

Board of Game Meeting Summary

Tues. November 7, 2000

Continuing deliberations for the Douglas Area, Proposal 26 was amended to reduce the number of antlerless permits and move the season later, to Nov. 15-30.

Proposal 26A created an antlerless moose hunt at Gustavus in GMU 1C and was adopted by a narrow margin, reflecting discomfort in the small Icy Strait community with the concept of taking cows.

Proposal 27 increased the number of permits available for the Berner's Bay moose drawing hunt and was adopted.

Proposal 22 increased the season length for goats in Unit 1C by opening it one month earlier, starting Sept. 1. It was amended to also lengthen the season for the archery-only goat hunt to start Sept. 1.

Proposal 10 was adopted to change the Unit 5 brown bear general season to a registration hunt.

Proposal 6 would have changed the brown bear bag limit in Unit 1D to one bear every year or 2 years. It did not pass.

Proposal 1 opened a beaver trapping season in Unit 1D and was amended to reduce the bag limit to 5.

Proposal 11 would have closed Horse Island to all hunting and failed.

Proposal 33A to finalize intensive management population & harvest objectives for deer in Region I and moose and caribou in Region III was passed with no changes to the numbers listed above.

Proposal C No action was taken based on 33A

Proposal D No action was taken based on 33A

Proposal G was adopted to modify nonresident harvest ticket requirements

Proposal L, M, and N to conform regulations to current state statute for the same-day-airborne harvest of wolves passed, with the proviso that these would not be submitted to Law if the ballot proposition re SDA passed.

Proposal 38 was amended to close an area of approximately 30 square miles in the southwest corner of the "wolf townships" to taking of wolves, to protect the East Fork pack's range outside Denali NP. No lands were closed to the east of the park.

Proposal E identifying customary and traditional uses of furbearers was amended to cover the entire state and to identify amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence as a range from 0 to the harvestable surplus. As this unexpected move to enact C&T findings proceeded, the Board's understanding was that they were creating a "triggerless" system that would meet the requirements of the law but not create Tier II trapping situations.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS
BOARD OF GAME
November 1 - 9, 2000
Juneau, Alaska

DESIGNATED REPORTER: Sherry Wright

This summary of actions is for information purposes only and not intended to detail, reflect or fully interpret reasons for Board actions.

PROPOSAL NO. 1

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Open a beaver trapping season in Unit 1D.

AMENDMENT: Bag limit: 5 beaver per season.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that beaver trapping seasons were closed in 1975 due to historic low numbers. The board heard from the department that since 1976 there has been an increase in the beaver population and the department believes the population could be sustained with a trapping season. Some members of the public indicated beaver are causing property damage in the area. The board decided on a conservative bag limit for personal use or sale while controlling beavers in an area where they are causing problems.

PROPOSAL NO. 2

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Shorten the Unit 3 nonresident black bear season.

AMENDMENT: Unit 3, Kuiu Island for non-resident hunters: 1 bear, the season Sept 1 - June 30 will be closed by emergency order when the harvest guideline has been reached. The annual harvest of black bears on Kuiu Island in Unit 3 by nonresident hunters should be managed so that in any given consecutive three-year period, the average annual harvest does not exceed 120 bears. A nonresident hunter who takes a black bear on Kuiu Island in Unit 3 shall report the sex and location of the kill to ADF&G Wildlife Conservation in Petersburg within 5 days of harvest. The skin and skull of a black bear taken by a nonresident hunter on Kuiu Island in Unit 3 must be sealed within 14 days after the taking and may not be transported from Units 1-4 until it has been sealed.

DISCUSSION: The board heard concerns from the department that there is an increase in the harvest of black bear on Unit 3, particularly on Kuiu Island. The department reported the increase in nonresident use is due to the trophy-size black bear in this unit. The board received comment that reducing the season for nonresidents could impact guides and transporters. The department indicated they would embark on a research effort that will give them better harvest data by fall 2001.

PROPOSAL NO. 3

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 2

DESCRIPTION: Establish a registration hunt for black bears in Unit 3.

PROPOSAL NO. 4

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 2

DESCRIPTION: Modify black bear seasons and bag limits in Unit 3.

PROPOSAL NO. 5

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Require that a wounded bear in Units 1-4 be considered the bag limit.

DISCUSSION: The department reported and the board agreed that this issue would be better addressed by hunter education. Public Safety officials indicate this proposal is unenforceable.

PROPOSAL NO. 6

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Allow hunters to harvest one brown bear per year or every other year in Unit 1D.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that although the bear population in Unit 1D is healthy the current harvest level is approaching the guideline harvest level based on the estimated number of brown bears in the subunit. The board agreed that by allowing hunters to take a bear every year could compromise the health of the population.

PROPOSAL NO. 7

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Align the Unit 1 spring brown bear season with the current Unit 4 “inside waters” spring season.

DISCUSSION: The board listened to concerns of a rapid increase in guided nonresident hunting in Unit 1A. The board and the department agreed that the moratorium on all guide use across the Tongass National Forest, recently implemented by the US Forest Service, would help regulate the current high harvest of brown bear that may be too high to sustain over the long term.

PROPOSAL NO. 8

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Open brown bear season on Wrangell, Etolin, and Deer Islands.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that very few bears are present on Wrangell, Etolin, and Deer Islands. The board agreed that the population is not large enough to support a sustainable harvest.

PROPOSAL NO. 9

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 8

DESCRIPTION: Open brown bear season on Wrangell, Etolin, and Deer Islands.

PROPOSAL NO. 10

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Change Unit 5 brown bear general season to registration hunt.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that this proposal would require brown bear hunters to secure a registration permit prior to hunting brown bear in Unit 5. The board agreed that a registration permit allows wildlife managers to obtain information from unsuccessful hunters, which is a very valuable tool.

PROPOSAL NO. 11

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Close Horse Island to all hunting.

DISCUSSION: The Department of Law reported that the board can close areas to hunting for conservation reasons, but they do not have the authority to do so based solely on a public safety rationale. Fish and Wildlife Protection suggested that property owners have the option of posting no trespassing signs.

PROPOSAL NO. 12

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Establish an archery-only, antlered deer season on Mitkof, Kupreanof, Woewodski and Butterworth Islands.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that deer populations on these islands suffered severe population declines due to severe winter weather in the 1960s and early 1970s. The board expressed concerns about opening a hunt on a recovering population. The board concluded that the populations of deer on these islands need more time to recuperate.

PROPOSAL NO. 13

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Establish an archery-only antlered moose season on Mitkof, Kupreanof, Woewodski and Butterworth Islands.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that 60 percent of moose killed in Units 1B and 3 are taken during the first two weeks of the season but that the four week season (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15) still allows opportunity for archers. The board also determined that they do not want to open an any-bull season in an area that is managed under the spike-fork 50-inch regulation.

PROPOSAL NO. 14

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 12

DESCRIPTION: Establish an archery-only either sex deer season on Mitkof, Kupreanof, Woewodski and Butterworth Islands.

PROPOSAL NO. 15

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 16

DESCRIPTION: Establish new boundaries for deer hunting within the Petersburg city limits.

PROPOSAL NO. 16

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Establish new boundaries for deer hunting within the Petersburg city limits.

AMENDMENT: Include Mitkof Island, Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula east of the Portage Bay-Duncan Canal Portage, and Woewodski and Butterworth Islands.

DISCUSSION: The board determined that this proposal would establish new boundaries that are consistent with those currently in effect for other big game species. The board concluded that the amended proposal language simplifies the regulatory language.

PROPOSAL NO. 17

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Increase the number of permits to 120 in the drawing hunt, and provide a general season for elk in Units 1, 2 and remainder of 3.

AMENDMENT: Unit 3, that portion bounded by a line beginning at the intersection of Sumner Strait and Clarence Strait, running southeast following the midline of Clarence Strait, down the midline of Snow Passage, then east of the Kahevarof Islands back to the midline of Clarence Strait down to its intersection with Ernest Sound, then northeast following the midline of Ernest Sound, excluding Niblak Islands, to its intersection with Zimovia Strait, then northwest following the western shoreline of Zimovia Strait to its intersection with Chichagof Passage, then west along the midline of Chichagof Passage to its intersection with Stikine Strait, then northerly along the midline of Stikine Strait, west of Vank Island, to its intersection with Sumner Strait, then northwest along the midline of Sumner Strait back to the point of beginning. Units 1, 2. and the remainder of Unit 3 1 elk; resident and nonresident season: Aug. 1 - Dec. 31.

DISCUSSION: The board discussed that the Unit 3 Elk Management Plan called for a hunting season when the population could support a harvest of 20 bulls. The department reported that elk reached that level in 1997. In 1999 permits were issued and 55 hunters harvested 16 elk. The department indicated that elk have adapted well and continue to thrive. The board concluded that the increase in permits would help achieve the desired harvest level.

PROPOSAL NO. 18

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Lengthen Unit 3 "archery-only" bull elk season to Sept. 1 – 30.

DISCUSSION: In 1998, the board extended the Unit 3 elk season and authorized a two-week archery-only hunt for bull elk from Sept. 15 - 30. The department reported that to date only one elk has been taken in Unit 3 with a bow. The board concluded that this proposal would not increase pressure on the resource but that it will give those hunting time to complete their hunt.

PROPOSAL NO. 19

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 17

DESCRIPTION: Modify bag limits and lengthen season for elk in Unit 3.

PROPOSAL NO. 20

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 18

DESCRIPTION: Lengthen season and create separate drawing hunt for “archery-only” bull elk.

PROPOSAL NO. 21

ACTION: No action taken due to No. 18

DESCRIPTION: Establish Unit 3 “archery-only” registration bull elk hunt Sept. 15-30.

PROPOSAL NO. 22

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Lengthen goat season in portion of Unit 1C by opening one month earlier.

AMENDMENT: Unit 1C that portion draining into Stephens Passage and Taku Inlet between Point Salisbury and Taku Glacier - archery only - Sept. 1 - Nov. 30.

DISCUSSION: The department noted that in 1996 the board reopened goat hunting based on aerial surveys that indicate the goat population had recovered to a harvestable level. The department reported that there is not much hunter interest in the area due to the inclement weather conditions. The board agreed that opening the season one month early would allow hunters to access the area.

PROPOSAL NO. 23

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Create a Unuk River controlled use area for moose hunting that would restrict moose hunting until 24 hours after being airborne.

DISCUSSION: The board determined that current statewide regulations required hunters NOT hunt until 3 AM following the day they were airborne.

PROPOSAL NO. 24

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Establish drawing permit hunt for bull moose in Unit 1B that would run concurrently with the current registration permit hunt.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that since the enactment of the antler restriction for moose in Unit 1B that moose distribution and abundance has steadily increased. The board determined that the department's management method has brought back populations to healthy levels.

PROPOSAL NO. 25

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Extend moose season by opening the last 2 weeks of October.

DISCUSSION: The department indicated that moose in Units 1B and 3 have antler development characteristics that place them in the spike-fork category during the first or second year of life. The board agreed that extending the season for a month would increase the number of moose harvested and possibly reduce recruitment into the breeding population.

PROPOSAL NO. 26

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Create a drawing permit hunt for cow moose in portion of 1C.

AMENDMENT: Unit 1(C), that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage, 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: 1 bull by registration permit only; resident open season - Sept. 15 - Oct. 15; nonresident season - Sept. 15 - Oct 15; or 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 10 permits may be issued; resident open season - Nov. 15 - Nov. 30; nonresident season - Nov. 15 - Nov. 30.

DISCUSSION: The board heard concerns from residents of Gustavus who are fearful of an antlerless moose hunt. The board expressed their understanding of the local residents' concerns. The department reported that the high moose densities in the Gustavus Forelands and the utilization of the available browse might cause the herd to exceed its winter carrying capacity. The department indicated that a moose browse study to quantify the extent of browsing indicated that nearly moose utilizes 90 percent of available twigs. The board agreed that a limited take of antlerless moose would decrease the

productivity of the herd. The board will send a letter to the residents of Gustavus to explain their decision to open a limited cow hunt.

PROPOSAL NO. 27

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Increase number of permits for moose drawing hunt in Berners Bay.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that because of limited habitat available to this moose population they must keep the herd at or below carrying capacity by using drawing permits on bull and cow moose. The department's management objective for the herd is 90 animals. In November 1999 the department counted 108 moose. The board agreed that increasing the number of drawing permits from 20 to 30 would hold the herd within its carrying capacity and provide additional hunting opportunity.

PROPOSAL NO. 28

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Change season dates for waterfowl hunting in Units 1-4 from Sept. 1 - Dec. 16 to Oct. 8 - Jan 27.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that Units 1-4 are currently considered a single waterfowl-hunting zone under federal regulations. Creating a later season would mean all of Southeast Alaska seasons would have to shift. The board indicated this issue was before them in 1996 and in 1998. The board concluded that the majority of public input recommended no change to the current regulations.

PROPOSAL NO. 29

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Restrict bag limits for sea ducks.

DISCUSSION: In 1999 the board and the US Fish and Wildlife Service responded to concerns about declining populations of some sea ducks in Alaska by adopting modest restrictions to resident and nonresident bag limits. The department also reported that none of the hunted sea duck populations are exhibiting rapid decline. The board and the department agreed that sea duck regulations should be handled on a statewide basis, rather than by region. The board asked the department to conduct sea duck hunter surveys. The Board of Game will write a letter to the Audubon Society to request volunteers to help with sea duck surveys.

PROPOSAL NO. 30

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Require sealing of elk taken in the general season.

AMENDMENT: [REGION I] Units 1 - 6.

DISCUSSION: The department expressed concerns about the effects of introduced elk on native Sitka black-tailed deer and their habitat. The board agreed that this regulation would help facilitate the collection of harvest data from elk under the terms of the general season in companion proposal No. 17.

PROPOSAL NO. 31

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Increase allowable wolf harvest level in Unit 2 from 25 percent of the estimated population to 30 percent.

DISCUSSION: The board heard reports that the natural mortality of wolves in Unit 2 is lower than previously estimated. The board agreed that deaths unrelated to trapping and hunting was less than 5 percent and that a harvest guideline of 30 percent would not result in an over harvest of the total estimated population.

PROPOSAL NO. 32

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Require deer harvested in Units 1-4 have a weatherproof tag attached.

DISCUSSION: The department did not support this proposal indicating that current regulations require a deer harvest ticket be validated by the hunter who is required to cut out the month and day first before leaving the kill site. The board agreed that designing a weatherproof tag would add additional cost and they did not believe that an affixed, waterproof tag would reduce illegal take.

PROPOSAL NO. 33 See page 10 for population and harvest objectives for big game prey populations in the Interior and Southeast regions.

PROPOSAL NO. 34 **ACTION: No action taken due to No. 35**
DESCRIPTION: Close trapping in some areas around Ketchikan.

PROPOSAL NO. 35 **ACTION: Failed**
DESCRIPTION: Close trapping in some areas around Ketchikan.
DISCUSSION: The department indicated they would help form a community work team in Ketchikan to further explore this issue. The team will consist of representatives of the trapping community, local hikers, the US Forest Service and the City and Borough of Ketchikan. The department will work with the members toward a consensus or compromise. The board agreed that the local stakeholders could best deal with the issue.

PROPOSAL NO. 36 **ACTION: Failed**
DESCRIPTION: Create a controlled use area on Kuiu Island for black bear hunting.
DISCUSSION: The board listened to reports from the department that indicated there was no population-based necessity to impose a restriction of the use of motorized vehicles on Kuiu Island.

PROPOSAL NO. 37 **ACTION: Failed**
DESCRIPTION: Create a controlled use area on Kuiu Island for deer hunting.
DISCUSSION: The department's surveys indicate very little change in deer densities in the last 10 years -- that the deer harvest on Kuiu island is low. The board agreed that restricting use of motor vehicles would have little, if any impact on Kuiu deer populations.

PROPOSAL NO. 38 **ACTION: Passed as amended**
DESCRIPTION: Close portion of Unit 20A near Denali Park to wolf hunting and trapping.
AMENDMENT: Beginning at the point of intersection of the boundary of Denali National Park and the Savage River, along a straight line northwest to a point on the Park Boundary two miles south of the Stampede Trail, then south and east along the Park Boundary to the point of beginning, is closed to the taking of wolves. The provisions of this section do not apply after June 30 2002.
DISCUSSION: At its March 2000 meeting the board heard reports from the Park Service and ADF&G that there was no biological reason to restrict hunting and trapping of wolves in this area. The board agreed to defer the proposal and assign it to a working group that would consist of citizens from the environmental community, the trapping community, local advisory committee members, a representative of rural Alaska, and a representative of the tourism industry. The group met three times and was unable to come to a consensus but members of the Citizens Group on Denali Wolves each gave their recommendations to the board. The board listened to emotional testimony from individuals on both sides of the issue. The action is an effort to meet the desires of the wildlife viewers while recognizing the long-standing use of wolves by local residents. The board will revisit this matter in two years to see if the boundary adjustments or other changes are necessary.

PROPOSAL NO. A **ACTION: Passed as amended**

DESCRIPTION: Include Takotna River drainage in the Unit 19D-East Wolf Predation Control Plan

AMENDMENT: Delete all language after paragraph 1 and change [SHALL] to may.

DISCUSSION: The board supported the expansion of the implementation area that includes the Takotna River drainage. The board heard from the department that past survey data and recent anecdotal information suggests moose and wolf population densities indicate that wolf packs are using the Takotna drainage and range freely across the boundary of the implementation plan. The board agreed that the community of Takotna is identified as one of the communities having difficult getting moose for food.

PROPOSAL NO. B
2001 mtg.

ACTION: Amended and deferred to spring

DESCRIPTION: Shorten nonresident moose season in Units 19A and B and require antler destruction.

AMENDMENT: Pursuant to the intent of AS 16.05.258(b)(2) add "by permit only to all nonresident seasons of identified moose populations in areas of intensive management; within 5 AAC 92.052 add "up to ___ permits may be issued if conditions warrant"; within 5 AAC 92.052 add a new paragraph: "for nonresident moose hunters, a permit may be issued by registration in person or through an agent until the last day of February; following that time, permits may only be issued as drawing permits;" within 5 AAC 92.050 (a)(1) add "the department must require adequate proof of agency."

DISCUSSION: The board discussed that throughout the state the explosive growth and proliferation of nonresident guides, outfitters and air taxi "drop-off" hunters in recent years is of concern to wildlife managers. The board will reissue its resolution to the Legislature requesting that they reinstate the Big Game Guide Services Board. The department will draft the amended changes to this proposal that will go out for further review and discussion at its spring 2001 meeting.

PROPOSAL C See pages 9 and 10 for population and harvest objectives for big game prey populations in the Interior and Southeast regions.

PROPOSAL D See pages 9 and 10 for population and harvest objectives for big game prey populations in the Interior and Southeast regions.

PROPOSAL E

ACTION: Passed as amended

DESCRIPTION: Identify customary and traditional uses and amounts for furbearers and fur animals statewide.

AMENDMENT: All furbearers (to include the nonsubsistence use areas) are used for subsistence wherever they are found. For each species, the amount necessary equals 100 percent of the harvestable surplus.

DISCUSSION: The board determined that there are customary and traditional uses of furbearers and fur animals throughout Alaska. The board addressed the unique situation of furbearers in Alaska. They found that all uses of furbearers and fur animals are subsistence uses wherever they are found in harvestable quantities. The board determined that the amount necessary for subsistence use was found to equal the harvestable surplus.

PROPOSAL F

ACTION: Failed

DESCRIPTION: Establish a Kaiyuh Controlled Use Area for moose hunting.

DISCUSSION: The department reported that hunter success for locals remain high. The board heard reports that survey data does not indicate local hunters are being displaced.

PROPOSAL G**ACTION: Passed****DESCRIPTION:** Modify nonresident harvest ticket requirements.**DISCUSSION:** This is a housekeeping measure that will help with enforcement of this regulation. The department reported that when the board adopted section (h) of 5 AAC 92.010 at its 1998 statewide meeting that the language was too broad. The department reported that modification to the regulation would allow for enforcement and fairness since a resident could be cited for lack of harvest tickets while nonresidents would not be cited.**PROPOSAL H****ACTION: Passed****DESCRIPTION:** Establish a Tier II musk ox season in Unit 22B.**DISCUSSION:** The board heard reports that muskoxen in Unit 22B have been managed for population growth and nonconsumptive use. The board listened to testimony that wildlife viewing is a high priority. The department indicated that the spring 2000 census showed muskoxen in Unit 22B increased from 27 bulls in 1998 to 159 animals of mixed sex and age in 2000. The Cooperators Group recommended a 5 percent harvest of bulls only and that they support protecting viewing opportunities by delaying hunting along the road system until the winter.**PROPOSAL: I****ACTION: Passed as amended****DESCRIPTION:** Establish a Tier II muskox season in Unit 22C.**AMENDMENT:** Unit 22C, that portion west of the west bank of the Bonanza River, north of the north bank of Bonanza Channel and Safety Sound, east of the east bank of the flowage connecting Safety Sound with the confluence of the Eldorado and Flambeau rivers, and east of and including the Eldorado River drainage.**DISCUSSION:** The board heard reports that the muskox population in Unit 22C have been managed for wildlife viewing and nonconsumptive use. At a meeting in August of 2000 the proponents of wildlife viewing agreed that since the muskox population is growing and a limited hunt in Unit 22C is acceptable if the hunt will allow for protection of muskox along the road system. The board commended the community and the group on their ability to see wildlife viewing and hunting as compatible.**PROPOSAL: J****ACTION: Passed as amended****DESCRIPTION:** Modify the Tier II musk ox season and bag limits for Unit 22D.**AMENDMENT:** Unit 22(D) Southwest, that portion west of the Tisuk River drainage, west of the west bank of the unnamed creek originating at the unit boundary opposite the headwaters of McAdam's Creek to its confluence with Canyon Creek, and west of the west bank of Canyon Creek to its confluence with Tuksuk Channel.**DISCUSSION:** The board expressed concern that a cow harvest might slow herd growth to the point that it would delay the ability to move out of a Tier II-only situation. The department reported they believe the herd growth will continue. The board recognized the hard work done by the Muskox Cooperators Group.**PROPOSAL: K****ACTION: Passed as amended****DESCRIPTION:** Modify the Tier II musk ox season and bag limits for Units 22E and 23.**AMENDMENT:** No more than 9 cows may be take in Unit 22E and no more than 5 cows harvested in Unit 23 SW.**DISCUSSION:** The department noted that the population can support a small harvest of cows and opportunity for an either sex harvest will continue to maintain the harvestable surplus of muskox.

PROPOSAL: L

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Conform regulation to current state statute for the harvest of same-day-airborne wolves.

DISCUSSION: The board discussed that passage of SB 74 that allows same-day-airborne hunting in specific areas has created discrepancies between administrative code and statute.

PROPOSAL: M

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Conform regulation to current state statute for the harvest of same day airborne wolves.

DISCUSSION: See discussion for Proposal L

PROPOSAL: N

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Conform regulation to current state statute for the harvest of same day airborne wolves.

DISCUSSION: See discussion for Proposal L.

PROPOSAL: O

ACTION: Passed

DESCRIPTION: Allow snowmachines to travel across the Dalton Highway Corridor.

AMENDMENT: Snowmachines may be used to transport game or hunters across the management area from land outside the management area to access land on the other side of the management area.

DISCUSSION: Department of Law reported that the Legislature amended the law that previously disallowed use of snow machines to traverse the corridor. Concern was expressed this language implies that people can use the Dalton Highway for access with their snow machine. This language is expressly for those crossing the corridor, not outside the corridor.

Population and Harvest Objectives for Big Game Prey Populations

The Board of Game has identified the following big game prey populations as important for providing high levels of harvest for human consumptive use and has established the following population and harvest objectives. The board discussed habitat, subsistence use, population herds, and harvest patterns in setting these objectives.

CARIBOU

Central Arctic Caribou Herd

Population 18,000-20,000
Harvest 600-800

Delta Caribou Herd

Population 5,000-7,000
Harvest 300-700

Fortymile Caribou Herd

Population 50,000-100,000
Harvest 1,000-15,000

Macomb Caribou Herd

Population 600-800
Harvest 30-50

Porcupine Caribou Herd

Population 100,000-150,000
Harvest 1,500-2,000

MOOSE

Unit 12 Moose Population

Population 4,000-6,000
Harvest 250-450

Unit 19A and Unit 19B Moose Population

Population 13,500-16,500
Harvest 800-1,650

Unit 19D East Moose Population

Population 6,000-8,000
Harvest 300-400

Unit 19D-remainder Moose Population

Population 4,000-6,000
Harvest 250-600

Unit 20A Moose Population

Population 10,000-12,000
Harvest 500-720

Unit 20B Moose Population

Population 12,000-15,000
Harvest 600-1,500

**Unit 20C-Moose Population
(outside of Denali Park)**

Population 3,000-4,000
Harvest 150-400

Unit 20D Moose Population

Population 8,000-10,000
Harvest 500-700

**Unit 20E- Moose Population Fortymile/
Ladue River Drainage**

Population 8,000-10,000
Harvest 500-1,000

Unit 21D Moose Population

Population 7,000-10,000
Harvest 450-1,000

Unit 21E Moose Population

Population 9,000-11,000
Harvest 550-1,100

Unit 24 Moose Population

Population 8,000-12,000
Harvest 400-850

Unit 25D Moose Population (Yukon Flats)

Population 10,000-15,000
Harvest 600-1,500

DEER**Unit 1A Deer Population**

Population 15,000
Harvest 700

Unit 1C Deer Population

Population 6,200
Harvest 450

Unit 2 Deer Population

Population 71,000
Harvest 2,700

Unit 3 Deer Population

Population 15,000
Harvest 900

Unit 4 Deer Population

Population 125,000
Harvest 7,800

**The Board of Game found a positive customary and traditional use
for the following big game species.**

Species and Units

Brown Bear

Units 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D and 3

Finding

Positive

Black Bear

Units 1A, 1B, 1D, 2, 3, and 5

Positive

Agenda Change Requests

- The board accepted an agenda change request from the Alaska Falconers to put falconry on its 2002 statewide meeting agenda.
- The board accepted an agenda change request to add moose in Units 19 and 19D to its spring 2001 meeting agenda.

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

*DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION
BOARDS SUPPORT SECTION*

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November 17, 2000

David James
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Division of Wildlife Conservation
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
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Fairbanks, AK 99701-1599

Re: Population and Harvest Objectives for moose in Unit 25D

During the Board of Game meeting November 2–7 in Juneau, the board established population and harvest objectives for moose in Unit 25D, as required by AS 16.05.255, the state's Intensive Management Law. The board set the population objective at 10,000–15,000 moose and the harvest objective 600–1,500 moose per year. These objectives are substantially higher than those recommended by the Department of Fish and Game.

Based on the biological information available regarding moose and predator populations and the habitat conditions, the board believes that with certain changes in management, Unit 25D could sustain a larger moose population and annual harvest and thus set higher objectives.

Information presented by the department, and comments from area residents, indicated that local hunters supported a modest increase in Unit 25D moose population and harvest, but there was local concern that higher moose numbers and harvest would attract non-local hunters, causing increased competition and conflicts. The board is sensitive to these concerns and is looking at ways to address these problems and still carry out the intent of the Intensive Management Law, which is to increase moose, deer, and caribou populations, where feasible, to provide increased opportunity for all hunters.

In the board's view, these numbers represent long-term goals. It is not expected or intended that such increases are achieved quickly, nor do we support drastic actions that could negatively impact local residents before management strategies are in place to address concerns. There will be time for the department to work with local and other users of Unit 25D to develop management strategies that provide improved hunting opportunities for all Alaskans while minimizing negative impacts on local residents. This type of approach has produced positive results in several other areas.

As you discuss the board's action regarding Unit 25D population and harvest objectives, please convey the board's intent and our interest in continuing to work toward a good solution for all concerned.

Sincerely,



Lori Quakenbush, Chairman
Alaska Board of Game

cc: Board of Game members
Bob Stephenson
Jim Marcotte ✓

Serving the Alaska Board of Fisheries and Alaska Board of Game

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

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November 17, 2000

Heather R. Kendall Miller
Native American Rights Fund
420 L St., Suite 505
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Ms. Kendall Miller:

As you know, the petition that you submitted on behalf of Selina Alexander to the Alaska Board of Game was referred to a special committee of the board at its March 2000 meeting in Fairbanks. Board member Mike Fleagle was named chairman and formed the committee. In addition to the chairman, seven other committee members included agency personnel and public citizens. The committee met in Fairbanks on August 11, 2000, and after much discussion they agreed to recommend that there be no change to the laws governing the sale of bear parts. The overriding concern was that changes in the law would encourage an overharvest of bears for a black-market sale of parts. A summary of the meeting is included with this letter.

The committee's recommendation was presented to the board during its recent meeting in Juneau, and the board concurred with the recommendation, therefore, the petition is denied. We thank you for bringing this issue to our attention, we regret that the outcome was not favorable to your client's interest, however, it was felt that other considerations regarding the resource could not be compromised at this time.

Sincerely,



Lori Quakenbush
Chairman, Board of Game

Cc: Committee members
Dave Anderson, Subsistence
Polly Wheeler, Subsistence
Jim Marcotte

Serving the Alaska Board of Fisheries and Alaska Board of Game

RC 71

MEMORANDUM STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

TO: Rob Bosworth, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game, HQ

THRU: Mary Pete, Director, Division of Subsistence

FROM: Dave Andersen, Subsistence Resource Specialist II, Fairbanks

DATE: August 14, 2000

SUBJECT: Meeting on the Sale of Bear Parts

The eight-member committee assigned to discuss the sale of bear parts met on Friday August 11, 2000 at the Fairbanks ADF&G large conference room. Board of Game member Mike Fleagle chaired the meeting. I attended as the Division of Subsistence representative at the request of Dr. Polly Wheeler. Other participants included Sgt. Todd Sharp (Public Safety), Dan Reed (Wildlife Conservation), Joe Mattie, Benedict Jones, Gabe Sam, and Dr. Fred Dean.

Following introductions, Chairperson Fleagle provided committee members with background on the issue by reviewing the petition to the Board of Game that had prompted formation of the committee. While the petition specifically requested that 5 AAC 92.200(b) be amended to include bear claws and fur from black or grizzly bears, Chairperson Fleagle encouraged committee members to consider expanding the discussion to include the sale of any bear parts. Following this direction, committee members were asked to offer their views on the petition request.

Six committee members expressed opposition to legalizing the sale of bear parts. Reasons for this opposition fell generally into three categories: 1) enforcement concerns; 2) conservation concerns; and 3) cultural concerns. Specific viewpoints offered in opposition to the sale of bear parts included the following:

- The legalized sale of bear parts would provide incentives for illegal hunting and provide significant challenges to enforcement officers in the field. Despite legal trade in bear parts in other parts of the U.S. there remains a strong underground market for bear parts, particularly gall bladders.
- Commercialization of wildlife (i.e., market-driven hunting) has a track record of being detrimental to wildlife populations. In addition, sale of wildlife is generally an ineffective and inefficient means of predator control, (if that is one of the objectives).
- Bears have a low reproductive rate and ADF&G continues to have conservation concerns for bears, especially grizzly bears, in many areas of the state.
- Athabaskan cultural traditions surrounding the care, treatment, and handling of harvested bears remain strong in many parts of the state. For individuals holding these beliefs it is inappropriate to sell items that include bear parts.
- Current law accommodates the traditional practices of making and wearing handicraft items out of bear parts. There is little evidence that the commercial sale of these items is part of that tradition.

Two committee members spoke in favor of allowing the sale of bear parts. According to these committee members, allowing the sale of bear parts would provide hunters with additional opportunity to realize some economic gain from a harvested animal. In addition, it might invite additional bear harvest in areas where predators are suppressing ungulate populations. Specific viewpoints offered by committee members in support of allowing the sale of bear parts include the following:

- Current liberal seasons and bag limits on black bears over most of the state indicate that ADF&G conservation concerns probably do not apply to that species.
- In many areas of the state with chronically low moose populations, communities and advisory committees have long been seeking ways to provide incentives for hunters to increase harvests of predators including bears.
- A flourishing (legal) trade in bear parts (skulls, jaws, teeth, claws, hides, etc.) in many lower 48 states has had no apparent detrimental affect on bear populations. The underground market for bear gall bladders has declined dramatically with the recent advent and commercial manufacture of certain synthetic drugs (i.e., viagra). Enforcement issues could be handled with additional tagging or sealing requirements.
- Allowing the sale of bear parts would not obligate hunters to do so if their culture and traditions prohibited it.

After several hours of discussion, committee members in support of allowing the sale of bear parts agreed that they were opposed to including grizzly bear in a revised regulation and that only black bear parts should be considered for inclusion. This attempt at a compromise was unsuccessful in attracting any additional support for the concept of allowing bear parts to be sold. The committee was still split 6-2 with the majority of members opposing any change to existing regulations. Chairperson Fleagle will provide an official meeting summary to committee members and the Board of Game.

CC: Polly Wheeler