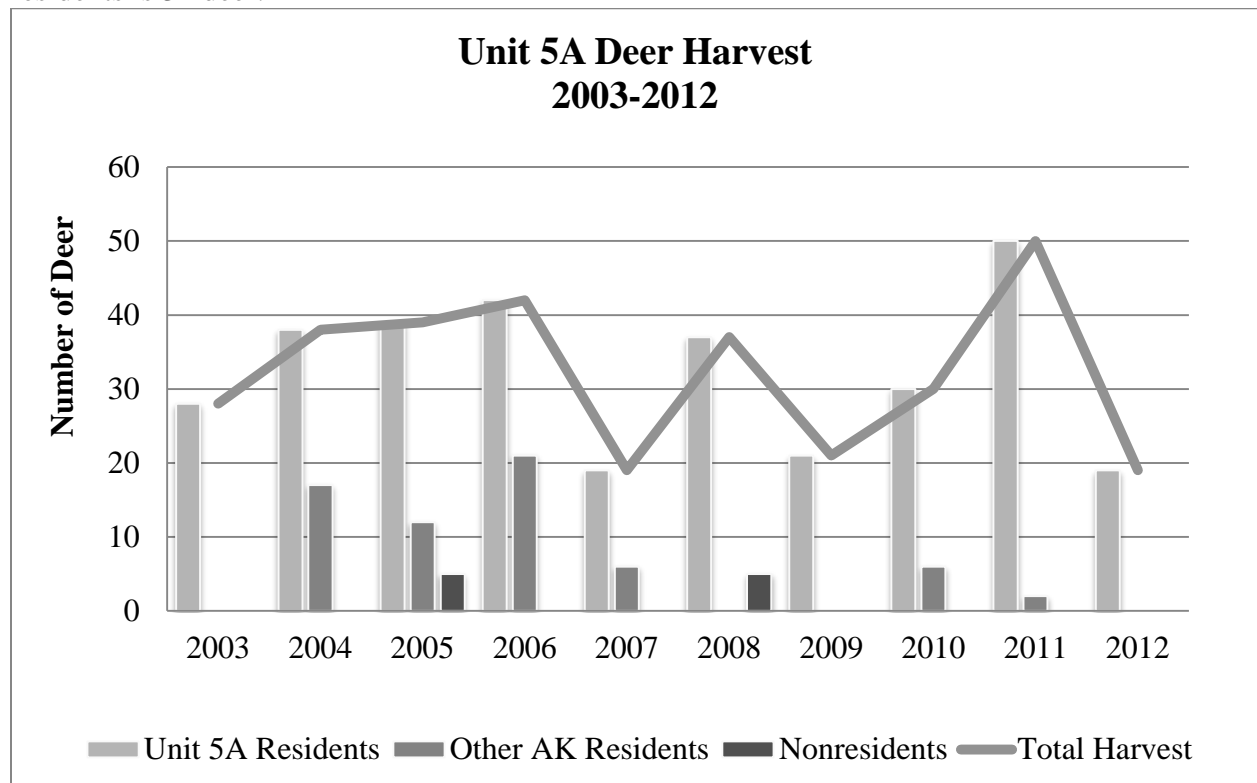


Juneau, Haines/Skagway, and Yakutat Areas – Units 1C, 1D, & 5

PROPOSAL 16 - 5 AAC 99.025. Customary and traditional uses of game populations. Modify the amount reasonably necessary for subsistence uses for deer in Unit 5 as follows:

Species & Unit	Finding	Amount Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence
(5) Deer		
Unit 5	Positive	[100 PERCENT OF THE ALLOWABLE HARVEST] xx-xx

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 5 and the current amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (ANS) is 100% of the allowable harvest. However, there is currently a nonresident hunt opportunity in Unit 5A for one buck from November 1–30 (there is no state or federal open season in Unit 5B). The department has no conservation concerns for deer in Unit 5, and so this proposal provides the Alaska Board of Game an opportunity to re-evaluate the ANS range. The recent ten-year average harvest by residents of Unit 5A is 25 deer and by all Alaska residents is 31 deer.



PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(EG-C14-351)

PROPOSAL 17 - 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. Increase the resident bag limit for deer in Unit 1C (Lincoln, Shelter & Sullivan Islands) to six deer, of which the last two must be bucks as follows:

Lincoln, Shelter and Sullivan Islands: Six deer total, the last two of which must be bucks.

Retain the current regulations for harvest tickets to be validated in sequential order, and unused tickets must be carried when you hunt, and evidence of sex must remain naturally attached to the meat or antlers must remain naturally attached to the entire carcass, with or without viscera.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? For the portion of Unit 1C that consists of Lincoln, Shelter and Sullivan Islands, the limit should be increased to 6 deer total, the last 2 of which must be bucks.

ADF&G literature states that deer population mortality in the ABC islands (Admiralty-Baranof-Chichagof) as well as other maritime influenced islands such as Lincoln, Shelter and Sullivan Islands, is significantly influenced by how much snow the region receives. In contrast, hunters have very little impact on the population given the brushy and rugged terrain of the unit. In 2008 and 2009, 13 and 23 deer were harvested on Lincoln and Shelter Islands. These are not large numbers and it's unlikely that allowing hunters to harvest two more bucks will have any significant impact. Such a change would also bring this portion of the unit into alignment with federal subsistence regulations.

Additional harvest of bucks will not impact the population and will provide for increased targeted harvest of bucks in years where heavy snow pushes deer to the beaches. This proposal would have no additional cost to implement due to hunters currently being issued six tags.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr

(EG-C14-296)

PROPOSAL 18 - 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting season bag limits for goat. Establish a resident, archery drawing hunt for goats in Unit 1C, Juneau area as follows:

Unit 1C, Juneau area: One goat by drawing permit August 1 - December 31, residents only.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I propose the Board of Game adopt an archery drawing hunt for goats for the area directly around Juneau, similar to the drawing hunt in Ketchikan (except that hunt is open to rifle hunting).

The justification for this hunt is the close proximity to the population center of Juneau, and the high number of hiking trails with recreational climbers makes the use of a bow much safer to the public. The high number of goats in this area supports some kind of harvest. An archery drawing

hunt seems like the next step in keeping with the ADF&G's mandate of providing hunting opportunities for the residents where a harvestable population of animals exist.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Ashton (EG-C14-237)

PROPOSAL 19 - 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Create a resident youth hunt for goats in Unit 1D, Tugahgo Mountain area as follows:

We would like to reserve the Tugahgo Mountain goat hunt area for youth only by creating a youth goat hunt. The Tugahgo Mountain area is close to Haines and can be accessed by trail thus accessible to youth. We will defer to ADF&G to decide the details of this hunt such as drawing versus registration, dates, number of goats and points.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Upper Lynn Canal Advisory Board requests a youth goat hunt in Game Unit 1D to encourage youth to hunt. We would like to maximize youth hunting opportunity. Youth continue to compete with adults for goats in an area that is relatively easy to access from Haines.

Another solution we considered was outlining the hunt as a registration and have only one goat every four regulatory years so the same youth doesn't get the goat every year. We decided to defer such details to ADF&G since they are more familiar with the design of successful youth hunts.

PROPOSED BY: Upper Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C14-45)

PROPOSAL 20 - 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat. Expand the resident goat season dates for registration permit hunts RGO23 and RGO24 in Unit 1D as follows:

The Upper Lynn Canal Advisory Board is requesting the Board of Game to include registration permit hunts RGO23 and RGO24 into RGO26 so that the goat hunting season in Unit 1D will be open from August 1 - December 31. This will allow hunters more time harvest the quota of goats allowed by ADF&G through the established point system.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to expand dates for the RGO23 and RGO24 goat hunt to allow for more goat hunting opportunity. RGO23 and RGO24 are divided into approximately eight areas that are assigned a certain number of allowed harvest points. A billie killed counts as one point and Nanny as two. A point is allocated for every 100 adult goats that are sighted on aerial survey. This excellent management system of points has prevented too many goats from being harvested from a certain area or herd. Our goat population appears healthy and stable in RGO23 and RGO24. This regulation change will not affect areas from being closed early once the number of allotted points is obtained. We feel that extension of these dates will not adversely affect the goat population, yet will allow more hunting opportunities.

What will happen if not changed: Areas will continue to close before the number of allowable points is obtained.

What other solutions: We could include either RGO23 or RGO24 into RGO26 but not both. We could simply change the open season dates of RGO23 and RGO24.

PROPOSED BY: Upper Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C14-46)

PROPOSAL 21 - 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear. Delay the use of black bear bait stations in Unit 1D until after the brown bear season is closed as follows:

This proposal recognizes that the conflict only exists in subunit 1D and not the rest of Unit 1. The brown bear spring hunting season in subunit 1D ends on May 31. The black bear spring hunting season extends through the month of June. The simplest solution to a huge problem is to separate the two seasons, by restricting the placing of bait at a registered black bear bait station that is located in subunit 1D until after the brown bear hunting season is closed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Subunit 1D surrounds the town of Haines, where three separate guiding companies, as well as a local population base of approximately 2,700 people intensely compete for the same game animals in easily accessible, relatively narrow river-bottom corridors.

Haines is actually one of the most rugged and mountainous hunting areas of the state, and almost all of the upper reaches of the local drainages are inaccessible by boat or even airplane.

Brown bears are concentrated in specific areas relative to game trails which parallel the rivers in subunit 1D and almost all access for hunting bears is gained by short hops with river boats, or driving the few roads that parallel the rivers for short distances relative to the size of subunit 1D. This concentrates all bear hunters to small areas and the competition between some hunting guides and between some locals is intense and often problematic.

The local spring brown bear hunting season is presently concurrent with the black bear baiting season. Black bear bait stations have been historically problematic in subunit 1D because they are all located where intense spring brown bear hunting takes place by both locals and guides. Black bear bait stations near Haines have historically been abused by some locals and some disreputable guides, and it is well documented by wildlife troopers that many brown bears have been illegally taken over local bait stations for a very long time.

A small portion of the past and recent abuse of black bear bait stations proximate to Haines, and the illegal taking of brown bears at bait stations, can be best appreciated by viewing internet information related to: "Operation Bruin, Haines, Alaska." Or: "International Wildlife Investigation, Haines, Alaska". Operation Bruin was a joint three-year-long investigation between the State of Alaska, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Canadian authorities. In November of 2011 it culminated in one of the largest busts in the history of wildlife law enforcement in Alaska, and it is presently on-going. To date, two past Haines hunting guides

have been convicted of felony charges as a result of Operation Bruin, and an assistant hunting guide escaped charges by testifying against his employers.

The Haines Advisory Committee voted to separate the black bear bait season from the brown bear hunting season, but the proposal was poorly worded and therefore did not properly identify the depth of the problem.

Additionally, the proposal was mistakenly submitted by a past member of the local advisory committee during the board's statewide cycle for proposals, as opposed to being relative to subunit 1D, which is only a very small portion of Unit 1 in Southeast Alaska. It was not surprising that the past Board of Game previously declined the proposal as it was written and in the manner it was submitted.

One local hunter publically and locally vehemently opposed changing the baiting season for black bears during the comment period on the above mentioned proposal on the grounds that baiting black bears is a form of subsistence hunting, and that it also easily allows the mentoring of young hunters. Changing the season for baiting black bears does not close the black bear hunting season, and such a proposal is not designed to be a back-door to stopping the baiting of black bears.

If the black bear baiting season in subunit 1D was restricted to the month of June, hunting black bears would still be allowed through the entire months of May and June, which is ample time to mentor a youth while hunting black bears for two complete months, the second of which could be over bait.

When bait stations exist, either legal or illegally, dominant brown bears will naturally gravitate to the bait stations where a legal hunter cannot hunt them, and in a congested, geographically restricted hunt area such as Haines, the problem is compounded for obvious reasons of terrain and accessibility. That situation then becomes even more problematic for a legitimate commercial guiding company to legally conduct business, because of the question regarding if a brown bear was accidentally or purposefully killed over bait, or how close the brown bear was to a bait station, no matter who the bait station was registered to.

As a Master Guide operating in the Haines area for well over 20 years, I can truthfully say that black bear bait stations, both legal and illegal, have very nearly put me out of business during the spring guiding season. Consider that a black bear bait station can legally be registered at any time leading to or during the spring hunting season. Also, a bait station can be registered next to a commercial registered base camp for a guide/outfitter, at his spike-camp location, or right in the middle of his historic guiding area...and everyone is competing for the best turf.

Additionally, it has been noted by a wildlife trooper and also, (to my understanding, relayed by them to biologist), that some Haines individuals have likely historically abused their bait permits by registering a black bear bait station in order to gain an exclusive brown bear hunting location by not actually putting out bait.

All legal bait stations in subunit 1D are identified on a large public wall-map at the local Haines ADF&G office, and in all cases bait stations are located proximate to where commercial brown bear guiding operations take place. The black bear bait station map at the Haines Fish and Game office has therefore inadvertently evolved into a declaration of areas open or closed to hunting brown bears by anyone who first registers a black bear bait site, even if they have no intention of ever hunting there during the brown bear season.

This proposal has nothing to do with being against baiting black bears, but it does have a lot to do with the common-sense management of our hunting resources while supporting the guiding industry. Therefore it should not be lumped together with, or confused with, any anti-bear baiting sentiments or any anti-bear baiting proposals.

PROPOSED BY: Al Gilliam (EG-C14-251)

PROPOSAL 22 - 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Shift the resident moose season two weeks earlier in Unit 5B, Mamby Shore area as follows:

Change the open season for moose in Unit 5B (Mamby Shore area) from September 1- December 15 to August 15- December 1.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We feel that moving the season back 2 weeks on both ends will allow for a safer, more productive hunting experience. August hunts are not unheard of throughout the state. We do not expect that this will adversely affect anyone, or any game. It is a harder area to get to, (boat or small plane only) so the historic harvest numbers are fairly low. We don't expect there will be that many people who want to hunt in August. We considered moving it back a full month, but thought 2 weeks would be better.

PROPOSED BY: Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C14-88)

PROPOSAL 23 - 5 AAC 85.045(1). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize antlerless moose hunts in Unit 1C as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(1)		
...		
Unit 1(C), Berners Bay drainages	Sept. 15 - Oct. 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15 - Oct. 15

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued

...

Unit 1(C), that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage

1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:

...

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued

Nov. 10 – Dec. 10
(General hunt only)

Nov. 10 – Dec. 10

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

Berners Bay

The Berners Bay strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt count of 90 moose, based on the estimated moose carrying capacity of this area. ADF&G has been very successful at maintaining this population level through the harvest of both bull and cow moose.

During 1998–2006, the number of drawing permits issued by the department for this herd ranged from ten bull permits and ten antlerless permits to seven bull permits and no antlerless permits. Harvest of bull moose averaged seven during this period, and in years where antlerless permits were issued, an average of four cows were harvested. Although we have the latitude of issuing up to 30 permits annually, we haven't issued more than 20 permits annually during any of the past 10 years; and no permits were issued during the period 2007-2013.

The number of moose counted during the fall aerial surveys determines the number of drawing permits issued. The mean number of moose observed during aerial counts from 1990 to 2006 was 77 moose (range: 59-108). Severe winter weather in 2006, 2007 and 2008 resulted in this population decreasing. The number of moose counted in replicate aerial surveys between 2007 and 2009 ranged between 33-62 moose. Surveys conducted in 2010 and 2011 detected 73 moose including 10 calves each year. In 2012, under excellent survey conditions, 102 moose were detected (21 bulls, 81 cows, and 14 calves). Based on the 2012 survey and sightability data from collared moose, the Berners Bay moose population is estimated to be 113 ± 11 moose. In 2013, under fair to good survey conditions, 73 were detected (18 bulls, 47 cows, and 8 calves). Based on the 2013 survey data and sightability data from collared moose, the Berners Bay moose population is estimated to be 90 ± 13 moose. While the Berners Bay moose population is not

increasing rapidly the population has reached management objectives for overall number of moose and bull to cow ratios.

As a result of the severe winters and the impacts they have had on this moose herd, we did not issue any permits between 2007 and 2013. Five bull only permits have been issued for fall 2014. We would prefer to keep the antlerless hunt available so we have this tool in the future if needed.

Gustavus

The Gustavus moose population (Unit 1C) increased rapidly from just a few animals during the 1980's and 1990's peaking at 404 moose observed in 2003. By 2002 ADF&G estimated the winter range moose density at Gustavus exceeded 5 moose per km², with only a small portion of that area being productive winter range as identified by abundant stands of willow. Because of concerns with these high moose numbers, ADF&G biologists began conducting spring browse utilization surveys in 1999, and documented 85–95% of the current annual growth of willow twigs available to moose had been consumed.

Based on the browse utilization data and overall moose densities at Gustavus, an antlerless hunt was first authorized for the Gustavus area by the BOG in fall 2000. Between 2002 and 2008, hunters harvested 11 to 67 antlerless moose annually depending on the number of permits made available. A hunt was not held in fall 2007 due to high winter-related moose mortalities. Antlerless hunts have not been held in the Gustavus area between 2009 and 2014.

A goal of the Gustavus antlerless moose hunts is to control the number of moose on the available winter range to ensure the available habitat is adequate to support the animals utilizing it. Based on aerial survey data and the use of collared moose to determine sightability estimates it appears this strategy is working. During the period 2000-2009 aerial survey counts ranged from 207-404 moose; surveys in 2010, 2011 and 2012 counted 165, 136 and 274 moose, respectively. In 2012, the Gustavus area moose population was estimated to be 317 ± 37 moose. In 2013, under good survey conditions, 186 moose were detected (25 bulls, 121 cows, and 40 calves). Based on the survey and sightability data from marked moose the 2013 moose population estimate is 323 ± 87.

In 2008, Gustavus calf survival decreased significantly to >10%. Surveys in 2009 through 2011 indicate calf survival is increasing (range: 18%-37%). The moose calf survival estimate for 2012 was 28% (2013 data not yet available). The annual adult female survival estimate is 90% for the period 2004-2012. Improving calf numbers and stable adult female survival suggests the Gustavus moose population has the potential to increase.

The population is now at a level the department believes is sustainable with the available habitat. Although an antlerless hunt will not be held in 2014, biologists believe it is important to keep this tool available to implement should the moose population increase to a point where there is detrimental impacts to available habitat.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (EG-C14-334)

PROPOSAL 24 - 5 AAC 85.045(3). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 5A, Nunatak Bench as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(3) Unit 5(A), that portion south of Wrangell - Saint Elias National Park, north and east of Russell and Nunatak Fiords, and east of the east side of East Nunatak Glacier to the Canadian Border (Nunatak Bench) 1 moose by registration permit only; up to 5 moose may be taken ...	Nov. 15 - Feb. 15	Nov. 15 - Feb. 15

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board. The Nunatak Bench (Unit 5A) hunt area is separated from adjacent moose habitat by fiords and glaciers, allowing for little immigration or emigration by moose. Therefore we manage this population separately from the remainder of Unit 5A, with a much longer and later running hunting season that spans the period of November 15-February 15. Because of the isolated nature of Nunatak Bench and the limited amount of moose habitat, we have traditionally allowed maximum hunter opportunity through an either sex hunt, thereby aiding in our goal of limiting herd growth to stay within the carrying capacity of this area. The either sex hunt strategy accommodates the timing of this hunt given that much of the hunt period occurs post antler drop making sex differentiation difficult.

The Nunatak Bench strategic moose management plan calls for a post-hunt population of a maximum of 50 moose. A high of 52 moose were counted on the Nunatak Bench in 2001, after which a decline in moose numbers was observed. During the period 2005-2011 (no survey in 2010, 2012 and 2013) the number of moose counted has ranged from 11 to 14, with only one to two calves observed on each flight. The decline in moose numbers may be related to the 68 foot rise in water level that flooded this area in 2003 when the advancing Hubbard Glacier created a dam flooding, and killing, preferred willow browse stands. Moose are able to emigrate from the area and have largely abandoned Nunatak Bench due to the lack of forage. Local hunters also suggest the presence of wolves is a factor keeping moose numbers low in the area.

During 1997-2004 hunting seasons an average of 12 permits were issued, with only four people actually hunted each season. An average of 8 days of hunting was expended each year to kill 0–4 moose, with an average annual harvest of about two moose. Six cows and nine bulls made up the total harvest during this period. No moose have been harvested since 2004 and ADF&G has not issued any permits for this area since then.

Although the moose numbers at this time do not support a harvest, ADF&G would like to keep this antlerless authorization active should the moose numbers again reach a harvestable level (25 moose). To date, moose have not re-colonized the area as quickly as they did in the past, and it is unknown if moose numbers will increase sufficiently to provide hunting opportunity. ADF&G will continue to monitor this moose population and again allow a harvest when the survey counts reach or exceed 25 moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (EG-C14-335)

PROPOSAL 25 - 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game. Move the resident duck season two weeks earlier in Unit 5 as follows:

Adjust the season duck hunting in Unit 5A from September 1 - December 16, to August 15 - December 1.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The thought of moving the season back two weeks is, some years the cold gets the birds moving south at different times. An early frost pushes a lot of the ducks passed Unit 5A before September 1, amounting to lost hunting opportunity for hunters. Adoption of this proposal would benefit hunters by having the season open ahead of the migration. We don't feel anyone will be negatively impacted, or there would be any harm to the resource.

We considered other times, but decided that two weeks should be adequate. We considered just moving it back two weeks and leaving it open until December 16, we like the idea, but didn't want to appear to be asking for more of a season, just an adjustment of when it takes place. If the board decided a season from August 15 - December 16 was acceptable, we don't feel the first two weeks of December are going to add that much extra harvest of waterfowl in Unit 5A, the pressure seems pretty light. We would be agreeable to this as well.

PROPOSED BY: Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C14-89)
