

Note: Proposal 148 was accepted by the Board of Game as an Agenda Change Request for consideration at the Southcentral Region Meeting in March 2019.

PROPOSAL 148

5 AAC 85.020(8). Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

Change the hunting season dates for brown bear in Unit 9B as follows:

Unit 9(B) ... Residents and Nonresidents

1 bear every 4 regulatory years by registration permit only. September 20 – October 21 (Odd years only) May 10 – 25 (Even years only)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In March 2018, the season length for brown bears in Unit 9 was shortened to October 7 – 21 because of concern for overharvest. However, this concern does not extend to Unit 9B where harvest and human population is lower, and bears tend to den earlier in the fall. ACs and local guides are requesting a return to September 20 to October 21 for Unit 9B. The Department of Fish and Game (department) does not object to the change.

The Department of Fish and Game’s intent was for shortened seasons for Units 9C, 9D, and 9E, the southern portion of the Alaska Peninsula. This was expanded to include all of Unit 9 during deliberations and went unnoticed.

Bears in Unit 9B move into the high country for denning early in October, making them much more difficult to access for hunters, unnecessarily reducing opportunity for harvest

Nonresident hunters who have already booked guided hunts in fall, 2019 (this biennial season occurs during odd years only) must be rescheduled or cancelled. If this change were made at the next regular meeting in 2021, guides and hunters in Unit 9B would have limited fall opportunity until fall, 2021. There would be little change in availability of bears three years from now.

If the problem is not solved, there will be a loss of bear hunting opportunity for guides and hunters in Unit 9B for several years.

The request is predominantly not allocative because the season length for residents and nonresidents is the same for biennial hunts, with guided nonresidents typically taking 75 – 100% of the harvest. In addition, residents have subsistence hunt RB502 (September 1 – May 31) and near-village RB525 (year-round). Total harvest with biennial hunts open, is typically 20 – 60 bears in Unit 9B, and less than five when resident-only seasons are open.

Submitters of the ACR are guides, hunters, subsistence hunters, trappers, and staff.

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(HQ-F18-ACR11)
