

PROPOSAL 160

5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, furs, and hides.

Clarify the wanton waste regulation to specify that game animals taken by domestic pets must be reported and salvaged for human consumption, as follows:

- (a) 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)...

(7) any owner or caretaker of a domestic animal that kills a game animal must, in addition to salvaging the meat for human consumption, report the take to the department no less than annually. If the owner or caretaker cannot identify the species of the game animal, it must be delivered to the department for identification as soon as possible.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Domestic animals kill millions of game animals in Alaska annually according to estimates based on national figures. Dogs account for some of this take, but cats are primarily responsible for the high numbers. Many of these game animals are protected species such as songbirds; however, some dogs are capable of killing game animals as large as moose (most frequently calves) and cats kill snowshoe hares, red, ground and flying squirrels, spruce and ruffed grouse, ptarmigan and ducks (all of which require salvage of meat or hides); unclassified game such as shrews, mice and crows (all of which are included in the hunting regulation booklet); furbearers such as marten, ermine and muskrats; as well as a wide variety of other game animals (primarily wild birds).

By definition, all wild animals in Alaska are game animals. Compiling and analyzing game harvests is a fundamental exercise of the Department of Fish and Game’s mandate and authority. Unfortunately, cats don’t always bring prey items back to their owners. But many do. There is no other straightforward way to ascertain the impact of domestic pets on game animal populations than by requiring the owners to report their pets’ annual kill.

A reporting requirement for harvesting game animals is not without precedent. The state requires hunters to report kills on harvest tickets in accordance with 5 AAC 92.010. Similarly, a person who collides with a big game animal is required to notify the Alaska State Troopers as soon as possible, according to 5 AAC 92.220(b), and those figures are shared with the department.

Alaska is the only state with a legislative mandate to manage game animals intensively for human consumption. The Alaska Legislature and Board of Game have demonstrated a compelling interest in minimizing the wanton waste of game. The meat of most game animals killed by pets is wasted. It’s a reasonable extension of the legislature’s intensive management and wanton waste laws to better understand and minimize the wanton waste of game killed by pets.

PROPOSED BY: Rick Sinnott (EG-F20-035)
