

Nome Area Proposals

PROPOSAL 26 - 5 AAC 85.045(a)(20). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Lengthen the hunting season for moose in Unit 22A as follows:

Change the ending date for the moose season to September 20 for permit RM841.

5 AAC 85.045(a)(20) Unit 22A that portion in the Unalakleet River drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik River drainages: 1 antlered bull by registration permit only Sept. 1—**Sept. 20** [SEPT. 14]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Changing the closure date for moose permit RM841 would better align regulation with current Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) practice. Currently the moose season closes for permit RM841 on September 14 and has a quota of 22 antlered bull moose. The harvest quota has not been harvested by the closing date of September 14 since it was increased to 22 moose. Each year ADF&G has extended the season until September 20 at the request of residents. When the season has been extended, the quota has been harvested on or before the 20.

Changing the season closure date to September 20 has several benefits. One, the community will no longer have the concern if ADF&G will extend the season. Second, ADF&G will not have to issue an emergency order (EO) to extend but will continue the practice of issuing EO's to close prior to the September 20 if it is forecasted to reach the allocated limit of 22 moose.

PROPOSED BY: Southern Norton Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F16-020)

PROPOSAL 27 - 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Lengthen the nonresident hunting season for moose in Unit 22A as follows:

Nonresident moose hunting season, Unit 22A "north of and including the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik River drainages: September 1-**20** [14], one bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with four or more brow tines on at least one side." Harvest ticket.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A date change for the non-resident moose hunting season in Unit 22A "north of and including the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik river drainages" from September 1-14 to September 1-20.

The moose in this area have recovered to a healthy population because of the mild winters and increased grizzly harvest. This is also a very remote area with poor access making moose retrieval difficult and time consuming. There would be very little increased harvest but would allow for cooler temps while recovering moose meat.

PROPOSED BY: Lance Kronberger (EG-F16-040)

PROPOSAL 28 - 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Eliminate the nonresident moose hunt in Units 22E and 22D remainder as follows:

Eliminate nonresident moose hunting in Units 22E and 22D remainder until low moose density and the relationship between changing population distribution and population growth or decline between subunits is better understood.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Rural users in Units 22E and 22D remainder are finding it increasingly difficult to harvest moose in their region. In 2013 and 2014, a total of only seven moose were harvested by local subsistence users (Teller, Brevig Mission, Wales and Shishmaref) in Units 22D and 22E. The moose population in these units is extremely low and there are not enough moose for resident hunters.

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game provided a report on moose populations in Unit 22 to the Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council at its October 14-15, 2015 public meeting in Nome. This report indicated that while the moose population in Unit 22E is considered stable or increasing, moose populations in Unit 22D are decreasing.

The 2014 spring Geospatial Population Estimator moose survey in Unit 22D remainder showed a 14% annual rate of decline from the 2011 spring moose survey. The nonresident moose season in Unit 22D remainder was closed by emergency order in 2015 when the quota of three moose was reached.

It is plausible that the modest increases documented in Unit 22E may reflect a redistribution of the moose from Unit 22D remainder versus any increases or decreases in the respective populations of those subunits. This suggests that moose in Unit 22D remainder and Unit 22E should be managed as one population.

Regardless, the moose population in both subunits remains very low at less than 0.5 moose per square mile. We do not believe it should be sustaining any non-resident harvest at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Seward Peninsula Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EG-F16-035)

PROPOSAL 29 - 5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou. Open a hunting season for caribou in Unit 22A by emergency order only as follows:

Unit 22A Golsovia River Drainage and South
Caribou hunt open by emergency order only
Residents – five caribou per day; season may be announced.
Nonresidents – five caribou total; season may be announced.
No change to other portions of Unit 22A

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Individuals illegally hunting privately owned reindeer in Units 22A, Golsovia River Drainage and South. Reindeer herders continually lose private property, time and money. The Western Arctic caribou herd (WAH) has not migrated south of the Unalakleet River in 15-20 years. Having an opening for caribou by emergency order (EO) only will save many reindeer and reindeer herders time and money. Have

an opening for caribou by EO only in Unit 22A Golsovia River Drainage and South will save time and money for other residents in the area when the WAH are present.

PROPOSED BY: Theodore Katcheak (HQ-C15-901)

PROPOSAL 30 - 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Lengthen the hunting season for brown bear in Unit 22C as follows:

Unit 22C brown/grizzly bear
1 bear every regulatory year
April 1—May 31 [MAY 1—MAY 31]
Aug. 1—Oct. 31

Other game subunits in Unit 22 have the standard brown bear season of August 1 to May 31. Unit 22C currently allows for a fall season of August 1 to October 31 and a spring season of May 1 to May 31. The intent of this proposal, spring season of April 1 to May 31, is to lengthen the window for the spring hunt. The date when bears emerge from hibernation is variable and tied to snow condition. The end of the spring hunt is determined by timing of snow disappearance more than a calendar date. By increasing the spring hunt window, the two- or three-week period of adequate snow cover should be consistently contained in the season dates. Opportunity from year to year will be more uniform regardless on dates of break-up.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The recent Seward Peninsula brown/grizzly bear assessment survey conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game with support from the National Park Service indicates the number of brown bears have increased. Local residents note increased human/bear encounters which supports the technical conclusions. On the other hand, climate change has shifted the spring snow melt timing which has had the effect of limiting bear hunting opportunity especially on the south slope of the Seward Peninsula. Given the abundant and increasing number of bear an increase in length of harvest opportunity should be allowed.

The previously mentioned human/bear encounters along with predation on other game species may be reduced if bear harvest is allowed to increase. In recent years, muskoxen have been driven into the city limits and on to the airports, in large part by a need to escape bear predation on calves. The Unit 22C moose population is depressed again due in part to bear eating calves. The local reindeer herds are also feeling the effects of predation. More bears are being taken as defense of life and property culls. A spring harvest is a better use of this abundant resource than the control measures used currently.

PROPOSED BY: Kawerak, Inc., Nome Eskimo Community (HQ-F16-111)

PROPOSAL 31 - 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Increase the bag limit for brown bear in Unit 22B as follows:

Unit 22B brown/grizzly bear

Two bears every regulatory year

Aug. 1 - May 31

[ONE BEAR EVERY REGULATORY YEAR]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The recent brown/grizzly bear assessment survey by the National Park Service and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game conducted in 2015 compared to the old survey for the Seward Peninsula 20+ years ago indicates that the bear population is on the rise. With the increasing number of bears more cabins are being broken into as well as drying racks being raided. More opportunity to harvest bears from an increasing population. The Unit 22B moose population crashed 20 years ago and has shown almost no recovery. Survival of moose calves is the poorest in the region. Bears are implicated due to the seasonality of the mortality. Bear harvest rates are thought to be quite low. The managers have expressed concern that predation is holding the moose population below threshold required for the moose population to grow. Bear densities are the greatest in local memory. A significant increase in harvest is sustainable. The harvest is small in relation to the population and doubling the limit will not yield a doubling of harvest rate. This is a measure that will address multiple game populations and can be reversed in a board cycle or two if the impact is greater than expected.

PROPOSED BY: Kawerak, Inc., Nome Eskimo Community (HQ-F16-110)

PROPOSAL 32 - 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Lengthen the hunting season for brown bear in Unit 22A as follows:

Unit 22A brown/grizzly bear

Residents, two bears every regulatory year, August 1—**June 15** [MAY 31]

Nonresidents, one bear every regulatory year, August 1—**June 15** [MAY 31]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Brown/grizzly bear season ending date south of and including the Golsovia River drainage ending date of 31 May. The remainder of Unit 22A ends on 15 June. The wind has blown the pack ice from the Bering Sea against the shore in 2005–2010 and 2012 so it is not possible to get there by boat until after 1 June. The bag limit for residents is two bears per year. The season should be the same for all of Unit 22A.

PROPOSED BY: John Wilson (EG-F16-078)
