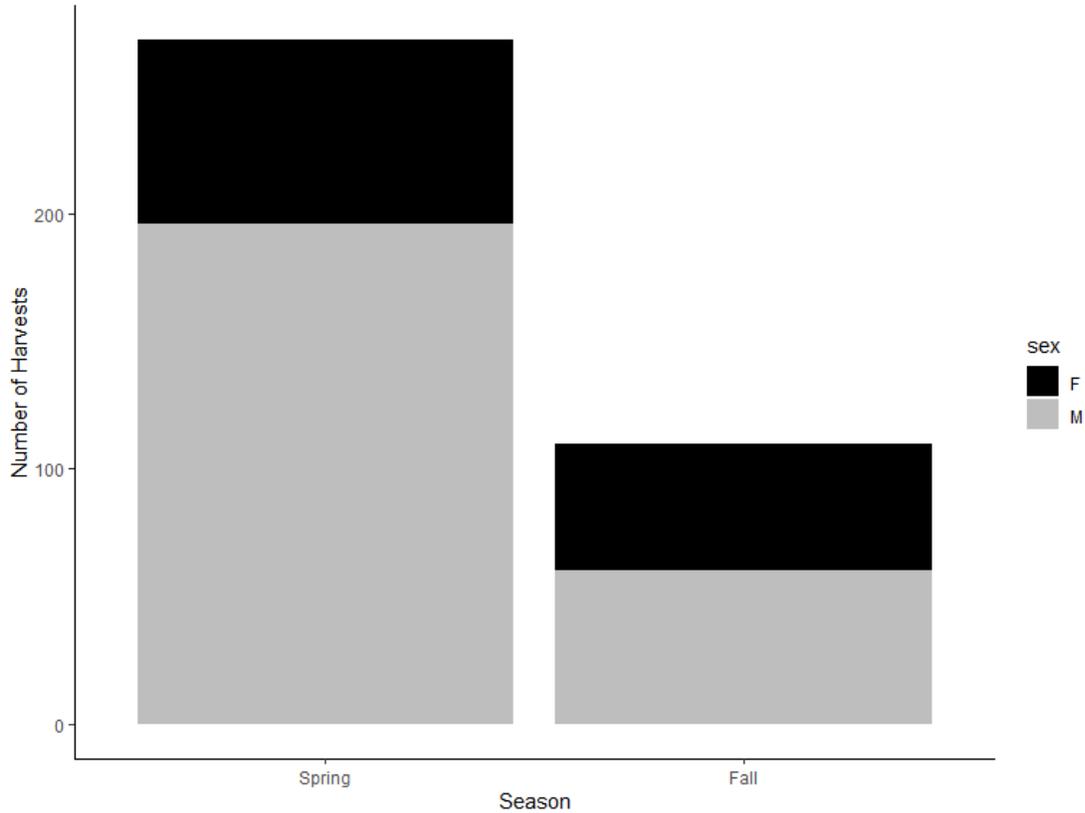


Figure 134-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

The proponent asks for permits to be available beginning August 4, which will only be 6 days before the hunt starts. If the board adopts this proposal the department requests to retain the ability to make permits available at a reasonable time based on the date the season opens rather than having a set availability date. Permits are usually made available no less than two weeks prior to the hunting, and in this case the department would likely make permits available in mid-July.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 135 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear season in Unit 15 from May 31 to June 30, to align with the black bear baiting season.

PROPOSED BY: Wayne Ctibor and Dennis Johns

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would extend the brown bear season in Unit 15 until June 30, to align with the black bear baiting season. The new season dates would be Sep. 1–Jun. 30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. The portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Unit 15 by 30 days to Sep. 1–Jun. 30 (currently Sep. 1 – May 31). The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring

brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities. Adopting this proposal would also result in different brown bear season dates in Units 7 and 15.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. They have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 135-1). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities of which 17 could be adult females was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 135-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 135-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (Feb. 5, 2022) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 135-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 135-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit has been occurring during the spring season with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

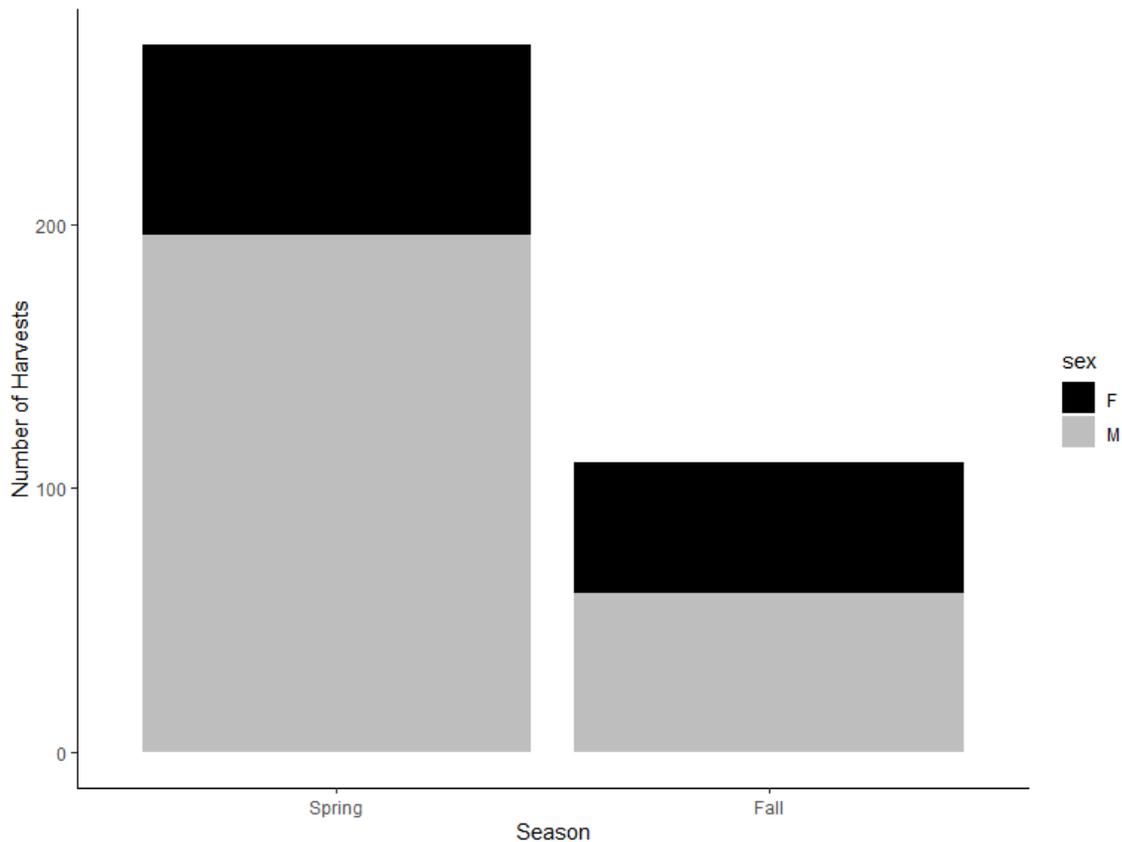


Figure 135-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal. The effect of adopting this proposal would lengthen the spring season by 30 days. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 136 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the season for the brown bear registration hunts in Units 7 and 15 to June 15.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Spraker

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would extend the season for the brown bear registration hunts in Units 7 and 15 to June 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July.

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Units 7 and 15 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. They have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 136-1). At the March

2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 136-1). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 136-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (Feb. 5, 2022) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 136-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 136-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014 when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit occurs during the spring season, with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

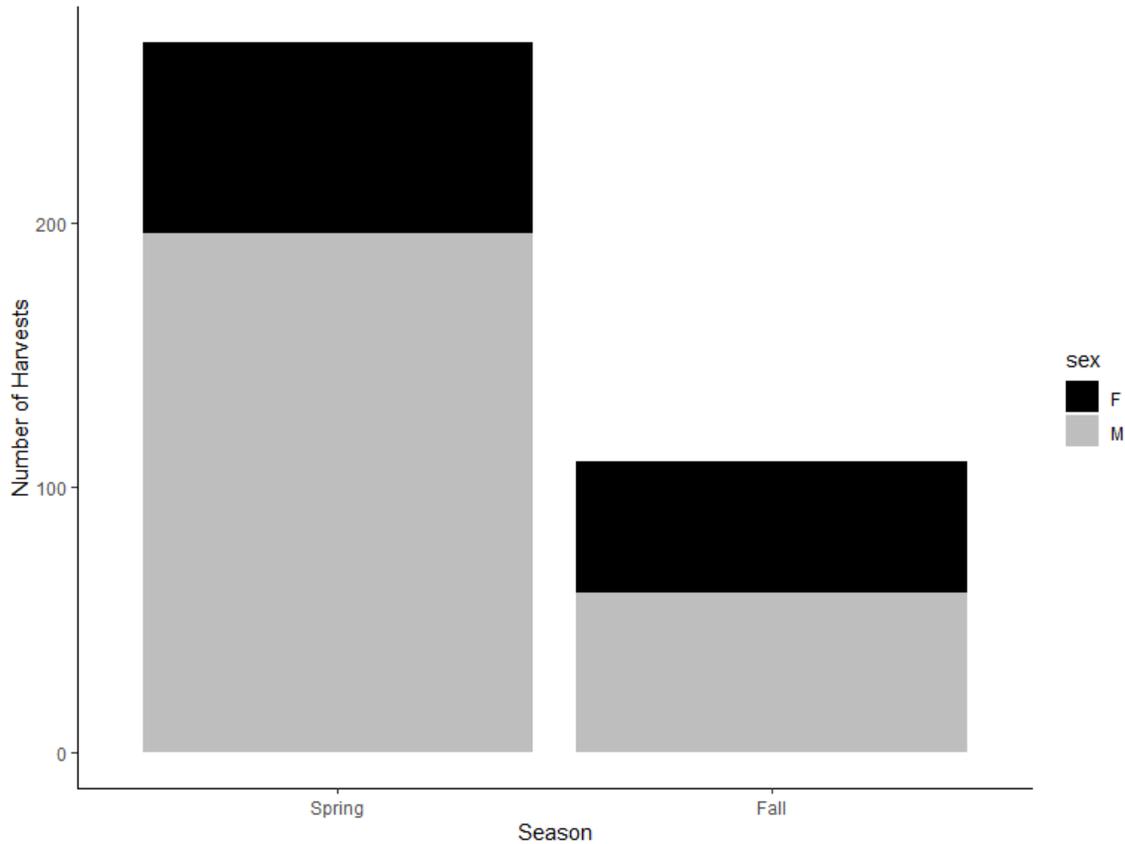


Figure 136-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would extend the spring season by 15 days. The proposed increased season length will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, which will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 137 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear registration hunt (RB300) in Unit 7 to June 15.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO: This proposal would extend the brown bear season in Unit 7 to June 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30 which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Unit 7 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities. Adopting this proposal would also result in different brown bear season dates in Units 7 and 15.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. These have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 137-1). At the March

2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities of which 17 could be adult females was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 137-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 137-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (Feb. 5, 2022) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 137-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 137-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit occurs during the spring season with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

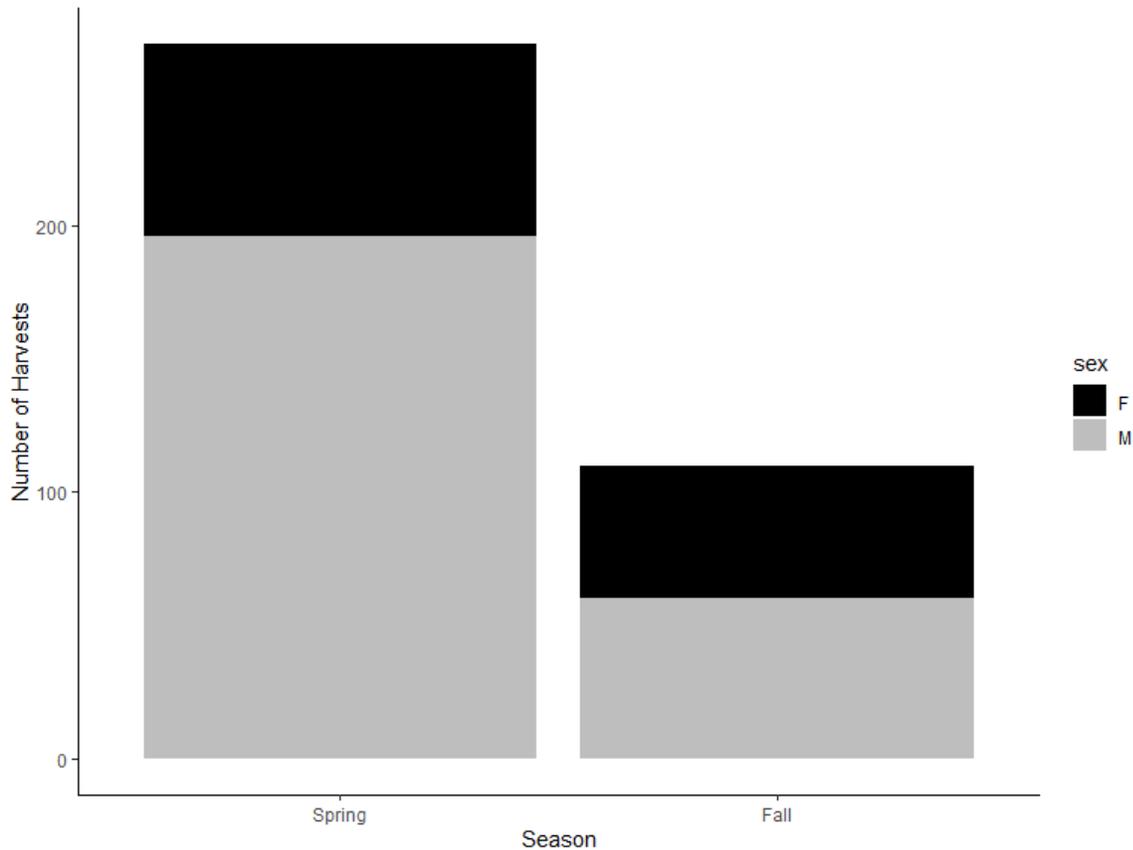


Figure 137-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would extend the spring season in Unit 7 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 138 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear season in Unit 15 to June 15.

PROPOSED BY: Danielle Wendt

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would extend the season for the brown bear registration hunts in Unit 15 to June 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Unit 15 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities. Adopting this proposal would also result in different brown bear season dates in Units 7 and 15.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. These have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 138-1). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 138-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 138-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (Feb. 5, 2022) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached, and, within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 138-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 138-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit has occurred during the spring season, with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

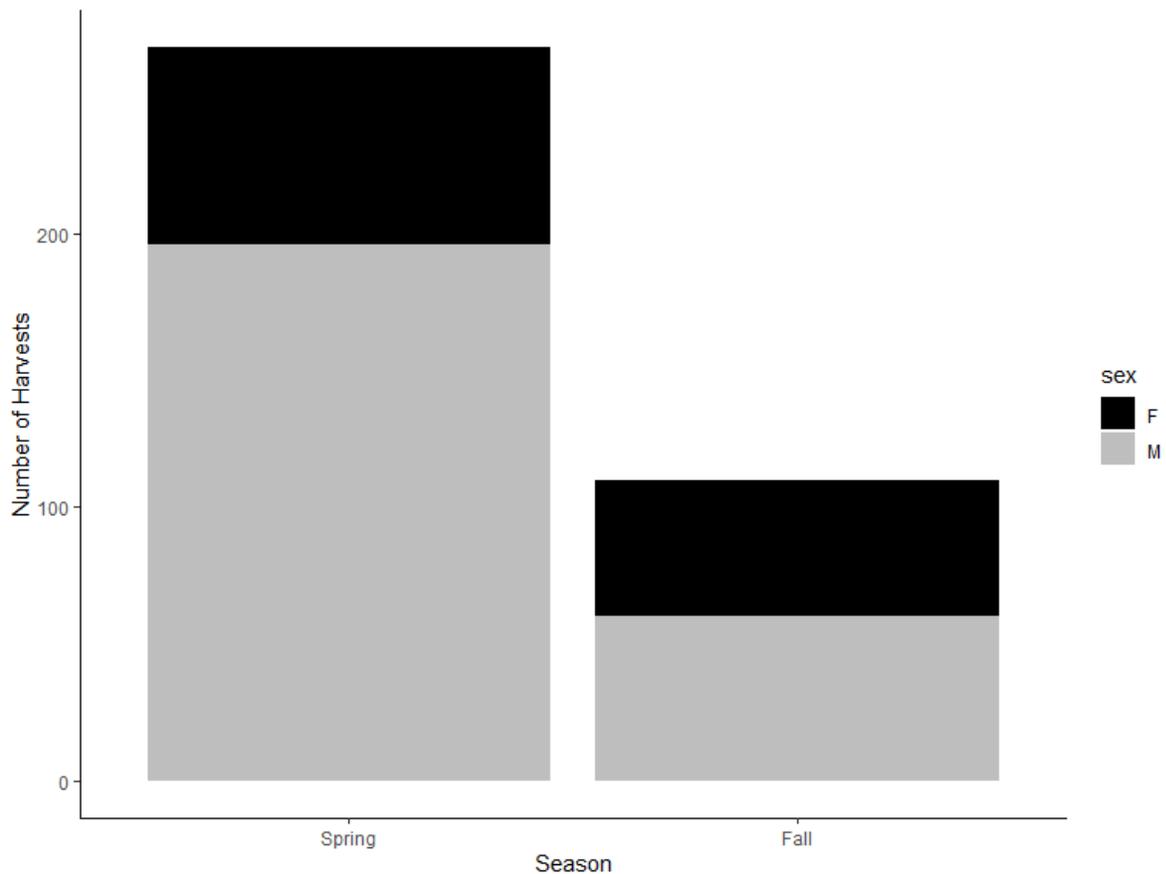


Figure 138-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would extend the spring season in Unit 15 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 139 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear season for the RB300 hunt in Units 7 and 15 to June 15.

PROPOSED BY: Logan Kurtz

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would extend the season for the brown bear registration hunts in Units 7 and 15 to June 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July.

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the brown bear season length in Units 7 and 15 by 15 days. The proposed increased season length would likely increase spring brown bear harvest. If so, this may result in Emergency Orders to close the season when mortality caps are met, reducing the availability of fall harvest opportunities.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. These have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 139-1). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 139-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 139-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (Feb. 5, 2022) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached, and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 139-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 139-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit has occurred during the spring season, with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

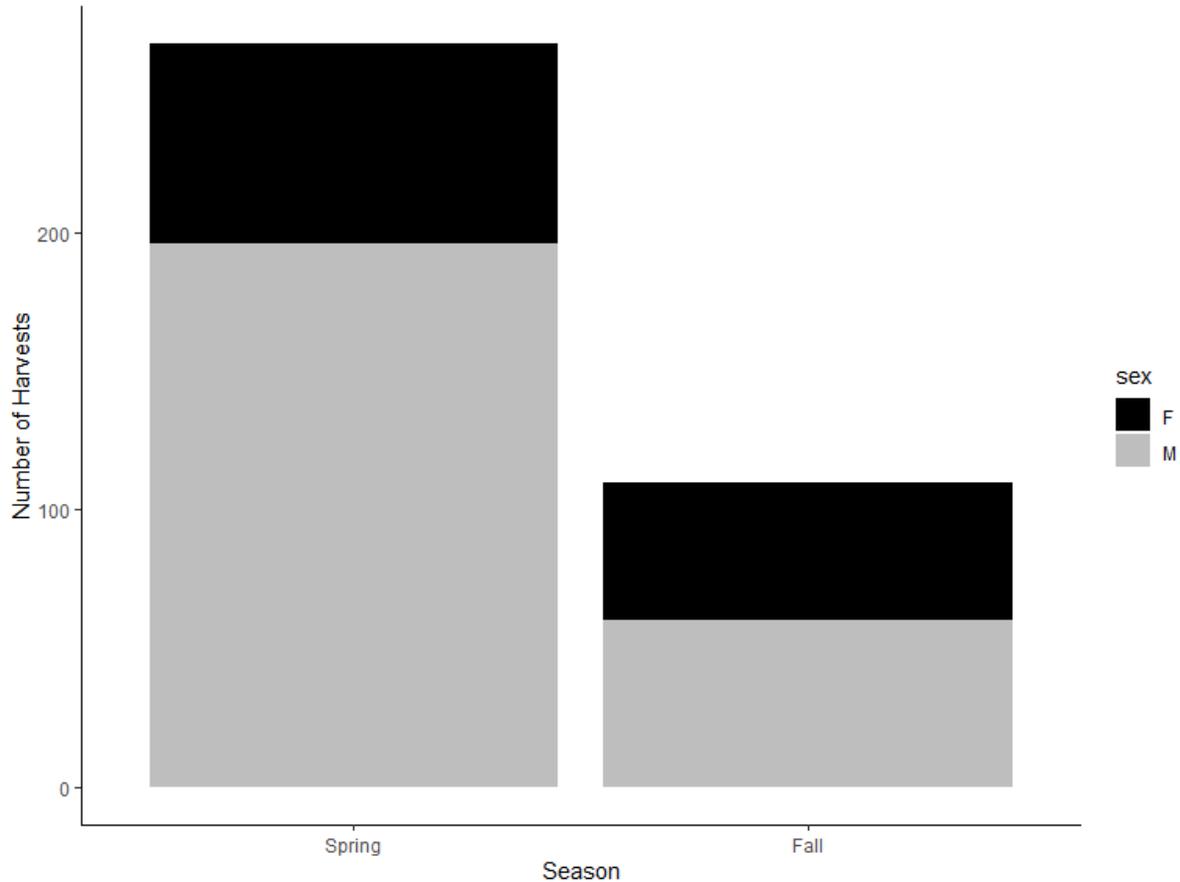


Figure 139-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would extend the spring season by 15 days. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Order when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 140 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the season for brown bear under RB300 open for take by bow and arrow only, in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO This proposal would create an archery only brown bear season in Units 7 and 15 from Jun. 1–Jun. 30, excluding areas within ½ mile of the Russian and Kenai Rivers, with a bag limit of one brown bear every regulatory year, by permit.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

As a bear baiting permit condition, hunting with the aid of bear bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July.

All of Unit 7 and most of Unit 15 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence area. That portion of Unit 15C outside the NSA has a negative brown bear C&T finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would extend the current brown bear season dates in the spring for Units 7 and 15 until June 30 (the current spring season ends May 31). Method of take during the added days (June 1 – June 30) would be restricted to archery only. The amount of additional harvest with an archery

only season is difficult to predict, but any additional spring harvest could impact opportunity during the fall season.

BACKGROUND: Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. These have included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps; Table 140-1). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (Table 140-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year (Figure 140-1). As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (02-05-22) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached, and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 140-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 140-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit has been occurring during the spring season, with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait.

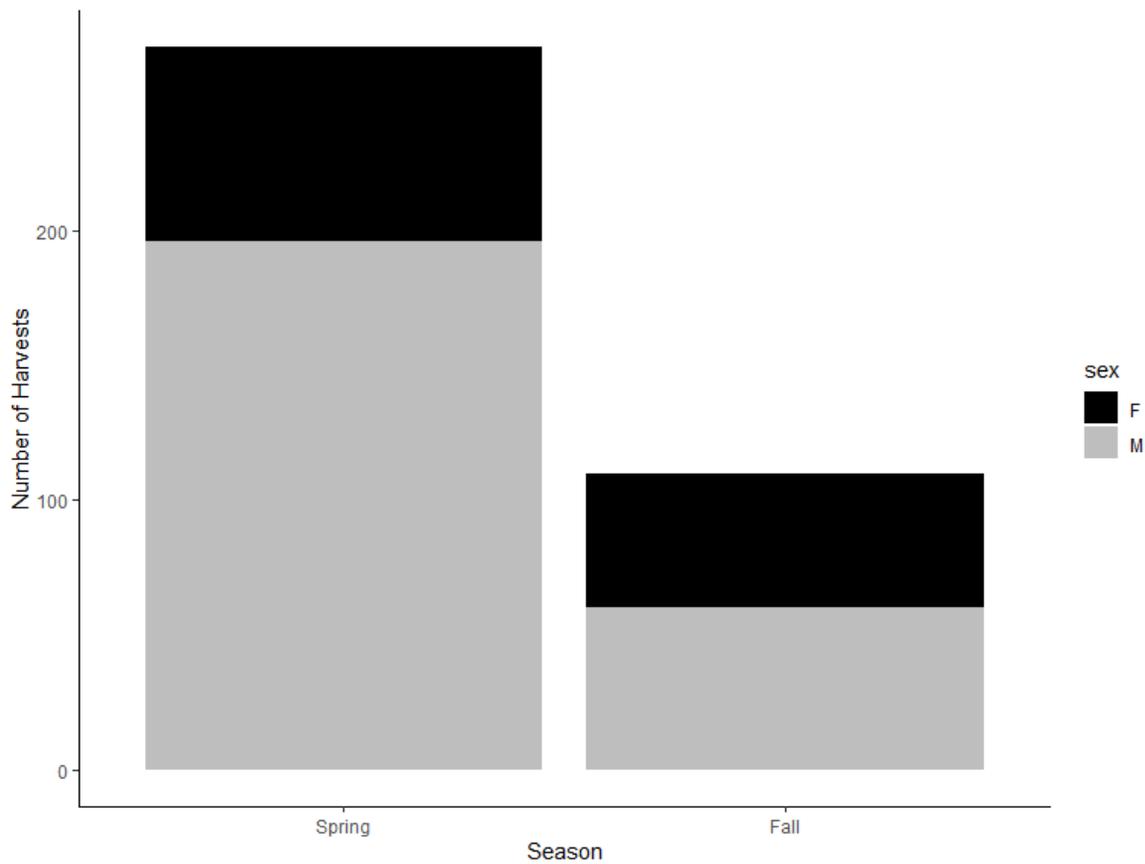


Figure 140-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during Spring and Fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NUETRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative in nature. Adopting this proposal would extend the spring season by 30 days for archery only hunters. The proposed increased season length, which will allow hunters to harvest brown bears over bait, will likely increase spring brown bear harvest and adult female harvest based on previous harvest trends. This additional harvest in the spring will likely result in seasons closing by Emergency Orders when mortality caps are reached, which will reduce fall harvest opportunities.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 141 – 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Lengthen the bear baiting season in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the length of the black and brown bear baiting seasons in Unit 7, changing the season dates to April 1–June 30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6)		
Unit 7		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(3)		

Unit 7, that portion south of the city limits of Seward at 60° 04' 58" N. lat., and Unit 15, that portion south of Kachemak Creek, Bradley River, and Bradley Lake

RESIDENT HUNTERS: No closed season.
3 bears (General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: No closed season.
1 bear

Hunting bears over bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed from Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal in 5 AAC 92.510, there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the bear baiting season in Unit 7 by 14 days. The increase would occur at the beginning of the baiting season. With additional opportunity, an increase in harvest is expected.

BACKGROUND: Hunting bears over bait in Unit 7 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30. During the spring season, this start date is in accordance with all other areas open for bear baiting except Unit 18, which has a start date of Apr. 1. Since black bear harvest is comparatively liberalized in Unit 7 (3 bear limit, no closed season), there is unlikely to be

measurable increase in black bear harvest and the department does not have a present biological concern surrounding black bear populations in Unit 7.

Brown bears generally exit dens earlier than black bears and there is potential that an increased bear baiting period may increase harvest of brown bears in Unit 7.

Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. This included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (tables 114-1 and 114-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears, or 50–60 total bears, experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year. As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 & 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (02-05-22) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached and within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 141-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 141-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014 when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit occurs during the spring season with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait (Figure 141-1).

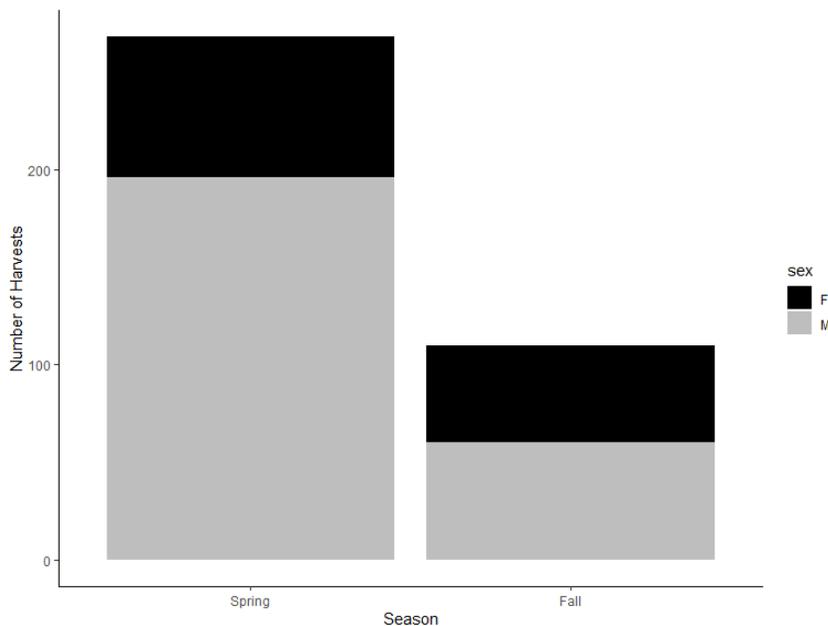


Figure 141-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during spring and fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska, 2014–2022.

Black bear hunting season is year-round in Game Management Units 7 & 15, although harvest over bait may only during Apr. 15–Jun. 30. From 2017–2021, 35% of black bear harvest has occurred over bait (figures 141-2 and 141-3).

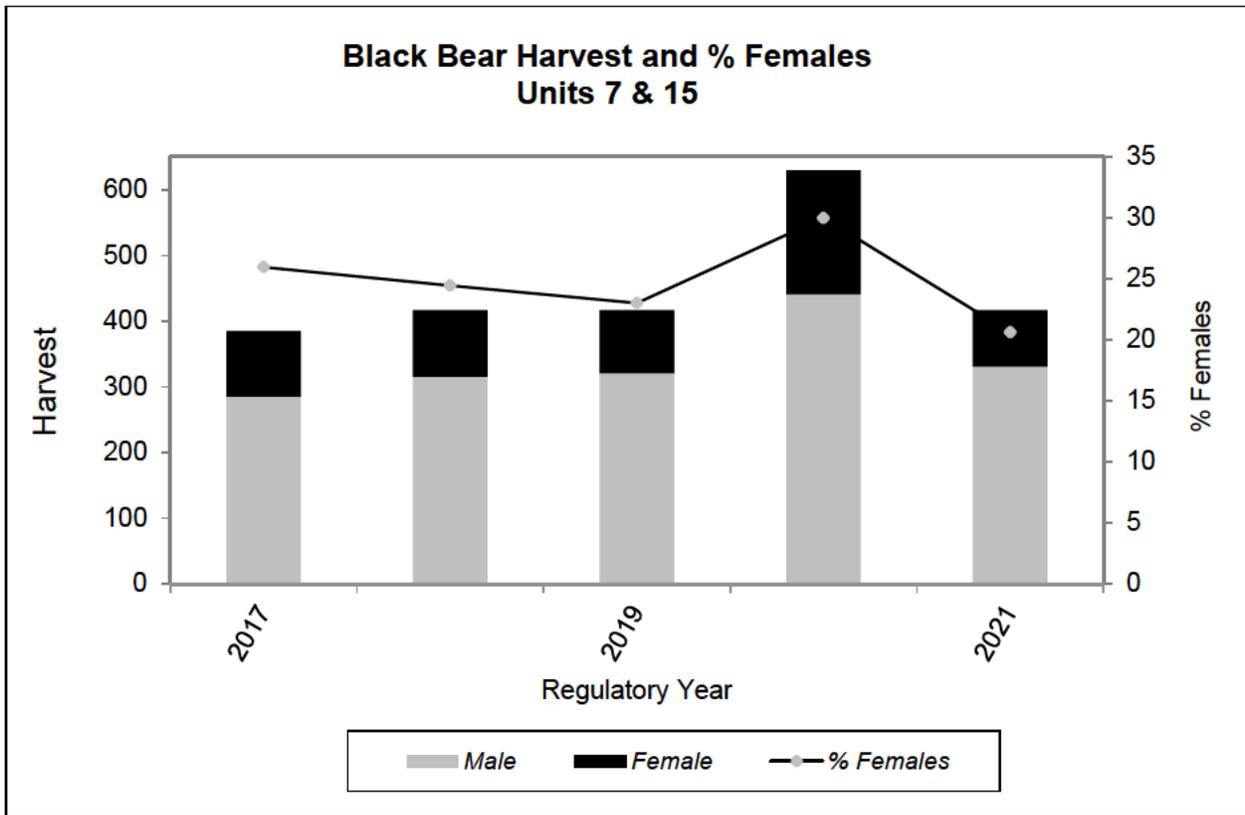


Figure 141-2. Black bear harvest in Game Management Units 7&15, 2017-2021.

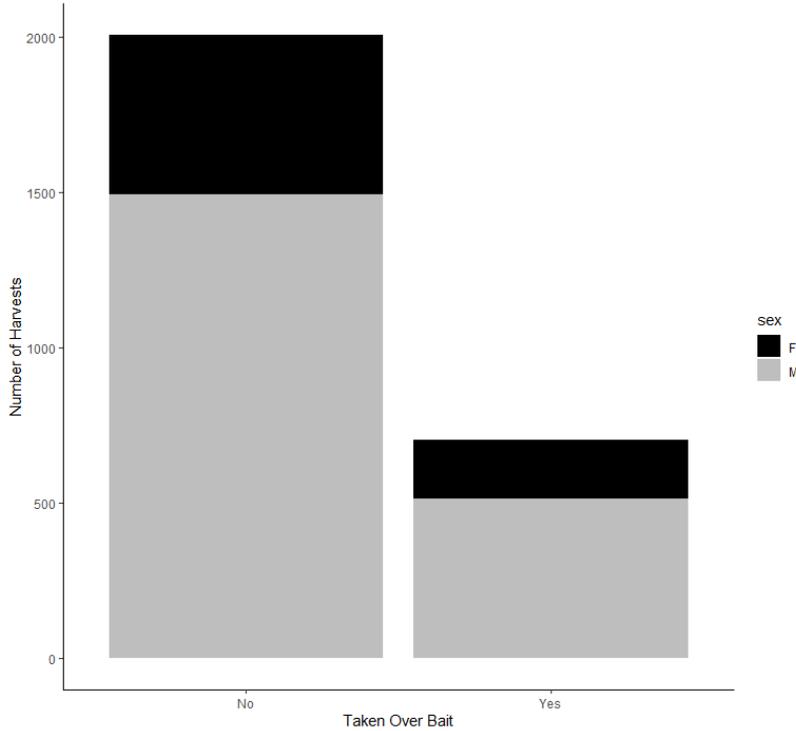


Figure 141-3. Number of black bear harvest mortalities by sex taken over bait in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska, 2017–2021.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would start bear baiting 14 days earlier than the current regulations allow (baiting to start April 1 instead of April 15). If adopted the department would not be concerned if this proposal resulted in additional black bear harvest; however if these additional dates are included in brown bear baiting season dates, and if additional brown bear harvest resulted, it could impact brown bear harvest opportunities in the fall. Also, adoption of this proposal would result in different start dates for baiting in Units 7 and 15.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 142 – 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Lengthen the brown bear baiting season in Unit 15.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Deiman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would increase the length of the bear baiting season in Unit 15 by moving the start date from April 15 to April 1. This would make the bear baiting season dates April 1 to June 30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(14)		
Unit 15		
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit only	Sept.1—May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept.1—May 31

The current regulations as defined in

5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(3)		
Unit 7, that portion south of the city limits of Seward at 60° 04' 58" N. lat., and Unit 15, that portion south of Kachemak Creek, Bradley River, and Bradley Lake		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 3 bears	No closed season. (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 bear		No closed season.

Hunting bears over bait in Units 7 and 15 is currently allowed from Apr. 15–Jun. 30, which extends beyond the current end of brown bear season.

Relative to the language in the proposal, in 5 AAC 92.510 there exists a closed area during June and July in Unit 7:

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July

There is a positive C&T finding for black bears in Unit 15C outside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, with an ANS of 20-60. Brown bears in Unit 15C have a negative C&T finding. Unit 7 is entirely within the nonsubsistence area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would increase the bear baiting season in Unit 15 by 14 days. The increase would occur at the beginning of the baiting season and would provide additional bear harvest opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Hunting bears over bait in Unit 15 is currently allowed during Apr. 15–Jun. 30. During the spring season, this start date is in accordance with all other areas open for bear baiting, except Unit 18 which has a start date of Apr. 1. Since black bear harvest is comparatively liberalized in Unit 15 (3 bear limit, no closed season), there is unlikely to be a measurable increase in black bear harvest and the department does not have a present biological concern surrounding black bear populations in Unit 15. Brown bears generally exit dens earlier than black bears and there is potential that an increased bear baiting period may increase harvest of brown bears in Unit 15.

Regulations regarding brown bear hunting in Units 7 and 15 have undergone many changes during the last decade. This included changes in season dates, methods of take, and objectives for allowable human caused mortalities (caps). At the March 2013 Board of Game meeting the season dates were adjusted to 1 September–31 May and the cap on the number of human-caused brown bear mortalities for calendar year (CY) 2013 was eliminated. A cap of 70 human caused mortalities, of which 17 could be adult females, was instituted for CY 2014 (tables 142-1 and 142-2). In addition, the board passed a regulation allowing hunters to harvest brown bears at bait stations beginning in the spring of 2014. In 2015, the Board of Game adjusted the cap to no more than 8–12 adult female bears or 50–60 total bears experiencing human caused mortality on a 3-year running average by calendar year. As a permit condition, successful hunters have 5 days to report their harvest either in person or via phone and bears must be sealed at an ADF&G office in either Soldotna, Homer, Palmer, or Anchorage within 10 days of date of kill.

The RB300 brown bear season had not been closed by Emergency Order in Units 7 and 15 until calendar year 2022, which includes regulatory year 2022/2023. At the time of the Emergency Order (02-05-22) the adult female human-caused mortality cap had been reached, and, within the following days, so had the total bear human-caused mortality cap as well.

Table 142-1. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	66	5	71
2015	27	10	37
2016	40	13	53
2017	30	7	37
2018	33	9	42
2019	39	7	46
2020	70	10	80
2021	35	5	40
2022	47	12	59

Table 142-2. Annual occurrences of known human-caused mortalities of adult female brown bears in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska.

Calendar Year	Hunting Mortality	Non-Hunting Human Caused Mortality	Total
2014	6	0	0
2015	6	1	7
2016	3	2	5
2017	2	0	0
2018	5	3	8
2019	5	1	6
2020	14	3	17
2021	7	1	8
2022	10	4	14

Since 2014, when brown bear harvest using bait was allowed, an average of 70% of brown bear harvest under the RB300 permit occurs during the spring season, with 77% of that harvest occurring over bait (figures 142-1 and 142-2).

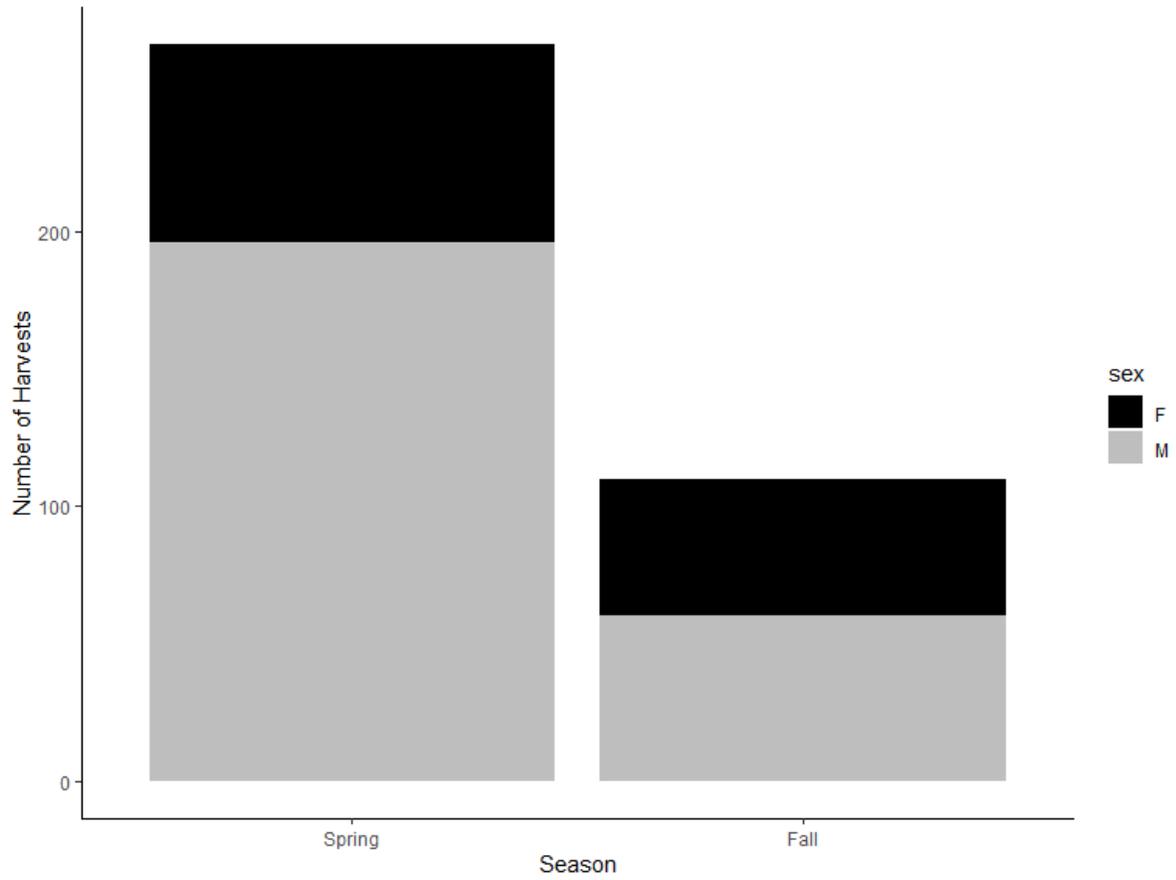


Figure 142-1. Number of brown bear harvest mortalities by sex occurring during spring and fall in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2014–2022.

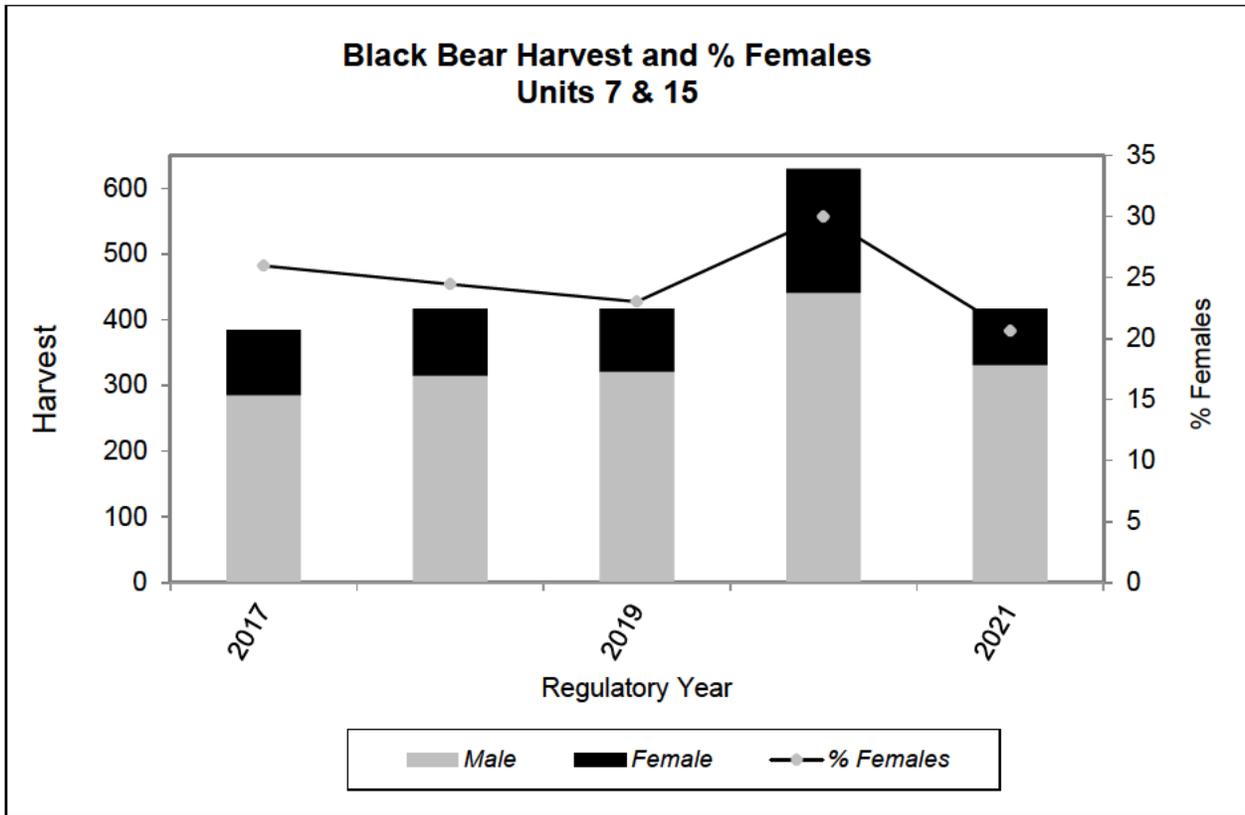


Figure 142-2. Black bear harvest in Game Management Units 7 & 15 in Alaska 2017-2021

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal would start bear baiting 14 days earlier than the current regulations allow (baiting to start April 1 instead of April 15). If adopted the department would not be concerned if this proposal resulted in additional black bear harvest; however, if these additional dates are included in brown bear baiting season dates, and if additional brown bear harvest resulted, it could impact brown bear harvest opportunities in the fall. Also, adoption of this proposal would result in different start dates for baiting in Units 7 and 15.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 143 - 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Restrict bear bait stations within a half mile of certain structures in Unit 15.

PROPOSED BY: Danielle Wendt

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current bear baiting regulation that restricts bating within one mile of a house, school, business, developed

recreational facility, campground, or permanent dwelling, including a seasonally-occupied cabin, to a ½ mile restriction.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or a scent lure.

(b) In addition to any condition that the department may require under 5 AAC 92.052, a permit issued under this section is subject to the following provisions:

...

(5) a person may not use bait or scent lures within

(A) one-quarter mile of a publicly maintained road, trail, or the Alaska Railroad;

(B) one mile of a

(i) house or other permanent dwelling, except that bait may be used within one mile of a cabin if the cabin is on the opposite side of a major river system, as identified by the department in the permit, from the bear baiting station;

(ii) business; or

(iii) school; or

(C) one mile of a developed campground or developed recreational facility;

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Allowing bait to be placed within one half mile of houses, permanent dwellings, businesses, schools, campgrounds and developed recreational facilities means bears will intentionally be attracted closer to those buildings and facilities; however, it is unknown if this change will result in additional bears being harvested by allowing the use of bait closer to structures and recreational facilities. Decreasing the distance does increase the chances of unwanted interaction between bears and humans.

BACKGROUND: The existing one mile restriction for placement of bear bait has been in place since at least 1982 and is applicable statewide. If adopted the proposed change will be the first time the distance has changed in over 40 years. The board made a single exception to the rule by allowing bait to be placed within one mile of a cabin if the cabin is on the opposite side of a major river system from the bait.

The department does not have reliable, high resolution data on the placement of bait stations relative to the structures listed in 5 AAC 92.044 (b) (5), and as a result is unable to produce a map showing just how much additional area may be opened to bait if this were to pass.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to making changes to a statewide regulation for one unit alone. This issue should be addressed on a statewide level, not by local area. The current one mile restriction is based on providing a safe buffer around a bait site to limit interactions between nonhunters and bears. Bears are habitually attracted to bait sites and will check these sites for food even after food is not present. Decreasing the distance increases the chance of negative interactions between humans and bears. The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the method of taking bears with the use of bait.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 144 - 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Define "developed recreation facility" and "permanent dwelling" for bear baiting in Units 15 and 7.

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the Board of Game to define a “developed recreation facility” as a state-maintained, multiuse area that provides services for shooting, launching of watercraft, or camping, that also includes signage and buildings that are regularly maintained for the purpose of recreation; and defines “permanent dwelling” as a structure permanently fixed in place, and legally owned by the public or a private individual, and occupied for a minimum of 30 days per year.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or a scent lure.

(b) In addition to any condition that the department may require under 5 AAC 92.052, a permit issued under this section is subject to the following provisions:

...

(5) a person may not use bait or scent lures within

(A) one-quarter mile of a publicly maintained road, trail, or the Alaska Railroad;

(B) one mile of a

(i) house or other permanent dwelling, except that bait may be used within one mile of a cabin if the cabin is on the opposite side of a major river system, as identified by the department in the permit, from the bear baiting station;

(ii) business; or

(iii) school; or

(C) one mile of a developed campground or developed recreational facility;

...

(d) In this section, “operate” means to establish, register, bait, maintain, or hunt a bait station site.

(e) In this section, “equipment” means barrels, tree stands, game camera, and other items associated with a bear bait station. Tree stands may be left in the field year-round with permission of the landowner or such other person authorized to give permission.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would provide a definition as defined above for a developed recreation facility and permanent dwelling as they relate to bear baiting in Units 7 and 15, the goal of which is less ambiguity for the public. The actual effect would likely create more confusion and would lead to different definitions for these two units compared to the rest of the state.

BACKGROUND: The proposed definitions for “developed recreation facility” and “permanent dwelling” would likely be problematic for the current intent of the regulation, which is to separate bear bait sites from other activities to prevent negative nonhunter/bear interactions. Many “developed recreation facilities” in Unit 7 and 15 are not state maintained. Examples of this include the Kachemak Nordic Ski Club facilities and trails, the Diamond Creek Recreation Area, and Tsalteshi Recreation Area. The proposed definition for a “permanent dwelling” would also be problematic. Many homes on the peninsula consist of structures not permanently fixed in place, such as mobile homes, campers, yurts, and other structures that individuals reside in year-round or on a seasonal basis. Furthermore, the department does not have reliable, high-resolution data on the placement of bait stations relative to the structures listed in 5 AAC 92.044 (b) (5).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to making changes to a statewide regulation for two units only. Definitions associated with bear baiting regulations are better addressed on a statewide basis, not by individual game management units. The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the definition of developed recreational facility and permanent dwelling, and if the board intends to define those terms for Units 7 and 15, or statewide, recommends the board create definitions that are easy to enforce and match any other definitions that may exist in other statutes or regulations, such as those under jurisdiction of the Department of Natural Resources, to maintain consistency and simplicity for the public.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 145 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping and 5 AAC 92.510. Areas closed to hunting. Close areas to hunting and trapping within 1/4 mile of parts of the Sterling Highway in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wildlife Alliance

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close areas to hunting and trapping within ¼ of a mile of parts of the Sterling Highway in Units 7 and 15 in proximity to wildlife underpasses and overpasses.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas closed to trapping in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550:

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping.

The current areas closed to hunting in units 7 and 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.510:

(8) Unit 7:

(A) the Portage Glacier Closed Area in Unit 7, which consists of Portage Creek drainages between the Anchorage-Seward Railroad and Placer Creek in Bear Valley, Portage Lake, the mouth of Byron Creek, Glacier Creek and Byron Glacier, is closed to hunting; however, migratory birds and small game may be hunted with shotguns, bow and arrow, crossbow, or falconry from September 1 through April 30;

(B) the Seward Closed Area in Unit 7, which consists of the south side drainage of the Resurrection River downstream from the Kenai Fjords National Park's eastern boundary, and Resurrection Bay drainages between the mouth of the Resurrection River and the mouth of Lowell Creek, are closed to the taking of big game, except black bear;

(C) the Cooper Landing Closed Area, which consists of that portion of Unit 7 bounded by Juneau Creek, beginning at its confluence with the Kenai River, then upstream to the confluence of Juneau Creek and Falls Creek, then easterly along Falls Creek and the north fork of Falls Creek and over the connecting saddle to Devils Creek, then southeasterly along Devils Creek to its confluence with Quartz Creek, then southwesterly along Quartz Creek to the Sterling Highway, then westerly along the Sterling Highway to the Kenai River, and then westerly along the Kenai River to the point of beginning at the mouth of Juneau Creek, is closed to the taking of Dall sheep and mountain goat;

(D) repealed 7/1/2011;

(E) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River, from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July;

(12) Unit 15:

(A) the Moose River Closed Area near Sterling in Unit 15(A), which consists of the area on and within one-quarter mile of the Moose River between the Kenai National Moose Range boundary and the Sterling Highway, is closed to the taking of waterfowl;

(B) the Kenai Moose Research Center Closed Area in Unit 15(A), which consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to hunting;

(C) the Russian River Closed Area, which consists of the area within 150 yards from each side of, and including, the Russian River from the outlet of Lower Russian Lake downstream to the confluence of the Russian River and Kenai River are closed to hunting during June and July;

The five over- and underpasses currently under construction are all located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make it illegal to trap or hunt within ¼ of a mile of five wildlife structures (including the structures themselves) that are part of the Sterling Highway MP 45-60 Project: two underpasses and one overpass in Unit 7 and two underpasses in Unit 15A.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Game has imposed area specific hunting and trapping closures when it has been found to be in the best interest of game management. Once the Sterling Highway construction project is complete, along with proposed fencing, the above referenced corridors will act as bottlenecks for wildlife moving across the highway corridor. Hunting and trapping in these areas could be highly effective and could possibly impact non-target species.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal and is **OPPOSED** to unnecessarily restricting opportunity to take game.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 146 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks on specific trails within the Kachemak Bay State Park in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Kachemak Bay State Park Citizen Advisory Board

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Require a 100-yard setback on traps from the Diamond Creek Trails, Grewingk Glacier Lake Trail and the Grewingk Saddle Trail within Kachemak Bay State Park.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550

(4) Unit 15

(D) ‘the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping’.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions exist throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions. State managed area restrictions can be found in 5 AAC 92.550.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make it illegal to trap within 100 yards of the Diamond Creek Trail, Grewingk Glacier Lake Trail, and the Grewingk Saddle Trail within Kachemak Bay State Park. This proposal may result in a decreased opportunity to take furbearers. Impacts to conflicts between user groups is unknown.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend an inordinate amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents have occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 147 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along certain snow machine and Nordic ski trails in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee, Sid Wolford and Kathy Sarns Irwin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Require a 100-yard setback on traps from the mapped trails maintained by the Snomad Snowmobile Club and Kachemak Nordic Ski Club in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550

(4) Unit 15

(D) 'the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping'.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make it illegal to trap within 100 yards of the mapped trails maintained by the Snomad Snowmobile Club and Kachemak Nordic Ski Club in Unit 15C. This proposal may result in a decreased opportunity to take furbearers. Impacts to conflicts between user groups is unknown.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend an inordinate amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents have occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land. This proposal is somewhat unique in that the department has not addressed trail closures for trails that are not maintained by municipalities, or state and federal agencies.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 148 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Require 100-yard trapping setbacks from known multi-use trails in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Jacob Swartz

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Require a 100-yard setback on traps from multi-use trails in Unit 7.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550. There are current no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of municipal or private land restrictions.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make it illegal to trap within 100 yards of multi-use trails in Unit 7. The proposal may result in a decreased opportunity to take furbearers. Impacts to conflicts between user groups is unknown.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend an inordinate amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics. **If adopted, this proposal would require a list of officially designated “multi-use trails” in Unit 7 to be generated and maintained.**

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 149 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along the perimeter of campgrounds in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Require a 50-yard setback of traps with an inside spread of 5-inches or less which are at least 4 feet above ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps in boxes from the perimeter of 4 campgrounds in Unit 7. All other trap types and sizes would require a 100-yard setback. Proposed campgrounds include: Quartz Creek Campground, Crescent Creek Campground, Russian River Campground, and Cooper Creek Campgrounds (North and South).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of municipal or private land restrictions.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict but may also limit some trapping opportunity. If adopted, the proposal will result in more complex trapping regulations in portions of Unit 7.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend an inordinate amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents have occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics. The department also has concerns with trying to define the boundaries of campgrounds and difficulty enforcing the restriction based on potentially ambiguous boundaries.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 150 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along certain roads and pullouts in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish trap setbacks of 100-yards on both sides of roads and all sides of pullouts listed in Unit 7. Traps with an inside spread

of 5 inches or less which are at least 4 feet above the ground or at snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps in boxes are allowed if more than 50 yards from the road or pullout. Following are the roads and pullouts that would be affected by this:

Quartz Creek Road - Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the powerline crossing at approximately mile 2.5.

Quartz Creek Road - From powerline crossing to Crescent Creek Trailhead at mile 3.5.

East Quartz Creek and Williams Road - Entire East Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with Quartz Creek Road and Williams Road.

Old Sterling Highway (unmaintained portion of Quartz Creek Road) - Old Sterling Highway from the Crescent Creek Trailhead to Tern Lake Rest and Picnic area.

Snug Harbor Road - The first 2.8 miles of Snug Harbor Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the entrance of the Chugach Electric Power Station.

Bean Creek Road - The entire distance from the Sterling Hwy to end.

Russian Gap Road – The entire distance from Sterling Hwy to end.

All vehicle pullouts along the Sterling Highway.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

The requested closures are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal will reduce trapping opportunity and may reduce user group conflict. If adopted, the proposal will result in more complex trapping regulations in portions of Unit 7.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend an inordinate amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The Department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 151 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap setback of 100-yards along the perimeter of highway pullouts accessing backcountry areas along the Seward Highway, and on both sides of the winter trails listed within the Summit Lake Recreational Area in Unit 7. However, traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less which are at least 4 feet above the ground or at snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps in boxes are allowed if more than 50 yards from the trail or pullout. Proposed access points include:

Japan Woods - The west side of the Seward Highway from the southern-most tip of Summit Lake (MP 44.5) north to Colorado Creek (MP 46.5).

Tenderfoot Campground – Ski Area - MP 46 of the Seward Highway.

Park N Poke - The west side of the Seward Highway from the southern-most tip of Lower Summit Lake (MP 47) to the gravel pit at (MP 49).

Manitoba Mountain - MP 48 of the Seward Highway, pullout on the east side of the highway for the Alaska Mountain Huts (non-profit organization), following the established .7-mile trail to the Manitoba Cabin, and up the Polly Mine Trail (1 mile) to where it meets with the Manitoba Mountain Trail and continuing up to tree line at the summit of Little Manitoba Mountain.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are found in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

The requested closures are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal will reduce trapping opportunity and may reduce user group conflict. If adopted, the proposal will result in more complex trapping regulations in portions of Unit 7.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to address furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend a significant amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The Department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 152 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along trails and trailheads in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap setback of 100 yards from trails and trailheads listed below in Unit 7. However, traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less which are at least 4 feet above the ground or at snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps in boxes are allowed if more than 50 yards from the trails and trailheads. Proposed access points include:

Crescent Creek Trail; USGS Map Seward, B7, C7 and C8; USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Crescent Creek Trail. Begins at Crescent Creek Trailhead parking area at mile 3.5 of Quartz Creek Road and ascends 6.5 miles to the Crescent Lake Cabin at the west end of the lake.

Lower Russian Lake Trail; USGS Map Seward B8, Kenai B1; USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Russian Lakes Trail. Lower Russian Lake Trail from the trailhead parking located in the Russian River Campground about 1.0 miles from the campground entrance to both the Barber Cabin on the shore of Lower Russian Lake and to the Russian River Falls Overlook.

Bean Creek Trail. Starting at its trailhead at mile 0.5 of the west end of Slaughter Ridge Road to its intersection of the main Resurrection Pass Trail above Juneau Falls.

Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek Trail. This trail is referred to as the Quartz Creek Trail on the 2004 plat approved by the Kenai Peninsula Borough for the Russian Gap Subdivision. This trail ascends behind the west side of KPB parcel 11912507 and continues through parcel 11912513, connecting with the Russian Gap Trail and heading north easterly along a bench below Russian Gap.

Resurrection Trail, South End; USGS Maps Seward B8, C8 and D8. From the southern Resurrection Trail trailhead on the Sterling Highway continuing to the Swan Lake public use cabin.

West Juneau Bench Trail; USGS Maps Seward B8, C8 and D8. From the Sterling Highway pullout at mile 53.25 just west of the southern Resurrection Trail trailhead continuing to its intersection with the Resurrection Trail.

Devil's Pass Ski Loops; USGS Map Seward C7 and C8; USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Devil's Pass Trail. These trails begin at the far end of the parking area for Devil's Pass Trail head at mile 39.5 of the Seward Highway. They loop along the cleared area to the northeast of the parking lot between Quartz Creek and the Seward Highway.

Stetson Creek Parking area and Trail. Stetson Trail parking area at milepost 50.7 of Sterling Highway. Setback of 100 yards around clearing beyond gate under the power line and first 400 yards up the trail.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

The requested closures are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict but may also limit some trapping opportunity. If adopted, the proposal will result in more complex trapping regulations in portions of Unit 7.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to address furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend a significant amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The Department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 153 - 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along Kenai Lake beaches in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap setback of 100 yards from the mean high water mark of Kenai Lake, on the north side from the Kenai River Bridge to 1 mile past the end of Williams Road, and on the south side from the Kenai River Bridge to ¼ mile past the powerline crossing (powerline is at mile 2.8 Snug Harbor Road). This would also apply to that portion of the Kenai Lake Beach (locally known as Waikiki Beach) that is ¼ mile north to ¼ mile south of the lake access road at mile 5.8 Snug Harbor Road in Unit 7. The exceptions would be that traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less which are at least 5 feet above the ground or at snow level or size 3 leghold marten traps set in boxes are allowed if more than 50 yards from the beach. Proposed access points include:

Kenai Lake Beaches: on the North side from the Kenai River Bridge to 1 mile past the end of Williams Road and on the south side from the Kenai River Bridge to ¼ mile past the powerline crossing (powerline is at mile 2.8 Snug Harbor Road). *Area from the mean high-water mark to 100 yds back.*

Kenai Lake Beach (Waikiki Beach); Kenai Lake Beach (locally known as Waikiki Beach) ¼ mile north to ¼ mile south of the lake access road at mile 5.8 Snug Harbor Road. *Area from the mean high-water mark to 100 yds back.*

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550. There are currently no areas in Unit 7 listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

The requested closures are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict but may also limit some trapping opportunity. If adopted, the proposal will result in more complex trapping regulations in portions of Unit 7.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend a significant amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

Many trails that trappers have historically used on the Kenai were originally established by trappers and over time use has diversified as development and the human population has expanded. Many of these same areas have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The Department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is primarily allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 154 - 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.
Require signs be posted at all active trapping access points in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require signs be posted at all active trapping access points in Unit 7. Trapping sign requirements would include 1) be at least 8” x 11”, 2) brightly colored (orange or yellow), 3) waterproof/tear proof, and 4) posted at eye level clearly denoting active trapping in the area. Must include ADF&G license number or “Fish & Wildlife ID number; contact information optional.”

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current methods and means restrictions for trapping can be found in 5 AAC 92.080 and 5 AAC 92.095. There are no signage requirements in Unit 7.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalog of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would likely have no effect on the take of furbearers, but would require extra effort by trappers to construct, post, and maintain signage.

BACKGROUND: Ethical and safe trapping practices are actively encouraged and taught throughout the state by the Alaska Trappers Association and the Alaska Frontier Trappers Association. The department relies heavily upon the experience and collaboration of local trappers to pursue and deal with furbearers that people have conflicts with on a regular basis. Without this relationship, the department would spend a significant amount of time and money addressing nuisance wildlife.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it does not create nor address a biological concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in additional costs for the department if tasked with locating, inventorying, and providing trapping information to all interested parties.

PROPOSAL 155 - 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Close Unit 15C to beaver trapping.

PROPOSED BY: Sue Christiansen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Close Unit 15C to beaver trapping as follows:

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska 5 AAC 92.550 in Unit 15 are as follows:

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to trapping.

There are area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

There is a positive, statewide C&T finding for beavers outside nonsubsistence areas, with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Beaver trapping and harvest opportunity would be lost if this proposal is adopted. This would reduce reasonable opportunity for subsistence outside nonsubsistence areas in Unit 15C.

BACKGROUND: Historically the Anchor River drainage has supported a significant harvest of beavers. In 1976, almost half (64 of 136) of the beavers taken in Unit 15 came from the Anchor River drainage system. The last documented harvest of beavers in this unit was 1 beaver in 2011, previous to which a beaver had not been harvested since 2006 when 4 beavers were taken.

Beaver harvest across Unit 15C has declined significantly in recent years, from an average of 22 beavers per year (2012-2016) to 5 in 2017. Trappers reported to local staff low numbers and poor recruitment along traditional trap lines in 2017.

ADF&G does not conduct surveys for beavers on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beavers are a keystone species that manipulate their environment for their own benefit. Beavers impound water and trap nutrients, creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations, however, are also known to cause real and perceived issues with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water levels or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds, particularly coho salmon; regulate water temperature; and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To address nuisance beaver concerns, the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beavers as required. No nuisance beaver permits have been issued for the Anchor River drainage for at least 20 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it will eliminate beaver trapping and harvest opportunity. As noted in the background section, active beavers were observed in drainages near the Anchor River and it is unknown why beavers have not recolonized the river system.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 156 - 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Close beaver trapping in the Anchor River and Deep Creek Drainages in Unit 15C for six years.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Close beaver trapping in the Anchor River and Deep Creek drainages in Unit 15C for six years with a required review before re-opening.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550:

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

Although there is a positive statewide C&T finding for beavers outside nonsubsistence areas, with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable portion, the drainages referenced in this proposal are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Beaver trapping and harvest opportunity would be lost if this proposal is adopted.

BACKGROUND: Historically the Anchor River drainage has supported a significant harvest of beavers. In 1976, almost half (64 of 136) of the beavers taken in Unit 15 came from the Anchor River drainage system. The last documented harvest of beavers in this unit was 1 beaver in 2011; prior to this, a beaver had not been harvested since 2006 when 4 beaver were taken, despite active trappers in the area.

Beaver harvest across Unit 15C has declined significantly in recent years, from an average of 22 beavers per year (2012-2016) to 5 in 2017. Trappers reported to local staff low numbers and poor recruitment along traditional trap lines in 2017.

ADF&G does not conduct surveys for beavers on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beavers are a keystone species that manipulate their environment for their own benefit. Beavers impound water and trap nutrients, creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations are also known to cause

problems with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water levels or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds, particularly coho salmon; regulate water temperature; and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To address problems caused by nuisance beavers, the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beavers as required. No nuisance beaver permits have been issued for the Anchor River or Deep Creek drainages for at least 20 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. Unlike Proposal 155, this proposal seeks to close specific river systems rather than the entire unit, but will still reduce beaver trapping and harvest opportunity. As noted in the background section active beavers were observed in drainages near the Anchor River and it is unknown why beavers have not recolonized the river system.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 157 - 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer Trapping. Shorten the beaver trapping season in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Shorten the beaver trapping season in Unit 7.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current seasons and bag limits for beaver in Units 7 and 15 can be found in 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer Trapping.

(1) Beaver

Species and Units	Open Season	Bag Limits
Units 7 & 15	Oct. 15 – Apr. 30	20 per season

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The beaver trapping season would be shortened by 17 days with a start date of November 1. Beaver trapping and harvest opportunity will be reduced.

BACKGROUND: Beaver trapping seasons from 2000–2008 were Nov. 10–Mar. 30. They were lengthened during 2009–2014 to Nov. 10–Apr. 30. They were further expanded in 2015 to the current season dates of Oct. 15–Apr. 30.

Greatest annual recorded harvest of beavers in Unit 7 since the year 2000 occurred during the 2002/2003 regulatory year, with 143 beavers harvested via traps or snares. This was somewhat anomalous compared to surrounding years and harvest has subsequently decreased and stabilized. The annual number of recorded Unit 7 trapped or snared beavers has not appreciably increased or decreased since regulatory year 2005/2006 (mean = 21 beavers) despite regulatory changes and changes in fur prices.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it does not create nor address a biological concern. Annual harvest has remained stable in spite of differing season dates and little change is expected if adopted.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 158 - 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer Trapping. Shorten the coyote trapping season in Unit 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Shorten the coyote trapping season in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current seasons and bag limits for coyote in Units 7 and 15 can be found in 5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer Trapping.

(1) Coyote

Species and Units	Open Season	Bag Limits
Units 7 and 15	Oct. 15 – Mar. 31	No Limit

Additional restrictions in Units 7 and 15 are delineated in 5AAC 92.095(a): the following methods and means of taking furbearers under a trapping license are prohibited, in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

...

(7) taking a wolf or coyote with a steel trap, or with a snare smaller than 3/32 inch diameter in

(A) Units 7, 9, 12, 13, 14(B), 15, 16, 17, 19 — 21, 24, and 25 during April or October;

(B) Units 7, 13, 15, and 16 from November 1 through November 9;

Unit 7 is entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. There is a portion of Unit 15C near Seldovia, Nanwalek, and Port Graham that is outside the nonsubsistence area, and there is a positive C&T finding for coyotes with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable surplus.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, the proposal will reduce coyote trapping and harvest opportunity by shortening the trapping season by 26 days: the new start date would be November 10. In addition, snare size restrictions in Units 7 and 15 during the current season dates would be eliminated.

BACKGROUND:

The department does not conduct surveys for coyotes on the Kenai Peninsula and sealing is also not required. Therefore, the department has limited data on the status of populations or the effect of this regulation. As written, this proposal would not influence the methods and means for wolf snaring during October, making adoption of this proposal potentially inconsequential.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it does not create nor address a biological concern. If adopted, the board should consider the practicality of the proposal because wolf trapping, with noted restrictions, will continue and the potential to take coyotes is high.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 159 - 5 AAC 84.270 Furbearer Trapping. Lengthen the wolverine hunting season in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Lengthen the wolverine hunting season in Units 7 and 15. The proponent clarified the season would open on August. 10.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current seasons and bag limits for wolverine hunting in Units 7 and 15 can be found in 5 AAC 85.057. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolverine.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
1 wolverine		

There is a positive C&T finding statewide for wolverines outside nonsubsistence areas, with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable surplus. Unit 7 is within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area; however, a small area of lower Unit 15C is outside the NSA.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The wolverine hunting season would be lengthened, although a proposed start date is not defined in the proposal, the proponent has since clarified the season would open on August 10. Wolverine trapping opportunity will be increased, and a slight increase in harvest may occur.

BACKGROUND: Wolverines in Units 7 and 15 may be harvested under a hunting or trapping license with varying season dates and bag limits. However, all wolverine pelts must be sealed by the department. From 2000–2021, a majority of wolverines were harvested via trapping (47%) followed by snaring (27%) and ground shooting (23%; 3% other). Wolverine harvest via ground shooting is likely opportunistic and incidental while users are pursuing other game (Figure 159-1).

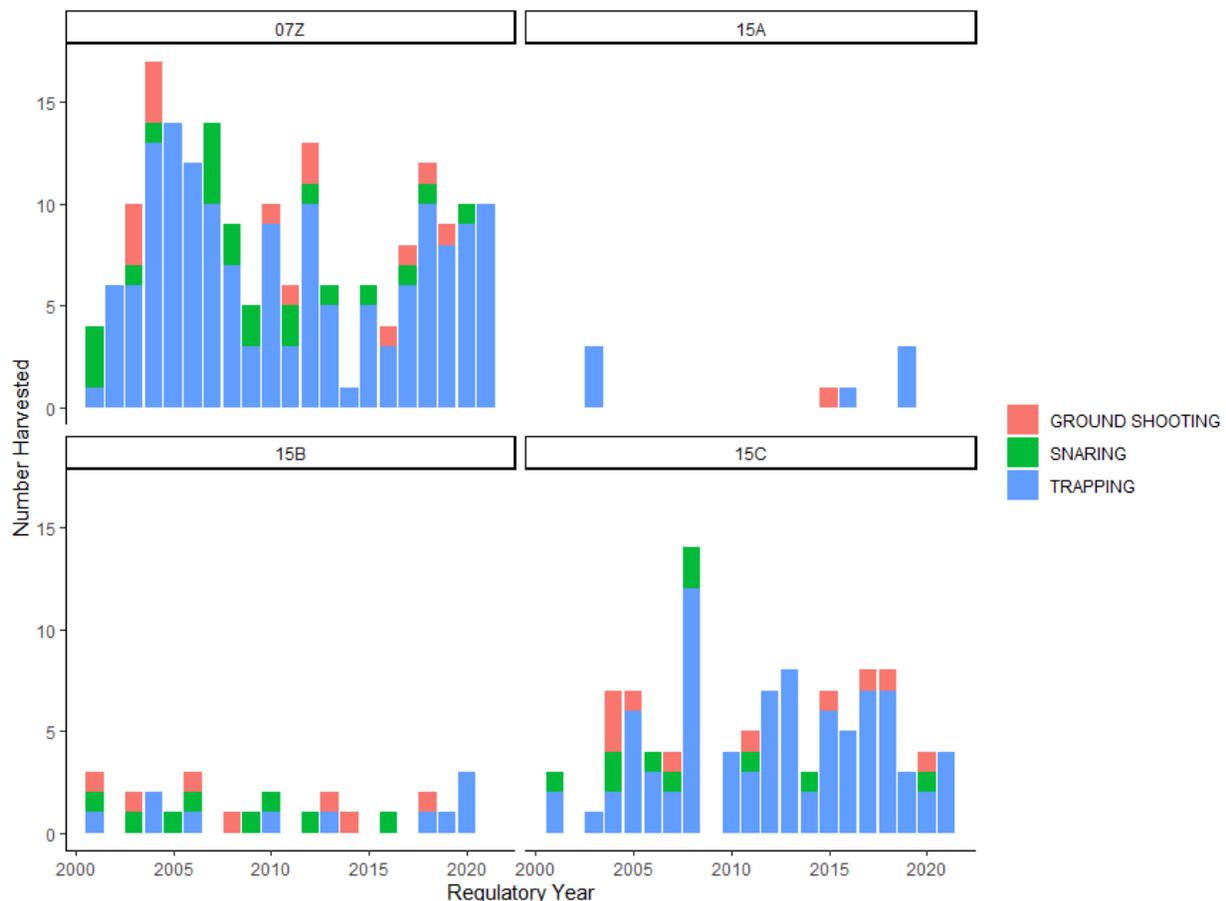


Figure 159-1. Number of wolverines harvested in Units 7 & 15 during regulatory years 2001/2002 – 2020/2021 by method of take.

Across this time period 32% of ground shooting harvest occurred in September followed by 18% in October, 14% in November, 4% in December, 3% in January, 10% in February, and 18% in March. With a limited bag limit of 1 wolverine annually, the department has no concern about extending season dates.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to increase wolverine hunting opportunity. An increase in harvest is expected to be minimal and not create a conservation concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 160 - 5 AAC 92.095(a) Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Limit beaver trapping to one set per lodge for Units 7 and 15 and require visual markers.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would limit beaver trapping to one set per lodge, limit removal to only 1 beaver per lodge, and require each trapped lodge be visually marked with a pole set vertically in the ice in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The following methods and means of taking fur animals under a trapping license are prohibited, in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080:

- (1) by disturbing or destroying a den, except that any muskrat pushups or feeding house may be disturbed in the course of trapping;
- (2) by disturbing or destroying any beaver house;
- (3) taking beaver by any means other than a steel trap or snare, except that a firearm may be used to take two beaver per day in Units 9 and 17 from April 15 through May 31 if the meat is salvaged for human consumption; a firearm may be used to take beaver in Units 1-5, 8, 16, 22, and 23 throughout the seasons and with the bag limits established in 5 AAC 84; a firearm or bow and arrow may be used to take beaver in Unit 17 from Dec. 1 through April 14 if the meat is salvaged; a firearm or bow and arrow may be used to take beaver in Units 12, 19, 20(A), 20(C), 20(E), 20(F), 21, 24, and 25 throughout the seasons and with the bag limits established in 5 AAC 84;
- (4) using a dog, net, or fish trap (except a blackfish or fyke trap);
- (10) taking beavers in Units 11, 13, and 16 from September 25 through November 9, in the remainder of Unit 20(B) and in Unit 20(D) from September 25 through October 31 and from April 16 through May 31, and in Units 7 and 15 from October 15 through November 9 and from April 1 through April 30, except with underwater traps or snares
- (11) by using a hook;

(12) by placing or leaving an active trap or snare set on land or ice that is within 300 feet of the site at which a moose, caribou, or deer was killed as a result of being caught in a trap or snare;; this prohibition applies for the duration of the regulatory year in which the moose, caribou, or deer was killed as a result of being caught in the trap or snare:

There is a positive C&T finding statewide, outside nonsubsistence areas, for beavers, with an ANS of 90% of the harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would reduce potential trapping opportunity by limiting the number of sets and beavers harvested. In addition, extra onus is put on the trapper to ensure lodges are signed and stay signed. This proposal may limit reasonable opportunity for subsistence trappers outside the nonsubsistence area.

BACKGROUND: ADF&G does not conduct surveys for beavers on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beavers are a keystone species that manipulate their environment for their own benefit. Beavers impound water and trap nutrients, creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations, however, are also known to cause problems with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water levels or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds, particularly coho salmon; moderate water temperatures; and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To address concerns caused by nuisance beavers the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beavers as required. No nuisance beaver permits have been issued for the Anchor River drainage in the last 20 years.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. While the proposal provides for trapping and harvest opportunity it will be reduced when it is common practice to make multiple sets to take multiple beavers at a lodge. This restriction is in place on the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in an attempt to mitigate impacts of trapping on beaver abundance; no data are available to determine effectiveness.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 161 – Direct ADF&G to conduct a feasibility study for transporting Sitka Black-tailed deer to Unit 15C, south side of Kachemak Bay.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to direct the department to begin the process required for the transplant of Sitka black-tailed deer to Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? This is not a regulatory proposal. The department has a DWC Wildlife Transplant Policy (WTP; ADF&G 2010) which prescribes the evaluation process for assessing and weighing the potential risks and benefits of proposed transplants.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Because this proposal is non-regulatory and outside the scope of the Board of Game process, the board does not have the authority to direct the department to conduct a feasibility study for transplanting species from one location to another. However, the department is currently discussing this request internally and takes all requests for food security seriously.

BACKGROUND: The DWC Wildlife Transplant Policy (WTP) prescribes the evaluation process to assess and weigh the potential risks and benefits for a proposed transplant. The transplant process requires four steps: a scoping report, a feasibility assessment, public and department review, and a formal department transplant plan. As the first step, the WTP prescribes the following elements for a scoping report:

- A. Identify the species proposed for the transplant;
- B. Identify the transplant category;
- C. Identify the source of the transplant;
- D. Identify the initial transplant location;
- E. Describe the benefits to be derived from the transplant;
- F. Describe the extent of public support for the transplant;
- G. Describe potential ecological risks associated with the transplant; and
- H. Estimate costs associated with the transplant.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Board does not have the authority to direct the Department to expend funds to conduct a feasibility study for transporting Sitka Black-tailed deer to Unit 15C, south side of Kachemak Bay. As such, the Department recommends the Board **TAKE NO ACTION** on this proposal and instead forward to the Department for its consideration.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is expected to result in significant additional costs to the department to complete the necessary steps in the transplant process as described in the DWC Wildlife Transplant Policy.

PROPOSAL 162 – 5 AAC 85.065 (a)(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

Extend the ptarmigan season in a portion of Unit 15C to March 31.

PROPOSED BY: Rollin Braden

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would extend the ptarmigan hunting season from January 31 to March 31 for that portion of Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay and north of the Fox River. There would be no change to the bag limit of 5 per day, 10 in possession.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? That portion of Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay and north of the Fox River for ptarmigan; August 31 – January 31; 5 ptarmigan per day, 10 in possession.

The portion of Unit 15C in question is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? An additional 2 months would be added to the ptarmigan hunting season in that portion of Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay and north of the Fox River. Harvest will increase with the later closure date, despite not changing the bag limit. Increased harvest in February and March has the potential to negatively affect overall population levels because harvest during this time is removing birds that have survived into the next breeding season.

BACKGROUND: At the March 2015 meeting, the board adopted Proposal 175 due to concerns about low ptarmigan abundance and the potential for overharvest. This proposal reduced the season duration and bag limit in Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay and north of the Fox River from August 10-March 31 to August 10-January 31 and from 10 ptarmigan per day, 20 in possession to 5 per day, 10 in possession. Much of this area had become and continues to be very popular for snowmachining and late winter hunting. As a result of technological advancements over the last 20 years snowmachines have ready access to virtually all of this area and have made this ptarmigan population widely accessible. The current regulation has been in place since its adoption in March 2015.

Beginning in 2014, spring breeding surveys for territorial male willow ptarmigan were initiated at several locations in Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay as well as other locations in units 7 and 15A and have since been surveyed annually (Figure 162-1). Overall, the unit 15C willow ptarmigan population north of Kachemak Bay has increased steadily since 2015 although it is still believed to be below historical abundance. In 2021, willow ptarmigan were sighted in

limited numbers in historical portions of their range from which they have been absent for the past several decades. Other populations of willow ptarmigan elsewhere on the Kenai Peninsula have not increased as steadily. Hunting regulations throughout the remainder of units 7 and 15 allow late winter hunting during February and March but access to these areas is more limited.

Through two separate studies on rock and willow ptarmigan in Unit 13 between 2013 and 2017 (Merizon et al. 2018 and Frye et al. 2022) the department identified that natural mortality rates in the fall are high but those in the winter are very low (for populations that have limited or no human harvest mortality in the winter). Therefore, individuals that survive through the period of high mortality in the fall will very likely survive into the breeding season. Late winter (later than 15 February) harvest mortality is additive (i.e., adds additional mortality beyond what is expected naturally) and directly reduces spring breeding densities. The portion of Unit 15C under consideration in this proposal is readily accessible by snowmachine in February and March, which often results in higher harvest potential. Coupled with harvest composition data from Unit 15 (prior to 2015), ease of access likely contributed to the low spring breeding densities observed in Unit 15C prior to 2015.

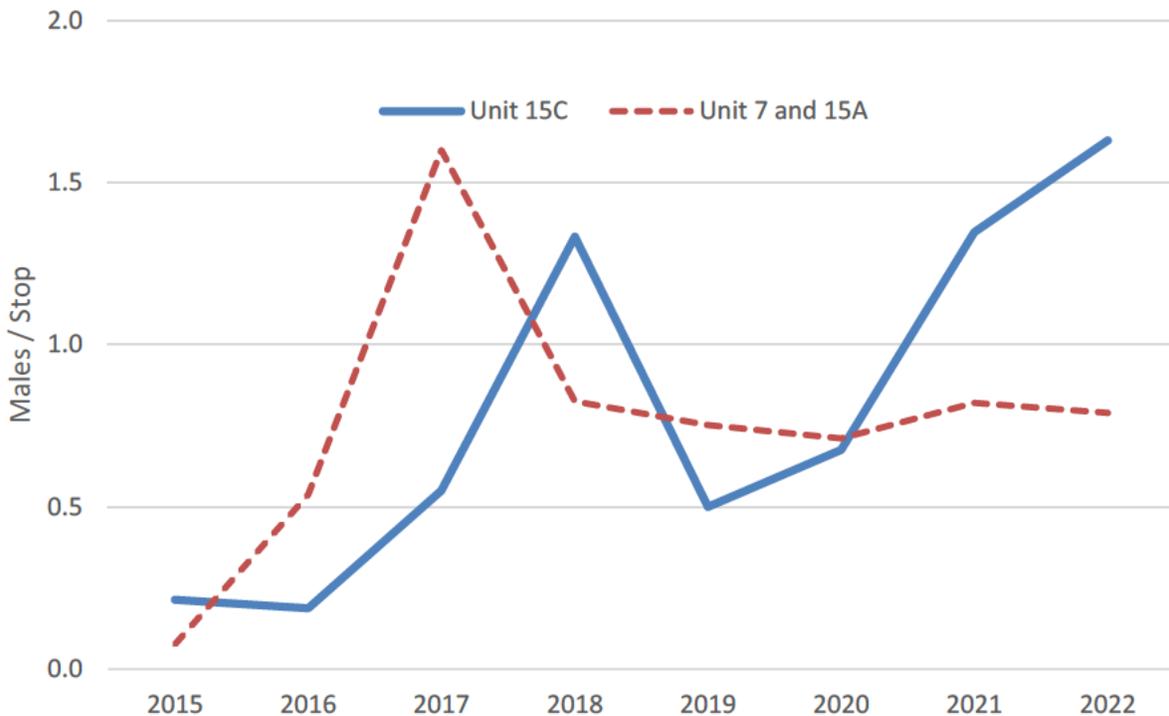


Figure 162-1. Willow ptarmigan spring breeding survey densities in Unit 15C only, and all survey routes combined (ALL Kenai: Units 7, 15A, and 15C), 2015 – 2022.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Although the department does not have any conservation concerns for Unit 15C rock or willow ptarmigan, if lengthly seasons are adopted and large bag limits retained, there could ultimately be a

conservation concern. There are two ways to manage ptarmigan populations, one of which is long seasons which have the potential to reduce ptarmigan populations, the other is with slightly shorter seasons which has a higher likelihood of more abundant populations.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 163 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.

Rescind the bag limit restrictions for sea duck hunting in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Waterfowl Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to rescind the special daily bag and possession limit restrictions in Unit 15C for eiders, harlequin ducks, and long-tailed ducks.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulations allow a daily bag and possession limit for residents and nonresidents of no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession of harlequin ducks or long-tailed ducks, and no more than 1 per day, 2 in possession of eiders (king or common) in Unit 15C.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(B) Sea Ducks (except Spectacled and Steller’s eiders)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
-----------------------------	-----------------------------	--------------------------------

5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), 14, remainder of 15, and 16

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

10 per day, 20 in possession, of which no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession, may be harlequin ducks and no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession, may be

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
(General hunt only)

long-tailed ducks

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

8 per day, 20 in possession; however, no more than 4 each of any sea duck species may be taken per season; and no more than 20 sea ducks of all species may be taken per season

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

Unit 15(C), that portion in Kachemak Bay east of a line from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

10 per day, 20 in possession, of which no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession, may be harlequin ducks, no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession may be long-tailed ducks, and no more than 1 per day, 2 in possession, may be an eider

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

8 per day, 20 in possession, of which no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession, may be harlequin ducks, no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession, may be long-tailed ducks, and no more than 1 per day, 2 in possession, may be an eider

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

...

3. Note: For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? In Unit 15C, resident hunters would be legally permitted to harvest no more than 6 per day and have 12 in possession of harlequin ducks and long-tailed ducks, and no more than 10 per day, 20 in possession of king and common eiders. Nonresident hunters would be legally permitted to harvest no more than 4 each of any sea duck species per season and no more than 20 sea ducks of all species per season. It is unknown if increasing the bag and possession limits will result in a reduction in abundance of harlequin and long-tailed ducks in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: In 1999, with guidance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), the Board of Game (board) adopted moderate restrictions to sea duck bag and possession limits in response to general concerns over large-scale long-term declining trends in some species of sea ducks in Alaska. The limits were reduced for residents from 15 daily, 30 in possession to 10 daily, 20 in possession, and restricted nonresidents to no more than 4 each of scoters, eiders, harlequin and long-tailed ducks per season and a per season total possession limit. In addition, limits for harlequin ducks and long-tailed ducks were reduced by considering them under the general duck limit. In 2001, the board further clarified these regulations for residents and non-residents but included a restriction that limited residents to no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession for harlequin ducks or long-tailed ducks. The department noted these modifications were appropriate and represented a practical balance of precaution over resource concerns and retention of sea duck harvest opportunity in Alaska. In subsequent board cycles, the public expressed continued concerns over perceived localized depletions of sea ducks in Kachemak Bay and in 2010, the board further reduced the resident/nonresident limits in Unit 15C for harlequin ducks and long-tailed ducks to no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession and for eiders to no more than 1 per day, 2 in possession.

The biology of sea ducks in general complicates efforts to assess their status and trends: there are few surveys well suited or specific to monitoring sea ducks. However, continental-scale (Waterfowl Breeding Population and Habitat Survey [BPOP]) or regional breeding pair surveys (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Arctic Coastal Plain) provide some information on sea duck populations in Alaska. Long-term annual indices from these surveys have shown population declines in many species between the 1970s and mid-1990s: for example, eiders, scoters, and long-tailed ducks seemingly experienced apparent declines of 50+%. Reasons for these declines are unknown. Since the 1990s, many sea duck population trends have either stabilized or are increasing, although abundances remain below historical population levels. Long-term (1964–2019) trend data from the Alaska strata of the BPOP indicate long-tailed ducks declined at an average annual rate of -2.69% with a continued decline of -11.77% from 2010–2019. In contrast, data from regional surveys indicate positive long-term trends for king and common eiders at average annual rates of 2.5% and $\geq 4\%$, respectively.

Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic aerial and boat-based surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially, the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates

of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results indicated an annual increase of 1.2% in the abundance index for harlequin ducks and an annual decrease of -0.37% for long-tailed ducks. Survey observations of king and common eiders were insufficient to reliably calculate trends in abundance indices.

Annual harvest of sea ducks during the fall-winter period is estimated by the Service via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for long-tailed ducks was 487. For harlequin ducks the long-term average harvest was 1,514. Harvest estimates for eiders are grouped and the long-term average was 259.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that sea duck management is directed primarily at the population level, in many cases at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends or harvest at small geographic scales (e.g., Unit 15C) across the state that might direct regulatory decisions. If this proposal is adopted, the department recommends amending the proposed regulations for common and king eiders to match the regulations for harlequin and long-tailed ducks.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 164 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.
Reduce the bag limit for goldeneye in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for goldeneye to 4 per day, 8 in possession in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for goldeneye of 8 per day, 24 in possession in Units 5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 - 16.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(A) Ducks (except sea ducks)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), and 14 - 16		
8 per day, 24 in possession however, no more than 2 per day, 6 in possession may be canvasbacks	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

3. Note: The limits for ducks in 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(A) include all species of ducks, except those designated as sea ducks. For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 4 goldeneyes per day and have more than 8 in possession in Units 7 and 15. It is unknown if a reduction in bag limits would result in an increase in goldeneye abundance in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: Goldeneyes are comprised of two species: Barrow’s goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) and common goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Both species breed and overwinter in Alaska, but their annual distributions also include portions of the contiguous U.S. and Canada. In general, common goldeneyes have a more widespread distribution than Barrow’s goldeneye. Taxonomically, goldeneyes are classified as sea ducks but are included in the general duck bag and possession limits under federal regulations. Because the goldeneye species are closely allied and are often difficult to distinguish, most population monitoring does not separate species.

Statewide status: Population status is assessed from an aerial survey of breeding birds (BPOP) conducted annually in Canada and the U.S. by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BPOP was designed to monitor duck populations at the continental scale, but population indices of

goldeneyes in Alaska may be derived by combining indices from the Alaska/Yukon survey strata. However, notable caveats are that these indices are based on relatively low survey counts and do not include assessment of goldeneyes that winter in Alaska and breed in western portions of Canada (e.g., much of the Yukon Territory and British Columbia) absent BPOP survey coverage. The long-term (1964-2019) trend in the goldeneye breeding population index in the Alaska/Yukon strata was -1.4% per year, with an average index of 64,091. The trend in the index over the most recent 10-years of consecutive surveys (2010-2019) was -7.18% per year with an average index of 28,033.

Local status: Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic aerial and boat-based surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results showed an annual decrease of approximately -0.75% (95% CI = -2.28 – 0.85) in the abundance index for goldeneye, although the 95% credible interval for the rate of change encompassed zero, indicating uncertainty in the trend trajectory. Goldeneyes were the most abundant species group counted, comprising ~25% of the total observations during the 10-year survey period. Most survey observations of goldeneyes were in nearshore habitats.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for Barrow's goldeneye was 1,857 and for common goldeneye was 1,083.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal issue inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of goldeneyes. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Goldeneyes are harvested at relatively low levels in Alaska, and further restrictions to hunting in two Units are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to the goldeneye population in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 165 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.

Reduce the bag limit for goldeneye in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Penelope Haas

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for goldeneye to 4 per day, 8 in possession in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for goldeneye of 8 per day, 24 in possession in Units 5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 - 16.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(A) Ducks (except sea ducks)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), and 14 - 16	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
8 per day, 24 in possession however, no more than 2 per day, 6 in possession may be canvasbacks		

3. Note: The limits for ducks in 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(A) include all species of ducks, except those designated as sea ducks. For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 4 goldeneyes per day and have more than 8 in possession in Units 15C. It is unknown if reducing the bag limit will result in an increase in goldeneye abundance in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: Goldeneyes are comprised of two species: Barrow's goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) and common goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). Both species breed and overwinter in Alaska, but their annual distributions also include portions of the contiguous U.S. and Canada. In general, common goldeneyes have a more widespread distribution than Barrow's goldeneye. Taxonomically, goldeneyes are classified as sea ducks but are included in the general duck bag and possession limits under federal regulations. Because the goldeneye species are closely allied and the species are often difficult to distinguish, most population monitoring does not separate the species.

Statewide status: Population status is assessed from an aerial survey of breeding birds (BPOP) conducted annually in Canada and the U.S. by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BPOP was designed to monitor duck populations at the continental scale, but population indices of goldeneyes in Alaska may be derived by combining indices from the Alaska/Yukon survey strata. However, notable caveats are that the indices are based on relatively low survey counts; and do not include assessment of goldeneyes that winter in Alaska and breed in western portions of Canada (e.g., much of the Yukon Territory and British Columbia) absent BPOP survey coverage. The long-term (1964-2019) trend in the goldeneye breeding population index in the Alaska/Yukon strata was -1.4% per year, with an average index of 64,091. The trend in the index over the most recent 10-years of consecutive surveys (2010-2019) was -7.18% per year with an average index of 28,033.

Local status: Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic aerial and boat-based surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results showed an annual decrease of approximately -0.75% (95% CI = -2.28 – 0.85) in the abundance index for goldeneye, although the 95% credible interval for the rate of change encompassed zero, indicating considerable uncertainty in the trend trajectory. Goldeneyes were the most abundant species group counted, comprising ~25% of the total observations during the 10-year survey period. Most survey observations of goldeneyes were in nearshore habitats.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S.,

flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for Barrow's goldeneye was 1,857 and for common goldeneye was 1,083.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal issue inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of goldeneyes. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Goldeneyes are harvested at relatively low levels in Alaska, and further restrictions to hunting in a single subunit is unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to the goldeneye population in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 166 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.
Reduce the bag limit for bufflehead in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for bufflehead to 4 per day, 8 in possession in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for bufflehead of 8 per day, 24 in possession in Units 5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 - 16.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(A) Ducks (except sea ducks)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), and 14 - 16		

8 per day,
24 in possession
however, no more than 2 per
day, 6 in possession may be
canvasbacks

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

3. Note: The limits for ducks in 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(A) include all species of ducks, except those designated as sea ducks. For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 4 bufflehead per day and have more than 8 in possession in Units 7 and 15. It is unknown if reducing the bag limit will result in an increase in bufflehead abundance in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: Buffleheads (*Bucephala albeola*) are the smallest sized diving duck in North America. Buffleheads primarily breed across the boreal forest and aspen parklands ecoregions, and winter in maritime and inland waters across the U.S. and Mexico. In Alaska, buffleheads breed in boreal regions of the Interior and winter in nearshore marine waters from the far Aleutian Islands to the Southeast panhandle of the state. Taxonomically, buffleheads are classified as sea ducks but are included in the general duck bag and possession limits under federal regulations.

Statewide status: Population status is assessed from an aerial survey of breeding birds (BPOP) conducted annually in Canada and the U.S. by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BPOP was designed to monitor duck populations at the continental scale, but population indices of buffleheads in Alaska may be derived by combining indices from survey strata in the Alaska/Yukon portion of the survey. The long-term (1955-2019) trend in the bufflehead breeding population index was positive at 0.48% per year, with an average index of 44,419. The trend in the index over the most recent 10-years of consecutive surveys (2010-2019) showed a slight decline of -2.8% per year with an average index of 45,128.

Local status: Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic aerial and boat-based surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data

were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results showed an annual increase of approximately 2.0% (95% CI = -0.17 – 4.33) in the abundance index for buffleheads, although the 95% credible interval for the rate of change encompassed zero, indicating some uncertainty in the trend trajectory. Buffleheads comprised <4% of the total observations during the 10-year survey period and were found primarily in the nearshore habitats.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for buffleheads was 1,200.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal concern inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of buffleheads. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Buffleheads are harvested at relatively low levels in Alaska, and there is unlikely to be risk of population-level overharvest. Further restrictions to hunting in two Units are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to regional winter aggregations or the population in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 167 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.
Reduce the bag limit for bufflehead in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Penelope Haas

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for bufflehead to 4 per day, 8 in possession in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for bufflehead of 8 per day, 24 in possession in Units 5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 - 16.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(A) Ducks (except sea ducks)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), and 14 - 16		
8 per day, 24 in possession however, no more than 2 per day, 6 in possession may be canvasbacks	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

3. Note: The limits for ducks in 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(A) include all species of ducks, except those designated as sea ducks. For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 4 bufflehead per day and have more than 8 in possession in Unit 15C. It is unknown if a reduction in bag and possession limits would result in an increase in bufflehead abundance in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: Buffleheads (*Bucephala albeola*) are the smallest sized diving duck in North America. Buffleheads breed primarily across the boreal forest and aspen parklands ecoregions, and winter in maritime and inland waters across the U.S. and Mexico. In Alaska, buffleheads breed in boreal regions of the Interior and winter in nearshore marine waters from the far Aleutian Islands to the Southeast panhandle of the state. Taxonomically, buffleheads are classified as sea ducks but are included in the general duck bag and possession limits under federal regulations.

Statewide status: Population status is assessed from an aerial survey of breeding birds (BPOP) conducted annually in Canada and the U.S. by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The BPOP was designed to monitor duck populations at the continental scale, but population indices of buffleheads in Alaska may be derived by combining indices from survey strata in the Alaska/Yukon portion of the survey. The long-term (1955-2019) trend in the bufflehead breeding population index was positive at 0.48% per year, with an average index of 44,419. The trend in the index over the most recent 10-years of consecutive surveys (2010-2019) showed a slightly declining trend of -2.8% per year with an average index of 45,128.

Local status: Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic aerial and boat-based surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results showed an annual increase of approximately 2.0% (95% CI = -0.17 – 4.33) in the abundance index for buffleheads, although the 95% credible interval for the rate of change encompassed zero, indicating some uncertainty in the trend trajectory. Buffleheads comprised <4% of the total observations during the 10-year survey period and were found primarily in the nearshore habitats.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for buffleheads was 1,200.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal concern inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of buffleheads. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Buffleheads are harvested at relatively low levels in Alaska, and there is unlikely to be risk of overharvest. Further restrictions to hunting in a single subunit are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to regional winter aggregations or the population in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 168 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.

Reduce the bag limit for harlequin duck for Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for harlequin ducks to 1 per day, 2 in possession in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for harlequin ducks of 6 per day, 12 in possession in Units 5 – 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 – 16 for resident hunters, and 4 each of any sea duck per season for nonresidents. In Unit 15C, the resident and nonresident hunter daily bag and possession limit is 2 per day, 4 in possession.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(B) Sea Ducks (except Spectacled and Steller’s eiders)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), 14, remainder of 15, and 16		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 10 per day, 20 in possession, of which and no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession, may be harlequin ducks...	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 8 per day, 20 in possession; however, no more than 4 each of any sea duck species may be taken per season;		Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

and no more than 20 sea ducks
of all species may be taken per season

Unit 15(C), that portion in
Kachemak Bay east of a line
from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

10 per day, 20 in Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
possession, of which (General hunt only)
no more than 2 per day,
4 in possession, may be harlequin ducks...

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

8 per day, 20 in Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
possession, of which no more
than 2 per day, 4 in possession
may be harlequin ducks...

3. Note: For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 1 harlequin duck per day nor have more than 2 in possession in Units 7 and 15. It is unknown if a reduction in bag and possession limits will result in an increase in abundance of harlequin ducks in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: There are two distinct populations of harlequin ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) in North America: a small population in Eastern Canada and a larger population that resides along the west coast from Alaska to California. In Alaska, harlequin ducks breed in mountainous regions on fast flowing rivers and streams, and winter in rocky intertidal habitats from the far Aleutian Islands to the Southeast panhandle of the state. Harlequin ducks are seemingly abundant in Alaska but there are no range-wide surveys that have consistently tracked long-term trends or provided estimates of population abundance.

Statewide status: Comprehensive data on status and trends are presently unattainable because harlequin ducks are difficult to observe in their remote breeding and wintering habitats, which span extensive geographic areas. Perhaps the most inclusive statewide abundance dataset is the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), an annual road-based community science effort that enumerates

bird species in December across Alaska in 38 locations; however, the locations represent only a small fraction of the winter range of harlequin ducks. The trend in CBC data indicates the wintering harlequin duck population slightly increased at an annual rate of 0.51% (95% CI: -0.83 – 2.29) since 1970, and 0.78% (95% CI: -1.39 – 3.55) from 2009–2019. Most other status and trend data are from infrequent, often boat-based, surveys of relatively localized geographic wintering areas around the state from the 1970s to the 2000s. The surveys included sites in the Aleutians (1992-1993), lower Cook Inlet (1994), Kachemak Bay (1999–2003, 2012–2014, 2018–2019), Prince William Sound (1997–2005, 2007–2009), Kodiak Island (1994–1997; 2004–2007), and Southeast Alaska (complete coverage over 5 years 1997–2001). Small-scale population trends can be derived from the Prince William Sound, Kodiak Island, and Kachemak Bay surveys. Surveys showed stable trends for harlequin ducks in Prince William Sound and Kodiak Island, and an increasing trend of 1.2% (95% CI = -0.24 – 2.64) annually in Kachemak Bay with some uncertainty in the trend trajectory over the 10-survey-years.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for harlequin ducks in Alaska was 1,514.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal issue inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of harlequin ducks. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Local aggregations in Southcentral appear to have stable trends, and there is likely little risk that harlequin ducks are overharvested in Alaska. Further restrictions to hunting in two Units are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to regional winter aggregations of harlequin ducks or the Alaska population.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 169 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.
Reduce the bag limit for harlequin in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Penelope Haas

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for harlequin ducks to 1 per day, 2 in possession in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for harlequin ducks of 6 per day, 12 in possession in Units 5 – 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 – 16 for resident hunters, and 4 each of any sea duck per season for nonresidents. In Unit 15C, the resident and nonresident hunter daily bag and possession limit is 2 per day, 4 in possession.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(B) Sea Ducks (except Spectacled and Steller’s eiders)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), 14, remainder of 15, and 16		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 10 per day, 20 in possession, of which and no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession, may be harlequin ducks...	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 8 per day, 20 in possession; however, no more than 4 each of any sea duck species may be taken per season; and no more than 20 sea ducks of all species may be taken per season		Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
Unit 15(C), that portion in Kachemak Bay east of a line from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		

10 per day, 20 in possession, of which... no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession, may be harlequin ducks...

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

8 per day, 20 in possession, of which no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession may be harlequin ducks...

Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

3. Note: For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 1 harlequin duck per day nor have more than 2 in possession in Unit 15C. It is unknown if a reduction in bag and possession limits will result in an increase in abundance of harlequin ducks in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: There are two distinct populations of harlequin ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) in North America: a small population in Eastern Canada and a larger population that resides along the west coast from Alaska to California. In Alaska, harlequin ducks breed in mountainous regions on fast flowing rivers and streams, and winter in rocky intertidal habitats from the far Aleutian Islands to the Southeast panhandle of the state. Harlequin ducks are seemingly abundant in Alaska but there are no range-wide surveys that have consistently tracked long-term trends or enumerated the population.

Statewide status: Comprehensive data on status and trends are unattainable because harlequin ducks are difficult to observe in their remote breeding and wintering habitats, which span extensive geographic areas. Perhaps the most inclusive statewide abundance data set is the Christmas Bird Count (CBC), an annual road-based community science effort that enumerates bird species in December across Alaska in 38 locations; however, the locations represent only a small fraction of the winter range of harlequin ducks. The trend in CBC data indicates the wintering harlequin duck population slightly increased at an annual rate of 0.51% (95% CI: -0.83 – 2.29) since 1970, and 0.78% (95% CI: -1.39 – 3.55) from 2009–2019. Most other status and trend data are from infrequent, often boat-based, surveys of relatively localized geographic wintering areas around the state from the 1970s to the 2000s. The surveys included sites in the

Aleutians (1992-1993), lower Cook Inlet (1994), Kachemak Bay (1999–2003, 2012–2014, 2018–2019), Prince William Sound (1997–2005, 2007–2009), Kodiak Island (1994–1997; 2004–2007), and Southeast Alaska (complete coverage over 5 years 1997–2001). Small-scale population trends can be derived from the Prince William Sound, Kodiak Island, and Kachemak Bay surveys. Surveys showed stable trends for harlequin ducks in Prince William Sound and Kodiak Island, and an increasing trend of 1.2% (95% CI = -0.24 – 2.64) annually in Kachemak Bay with some uncertainty in the trend trajectory over the 10-survey-years.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for harlequin ducks in Alaska was 1,514.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal issue inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of harlequin ducks. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Local aggregations in Southcentral appear to have stable trends, and there is likely little risk that harlequin ducks are overharvested in Alaska. Further restrictions to hunting in a single subunit are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to regional winter aggregations of harlequin ducks or the Alaska population.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 170 – 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting season and bag limits for small game.
Reduce the bag limit for long-tailed duck in Units 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to reduce the daily bag and possession limits for long-tailed ducks to 1 per day, 2 in possession in Units 7 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current regulations were established consistent with the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and based on the recommendations of the Pacific Flyway Council in consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife

Service. The Board of Game has the authority to set regulations for migratory game birds provided they are consistent with or more restrictive than the federal frameworks for Alaska.

The current regulation allows a daily bag and possession limit for long-tailed ducks of 6 per day, 12 in possession in Units 5 – 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Island), and 14 – 16 for resident hunters, and 4 each of any sea duck per season for nonresidents. In Unit 15C, resident and nonresident hunter daily bag and possession limit is 2 per day, 4 in possession.

5 AAC 85.065(a)(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

...

(B) Sea Ducks (except Spectacled and Steller’s eiders)³

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
5 – 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), 14, remainder of 15, and 16		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 10 per day, 20 in possession, of which... and no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession, may be long-tailed ducks	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 8 per day, 20 in possession; however, no more than 4 each of any sea duck species may be taken per season; and no more than 20 sea ducks of all species may be taken per season		Sept. 1 – Dec. 16
Unit 15(C), that portion in Kachemak Bay east of a line from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 10 per day, 20 in possession, of which... no more than 2 per day, 4 in possession, may be long-tailed ducks...	Sept. 1 – Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 8 per day, 20 in		Sept. 1 – Dec. 16

possession, of which no more...
than 2 per day, 4 in possession
may be long-tailed ducks...

3. Note: For the purposes of this regulation, sea ducks include harlequin ducks, long-tailed ducks, eiders, scoters, and common and red-breasted mergansers...

Except for the waters around Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek, Kachemak Bay is located within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Use Area. Outside the NSA, there is a positive C&T finding for migratory birds (which includes waterfowl) in all units with a harvestable portion.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters would not be legally permitted to harvest more than 1 long-tailed duck per day nor have more than 2 in possession in Units 7 and 15. It is unknown if a reduction in bag and possession limits will result in an increase of long-tailed duck abundance in Kachemak Bay.

BACKGROUND: Long-tailed ducks (*Clangula hyemalis*) are sea ducks that have a circumpolar distribution and breed in tundra habitats of the arctic and subarctic regions, and winter in coastal marine waters or large inland lakes. In Alaska, long-tailed ducks breed in tundra habitats in western and northern regions and winter in marine waters from the far Aleutian Islands to the Southeast panhandle of the state. Wintering aggregations of long-tailed ducks in Alaska appear unaffiliated with distinct breeding areas, and birds breeding across the arctic and subarctic are affiliated with numerous wintering areas across southern Beringia.

Statewide status: Estimates of abundance are difficult to obtain because long-tailed ducks breed over a wide range at low densities, and in areas outside of traditional survey coverage. However, surveys of breeding birds can provide some information on status and trends of long-tailed ducks in Alaska. Population indices may be derived from a continent-wide aerial survey of breeding birds (BPOP) conducted annually in Canada and the U.S. by combining indices from strata in the Alaska/Yukon portion of the survey. From these strata, the long-term (1964-2019) trend in the breeding population index was -2.7% per year, with an average index of 110,995. The trend in the index over the most recent 10-years of consecutive surveys (2010-2019) was -11.7% per year with an average index of 46,372.

Regional-scale surveys of western and northern Alaska, primary breeding areas for long-tailed ducks, also offer information on status and trends. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta aerial breeding pair survey has provided data on distribution, abundance, and trend of waterfowl species breeding in western Alaska. The long-term (1988-2016) trend in the population index was slightly declining at -0.9% per year with an average index of 5,875 but the most recent 10-year (2007-2016) trend was slightly increasing at 1.1% per year with an average index of 4,591. The Arctic Coastal Plain aerial breeding pair survey has provided data on distribution, abundance and

trend of waterfowl species breeding in northern Alaska. The long-term (1986-2017) trend in the population index showed a slight decline at -0.9% per year with an average index of 51,151. The most recent 10-year (2008-2017) trend also showed a slight decline at -2.8% per year with an average index of 50,654.

Local status: Because of continued public interest in the waterfowl resources in Kachemak Bay (KB), the department conducted periodic boat-based / aerial surveys of wintering waterfowl in 1999-2003, 2012-2014, and 2018-2019. Initially, the objective of the surveys was to obtain estimates of abundance and trends for waterfowl species wintering in KB. However, the survey design disallowed accounting for imperfect detection and double counting of birds. Thus, data were analyzed as trends in abundance indices over the duration of the survey. Results showed a slight annual decline of approximately -0.41% (95% CI = -2.30 – 1.49) in the abundance index for long-tailed ducks, although there is some uncertainty in the trend trajectory given that the 95% credible interval encompassed zero. Long-tailed ducks comprised 2.4% of the total observations during the 10-year survey period: the highest number of survey observations of long-tailed ducks occurred offshore.

Harvest estimates: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service monitors the annual fall-winter harvest of migratory birds and hunter activity via a national harvest survey informed by the Harvest Information Program (HIP). Hunters in Alaska register for HIP with the purchase of a state duck stamp. The HIP is designed to provide species-specific harvest estimates at the scale of the U.S., flyway, and state. The long-term (1999-2021) average annual statewide harvest estimate for long-tailed ducks in Alaska was 487.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal. However, the department notes that a principal issue inherent in this proposal is perceived local depletion of long-tailed ducks. The department and other wildlife agencies focus waterfowl management primarily at the population level; however, in this case management is at the statewide scale with consideration for regional scale (i.e., Hunt Zone) management if appropriate. The department has no practical or reliable means of monitoring population trends and harvest at small geographic scales across the state that might direct sensible regulatory decisions. Long-tailed ducks are harvested at relatively low levels in Alaska, and further restrictions to hunting in two Units are unlikely to provide meaningful conservation benefit to the long-tailed duck population in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 171 – 5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures.

Direct ADF&G to implement a method for accurate reporting of sea duck harvest for Units 6, 7 and 15.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to direct the department to record sea duck harvest in Units 6, 7, and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is not a current regulation that requires the department to record hunter harvest of sea ducks in Alaska. However, the following regulation requires all hunters that possess an Alaska waterfowl conservation tag (state duck stamp) to register with the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) as part of the National Migratory Bird Harvest Survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service).

5 AAC 92.018. Waterfowl conservation tag. A person required to possess an Alaska waterfowl conservation tag or “stamp” under AS 16.05.340(a)(17) shall

- (1) register in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program and carry proof of that registration while hunting migratory birds; and...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The department would be required to develop and administer a harvest survey of hunters to record sea duck harvest in Units 6, 7, and 15. By implementing a localized harvest survey, limited data would be available on sea duck harvest. However, because of these limitations and accuracy concerns, the goal of attaining small area harvest estimates is unlikely to be met.

BACKGROUND: Harvest monitoring is an important component of management and regulatory decisions for migratory game birds. Methods for monitoring annual harvest have varied since the 1950s, including early templates by the Service and many state sponsored harvest surveys.

The department conducted a survey of waterfowl harvest in Alaska from 1971–1997, primarily via a voluntary mail-in questionnaire provided to hunters who purchased the state duck stamp. The survey was designed to estimate hunter activity and harvest of ducks, sea ducks, five goose species, cranes, and snipe in 12 geographic regions across the state. Hunters were not asked to specify their duck or sea duck harvest in order to avoid potential inaccuracies due to misidentification. The department discontinued the statewide harvest survey in 1998 when the Service fully implemented an annual national fall-winter harvest survey in partnership with state wildlife agencies across the U.S.

The national harvest survey was developed to assess nationwide harvest of migratory game birds in recognition of long-standing problems with traditional state and federal surveys including: inadequate sampling of migratory bird hunters, lack of information on non-waterfowl species (e.g., snipe, sandhill cranes, doves) and less frequently hunted species (e.g., sea ducks, brant),

and inconsistent survey methods among states, all of which prevented comprehensive flyway and national harvest estimates.

The national harvest survey monitors harvest of migratory game birds and hunter activity in the U.S. by implementing three important components: the Harvest Information Program (HIP), the National Migratory Bird Harvest Survey (diary survey), and the Parts Collection Survey (PCS). The HIP requires that licensed migratory game bird hunters annually register with the program in each state they hunt (in Alaska, hunters register for HIP with purchase of the state duck stamp). State agencies collect personal information and the previous year's hunting activity from registered hunters and send it to the Service. The Service uses this list to draw and stratify a statistical sample of hunters for a voluntary harvest diary survey designed to record their hunting activity throughout a hunt season. The Service conducts 5 separate harvest diary surveys to estimate harvest and hunter activity of waterfowl (ducks, sea ducks, geese, brant); doves and pigeons; woodcock, snipe, rails, gallinules, and coots; and sandhill cranes.

The Service also conducts the PCS annually to estimate species, age, and sex composition of the harvest. Hunters voluntarily collect and send in either wings (ducks, brant, coots) or tail feathers (geese) from birds they shot throughout a hunting season. At season's end, the Service and state wildlife agencies examine the submitted wings and tail feathers to determine species, age, and sex composition of the harvest. The species composition estimates derived from the PCS are combined with harvest estimates from the HIP survey to calculate annual species-specific duck and goose harvest estimates for each state, as well as nationwide.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because statewide species-specific harvest estimates for migratory game birds are being provided to the state through the national harvest survey conducted annually by the Service; this includes HIP registration, the diary survey, and the PCS. All persons who purchase a state duck stamp in Alaska are automatically enrolled in the HIP.

The national harvest survey is used to generate harvest estimates at large geographic scales (i.e., continental to state level), in agreement with the scale of population monitoring. Accordingly, migratory game bird management (in this case, sea ducks) is aimed at these larger scales – with consideration for regional scale management when appropriate (i.e., in Alaska, the 5 Migratory Bird Hunt Zones).

The department also notes that lacking any complementary population status and trend information for sea duck species at a corresponding scale, regional harvest data are devoid of context and impractical for harvest management. The department cautions that without an independent assessment of species composition (e.g., a regional PCS), a harvest survey is susceptible to inaccuracies from species misidentification.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in significant additional costs to the department for the development, annual administration, and reporting of a sea duck harvest survey in Units 6, 7, and 15.

PROPOSAL 172 – 5 AAC 92.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures.
Require mandatory harvest reporting for sea ducks in Kachemak Bay in Unit 15C.

PROPOSED BY: Penelope Haas

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal seeks to direct the department to record sea duck harvest in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is not a current regulation that requires the department to record hunter harvest of sea ducks in Alaska. However, the following regulation requires all hunters who possess an Alaska waterfowl conservation tag (state duck stamp) to register with the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program (HIP) as part of the National Migratory Bird Harvest Survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

5 AAC 92.018. Waterfowl conservation tag. A person required to possess an Alaska waterfowl conservation tag or “stamp” under AS 16.05.340(a)(17) shall

- (1) register in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program and carry proof of that registration while hunting migratory birds; and...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The department would be required to develop and administer a harvest survey of hunters to record sea duck harvest in Unit 15C. By implementing a localized harvest survey, limited data would be available on sea duck harvest. However, because of these limitations and accuracy concerns, the goal of attaining small area harvest estimates is unlikely to be met.

BACKGROUND: Harvest monitoring is an important component of management and regulatory decisions for migratory game birds. Methods for monitoring annual harvest have varied since the 1950s, including early templates by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and many state sponsored harvest surveys.

The department conducted a survey of waterfowl harvest in Alaska from 1971–1997, primarily via a voluntary mail-in questionnaire provided to hunters who purchased the state duck stamp. The survey was designed to estimate hunter activity and harvest of ducks, sea ducks, five goose species, cranes, and snipe in 12 geographic regions across the state. Hunters were not asked to speculate their duck or sea duck harvest in order to avoid potential inaccuracies due to misidentification. The department discontinued the statewide harvest survey in 1998 when the

Service fully implemented an annual national fall-winter harvest survey in partnership with state wildlife agencies across the U.S.

The national harvest survey was developed to assess nationwide harvest of migratory game birds in recognition of long-standing problems with traditional state and federal surveys including: inadequate sampling of migratory bird hunters, lack of information on non-waterfowl species (e.g., snipe, sandhill cranes, doves) and less frequently hunted species (e.g., sea ducks, brant), and inconsistent survey methods among states, all of which prevented comprehensive flyway and national harvest estimates.

The national harvest survey monitors harvest of migratory game birds and hunter activity in the U.S. by implementing three important components: the Harvest Information Program (HIP), the National Migratory Bird Harvest Survey (diary survey), and the Parts Collection Survey (PCS). The HIP requires that licensed migratory game bird hunters annually register with the program in each state they hunt (in Alaska, hunters register for HIP with purchase of the state duck stamp). State agencies collect personal information and the previous year's hunting activity from registered hunters and send it to the Service. The Service uses this list to draw and stratify a statistical sample of hunters for a voluntary harvest diary survey designed to record their hunting activity throughout a hunt season. The Service conducts 5 separate harvest diary surveys to estimate harvest and hunter activity of: waterfowl (ducks, sea ducks, geese, brant); doves and pigeons; woodcock, snipe, rails, gallinules, and coots; and sandhill cranes.

The Service also conducts the PCS annually to estimate species, age, and sex composition of the harvest. Hunters voluntarily collect and send in either wings (ducks, brant, coots) or tail feathers (geese) from birds they shot throughout a hunting season. At season's end, the Service and state wildlife agencies examine the submitted wings and tail feathers to determine species, age, and sex composition of the harvest. The species composition estimates derived from the PCS are combined with harvest estimates from the HIP survey to calculate annual species-specific duck and goose harvest estimates for each state, as well as nationwide.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because statewide species-specific harvest estimates for migratory game birds are being provided to the state through the national harvest survey conducted annually by the Service; this includes HIP registration, the diary survey, and the PCS. All persons that purchase a state duck stamp in Alaska are automatically enrolled in the HIP.

The national harvest survey is used to generate harvest estimates at large geographic scales (i.e., continental to state level), in agreement with the scale of population monitoring. Accordingly, migratory game bird management (in this case sea ducks) is aimed at these larger scales – with consideration for regional scale management when appropriate (i.e., in Alaska, the 5 Migratory Bird Hunt Zones).

The department also notes that lacking any complementary population status and trend information for sea duck species at a corresponding scale, regional harvest data are devoid of context and impractical for harvest management. The department cautions that without an independent assessment of species composition (e.g., a regional PCS), a harvest survey is susceptible to inaccuracies from species misidentification.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would result in significant additional costs to the department for the development, annual administration, and reporting of a sea duck harvest survey in Unit 15C.

PROPOSAL 173 – 5 AAC 85.045(11). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 13A.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13A; this hunt must be re-authorized annually by the Board of Game (BOG) to comply with statutory requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunting regulations can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2020–2021 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

The department is authorized to issue up to 200 drawing permits for antlerless moose hunts in Unit 13A for an October 1–31 and March 1–31 season. Hunters are prohibited from taking calves and cows accompanied by a calf.

Units and Bag Limits (11)	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 13 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: ...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only in Unit 13(A); up to 200 issued; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf	Oct. 1–Oct. 31 Mar. 1–Mar. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season permits may be

...

The IM population objective for 13A is 3,500-4,200 moose and the IM harvest objective is 210-420 moose.

The BOG has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in all of Unit 13, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 300–600 moose for the entire game management unit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13A for the 2023 regulatory year; this hunt is needed to keep the moose population within intensive management objectives and provide additional hunting opportunity for residents.

BACKGROUND: The Unit 13A antlerless hunt was established in March 2011 and the first Unit 13 antlerless hunt under this regulation took place in September 2012. Ten permits were issued annually for a single hunt area in the central portion of Unit 13A. The hunt area was extended beginning RY19 to include all of 13A-West, where bull-to-cow ratios are low, twinning rates are low, browse removal is relatively high, and the 3-year running average of moose abundance in 13A has been at or above the upper end of the abundance objectives since 2011. This hunt resulted in the harvest of four cow moose during the 2012 season and two during the 2013 season. During the 2013 Board of Game meeting in Wasilla, the board adopted a proposal that changed the hunt from September 1–20 to October 1–31 and March 1–31. These new season dates were implemented in the fall of 2014, after which harvest success increased.

Four cows and 3 bulls were harvested during the 2014 season, 7 cows during the 2015 season, 5 cows during the 2016 season, 6 cows and 2 bulls during the 2017 season, 7 cows during the 2018 season, and 8 cows and 2 bulls during the 2019 season. Twenty permits were issued for RY20, and 16 cows were harvested. Twenty-five permits were issued for RY21, and 22 cows were harvested.

The board has also directed the department to issue antlerless moose permits when the moose population is at or above the midpoint of the population objective with the goal of harvesting up to 1% of the cow moose population. The current population objective for Unit 13A is 3,500–4,200, and the three-year average of the moose population index has been at or above the midpoint of the objectives since 2011 (Table 173-1). The antlerless hunt in western Unit 13A contributes to maintaining the moose population within the intensive management objectives. The additional harvest provided through this hunt will also assist in achieving the harvest objectives for the population, providing additional sustainable harvest opportunity for the public.

Table 173-1. Three-year running average: moose population index in Unit 13A, 2011–2022

Regulatory Year	Population Index (3yr avg)
2011	4,233
2012	4,214
2013	4,389
2014	4,324
2015	4,489
2016	4,339
2017	4,085
2018	3,907
2019	3,845
2020	3,938
2021	4,112
2022	3,996

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Antlerless moose hunts must be re-authorized annually by the board to comply with statutory requirements. These hunts are an essential management tool to regulate the moose populations within the established intensive management objectives for population size, sex ratios, and harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 174 – 5 AAC 85.045(11). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 13C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13C; this hunt must be re-authorized annually by the Board of Game (BOG) to comply with statutory requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunting regulations can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2020–2021 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

The department is authorized to issue up to 200 drawing permits for antlerless moose hunts in Unit 13C for an October 1–31 season. Hunters are prohibited from taking calves and cows accompanied by a calf.

Resident	
Open Season	
(Subsistence and	Nonresident

Units and Bag Limits
(11)

General Hunts)

Open Season

Unit 13

1 moose per regulatory year,
only as follows:

...

1 antlerless moose by
drawing permit only in Unit 13(C);
up to 200
permits may be issued;
a person may not take a calf or a
cow accompanied by a calf

Oct. 1–Oct. 31

No open season

(General hunt only)

...

The IM population objective for 13C is 2,000-3,000 moose and the IM harvest objective is 155-350 moose.

The BOG has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in all of Unit 13, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 300–600 moose for the entire game management unit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13(C) for the 2024 regulatory year; antlerless hunts are needed to keep the moose population within intensive management objectives and provide additional hunting opportunity for residents.

BACKGROUND:

The board has directed the department to issue antlerless moose permits when the moose population is at or above the midpoint of the population objective with the goal of harvesting up to 1% of the cow moose population. The current population objective for Unit 13C is 2,000–3,000, and the 3-year running average of estimated moose abundance has been above objectives since 2011 (Table 174-1). The antlerless hunt in 13C is necessary to maintain the moose population within the intensive management objectives and provide for additional harvest opportunity for the public.

Table 174-1. Three-year running average: moose population index in Unit 13C, 2010–2022

Regulatory Year	Population Index (3yr avg)
2010	2,997
2011	3,183
2012	3,156
2013	3,379
2014	3,488
2015	3,833
2016	3,887
2017	3,400
2018	3,110
2019	3,028
2020	3,331
2021	3,263
2022	3,047

The antlerless moose hunt for 13C was established in January 2022; the first hunt will be held in October 2023. Permit numbers for the upcoming hunting season must be determined before annual moose surveys can be completed. As such, following a relatively severe winter in 2021/22 with heavy snowfall, only 5 permits were issued for the RY2023 season due to uncertainty surrounding moose numbers following the winter season. The population was reassessed in early winter 2022/23. Up to 1% of the estimated cow moose population would provide for a potential harvest of up to 21 cow moose. As such, additional permits will be issued for the RY2024 season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Antlerless moose hunts must be re-authorized annually by the board to comply with statutory requirements. These hunts are an essential management tool to regulate the moose populations within the established intensive management objectives for population size, sex ratios, and harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 175 – 5 AAC 85.045(11). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 13E.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13E; this hunt must be re-authorized annually by the Board of Game (BOG) to comply with statutory requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunting regulations can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2020–2021 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

The department is authorized to issue up to 200 drawing permits for antlerless moose hunts in Unit 13E for an October 1–31 season. Hunters are prohibited from taking calves and cows accompanied by a calf.

Units and Bag Limits (11)	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 13 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: ...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only in Unit 13(E); up to 200 permits may be issued; a person may not take a calf or a cow accompanied by a calf ...	Oct. 1–Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season

The IM population objective for 13E is 5,000-6,000 moose and the IM harvest objective is 300-600 moose.

The BOG has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in all of Unit 13, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 300–600 moose for the entire game management unit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 13(E) for the 2024 regulatory year; antlerless hunts are needed to keep the moose population within intensive management objectives and provide additional hunting opportunity for residents.

BACKGROUND: The board has directed the department to issue antlerless moose permits when the moose population is at or above the midpoint of the population objective with the goal of harvesting up to 1% of the cow moose population. The current population objective for Unit 13E is 5,000–6,000, and the 3-year running average of estimated moose abundance has been above objectives since 2014. The antlerless hunt in 13E is necessary to maintain the moose population

within the intensive management objectives and provide for additional harvest opportunity for the public.

The antlerless moose hunt for 13E was established in January 2022; the first hunt will be held in October 2023. Permit numbers for the upcoming hunting season must be determined before annual moose surveys can be completed. As such, following a relatively severe winter in 2021/22 with heavy snowfall only 5 permits will be issued for the RY2023 season due to uncertainty surrounding moose numbers following the winter season. The population was reassessed in early winter 2022/23. Up to 1% of the estimated cow moose population would provide for a potential harvest of up to 37 cow moose. As such, additional permits will be issued for the RY2024 season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Antlerless moose hunts must be re-authorized annually by the board to comply with statutory requirements. These hunts are an essential management tool to regulate the moose populations within the established intensive management objectives for population size, sex ratios, and harvest.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 176 - 5 AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish & Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B; these hunts must be re-authorized annually by the Board to comply with statutory requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunting regulations for Units 14A&B can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022–2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

- The department has the authority to issue up to 2,000 drawing permits to resident hunters in Unit 14A with a bag limit of one antlerless moose. The season is August 20–September 25 for DM400–DM412 and November 1–November 30 for DM413 and December 1–December 30 for DM414.
- The department may also issue up to 200 permits to resident hunters for the targeted hunt in Unit 14A with a bag limit of one moose during a winter season to be announced by emergency order.

- The department may also issue up to 100 additional permits to resident hunters for a targeted hunt in Unit 14B with a bag limit of one moose during a winter season to be announced by emergency order.
- The IM population objective for 14A is 6,000-6,500 moose and the IM harvest objective is 360-750 moose; the IM population objective for 14B is 2,500-2,800 and the IM harvest objective is 100-200 moose.
- Units 14A and 14B are inside the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B; these hunts are needed to keep the moose population within management objectives and provide additional hunting opportunity for residents. The targeted hunt also provides managers with a tool to reduce moose-vehicle collisions and address nuisance moose issues.

BACKGROUND: Moose surveys conducted in December of 2020 provided an estimate of 7,112 (\pm 711; 80% CI) moose in Unit 14A. This is less than the 2019 population estimate of 7,900, however, it is greater than the population objective of 6,000–6,500 moose. Twinning surveys conducted in the spring of 2021 showed a twinning rate of 15%; this is indicative of a population that should be managed for sustainability. The twinning rate has been decreasing since 2017 which suggests that the population has reached carrying capacity.

The number of antlerless permits available was raised in spring of 2011 from 400 to 1,000. Due to the heavy snows that same winter, there were no antlerless permits issued in 2012. Subsequent surveys indicated that the moose population was not adversely affected by the winter of 2011 and was continuing to grow. The number of permits available has been increasing and was raised to the limit of 1,000 permits for the fall of 2017. In spring of 2018 the board increased the permit levels to 2,000 permits and 1,302 permits were issued for RY18 and 1,310 in RY19. The success rate for hunters under the antlerless permits has remained steady at about 46% over the past 3 years.

The targeted moose hunt in Units 14A&14B provide an additional tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collision and nuisance management issues. The targeted hunt (AM415) has been in place since 2012. Under this permit, hunters are either designated a specific nuisance moose to take or are assigned one of four areas where a high number of moose–vehicle collisions are known to occur. In this scenario, permits are issued as snow increases and moose become more prevalent along roadways. The winter of 2014 was very mild with almost no snow. As a result, only 20 permits were issued that year. No permits were issued in the winters of 2017–2021. For the years that permits were issued, on average 143 permits were issued and 110 moose were taken, providing an average success rate of 77%.

The Unit 14A moose population has exceeded population objectives for the past 12 years and has the potential for large increases in a relatively short amount of time. These increases in density may increase in the number of moose-human conflicts, and moose may experience nutritional stress, particularly during severe winters. We suspect that the number of antlerless moose harvested in recent years and the severity of the winter of last couple of years has arrested the growth of the herd and may have led to a population reduction. We anticipate offering fewer antlerless permits for RY23 and future permit levels will be adjusted as we get more current population information.

Browse surveys completed in the spring of 2016 demonstrated a removal rate of 37.13% ($\pm 6.9\%$ at the 95% CI). This offtake indicated a relatively high proportion of commonly browsed plants in the unit are being consumed annually, suggesting the moose population in Unit 14A may be approaching their carrying capacity. Browse surveys were conducted at the end of a winter that had little snowfall and browsing appeared to be more evenly distributed than what would be found in a typical year.

Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of 316 moose per year were killed in the Mat-Su Valley area during the last 5 years of average snowfall. The department also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure.

The Department uses the targeted hunts to mitigate public safety concerns by issuing permits to selected hunters and assigning them to hunt areas that correspond with areas of high moose-vehicle collisions or reoccurring nuisance issues.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Antlerless moose harvests are necessary to achieve and maintain the population within objectives and reduce moose-human conflicts in the Mat-Su Valley by providing significant additional moose hunting opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 177 – 5 AAC 85.045(15). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 17A.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose seasons for Unit 17A.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations for the Unit 17A moose hunt allow resident hunters a bag limit of two moose per regulatory year under registration permits; however, only 1 moose can be taken during the fall season. Nonresidents are restricted to a bag limit of one bull moose with antler restrictions by drawing permit.

- There are three fall hunts, one of which allows the harvest of an antlerless moose:
 - Registration permit (RM573), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one bull moose, Aug 25–Sept 25;
 - Registration permit (RM571), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one antlerless moose, Aug 25–Sept 25;
 - Drawing permit (DM570 - up to 20 permits are available), for non-resident hunters only, with a bag limit of one bull moose with 50” antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on at least one side, Sept 5–Sept 15.
- There are two winter hunts, open to resident hunters only, one of which allows for the harvest of antlerless moose.
 - Registration permit (RM575), with a bag limit of one antlered bull moose;
 - Registration permit (RM576), with a bag limit of one antlerless moose.
 - Winter hunt season dates for the winter hunts are as follows: Jan 1– Feb 28.

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 17A.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in Unit 17, and an ANS of 100–150 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunts in Unit 17A. These antlerless hunts would continue to provide hunters with additional harvest opportunity while helping limit the growth of the Unit 17A moose population that is already above population objectives.

BACKGROUND: Moose are relative newcomers to much of Unit 17A, with only about 35 animals being present along the eastern border in 1980. Since then, moose have continued to increase in population size and expand throughout Unit 17A and west into Unit 18. Minimum counts of moose in Unit 17A were conducted in 14 different years during the period of 1991–2011, revealing a steady increase in moose numbers over time, with 1,166 moose counted in March 2011. During 2012–2015, surveys were not conducted due to inadequate snow conditions. Beginning in fall 2016, a Geospatial Population Estimator (GSPE) replaced the minimum count

for enumerating moose in Unit 17A. In spring 2017, this survey technique produced an estimate (corrected for sightability (1.2)) of 2,370 moose, (± 563). The uncorrected estimate was 1,990 moose (± 437).

Moose management in Unit 17A has been guided by the Unit 17A Moose Management Group, consisting of members from the Bristol Bay Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Nushagak and Togiak Fish and Game advisory committees, the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This group produced a Unit 17A Moose Management Plan that went through several iterations during 1996–2013, with the 2013 plan being used as the guiding document today. This plan has goals and objectives for hunter opportunity, harvest allocation, habitat mapping and population monitoring. The population objective for Unit 17A listed in the plan is 800–1,200 moose.

A drawing hunt for nonresident hunters was adopted by the board in 2013, with fall 2014 being the first year of that hunt. The impetus behind the nonresident hunt was abundant harvest opportunity provided by this growing moose population, and objectives within the moose management plan that provide for the nonresident opportunity when the moose population exceeds 1,000 animals and is at a stable or increasing trend.

The winter antlerless hunt was adopted by the board and initiated in RY13, and allows for an antlerless harvest when the moose population is above 600 animals and is stable or increasing. During the last four complete years of the RM576 antlerless hunt (RY18-RY21), 225 antlerless moose have been taken (184 cows and 41 bulls), for an average of 46 cows/year and 10 antlerless bulls/ year. This is a significant increase from the previous five-year period (RY13–RY17) where an average of ~13 cows/year were harvested.

Because of the concerns with the increasing moose numbers in Unit 17A that are already well above population objectives, a proposal was adopted by the board during their spring 2018 meeting in Dillingham, to open a fall antlerless hunt in fall 2018 to increase harvest on the female segment of the population. During the first year of this hunt in fall 2018, 8 antlerless moose were harvested; all were cows.

Additionally, travel conditions are the largest restriction to a successful winter hunt and due to the maritime climate, there is uncertainty when snow conditions will provide for sufficient transportation. Winter hunts RM575 and RM576 had been a “may be announced” for up to a 31-day season when conditions exist. In 2022 the BOG adopted set season dates of Jan. 1 – Feb. 28 to aid the department in curbing this increasing moose population.

During RY2018–2021 the total moose harvest in Unit 17A for both fall and winter hunts was 485 animals. This is a mean annual harvest of ~121 moose per year. The winter hunts represented 53% of all harvest during the same period (261 moose).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The moose population in this unit is above the upper limit of the population objective. Allowing a small harvest of antlerless moose will help limit population growth while providing additional harvest opportunity for hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 178 - 5 AAC 85.045 Hunting season and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Remainder of Unit 18.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the resident and nonresident antlerless moose seasons in two areas of Unit 18: south of and including the Goodnews River drainage (RM621), and in the harvest ticket hunts in the remainder of Unit 18.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Antlerless hunting under RM621 during the winter seasons is allowed for resident hunters south of and including the Goodnews River drainage in Unit 18 in a “may be announced” season that can be open from December 1 until March 31. The season timing and length depend on the winter travel conditions and how many moose are left from the fall quota.

Antlerless hunting during fall and winter seasons is allowed for resident hunters with a harvest ticket in the “Remainder of Unit 18”. There are three components to this antlerless season:

- 1) during August 1–September 30 the bag limit is 2 moose; however, only one antlered bull may be taken and taking calves or cows accompanied by calves is prohibited;
- 2) during October 1–November 30 the bag limit is 2 antlerless moose with no additional restrictions; and
- 3) during December 1–March 15 the bag limit is 2 moose with no additional restrictions.

Antlerless moose hunting is also allowed for nonresident hunters with a harvest ticket in Unit 18 remainder. The current season for nonresidents is December 1- March 15 and the bag limit is one antlerless moose.

The IM population objective for moose in Unit 18 is 1,000-2,000 and the IM harvest objective is 60-200.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in all of Unit 18, and an ANS of 200–400.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The antlerless hunts in these two areas—south of and including the Goodnews River drainage, and the remainder of Unit 18—would be reauthorized for RY2023. Hunters would be provided additional moose hunting opportunity if additional harvestable surplus is available.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. Both hunt areas support a large moose population, reaching an estimated minimum population of 24,000 moose. In all areas surveyed within these two areas, moose populations had twinning rates of 15-42% in 2022.

Harvests by residents in both areas in RY2021 (n=619) is lower than the previous 3-year average harvest (n=657). In RY2021, the harvest ticket reports from the remainder of Unit 18 included 125 cows taken, along with the harvest of 703 bull moose (residents and nonresidents). The combined bull and cow harvest for the remainder of Unit 18 represented in this reauthorization is well within sustained yield, and the population trajectory has not been affected by antlerless harvests.

The moose population in remainder of Unit 18 is at historical high levels. A survey from February and March 2021 estimated about 23,000 moose in the remainder of Unit 18. This follows a 30-year trend of growth, but there are signs of overabundance. Two April browse surveys estimate that over 30% of annual growth is being consumed by moose. This level of browse removal indicates the moose population is at or above the carrying capacity for these areas.

RY2017 was the first year for antlerless hunts for nonresidents. Only 2 nonresidents reported harvesting moose from Dec. 1 through March 31 from RY2017 to RY2021. We anticipate that participation in this hunt will remain low.

The total harvest in the area south of and including the Goodnews River drainage (RM621) was 14 bull moose.

Continuing antlerless moose harvest opportunity will benefit hunters and may also help slow the growth rate of the population.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain antlerless hunts in areas where moose populations are increasing or at high levels.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional cost to the department.

PROPOSAL 179 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(17). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize a winter antlerless moose season during February in a portion of Unit 19D.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO: This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 19D East, which is that portion of the Kuskokwim River drainage upstream of the Selatna River but excluding the Black River.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 85.045(a) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(17)

...

Unit 19(D), that portion upstream of the Selatna River, excluding the Black River

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 moose by registration permit only, a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Feb 1 – Last day of Feb.

...

The intensive management (IM) population objective for moose in Unit 19D East is 6,000–8,000 moose and the IM harvest objective is 400–600 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 19 with an ANS of 400-700 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The antlerless moose season for 19D (RM660) would be reauthorized. Antlerless hunts will continue to be available to hunters, and the department will continue to have the ability to use antlerless hunts as a tool to regulate the moose population.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goal of this hunt is to provide additional harvest opportunity.

The moose population in Unit 19D East has approximately doubled since predator removals began in 2003. Prior to intensive management, bull-to-cow ratios along the Kuskokwim River drainage were measured at 18 bulls per 100 cows. After predator reductions and a closure of moose hunting in the Bear Control Focus Area (BCFA), ratios improved to 39 bulls per 100 cows by 2007. By 2015 ratios had declined again and the current two-year average is 21 bulls per 100 cows.

Twinning rates in Unit 19D East remained high until 2015 (30-40%) at which time they began to decline, indicating some level of nutritional stress. However, twinning rates have improved in recent years and the current 2-year average twinning rate is 29%. Short yearling weights

collected in March 2022 also indicate healthy body weights and the moose population is at a sustainable level.

Additional harvest opportunity, particularly of cows, is available. Winter hunts distribute hunter pressure and allow access to areas that are inaccessible in the fall. This hunt allows the department to provide additional opportunity, while not further depressing bull cow ratios within the BCFA.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. There are additional moose that can be harvested, and antlerless hunts can contribute toward meeting IM harvest objectives and subsistence opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 180 – 5 AAC 85.045(18) Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20A.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 20A.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Antlerless moose hunts are available throughout Unit 20A.

In the Ferry Management Trail, Wood River Controlled Use, and the Yanert Controlled Use areas, antlerless moose hunts are as follows:

Residents:

- Drawing permit for one antlerless moose, August 15–November 15.
- Targeted hunt for one moose by permit (AM751) announced by emergency order.
- Registration permit for one antlerless moose; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; Oct. 1–last day of February. These permits have not been issued for several years because desired harvest is achieved through drawing permits.

Nonresidents:

- No antlerless moose seasons

In the remainder of Unit 20A, antlerless moose hunts are as follows:

Residents:

- Drawing permit for one antlerless moose, August 15–November 15.
- Registration permit for one antlerless moose; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; August 25–last day of February. In most areas of Unit 20A these permits have not been issued for several years because desired harvest is achieved through drawing permits.
- Registration permit RM768 has been issued to provide reasonable opportunity to harvest antlerless moose for subsistence uses; this hunt occurs outside the Fairbanks Non-subsistence Area (FNA).

Nonresidents:

- No antlerless moose seasons.

Hunts for bull moose are also available in Unit 20A. Refer to the *2022–2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations* for specific details about bull moose hunting seasons in Unit 20A.

The intensive management (IM) population objective for moose in Unit 20A is 10,000–15,000 moose and the IM harvest objective is 500–900 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 20A outside the boundaries of the FNA with an ANS of 50–75 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) will have the authority to administer antlerless hunts as a management tool to regulate the moose population in Unit 20A, and to provide subsistence moose hunting opportunity outside the FNA, and antlerless opportunity inside the FNA.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. Antlerless hunts help regulate population growth, provide subsistence hunters with a reasonable opportunity to harvest moose, and can reduce incidences of vehicle collision and other nuisance situations. Overall, the goal is to protect the health and habitat of the moose population over the long term and to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits.

The department attempts to maintain the Unit 20A population within the IM population objective while monitoring nutritional status. The last two population surveys in 20A occurred in 2019 and 2021. The 2019 population estimate was 11,770 moose and the 2021 population estimate was 14,041 moose. These abundance estimates equate to 2.3 and 2.5 moose/mi² respectively. This moose population has been maintained at high densities for over 30 years, and continues to experience density-dependent effects, including low productivity and relatively light short-yearling female weights. Although sporadic signs of improvement in nutritional condition have been observed (i.e., higher twinning rates in portions of 20A and increases in male short-yearling weights in 2015 and 2016 compared to the late 1990s through early 2000s), no clear signals or significant trends have yet been detected. During the winter of 2021–2022 the department took a conservative approach to management and did not issue any antlerless moose permits in Unit 20A because of difficult snow and ice conditions that were likely to affect the moose population. The department will also not issue antlerless permits for the fall 2023 hunting season but will assess the population in the winter of 2022/2023 and determine if there is a harvestable surplus of antlerless moose for the fall of 2024.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal because antlerless hunts are an important management tool in regulating this high-density, nutritionally stressed moose population. If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the department will lose the ability to regulate this moose population, IM harvest objectives may not be met, and the IM population objective may be exceeded. Additionally, the public will lose opportunity to harvest a surplus moose and subsistence hunters in the portion of Unit 20A outside the FNA (part of the western Tanana Flats) may not have a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses. Although no antlerless moose permits are being issued in Unit 20A at this time having the ability to issue antlerless permits if and when there is a harvestable surplus of cow moose is valuable for managing this high density moose population.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in any additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 181 – 5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20B.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 20B.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Antlerless moose hunts are authorized in Unit 20B by drawing, registration, or targeted permit only, as follows:

Fairbanks Management Area, including Creamer’s Field

Residents and nonresidents:

- 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only, up to 150 permits, a recipient is prohibited from taking an antlered bull in the Fairbanks Management Area, September 1–November 27;
- 1 antlerless moose by muzzleloader by drawing permit, up to 10 permits, a recipient is prohibited from taking an antlered bull in the Fairbanks Management Area, Dec 1–January 31.

Fairbanks Management Area, outside of Creamer’s Field

Residents only:

- 1 moose by targeted permit by shotgun, crossbow or bow and arrow only, up to 100 permits, season to be announced by emergency order

Minto Flats Management Area

Residents only:

- 1 antlerless moose by registration permit, October 15–February 28

Middle Fork of the Chena River drainage

Residents only:

- 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit, up to 300 permits, taking of calves or cows with calves is prohibited, August 15–November 15
- 1 antlerless moose by registration permit, taking of calves or cows with calves is prohibited, October 1–February 28

Southeast of the Moose Creek dike within ½ mile each side of the Richardson Highway

Residents only:

- 1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow, crossbow, or muzzleloader, up to 100 permits, September 16–February 28
- 1 moose by targeted permit by shotgun, crossbow, or bow and arrow only, up to 100 permits, season to be announced by emergency order

Remainder of Unit 20B

Residents only:

- 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit, by youth hunt only, up to 200 permits, August 5–14;
- 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit, up to 1,500 permits, taking of cows with calves is prohibited, August 15–November 15
- 1 moose by targeted permit by shotgun, crossbow, or bow and arrow only, up to 100 permits, season to be announced by emergency order.

Hunts for bull moose are also available in Unit 20B. Refer to the *2020–2021 Alaska Hunting Regulations* for specific details about moose hunting seasons in Unit 20B.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 20B, within the Minto Flats Management Area, with an ANS of 20–40 moose.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 20B, outside the boundaries of the Minto Flats Management Area and outside the boundaries of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area, with an ANS of 75–100 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Antlerless hunts will continue to be available to hunters, and the department will continue to have the ability to use antlerless hunts as a tool to regulate the moose populations.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The department’s goal in Unit 20B is to provide for a wide range of public uses and benefits and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, provide hunting opportunity, help meet Intensive Management (IM) objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with a

reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios. If antlerless hunts are not reauthorized, subsistence hunters in the portion of Unit 20B outside the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area may not have a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses.

The department has administered multiple different antlerless hunts over the last 10 years in 20B. Currently the moose population is estimated to be within the Intensive Management objective of 12,000–15,000 moose, therefore the necessity for harvest is minimal and fewer hunts are offered at this time. The antlerless hunts that the department is currently administering are as follows:

Fairbanks Management Area (FMA) – The purposes of these antlerless hunts are to regulate population growth in the FMA and potentially reduce moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts.

The number of moose–vehicle collisions in the FMA is high and poses significant safety risks to motorists. In addition, moose–human conflicts continue to place significant demands on property owners. To increase hunting opportunity and harvest and to reduce moose–vehicle collisions, the department incrementally increased the number of drawing permits for antlerless moose in the FMA during Regulatory Year 1999 (RY99; that is, RY = 1 July 1999 through 30 June 2000) through RY10. Moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts declined during RY06–RY21, presumably in part due to the consistent antlerless moose harvests during RY09–RY21.

Richardson Highway Hunt -The Richardson Highway hunt is a drawing moose permit that allows hunters to hunt any moose within ½ mile on either side of the Richardson Highway with bow and arrow, muzzleloader or crossbow. The hunt is intended to reduce moose-vehicle collisions along the Richardson Highway.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. There are no biological concerns associated with the harvest of antlerless moose taken under these regulations in these hunt areas; however, elimination of these hunts would create a biological concern. The Unit 20B moose population has potential for growth due to the extensive wildland burns (i.e., increased productivity) and high survival rates. If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population may exceed carrying capacity and would require population reduction. The department would like to continue to have the ability to regulate moose densities in response to habitat and population performance while providing opportunities to hunt antlerless moose and help meet IM harvest objectives.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 182 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting season in Unit 20D.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish & Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize antlerless moose hunting seasons in

Unit 20D.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Unit 20D currently has antlerless hunts available by drawing permit only, with fewer than 50 permits offered. Current antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20D are as follows:

- Bison Range Youth Moose Hunt (YM792): youth (ages 10 to 17) hunters that are residents or nonresident children of residents; one bull per lifetime with spike-fork or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side, or one antlerless moose; however, a calf or cow accompanied by a calf may not be taken; September 1–30.
- Disabled Veteran/Purple Heart Recipient Hunt (DM795): qualified Purple Heart Recipient and 100% service-connected disability, resident and nonresident hunters; one moose every 4 years; however, a calf or cow accompanied by a calf may not be taken; September 1–15 within the Delta Junction Management Area
- Southwestern Unit 20D drawing hunt (DM791), excluding the Delta Junction Management Area; resident hunters; one antlerless moose; however, a calf or cow accompanied by a calf may not be taken; October 10–16.

All antlerless hunts listed above occur in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (FNA). Additional antlerless hunts outside the FNA are not currently sustainable. In addition to these drawing hunts, registration hunts are retained in the codified regulation for the department to utilize in reducing or maintaining the moose population in some areas of southern Unit 20D by increasing antlerless harvest.

Hunts for bull moose are also available in Unit 20D. Refer to the *2022–2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations* for specific details about moose hunting seasons in this area.

Moose in that portion of Unit 20D that is north of the Tanana River and outside the boundaries of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area have a positive C&T finding and an ANS of 5–15. Moose in that portion of 20D that is south of the Tanana River and outside of the boundaries of the FNA also have a positive C&T finding and an ANS of 5.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal will allow antlerless hunts to continue to be available to hunters, and the department will continue to have the authority to use antlerless hunts as a tool to regulate the moose population. This will help keep the population stable and prevent sharp population declines by avoiding range degradation.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goals of Unit 20D antlerless hunts are to make progress toward achieving the board’s intensive management (IM) harvest objective by harvesting cow moose from this highly productive population and to address concerns about range degradation, declines in nutritional indices, and reduced reproductive success by slowing moose population growth. It is important to manage this population for stability and a consistent harvestable surplus, rather than allow large population expansions and contractions, which can cause wide swings in the number of cow moose available for harvest.

These antlerless moose hunts are intended to improve or maintain the ability of moose habitat to support the current moose population. Hunting opportunity and harvest could increase, and the additional harvest could contribute to meeting Intensive Management (IM) harvest objectives. Moose populations will benefit by having moose densities compatible with their habitat. Delta Junction residents, staff, and motorists may benefit from reduced moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts.

To maintain a healthy and productive moose population, department research (Boertje et al. 2007) indicates that 10-month-old calves should weigh at least 385 pounds and that the population should not be allowed to grow when the 2-year average twinning rate is 11–20%. We confirmed in 2019 that 10-month-old calf weights in Unit 20D remain under 385 pounds (20D avg weight = 368 pounds). The Unit 20D 2-year twinning rate of 12% is also an indication this population is showing signs of nutritional stress. In addition, a 2022 browse survey showed 41% browse removal, which is above the 35% removal threshold recommended by Boertje et. al 2007. The department will continue to monitor these, and other density-dependent indices of nutritional condition.

During RY17–RY21 we issued an average of 35 drawing permits annually in Unit 20D for which the bag limit included antlerless moose, with an average harvest of 21 females (7% of the total 20D harvest). The winter of 2021–2022 was severe and included extremely deep snow and record setting rainfall in December which caused a nearly 2-inch-thick ice layer within the snowpack. Out of an abundance of caution, the department cancelled all antlerless hunts in RY22, and did not offer any antlerless hunts in RY23, pending survey results to determine the effects of the above-mentioned winter.

The 2022 moose survey of Unit 20D showed an approximate 40% decrease in the southern Unit 20D moose population. This was most likely the effect of moose in poor nutritional condition coupled with the severe winter of 2021–2022, although additional mortality of moose in adequate nutritional condition could have occurred as well. The current reduced moose population size is likely closer to the carrying capacity that the habitat can support in much of Unit 20D. Therefore, the department would like to utilize some antlerless harvest to maintain the current moose density of about 2.0 moose/mi² and plans to offer 20 or fewer drawing permits for antlerless moose in RY24 to prevent population growth. These permits would be advertised in the 2023 draw hunt supplement. Registration permits will only be issued in specific areas if additional harvest is necessary to maintain optimal moose densities.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. There are no biological concerns associated with harvest of antlerless moose taken under these regulations in these hunt areas. However, we do have biological concerns regarding habitat degradation, continued reduced nutritional condition, and reduced reproductive success if antlerless hunts are eliminated. The Unit 20D moose population has great potential for growth due to the extensive agricultural land, wildland fire footprints, and high predator harvest. If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population may quickly exceed carrying capacity. These hunts maintain the opportunity to hunt a harvestable surplus of cow moose and help to meet IM harvest objectives.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in any additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 183 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20E.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 20E.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Unit 20E currently has antlerless hunts available by drawing permit only. Current antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20E are as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(18)

...

Unit 20(E), remaining portion of the Ladue River Controlled Use Area

RESIDENT HUNTERS

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth hunt only; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Aug. 5–Sept. 5
Oct. 15–Nov. 30

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 400 permits may be issued; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Oct. 15–Nov. 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth hunt only; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Aug. 5–Sept. 5
Oct. 15–Nov. 30

Unit 20(E), that portion outside of the Ladue River Controlled Use draining into 1) the Ladue River upstream of the South Fork of the Ladue River, 2) the Dennison Fork of the Fortymile River, and 3) the Mosquito Fork of the Fortymile River drainage.

RESIDENT HUNTERS

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth hunt only; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or

Aug. 5–Sept. 5
Oct. 15–Nov. 30

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 400 permits may be issued; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Oct. 15–Nov. 30

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth

Aug. 5–Sept. 5
Oct. 15–Nov. 30

hunt only; up to 100 permits
may be issued in combination
with the nonresident drawing
hunt; a person may
not take a cow accompanied
by a calf

...

Hunts for bull moose are also available in Unit 20E. Refer to the *2022–2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations* for specific details about bull moose hunting seasons in this area.

The Board of Game (board) has identified the moose population in Unit 20E as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use. The board established intensive management (IM) harvest and population objectives of 250–450 and 8,000–10,000 moose, respectively.

The board made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in Unit 20E, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence uses of 50–75 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The department will have the authority to administer antlerless hunts as a management tool to regulate the moose population in Unit 20E and to provide additional sustainable moose hunting opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The primary goals of the Unit 20E antlerless moose seasons, if enacted, are to provide additional sustainable hunting opportunity, slow the growth of the moose population, and to make progress towards achieving IM harvest objectives. The decision framework to initiate antlerless harvest in Unit 20E includes bull:cow ratios, population trend, and nutritional indices. Bull:cow ratio estimates in southern Unit 20E are currently above the minimum management objective, population trend has stabilized in recent years, and nutritional indices indicate the population is currently at moderate to high nutritional levels. Therefore, the department does not plan to issue any antlerless moose permits for Unit 20E for regulatory year 2023.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. According to the decision framework, the department will not be issuing any antlerless moose permits for Unit 20E for regulatory 2023 and therefore does not have any biological concerns with this proposal. Even though the department does not intend to issue any antlerless moose permits for 2023, the department wants to keep the antlerless hunt in codified for when antlerless hunts are warranted.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in any additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 184 – 5 AAC 85.045 (a)(19). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
Reauthorize the winter antlerless moose season during March, in a portion of Unit 21D.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal will reauthorize a 15-day RM831 registration any-moose season to-be-announced during March in a portion of Unit 21D. The season has a harvest quota established by the department prior to the beginning of the season, and if the total harvest or harvest of cows reaches the quota, the season will be closed by emergency order.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The RM831 any-moose season is announced by emergency order in March when conditions allow for good success in harvesting moose, and is closed after 15 days or once the quota is reached.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(a)

(19)

...

Unit 21(D), that portion south of the south bank of the Yukon River, downstream of the up-river entrance of Kala Slough and west of Kala Creek

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull, by registration permit only; or

Aug. 22–Aug. 31
Sept. 5–Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 600 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 21(D) remainder; or

Sept. 5–Sept. 25

1 moose, by registration permit only, up to 15 days during March, however, a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

(Winter season to be announced)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side,

Sept. 5–Sept. 25

by drawing permit only; up to 600 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 21(D) remainder

...

Unit 21D has a positive finding for intensive management (IM), with IM objectives of a population of 7,000–10,000 and harvest of 4501,000 moose.

The Board made a positive C&T finding for moose in all of Unit 21, and an ANS of 600–800 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal would continue to allow harvest of a few antlered bulls, antlerless bulls, and cows in March when conditions allow for good success in harvesting moose. Because so few bulls have antlers during March, an any-moose season will have greater success rates than a bulls-only hunt and it will eliminate the need for hunters to make legal-animal determinations. This hunt will provide an opportunity to utilize the current harvestable surplus of cows and bulls, and any concern of overharvest of cows will be mitigated by a harvest quota for this hunt.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goals of this antlerless moose season are to provide additional opportunity during a time of year when conditions allow for good success in harvesting moose, slow the growth of this moose population, and to make progress toward achieving the board’s intensive management (IM) harvest objective of 450–1,000 moose in all of Unit 21D by harvesting cows from this highly productive area. Reauthorizing this hunt will likely make progress toward achieving these goals.

If this antlerless moose hunt is not reauthorized, opportunity to utilize a harvestable surplus of cow moose would be lost and the ability to meet Intensive Management (IM) harvest objectives could be compromised. In addition, rather than allow large population expansions and contractions, it is important to manage the population for stability and a consistent harvestable surplus.

The 2019 through 2022 hunts had a 2-day reporting requirement and a quota of 25 moose with no more than 20 cows. Harvest from this hunt will make progress toward achieving the IM harvest objectives without reducing bull-to-cow ratios to low levels. For the March RM831 hunt, 5 cows and 3 bulls were harvested in 2019, 11 cows and 3 bulls were harvested in 2020, 7 cows and 1 bull in 2021, and no moose were reported harvested in 2022.

The IM harvest objective has not been met since 2003 when the estimated harvest was 489 moose. The average estimated harvest during regulatory years 2010–2021 was 403 moose, including reported and estimated unreported harvest. The overall Unit 21D population estimate at the end of 2018 was 10,478 moose ($\pm 1,572$) and has likely changed very little based on recent trend area surveys. The current estimated combined harvestable surplus is least 1,095 moose for all of Unit 21.

This antlerless moose hunt area is approximately 2,559 mi² (21%) of the 12,093.6 mi² encompassed by Unit 21D. Moose abundance in the proposal hunt area was estimated at 4,000–4,500 moose, which is approximately 39–44% of the estimated total Unit 21D moose population.

The moose population in this portion of 21D is increasing, especially the number of cows in the population. Analysis of the combined Trend Count Areas (Squirrel Creek, Pilot Mtn., and Kaiyuh Slough TCAs) within the hunt area showed an increasing trend in moose abundance among all age classes from 2001 to present. Additionally, the Geospatial Population Estimate data also showed a statistically significant increase from 1,897 (±11%) moose in 2011 to 4,116 (±10%) moose in 2017. Moose twinning data for the winter any-moose hunt area showed high and stable twinning rates since 2004 (avg. = 35.7%).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Additional harvest opportunity, including the harvest of cows, exists in this portion of 21D.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in any additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 185 – 5 AAC 85.045(a)(19). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.
Reauthorize a winter antlerless moose season during part of February and March in Unit 21E.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO: This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 21E.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations as defined in 85.045(a) are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(19)

Unit 21(E)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 moose, by registration permit only, a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Feb 15 – Mar 15

...

Unit 21E has a positive finding for intensive management (IM), with IM objectives of a population of 9,000–11,000 and harvest of 550–1,100 moose.

The Board made a positive C&T finding for moose all of Unit 21 and an ANS of 600–800 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The antlerless moose season for 21E (RM837) would be reauthorized. Antlerless hunts will continue to be available to hunters, and the department will continue to have the ability to use antlerless hunts as a tool to regulate the moose population.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goals of this hunt are to provide additional harvest opportunity, meet harvest objectives, and stabilize the 21E moose population.

The most recent survey (2022) indicated there were 9,299 moose in Unit 21E, which is within the range of the Intensive Management (IM) population objective of 9,000-11,000 moose. Bull-to-cow ratios are high, with 46 bulls per 100 cows.

Within the Unit 21E moose survey area (4,094 mi²), the overall moose density increased from 1.0 moose/mi² in 2000 to 1.9 moose/mi² in 2022. During most of these years of growth, twinning rates remained high; however, twinning rates began declining in 2015. Since 2019 twinning rates have improved and the 2-year average twinning rate in the Holy Cross area is now 26%. Browse utilization remains high in the Holy Cross area, where the population density is highest and where winter mortality in deep snow years is a concern.

Additional harvest opportunity is available, particularly in the area around Holy Cross. Harvest in areas of high browse utilization reduces pressure on moose in those areas during deep snow winters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. There are additional moose that can be harvested, and this proposal will help meet harvest objectives while providing additional opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 186 – 5 AAC 92.015(a)(4). Brown bear tag fee exemptions. Reauthorize resident grizzly/brown bear tag fee exemptions throughout Interior and Eastern Arctic Alaska.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal would reauthorize the current resident tag fee exemptions for brown bears in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Brown bear tag fees and locking tags are not required for residents in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C. See below for regulations regarding the customary and traditional use findings and the amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence harvests of brown bears.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The \$25 resident tag fee exemption would be continued for brown bear hunts in Units 12, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26B, and 26C.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Game must annually reauthorize all resident tag fee exemptions. Resident brown bear tag fees were put in place statewide during the mid-1970s to discourage incidental harvest, elevate the status of brown bears to trophies, and to provide revenue. Today, Region III populations are abundant, and brown bears continue to be highly regarded as trophies. Across the region, season dates and bag limits effectively regulate harvest in areas where interest is high.

Eliminating all resident brown bear tag fees throughout Region III simplifies regulations, increases resident hunter opportunity, and is not likely to cause declines in these brown bear populations. This reauthorization would assist with our objective of managing Region III brown bear populations for hunter opportunity and would continue to allow hunters to take brown bears opportunistically. Reauthorizing these tag fee exemptions would allow residents who are unable to purchase the \$25 tag before hunting, due to lack of vendors or economic reasons, to legally harvest brown bears. During regulatory years 2012–2022 approximately 26% of brown bears harvested by resident hunters in Region III were taken incidentally to other activities, compared with 11% statewide.

Human-caused mortality in most areas of Region III is quite low and is assumed to be less than 6% of the population, which is a rate that is sustainable under most ecological circumstances. Where harvests are elevated (i.e., Units 20A, 20B, 20D, and portions of 26B), brown bear populations are managed through changes in seasons and bag limits. The presence or absence of tag fees does not appear to have a significant influence on harvest in these areas.

As part of this request to reauthorize exemption of resident brown bear tag fees throughout Region III, we recommend that the board, at a minimum, continue to reauthorize the tag fee exemptions for subsistence registration permit hunts in Units 19A and 19B (downstream of and including the Aniak River drainage), 21D, and 24. The customary and traditional use findings and amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence are presented below:

Customary and traditional use findings, and amounts reasonably necessary, brown bear populations, Region III:

Unit	Finding	Amount reasonably necessary for subsistence
Unit 12	Negative	N/A
Units 19A and 19B upstream of and excluding the Aniak River drainage, and Unit 19D (combined with Units 17B and 17C).	Positive	10–15
Units 19A and 19B downstream of and including the Aniak River drainage	Positive	5
Unit 19C	Negative	N/A
Unit 19D	Positive	2–6
Units 20A and 20B outside the boundaries of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Use Area and Unit 20C	Positive	1–3
Unit 20D, outside the boundaries of the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area	Positive	1–2
Unit 20E	Negative	N/A
Units 21 and 22	Positive	20–25
Units 23, 24, and 26	Positive	25–35
Unit 25A, 25B, 25C	Negative	N/A
Unit 25D	Positive	None made

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Brown bear numbers appear to be stable in the Interior and Eastern Arctic Units. The presence or absence of resident tag fees appears to have no influence on regional harvest. Therefore, this proposal does not present a biological concern.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in any additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 187 – 5 AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption. Reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions for the Central/Southwest Region.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal will reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions in Units 9, 11, 13, 16, and 17.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The following regulations are currently in effect for Region IV brown bear hunts:

5AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption

(a) A resident tag is not required for taking a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 11;
- (2) Units 13 and 16A;
- (3) Units 16B and 17;

...

(11) Unit 9, within the following areas, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit:

(A) Unit 9B, within five miles of the communities of Port Alsworth, Nondalton, Iliamna, Newhalen, Pile Bay, Pedro Bay, Pope Vanoy Landing, Kakhonak, Igiugig, and Levelock;

(B) Unit 9C, within five miles of the communities of King Salmon, Naknek, and South Naknek;

(C) Unit 9D, within five miles of the communities of Cold Bay, King Cove, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon;

(D) Unit 9E, within five miles of the communities of Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, Port Heiden, Port Moller, Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Bay, Perryville, and Ivanof Bay;

(12) Unit 10, within three miles of the community of False Pass, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit.

(b) In addition to the units as specified in (a) of this section, if a hunter obtains a subsistence registration permit before hunting, that hunter is not required to obtain a resident tag to take a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 9B;
- (2) Unit 9E, that portion including all drainages that drain into the Pacific Ocean between Cape Kumliun and the border of Units 9D and 9E;
- (3) Unit 17;

...

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in those portions of

Units 17A and 17B that drain into the Nuyakuk and Tikchik lakes, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5 bears. There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in the remainder of Unit 17B, and in Unit 17C, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–15 bears.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding in Unit 9B, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–20 bears, and a positive customary and traditional use finding in 9E, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–15 bears. The remainder of Unit 9 has a negative customary and traditional use finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters will not be required to purchase a brown bear locking tag before hunting brown bears in Units 11, 13, 16, and 17. In addition, brown bear tag fees will not be required for subsistence hunts in Units 9 and 17 or for permit hunts near communities in Unit 9.

BACKGROUND: Brown bear tag fee exemptions must be reauthorized annually, or the fee will be automatically reinstated.

General Season Hunts: The Board liberalized brown bear hunting regulations, including the tag fee exemption, to increase the opportunity to take brown bears in Units 11, 13, and 16 during the March 2003 Board of Game meeting and in Unit 17 during the March 2011 Board of Game meeting. The tag fee exemption in these Units provides greater opportunity to harvest brown bears by allowing opportunistic take.

During the March 2011 Board of Game meeting, the board also exempted brown bear tag fees for bear hunts near communities in Unit 9 to address public safety concerns in communities. Brown bears are abundant in Unit 9 and are primarily managed as a trophy species. Brown bears are frequently observed in communities destroying property in search of food or garbage and occasionally killing pets. The liberalized bear seasons and bag limits along with the elimination of the tag fee is intended to allow people to take bears before they destroy property, to promote a greater acceptance of the unit's bear population, and to resolve some of the compliance issues associated with the take of DLP bears.

Subsistence Brown Bear Hunts: The Board waived the brown bear tag fee requirement for subsistence brown bear hunts in Unit 17 and portions of Unit 9.

Subsistence brown bear harvest rates are low and well within sustainable limits. Exempting the resident tag fee has not caused an increase in subsistence harvest in these units. Continuation of the exemption accommodates cultural and traditional uses of brown bears in these units and provides an alternative for hunters who take brown bears primarily for their meat.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal because it provides greater sustainable harvest opportunity in Units 11, 13, 16, and 17; addresses public safety concerns in Unit 9; and provides subsistence harvest opportunity in portions of Units 9 and 17.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 188 - 5 AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemptions. Reauthorize the current resident tag fee exemptions for brown bear in Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the resident brown bear big game tag fee exemption in Region V.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

(a) A resident tag is not required for taking a brown bear in the following units:

- ...
- (4) Units... 26;
- ...
- (8) Unit 22;
- (9) Unit 23;
- ...
- (13) Unit 18;
- ...

(b) In addition to the units as specified in (a) of this section, if a hunter obtains a subsistence registration permit before hunting, that hunter is not required to obtain a resident tag to take a brown bear in the following units:

- ...
- (4) Unit 18;
- ...
- (7) Unit 22;
- (8) Unit 23;
- ...
- (10) Unit 26(A).

There is a positive C&T finding for brown bears in Unit 18, with an ANS of 20-30. There is also a positive C&T finding for brown bears in Units 21 and 22, with a combined ANS of 20-25. And there is a positive C&T finding for brown bears in Units 23, 24, and 26, with a combined ANS of 25-35.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The Board of Game must reauthorize brown bear tag fee exemptions annually or the fee automatically becomes reinstated. Tag fee exemptions reduce the administrative burden on hunters and provides opportunistic harvest opportunity.

General Season Hunts: Reauthorizations are needed for: Unit 18, where the tag fee has been exempted for 9 years; Unit 22, where the tag fee has been exempted for 19 years; Unit 23, where the tag fee has been exempted for 14 years; and Unit 26A, where the tag fee has been exempted for 9 years. Tag fee exemptions are desired to allow: 1) incremental increase in annual harvest; 2) opportunistic harvest by resident hunters; and 3) harvest by a wide range of users.

General season brown bear harvest rates are within sustained yield limits and previous exemptions of the resident tag fee have not caused dramatic or unexpected increases in overall harvest. In Units 18 and 26A, tag exemptions were authorized for RY2012 and harvest has remained within sustained yield and continues to be similar to the preceding ten-year period. In Unit 22, the 18-year tag-free period for residents has had an average annual harvest of 50 brown bears (range 41–63 bears). In Unit 23, general harvests have been increasing slowly since 1961, primarily in response to increases in human population rather than regulatory changes, although annual harvests vary due to weather and hunting conditions. Harvest data for Unit 23 show no trend in the sex ratio, age, or size of bears harvested under all types of hunts.

Subsistence Season Hunts: Reauthorizations are needed for Units 18, 22, 23, and 26A where brown bear subsistence hunt requirements include: 1) registration permit, 2) tag fee exemption, 3) salvaging meat for human consumption, 4) no use of aircraft in Units 22, 23 and 26A, 5) no sealing requirement unless hide and skull are removed from the subsistence hunt area, and 6) if sealing is required, the skin of the head and front claws must be removed and retained by ADF&G at the time of sealing. Continuing the tag fee exemption helps facilitate participation in the associated brown bear harvest programs maintained by ADF&G for subsistence hunts.

In all units, subsistence brown bear harvest rates are low and well within sustained yield limits and exempting the resident tag fee has not caused an increase in subsistence harvest. In Unit 18, we estimate 0–3 bears are taken annually in subsistence hunts. In Unit 22, subsistence harvest by permit is quite low, averaging less than one bear per year (less than 1% of the total brown bear harvest). In Unit 23, subsistence permit harvest has been less than five bears annually since 1992 (less than 10% of the total brown bear harvest). In Unit 26A, between zero and five bears are taken annually by subsistence registration permit holders.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain brown bear big game tag fee exemptions in general season and subsistence season hunts in Region V (Units 18, 22, 23, and 26A)

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal is not expected to result in additional cost to the department.

PROPOSAL 200 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Create a moose hunt in the Southcentral Region for seniors over the age of 65 with ADF&G Permanent ID cards.

PROPOSED BY: David Strawser

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create a moose hunt throughout the Southcentral Region (Units 6, 7, 14 (C), and 15) for seniors with an Alaska Department of Fish and Game Permanent Identification Card, with season dates of September 26-30. The proposal does not specify the bag limit for this hunt. Proxy hunting would not be allowed.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are in

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

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4)		
Unit 6(A), all drainages into the Gulf of Alaska from Cape Suckling to Palm Point		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 bull by registration permit only; up to 30 bulls may be taken	Sept. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 5 drawing permits may be issued		Sept. 1—Nov. 30
Remainder of Unit 6(A)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side	Sept. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side Sept. 1—Nov. 30

Unit 6(B)
1 antlered moose by registration permit only; up to 30 antlered moose may be taken Aug. 27—Oct. 31
(General hunt only) No open season.

Unit 6(C)
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 40 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season.
1 bull by registration permit only	Nov. 1—Dec. 31	No open season.
Unit 6(D) 1 bull	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30

(5)

Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage

RESIENT HUNTER:

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with non-resident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued; or

Aug. 20—Oct. 10
(General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with resident hunts

Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit only; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season.

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 15(A), that portion East of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road, and north of the Sterling High-

Oct. 10—Nov. 10
(General hunt only)

Oct. 10—Nov. 10

way;

(6)

The hunting seasons and bag limits for moose in
Remainder of Unit 7 are as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(6) Units and Bag Limits	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
(6) Remainder of Unit 7	Resident Open season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 25
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season.
(7) Unit 8	No open season.	No open season.
(12) Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area	Sept. 1—Mar. 31 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Mar. 31
1 moose per regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood	Sept. 1—Sept. 30	Sept. 1—Sept. 30

Management Area	(General hunt only)	
1 moose by drawing permit, by Bow and arrow only; up to 25 Permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management area		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued	Sept. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season.
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area		
1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Nov. 30
Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area		
1 bull by registration permit By bow and arrow only; up to 6 Bulls may be taken	Sept. 1—Oct. 20 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Oct. 20
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 10 permits may be issued	Sept. 20—Nov. 15 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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(13) hunting seasons and bag limits for moose in Unit 15 are as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop Wildlife Management Area		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 15—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15—Sept. 30
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road. and north of the Sterling Highway		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway; or	Oct. 10—Nov. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 10—Nov. 10
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Remainder of Unit 15(A)		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side	Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by drawing permit only;	Sept. 1—Sept. 25	No open season
Unit 15(B) Kalgin Island		
1 moose per regulatory year, by registration permit only	Aug. 20—Sept. 20	Aug. 20—Sept. 20
Remainder of Unit 15(B)		
1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers	Aug. 22—Aug. 29 (General hunt only)	Aug. 22—Aug. 29

with 3 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 bull by drawing permit only;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

No open season

Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay.

Aug. 25—Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt only)

No open season

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 25
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the nonresident drawing hunt; or

Oct. 20—Nov. 20

1 bull by drawing permit only or;

Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only,

Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued in combination with the resident drawing hunt Oct. 20—Nov. 20

Remainder of 15(C)

RESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or Sept. 1—Sept. 25 (General hunt only)

1 bull by drawing permit only or; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

1 moose by targeted permit only; Oct. 15—Mar. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; Sept. 1—Sept. 25

...

Current regulations provide a free fishing, hunting and trapping license for Alaska residents at 60 years of age.

In 2022, the board adopted Proposal 155 to provide for additional harvest opportunity, for any-bull, in antler restricted moose hunts when additional harvestable surplus is available.

Unit 6 and a very small portion of lower Unit 15C near Seldovia have a negative C&T finding for moose. Units 7, 14, and 15C are entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area. There is a positive C&T finding for moose on Kalgin Island in Unit 15C, with an ANS of

2. There is also a positive C&T finding for moose in that portion of Unit 15C near Port Graham and Nanwalek.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? It is difficult to determine anticipated increase in harvest if the proposal is adopted because it is unknown what the level of interest will be, and because the bag limit was not specified (e.g., antler restricted) an estimated increase, whether antler restricted or any-bull, is not possible.

BACKGROUND: There are currently numerous opportunities (see above) to hunt moose in the Southcentral Region between September 26-30 through various drawing or registration permit hunts; there are also a few general season hunts and one Tier II hunt that includes those dates. A legal bull to harvest varies for the permit hunts but is generally limited by antler configuration for the general season hunts.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal as written because there is no bag limit specified. If adopted the board will need to determine if this hunt will be a registration hunt, drawing hunt, or general season harvest ticket hunt, and will also need to specify the bag limit. If adopted the department recommends a drawing hunt to control additional harvest. The department supports additional hunting opportunity when populations allow; however, as noted above there are multiple hunts that occur during the dates requested which people in this category can already participate in. It is also important to note the proposal will allow hunters of any age to accompany and retrieve the moose, which may lead to very high harvest numbers.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 203 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Establish a moose drawing hunt within Unit 14C in Kincaid Park for hunters that meet the 70% disability standard with mobility impairments.

PROPOSED BY: Ira Edwards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to establish a weapons-restricted, antlerless moose drawing permit hunt for physically disabled residents in Kincaid Municipal Park in the Anchorage Management Area. Eligible hunters would be those with a physical disability of 70% or greater as noted under AS 16.05.940(25), who require a wheelchair or other mobility device, and who have taken a department approved Hunter Education course. Hunters would be required to pass a hunt orientation and proficiency test provided by ADF&G. Legal weapons would be shotgun or muzzleloader. The entire moose (including viscera) would be required to be removed from the kill site.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
5 AAC 85.045		
...		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1-Nov 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 may be issued		

...

The IM population objective for moose in Unit 14C is 1,500-1,800 moose and the IM harvest objective is 90-270 moose.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would establish a late fall drawing hunt in Kincaid Municipal Park for antlerless moose. This hunt would provide additional opportunity for mobility impaired hunters and has the potential to reduce moose-human conflicts in Kincaid Park. Since all hunters would be mobility impaired, they would be allowed to shoot from a motorized vehicle while on the trail.

BACKGROUND: Year-round recreational use of Kincaid Park has increased in recent years due to new single track bike trail development. However, since 2017 only 3 incidents of moose making contact with people within Kincaid Park have been reported to ADF&G. Of the three attacks, two were in May and one happened in June. Some of these conflicts have resulted in human injuries or property damage. Mountain bikers appear to suffer the most negative encounters and injuries, as they are traveling quietly at high speeds on narrow trails with little sight distance. While some recreational park users are concerned with public safety, others value

moose for viewing. Many people specifically go to Kincaid Park in the fall to photograph and view rutting behavior.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the allocative aspects of this proposal to establish an antlerless hunt in Kincaid Park in Unit 14(C). This is an allocation issue between consumptive and non-consumptive users. Under current regulations, ADF&G can issue more antlerless moose permits in the Anchorage Management Area. However, by municipal regulation, Kincaid Park is currently closed to hunting and trapping without approval from the Municipal Park Superintendent. If the proposal is adopted, the department may require that another licensed hunter with valid hunter's education accompany the permitted hunter. A safety orange vest provided by ADF&G would be required to be worn by all individuals participating in this hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal would require some minor costs to the department due to the need to conduct proficiency tests and hunter orientations.

PROPOSAL 204 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Close resident and nonresident hunting for Dall sheep in Unit 19C, for five years.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would close all sheep hunting in unit 19C for a 5-year period. Hunting would reopen August 2028.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 19(C)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by youth hunt only; or	Aug. 1 - Aug. 5	
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; or	Aug. 10 - Sept. 20	
1 sheep with 3/4-curl horn or less; the take of rams with	Oct. 1 - April 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	

both horns broken, lambs, or ewes with lambs, is prohibited; by registration permit only

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by youth hunt only; or

Aug. 1 - Aug. 5

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years

Aug. 10 - Sept. 20

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding in Unit 19 with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 1-5 sheep.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The primary effect of a closure to sheep hunting in Unit 19C would be a loss of hunting opportunity for residents and nonresidents. The current full curl harvest strategy is unlikely to regulate sheep population size or trends because only male sheep that average 8 years of age are harvested. In addition to a strategy which protects ewes, lambs, and most age classes of rams, the harvest of mature rams under the full curl regulation is largely compensatory. As such, sheep populations are primarily believed to be regulated by environmental factors (weather, predation, and forage) and occurs independently of hunted and non-hunted populations. Furthermore, a sheep hunting closure to Unit 19C may result in displacement of resident hunters, guides, and non-resident hunters to other GMUs.

The winter registration hunt was structured by the board specifically to provide a reasonable opportunity for successful harvest of Unit 19C sheep according to the customary and traditional use pattern. A closure of the winter hunt would reduce the reasonable opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Unit 19C has three sheep hunts: a general season with full curl horn restrictions for youth hunters from August 1–5; a general season with full curl horn restrictions for residents and nonresidents from August 10–September 20; and a winter registration permit hunt (RS380) for residents only with a bag limit of one sheep with $\frac{3}{4}$ curl horn or smaller, excluding rams with both tips broken, lambs, and ewes with lambs during October 1 – April 30. While the fall sheep season can provide for subsistence opportunity, the winter registration hunt was structured specifically to provide subsistence opportunity consistent with the pattern of customary and traditional uses.

Most sheep hunting takes place during the fall general season. During RY13–RY22, residents composed 49% of all sheep hunters in Unit 19C with an average of 84 hunters per year, while nonresidents composed 51% of sheep hunters with an average of 85 hunters per year.

Table 204.1. Unit 19C resident and nonresident hunters.

Year	Resident Harvest Ticket Hunters	Nonresident Harvest Ticket Hunters	Residents as Percentage of Harvest Ticket Hunters	RS380 Hunters (all Resident)	Total Resident Hunters	Residents as Percentage of Hunters Total
2013	69	93	43%	0	69	43%
2014	81	96	46%	8	89	48%
2015	97	88	52%	6	103	54%
2016	85	88	49%	3	88	50%
2017	99	81	55%	7	106	57%
2018	105	107	50%	2	107	50%
2019	90	93	49%	7	97	51%
2020	83	83	50%	0	83	50%
2021	56	67	46%	0	56	46%
2022	37	52	42%	0	37	42%
Total Avg.	80	85	48%	3	84	49%

Over the same 10-year period, an average of 85 sheep were harvested per year with nonresidents accounting for 68% of all sheep harvested compared to 32% for residents. Success rates averaged 33% for residents and 68% for nonresidents with an overall average success rate of 50%.

Table 204.2. Unit 19C resident and nonresident harvest.

Year	Resident Harvest Ticket Harvest	Resident Harvest Ticket Success Rate	Nonresident Harvest Ticket Harvest	Nonresident Harvest Ticket Success Rate	RS380 Harvest	Total Resident Harvest	Overall Resident Success Rate
2013	27	39%	61	66%	0	27	39%
2014	29	36%	57	59%	2	31	35%
2015	30	31%	63	72%	4	34	33%
2016	34	40%	62	70%	0	34	39%
2017	41	41%	64	79%	5	46	43%
2018	39	37%	79	74%	0	39	36%
2019	35	39%	75	81%	4	39	40%
2020	14	17%	54	65%	0	14	17%
2021	6	11%	34	51%	0	6	11%
2022	3	8%	26	50%	0	3	8%
Total Avg.	26	32%	58	68%	2	27	33%

Total annual sheep harvest in Unit 19C has varied significantly since the 1980s, likely associated with fluctuations in sheep abundance. Total harvest increased from the 1980s through 1990s and peaked at 127 sheep in 1995. Harvest then decreased during the late 1990s and averaged about 65 sheep annually from 2000-2010. Beginning in 2011 harvest steadily increased until RY18, when 118 sheep were harvested. Since RY18, harvest has subsequently decreased, to a current low of 29 sheep in RY22. This represents a 40-year low and a 75% decrease in harvest over a 4-year period. Although sheep survey data are not available for much of the above period, the cyclical nature of peaks and valleys observed in the harvest data likely reflects similar trends in sheep abundance.

Since the 1980s, residents accounted for about 33% of annual harvest while nonresidents took 67% of the harvest, similar to the more recent 10-year average. The proportion of sheep harvested by residents and nonresidents has remained relatively similar across years despite fluctuations in total harvest described above. However, beginning in RY20, resident success rates began to decline significantly.

The first sheep surveys conducted in portions of Unit 19C began in 2010. From 2010 through 2019, sheep abundance has been variable, but relatively stable. No surveys were conducted in 2020 and 2021; however, a segment of the overall survey and an area immediately adjacent to the survey area was completed in 2022. The result of those surveys indicates a 50–80% decline in sheep compared to 2019. The decline observed is most likely the result of difficult winter conditions associated with heavy snow fall, winter rain events, and late springs.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** a closure of Unit 19C to sheep hunting for the purpose of facilitating sheep population growth and is **NEUTRAL** with respect to any regulatory changes that address allocation.

While sheep harvested during the Aug. 10-Sept. 20 harvest ticket hunt for a full-curl ram can provide for subsistence uses, the registration permit hunt (RS380) provides specific opportunity for subsistence uses. However, the restrictions on the winter C&T hunt for the last three regulatory years and the current trend of a significantly decreasing resident harvest in the fall hunt may be indications that reasonable opportunity is not being provided. If the board adopted this proposal, it may wish to consider whether the resulting regulations will provide meaningful opportunity for subsistence.

Historically, sheep abundance in Unit 19C, as well as most other GMUs across the state, has fluctuated significantly. Long term harvest records in Unit 19C as well as other GMUs indicated a cyclical pattern which likely correlates with increasing, stable, and decreasing periods of sheep abundance. The full curl harvest strategy has allowed consistent and reliable opportunity for hunting during all phases of population cycles without jeopardizing the conservation of sheep populations.

The effects of density dependence on population dynamics in Alaska sheep are largely unknown. Therefore, determining the carrying capacity of GMUs or a mountain range for sheep is not currently possible. As such, managing sheep populations based on a desired population objective may not be feasible. In general, sheep surveys are designed to provide an index to sheep population status. These data are largely used to manage sheep hunter expectations rather than to inform regulatory change.

Despite recent changes in Unit 19C sheep abundance and associated harvest levels, the selective harvest strategy provides adequate conservation safeguards. Regardless, the department does recognize that user conflicts may become elevated when fewer numbers of legal sheep are available on the landscape. If allocation of harvest or hunting opportunity of Unit 19C sheep is warranted to address fewer numbers of legal rams on the landscape, there are numerous options for the Board to consider short of a complete closure. Those include, but are not limited to, the use of drawing permits, and shortening or shifting of season dates to limit participation (keeping in mind the preference for subsistence uses).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 205 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Change the moose registration permit requirement (RM653) for nonresidents to a draw permit within the Farewell area of Unit 19C.

PROPOSED BY: Robert McCaffrey, Lori McCaffrey, Paige McCaffrey, Chad McCaffrey, Chris Diltz, Jerry Diltz, Joey Diltz, Brian Wilson, Grant Sullivan, Ben Eaton, Barb Eaton, Pat Nolde, and Julie Nolde

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Create a nonresident draw permit, with 20 permits available, for nonresident moose hunters in the portion of Unit 19C generally known as the Farewell area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Currently there is a registration permit required (RM653) for nonresidents to hunt moose in the Farewell area. There is no limit on the number of permits available. Current seasons are September 1 – 20 with a bag limit of 1 bull moose with 50” antlers or 4 brow tines on at least one side.

There is a positive C&T finding for moose in Unit 19 outside the Lime Village Management Area, with an ANS of 400–700 moose, including 175–225 in Unit 19A and 20–24 in Unit 19B.

There is a negative IM finding for moose in Unit 19C.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If this proposal is adopted nonresidents in the RM653 hunt area would be required to win a draw permit instead of a registration permit. This would reduce nonresident opportunity and would likely reduce harvest. Impacts to resident hunters are unknown but may result in a higher harvest success rate.

BACKGROUND: The Farewell area north of the Alaska Range in Unit 19C is a popular moose hunting destination for both resident and nonresident hunters. For such a remote location there is a unique combination of good access, an extensive trail network, and a high density of moose.

Due to these factors the area attracts a large number of hunters and in September the area is very busy with both aircraft and ATVs. Poor harvest reporting and heavy hunting pressure in the area led the board to implement a registration permit for all hunters beginning in RY20. With this registration permit there is now excellent harvest reporting and a much clearer picture of what actual effort and harvest are like. Currently there are 190 – 200 hunters utilizing the RM653 permit with 90 – 105 moose being harvested annually. This is an extremely high harvest rate for such a small area (382 mi²) and is presumably only possible because moose move into the area every fall for the rut. Nonresidents currently make up 45% of all hunters using RM653 and they take 47% of the moose harvested. The Department conducts composition surveys in this same area in November. Bull cow ratios have been declining in recent years and the 2-year average is now 27 bulls: 100 cows, which is below our objective of 30 bulls: 100 cows. The most recent fall calf:cow ratio is also low in this area, since 17 calves: 100 cows were observed in 2022.

In November of 2022 the board heard four agenda change requests to alter the existing hunt structure in Unit 19C, which included the option in this proposal as well as closing the area to nonresidents for the fall of 2023.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspect of this proposal but does support reducing harvest at this time. If the board takes no action on this proposal the department does have EO authority to reduce the number of permits available or shorten seasons. However, this would affect both resident and nonresident hunters. If the board adopts this proposal they may wish to consider what the nonresident season will be next fall as implementation of a draw will not be possible in RY23 due to the timing of the application period.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 206 – 5 AAC 92.124 Intensive Management Plans VIII. Reauthorize the Unit 21E Intensive Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The current Unit 21E intensive management (IM) plan will expire on June 30, 2023, which is out of cycle with the Region III (Interior and Eastern Arctic Region) regular Board of Game meeting. Due to Covid-19, the regularly scheduled Region III meeting was shifted by one year, and this IM plan is now out of sync with that cycle. This proposal will bring the IM plan back into alignment with the regularly scheduled board meetings for this area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

- (a) Plans established. Intensive management plans for the following areas are established in this section:
- (b) Unit 21(E) Predation Control Area.

...

(6) time frame is as follows:

(A) through June 30, 2023, the commissioner may authorize removal of wolves and black and brown bears in Unit 21(E);

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If this proposal is adopted the 21E IM plan will be extended for one year to put it back in cycle with the Region III board meeting. The department will provide a Unit 21E IM update to the board at the March 2024 regulatory meeting.

BACKGROUND: Residents of Unit 21E; the Grayling, Anvik, Shageluk, Holy Cross Advisory Committee (GASH AC); and other hunters who use the area expressed concern about a perceived decline in the moose population during the mid-1990s. To address this concern, in January 2005, the Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) established a citizen-based working group. The working group was asked to review all available information and to develop a comprehensive moose management plan for the area. The final product was the Yukon–Innoko Moose Management Plan, which includes the following mission statement: “Maintain healthy and abundant moose populations by proactively managing moose, predation, and habitat, and keeping moose harvest within sustained yield so that subsistence needs for moose are met on an annual basis, and there is sufficient moose to provide for personal and family use by Alaska residents and some nonresident hunting opportunity for generations to come.” This plan was endorsed by both the Board of Game (board) and the Federal Subsistence Board in 2006.

Because proactive management was a major tenet of the plan, the working group recommended an aerial wolf control program to prevent further declines in moose densities and maintain hunting opportunities in Unit 21E. The board adopted an IM plan in March 2010 authorizing wolf control if the moose population declined below 1.0 moose/mi². This plan expired in June 2016 and a subsequent plan was authorized by the board in March 2017. The current plan was authorized for a 6-year period from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2023 and authorizes predator control if a GSPE point estimate is below 1.0 moose/mi² (corrected for sightability) and twinning rates are >20%. The most recent GSPE survey in 2022 estimated a density of 1.9 moose/mi² (corrected for sightability) and wolf control is not being considered at this time.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. While IM has never been active in Unit 21E, a 1-year extension will place this program back in cycle with regularly scheduled meetings for the Interior and Northeast Arctic Region, for which the next regular meeting is in 2024. The board may also consider amending the proposal to extend the expiration date into the future, which will reduce the board’s need to take this up at the March 2024 board meeting.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 207– 5 AAC 85.025(a)(8) Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Establish a Tier II hunt for Nelchina caribou in Unit 13

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a Tier II hunt framework in regulation for Nelchina caribou (NCH) in Unit 13 as required by statute so that a Tier II hunt is available if further reductions in harvest are warranted.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5AAC 85.025 (a) (8), Hunting Seasons and Bag Limits for Caribou

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(8)		
(B)		
Unit 13		
Up to 2 caribou per harvest report per regulatory year by community harvest permit only; up to 400 caribou may be taken; or	Aug. 10–Sept. 20 (Subsistence Hunt only) Oct. 21–March 31 (Subsistence Hunt only)	No open season
up to 2 caribou every regulatory year by Tier I subsistence permit only; or	Aug. 10–Aug. 31 (Subsistence Hunt only) Oct. 21–March 31 (Subsistence Hunt only)	No open season
up to 2 caribou every regulatory year by Tier I subsistence permit only; or	Sept. 01–Sept. 20 (Subsistence Hunt only) Oct. 21–March 31 (Subsistence Hunt only)	No open season
1 caribou every regulatory year by youth hunt drawing permit; up to 200 permits may be	Aug. 1–Aug. 5	No open season

issued; or

1 caribou every regulatory year by drawing permit; up to 5,000 permits may be issued; or

Aug. 20–Sept. 20
Oct. 21–March 31

No open season

1 bull every regulatory year by drawing permit; up to 200 permits may be issued when the herd is at or above population objectives; or

Aug. 20–Sept. 20

...

The board has identified the NCH as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use and established an intensive management (IM) population objective of 35,000–40,000 caribou with a harvest objective of 3,000–6,000 caribou.

There is a positive customary and traditional (C&T) subsistence use finding for caribou (5 AAC 99.025) in Game Management Units 12 and 13 with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (ANS) of 600–1,000 caribou.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted the current hunt structure would have a Tier II option that would further restrict hunter participation to ensure the herd is maintained and managed on a sustained-yield basis while providing subsistence opportunity. When the harvestable surplus falls below 600 caribou and a reasonable opportunity for success in harvesting a Nelchina caribou for subsistence uses cannot be provided to all eligible residents, applicants will need to be scored based on customary and direct dependence on the NCH.

Regulatory language such as the following would be added to the above hunt structures outlined in 5AAC 85.025(a)(8):

1 caribou by Tier II permit only; provided that the harvestable surplus is fewer than 600 caribou, up to XXX permits may be issued; or

Aug. 10–Sept. 20
(Subsistence Hunt only)
Oct. 21–March 31
(Subsistence Hunt only)

No open season

BACKGROUND: Existing regulations do not include the tools for the department to limit participation in the Nelchina caribou subsistence hunt as required by state subsistence law AS

16.05.258 (b)(4) when the harvestable portion of the population is below the low end of the ANS range, which is 600-1,000 caribou. When the existing regulations were created, the herd was above population objectives and the need for a Tier II hunt in 5 AAC 85.025 was not present; as a result, no such hunt was included in the existing hunt structure. The herd is currently below population objectives. It is anticipated that, before the herd begins to rebound, there may be seasons in which a reasonable opportunity to engage in subsistence uses may not be provided to all eligible residents.

In such a situation the Board of Game must limit participation by eliminating all consumptive uses other than subsistence uses and distinguish among subsistence users by applying the criteria in AS 16.05.258.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of the Nelchina herd and **SUPPORTS** the creation of a Tier II hunt which will allow a limited opportunity for subsistence uses. If the harvestable surplus falls below the low end of the ANS, the state subsistence law states that opportunity shall be allocated according to Tier II criteria. If there is no Tier II regulation, then the department does not have the authority to distinguish among subsistence users and will be required to close all opportunity (all existing hunts) until the Board of Game can act. Even with expedited regulations subsistence users could miss an entire hunting season.

The board will need to determine appropriate seasons, bag limits, and the maximum number of Tier II subsistence permits that can be issued for the Tier II hunt. Based on the history of subsistence opportunity in Unit 13 the department has provided a recommendation for some of the regulatory language in the comments above. Federal subsistence harvest should be considered when determining harvestable surplus available for state hunts.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 208– 5 AAC 85.055. Seasons and bag limits for sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would convert the nonresident drawing permit DS236 in the Southwest hunt area in Unit 14(C) to allow only nonresidents hunting with a relative within the second degree of kindred (2DK) as listed in Proposal 149 at the statewide meeting, and issue at least one nonresident permit for each of the four Unit 14(C) rifle permit areas: Northwest, Northeast, Upper Eagle River and Southwest.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current Dall sheep hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2022-2023 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area		
1 ram by drawing permit only by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years		Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31	
1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only;		Aug. 10 – Oct. 31

up to 240 permits will be issued total; or

1 ram by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, nonresident hunters wanting to hunt sheep in Unit 14(C) with a relative of the second degree of kindred would no longer have the option of applying for any drawing hunts in Unit 14(C) except for DS236 (the earliest hunt in the Southwest hunt area). If they wanted to hunt in any of the other permit areas, or any date range other than August 10 – 22, they would be required to hire a guide. Nonresident hunters wanting to hunt in DS236 with a guide would no longer have that option. They would only be able to participate in that hunt if they had an Alaskan relative of the second degree of kindred who could hunt with them; however they would still be able to hunt in DS237 and DS238, which are in the same hunt area but have different season dates.

Also, this proposal would require the department to issue at least one nonresident permit in each of the hunt areas in Unit 14(C), limiting the department’s ability to reduce permit numbers in response to future conservation concerns.

BACKGROUND: At the Statewide Board of Game meeting in March of 2022 the Board passed Proposal 149, which created a separate drawing for second degree kindred hunters for sheep where there was an allocation for nonresidents. The proposal provided examples of how many permits should be issued to each group within each hunt area, however after adding other existing regulations allocating permits between archery and rifle hunters to the recently passed regulations and assessing the number of permits that could be issued for conservation reasons, the department determined the intent of the proposal, as outlined in examples provided, could not be met due to existing regulations.

Currently, there are six nonresident guided-only permits distributed between the Northwest and Southwest hunt areas, so this would require a redistribution of those permits. Additionally, 5 AAC 92.057 states that a maximum of 5% of archery permits for Dall sheep in Unit 14C shall be issued to nonresidents, and a maximum of 13% of the unrestricted weapon permits shall be issued to nonresidents. Since this proposal would require the issuance of four nonresident permits (one for each hunt area), the department would no longer have the authority to drop the overall permit numbers below 31 total permits (4 of 30 permits is 13.3%) and stay in compliance with 5 AAC 92.057 and the requirement from this proposal to issue nonresident tags in each of

the above-mentioned hunt areas, no matter the status of the sheep population. This would limit our ability to reduce the number of permits in response to any future conservation concerns.

The proposer also mentions converting one of the DS240 archery only permits to second degree kindred only. This would exceed the 20% maximum allocation to second degree kindred hunters requested in the proposer's original proposal (Proposal 149 at the statewide meeting) that addressed this issue.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative portion of this proposal. However, the department is **OPPOSED** to the components of the proposal that limit the department's ability to set permit numbers in response to conservation concerns.

Full-curl regulations are generally sufficient, and harvest and population history in GMU 14C supports that the current regulations are working as intended. Importantly, the existing draw hunt structure in GMU 14C both distributes hunters across a small geographic area and gives the opportunity to harvest large rams under enjoyable hunting conditions, in addition to ensuring that the population is not overharvested.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.
