

Palmer Area Proposals – Units 14A, 14B & 16

PROPOSAL 78

5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.

Extend the caribou season in Unit 16B as follows:

Open Season: August 10 - October 15

Alternative Open Season: August 10 - October 10

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend caribou season until October 15. For many years the caribou season was open well into October and many years ago it was open much of the winter. Due to the wolf predation issue many years ago the season was cut back and in 2005 was extended to September 30. The climates have been changing to the point we are all seeing moose and caribou ruts seemingly taking place later and later in the year. Finally some biologists are admitting to researching and discussing how hunting seasons and animal behavior is changing. The biggest and oldest bulls are not coming down to lower elevations and gathering cows anywhere near as early in the year as they used to. Snows are not driving them down as the winters are coming later. The best harvest for the herd is the older bulls, animals that are at the tail end of their life anyways. Quality of mature bulls has fallen historically in my opinion as well as numbers harvested. Before 2005 when the season changed to September 30 there was only a handful of caribou harvested in as the season closed September 20 in Unit 16B. In the last five years a total of 68 caribou have been harvested in Unit 16 with all but one of those taken in 16B. 2019 was the most with 22 harvested and it is also the coldest and best snow year in many we have had. We recognize the concern over rutted meat with late season caribou, however for many years we dealt with that and the law requires us to take the meat. I donated lots of caribou meat to the native hospital last season per their request through the Alaska Professional Hunters Association (APHA). I followed the delivery and pick-up of this meat. I also followed up to inquire of there satisfaction with it as well as how to cook and prepare it as late season caribou can be prepared differently. The feedback was fantastic and they are looking for more this next season. The additional hunting time in the field would allow trophy sport hunters (both resident and nonresident) the opportunity to spend more time in the field. License and tag sales would be beneficial to ADF&G and the general economy would benefit if more tourism was in place later in the season. There has not been much interest or money spent in Units 16 or 19 the last many years on caribou populations. The additional Pittman Robinson match may be helpful in accomplishing this. I do not believe going back to the historical later season dates will negatively impact the population, as most hunters this time of year are after bigger older bulls.

If the season is left as is, the older bulls that are not seen during the hunting season will just die of old age and no-one benefits, except maybe a slow cow or two!

PROPOSED BY: Steven Perrins

(EG-F20-148)

PROPOSAL 79

5 AAC 85.045(a)(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12)		
Unit 14(A)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 antlerless moose permits may be issued; or	Aug. 20—Sept. 25 (General hunt only) Nov. 1—Dec. 15 (General hunt only)	No open season
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun or bow and arrow only; up to 200 permits may be issued	Winter season to be announced by emergency order (General hunt only)	No open season
Unit 14(B)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued.	Winter season to be announced by emergency order (General hunt only)	No open season

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board of Game. There are two types of antlerless moose hunts in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley – a drawing permit hunt used to regulate growth of the moose population in Unit 14A and targeted hunts used to mitigate public safety concerns in Units 14A and 14B.

Moose surveys conducted in February 2019 yielded an estimate of 7,900 moose in Unit 14A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 6,000–6,500 moose and less than the 2017 survey estimate of 8,756 moose indicating that the increased antlerless harvests are having the desired effect of reducing the population. A sex and age composition survey completed in 2019 demonstrated a bull ratio of 34 bulls:100 cows and a calf ratio of 29 calves:100 cows.

Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized in Unit 14A since 2001 in order to regulate the growth of the population. The permit level was increased from 450 to 1,000 in 2013 to account for the continued increase in the population and again in spring 2018 from 1,000 to 2,000. Harvest from the increased permit levels is expected to bring the population back to within the objective for the unit of 6,000–6,500. Without this harvest the density of moose will increase and we anticipate an increase the number of moose-human conflicts, and moose may experience nutritional stress as the population nears carrying capacity.

The targeted moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B are an effective tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collision and nuisance management issues. Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of 267 moose per year were killed in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley area during the last few years of average snowfall and substantially more were killed during higher snowfall years. The Department of Fish and Game also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-068)

PROPOSAL 80

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Create a resident youth hunting season for any bull moose (YM4XX) in Unit 14A as follows:

One moose every regulatory year, August 20 – September 25 and November 15 - January 31.

No open nonresident season.

Youth hunt drawing permit: up to 50 permits may be issued.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently there are no resident youth any bull moose draw permits for Unit 14A. There is currently a youth bull moose hunt in neighboring Unit 16B, YM541. However, access to Unit 16B requires use of equipment, such as boat, plane, or snowmachine. There seems to be plenty of moose near the roadways and public use areas in Unit 14A for youth to participate. With declines nationwide regarding youth participation, I feel making more opportunities can increase our numbers here in Alaska.

Creation of a resident youth hunt in 14A would follow the guidelines found in YM541:

Eligible applicants: Resident youth who are 10 to 17-years-old. Each permittee must be accompanied in the field by a licensed resident adult at least 21-years-old. Bag limit counts against the bag limit of BOTH the permittee and the accompanying adult. Permittees and accompanying adults must wear hunter orange vests. Basic hunter education is required for all youth hunters participating in youth drawing hunts, regardless of their age or if their accompanying adult has basic hunter education.

The latest reports (at time of writing this) indicate the following harvest statistics for bull moose in 2018:

14A General Harvest Ticket	378 moose
16B General Harvest Ticket	179 moose
16B YM541 Draw Permit	16 moose

If the youth in YM541 are taking less than ten percent of moose compared to general harvest ticket hunters in 16B, we could assume a good starting point for the any bull youth hunt in Unit 14A would be around 35 animals. However, number of draw permits would be subject to latest herd population counts as well as 2019 harvest information. I do know that youth have the Unit 14A Point Mackenzie antlerless hunt, YM412, but for the bull hunt, I think it would be ideal to have the entire unit to provide the hunters more land opportunities for their harvest. Seasons would run similar to YM541, with dates August 20 – September 25 and November 15 - January 31.

PROPOSED BY: Tyler Eggen (HQ-F20-001)

PROPOSAL 81

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Allow muzzle loading and black powder cartridge long guns be used for harvesting moose in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

I would suggest, if the Board of Game (board) adopts this proposal, that the definitions of legal muzzleloader and black powder cartridge rifles as stated in the Delta bison hunt hunting information on the ADF&G web page be used. These definitions are as follows: muzzleloader: muzzle loading rifles must be .54 caliber or larger, or at least .45 caliber with a 300 grain or larger elongated slug; black powder cartridge rifles: must fire a 400 grain bullet or larger loaded with a minimum of 70 grains of black powder or equivalent (.45-70 with a 400 grain bullet or a .44-90 with a 550 grain bullet).

These definitions are considered adequate for harvesting bison so they should work just fine for moose. The number of prospective hunters who might choose to use these types of harvest tools would be relatively small, but having the ability to use a favorite muzzleloading firearm or black powder cartridge rifle would greatly enhance the experience.

The average hunter who might choose to use these black powder weapons is usually knowledgeable and experienced in their use.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current regulations specify that a shotgun with slugs, a crossbow, or a bow and arrow are the only legal hunting tools allowed for participants in the targeted hunts in Units 14A and 14B. Because the hunts occur along highway corridors and near housing, a harvest tool with a relatively short range yet capable of killing a moose is required for safety reasons.

For hunters who are older or disabled, this hunt offers the best opportunity to harvest a moose if the individual is selected to participate in the hunt. For others, the ability to use a firearm type other than a shotgun would enhance the hunting experience beyond just shooting an animal.

Because they are also relatively short-range firearms, with ballistics similar to shotguns with slugs, I propose adding muzzleloading and black powder cartridge long guns to the list of allowable harvest tools.

PROPOSED BY: Howard Delo (EG-F20-029)

PROPOSAL 82

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Extend by two days the current bow and arrow only general moose season in Units 14A, 14B, and 16A as follows:

Unit 14A: One moose per regulatory year, only as follows: One bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only, August 10 - August **19** [17].

Unit 14B: One moose per regulatory year, only as follows: One bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only August 10 - August **19** [17].

Unit 16A: One moose per regulatory year, only as follows: One bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brown tines on at least one side, by bow and arrow only; August 10 – **19** [17].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extending the current bow and arrow only hunt for moose will allow hunters who choose to begin hunting during the early season to continue right on into the general season. From 2014 to 2018, only 5% of moose harvested during the general season in Units 14A, 14B, and 16A were taken in the bow and arrow only time frame. An additional two days of hunting with bow and arrow will not have any negative affect on the resource.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-F20-058)

PROPOSAL 83

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Remove the 50-inch bag limit requirement for the resident and nonresident moose hunt in Unit 16A as follows:

Regulation to read: spike/fork and "must have three or more brow tines".

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Enforcement of 50-inch three brow tine regulation. To many sublegal moose are being taken. To many times I hear and see 44 to 48-inch moose taken with only two brow tines and people either leave them lay or take them out of the field in hopes to not get caught. This has to change. Our moose population is diminishing to fast. Last survey we had 1,700 moose counted, a year later only 895 were seen. The chairman

even asked what happened? With the winter of 2019-2020 we have had a lot of moose winter kill. Around a 3-mile radius of my house alone I know of four winter kills. I expect to see way more as snow melts. We need a change! We need the 50-inch requirements removed.

PROPOSED BY: Neil DeWitt (EG-F20-012)

PROPOSAL 84

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Establish an antlerless moose season in Unit 16B as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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RESIDENT HUNTERS

If the harvestable portion is 199 moose or less; up to 400 total Tier II permits may be issued;

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by Tier II subsistence hunting permit only; or

Aug. 20–Sept. 30
(Subsistence hunt only)

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit only; or

Dec. 15–Mar. 31
(Subsistence hunt only)

if the harvestable portion is greater than 199 moose, but less than 241 moose;

1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or

Sept. 1—Sept. 20

1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit only; up to 260 permits may be issued; or

Dec. 15–Mar. 31
(Subsistence hunt only)

If the harvestable portion is greater than 240 moose:

1 bull with spike-fork antlers
or 50-inch antlers with 3 or
more brow tines on one side;
or

Aug. 20–Sept.25

1 bull by drawing permit
only; up to 75 percent of the
combined drawing permits in
the area may be issued to
non-youth hunters; up to 600
permits may be issued;
provided that the harvestable
portion is greater than 310
moose; or

Aug. 20–Sept.25
(General hunt only)

1 bull by youth hunt drawing
permit only; up to 25 percent
of the combined drawing
permits in the area may be
issued to youth hunters;
provided that the harvestable
portion is greater than 310
moose; or

Aug. 20–Sept.25
Nov. 15—Jan. 31
(General hunt only)

1 bull by registration permit
only; or

Dec. 15–Last Day of Feb.

1 bull by drawing permit
only; up to 500 permits may
be issued; or

Dec. 15–Last Day of Feb.

1 **moose** [bull] by Tier II
subsistence hunting permit
only; up to 260 permits may
be issued; or

Dec. 15–Mar. 31
(Subsistence hunt only)

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

**Aug. 20 –Sept. 25
Nov. 15 –Jan. 31
(General hunt only)**

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS

1 bull with spike-fork antlers
or 50-inch antlers with 3 or
more brow tines on one side;
if the harvestable portion is
greater than 240 moose

Aug. 20–Sept. 25

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? As of February 2019, the Unit 16B moose population is estimated at 9,984 ± 1702 (80% CI) moose. The population objective for Unit 16B is 6,500–7,500 moose.

Moose harvest has been steadily increasing since regulatory year 2012 and has been within the harvest objective (310–600) since 2015. The Department of Fish and Game sought to address the high bull-to-cow ratios by increasing the number of drawing permits available for the fall hunt. Bull to cow ratios have been reduced in portions of the unit. In the middle portion of Unit 16B the bull:100 cow ratio was 42 in 2011 and 38 in the fall of 2019. In the southern portion of the unit the bull:100 cow ratio was 52 in 2010 and 32 in the fall of 2019. The Board of Game approved a winter registration and a winter draw hunt with an ‘any bull’ bag limit in the spring of 2016. However, concerns were raised by the local communities that mid-winter bull hunts may stress cows as hunters search for a legal animal. The moose population itself was not deemed to be over the objective until surveys were completed in the spring of 2018. Additional bull permits will not address the reproductive segment of the population and would likely not be sufficient to bring the population back to the objective. Current winter opportunities include a Tier II ‘any-bull’ hunt and a youth draw hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-072)

PROPOSAL 85

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Establish a registration hunt for bull moose limited to resident certified bowhunters only within Unit 16B as follows:

Institute a registration hunt open to certified bowhunters only with harvest reporting requirements to be set by the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). This hunt would be subject to the same residency requirements, bag limit, season dates and area as outlined in DM540. The purpose of this new hunt being a registration hunt would be so that ADF&G can monitor the participation and success rates more closely. The purpose of this hunt would be to give bowhunters a higher percentage of legal animals to pursue while still having limited success in harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A registration hunt for certified bowhunters only would give more resident hunters the opportunity to pursue a higher percentage of legal moose within Unit 16B without having a negative impact on the resource. According to ADF&G, 2,902 moose were harvested in Unit 16B from 2009 to 2018. According to the area biologist, only 46 of the 2,902 moose harvested were reported taken with archery equipment.

These reported harvests with bow and arrow account for less than 2% of all moose taken in Unit 16B over a 10-year period, showing the extremely low impact to moose populations. According to recent surveys by ADF&G (as of spring 2020), the moose in Unit 16B are approximately 2,500 over population objectives. There is only one registration hunt for moose in the State of Alaska that is limited only to certified bowhunters (RM445). From 2009 to 2018, hunters participating in RM445 have only seen a 2.3% success rate according to ADF&G. RM445 is a great example of the low impact a bow and arrow only hunt would have on moose populations in an any bull area.

Lastly, having a registration hunt rather than taking off limitations for the general season would allow ADF&G to collect data, closely monitor success rates, as well as issue emergency orders if the need ever arises.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Weaver (EG-F20-052)

PROPOSAL 86

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Change the bag limit for Dall sheep in Unit 14A to full-curl ram as follows:

Change Unit 14A sheep draw permit bag limit from one [ANY RAM] to: **One ram with full-curl horn or larger, both horn tips broken or 8 years old or older.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to have the any ram draw permits in Unit 14A changed to full curl permits. This regulation was put into effect in 2008 to try and grow the older ram population but there are currently 53 permits being issued for any ram. With the rise of sheep hunting popularity this has created more harvest of younger rams and less preservation of mature Chugach rams. There has been virtually no increase in the mature ram population during the 13 years that the any ram regulation has been in place. It has failed to do what it was put in place to do. Many areas in Unit 14A used to have an abundance of large, mature rams and we think this is the first step in returning this area to its original abundance again.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-006)

PROPOSAL 87

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Change the bag limit for the Dall sheep permit hunts in Unit 14A and convert the early season to archery only permit hunts as follows:

Unit 14A: DS170 - DS180 - DS190 - DS270 - DS280 - DS290 - (Resident and Nonresident)

Allocate the first half of the Dall sheep draw permits to archers only for "any rams".

DS175 - DS185 - DS195 - DS275 - DS285 (Resident & Nonresident)

Allocate the second half of the draw permits to any weapon and "full-curl rams" only.

Address the discrepancy of the "any ram" regulation and management of sheep in Unit 14A. Address dates between the first portion of the season and or the second portion of the season for weapon restrictions. Allow more rams to reach maturity with the archery regulations, as there is ADF&G data proving the low harvest success of archers. Approximately 130 rams have been harvested with archery equipment in the state of Alaska over the past 10 years (approx. 1%), those numbers include archery only draws and general harvest hunts. The low success rate of archers would not have a significant impact on this "any ram" hunt. Changing the any weapon portion of this proposed draw to full-curl only will allow more rams to reach maturity and a larger population of Dall sheep. Dates of the weapons restrictions is less important than allowing the opportunity to harvest rams for both "any ram" hunters and "full-curl" hunters.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Dall sheep permits available in Unit 14A for less than full curl rams. Addressing the discrepancy in sheep population, and trophy rams versus hunt opportunity of Dall sheep in Unit 14A.

PROPOSED BY: Austin Manelick (EG-F20-020)

PROPOSAL 88

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Establish an archery only general season hunt for Dall sheep in Unit 14 as follows:

Create an early archery season from August 1- 9 before the general sheep season. This would provide a great opportunity for archery hunters by opening an earlier time frame for archery only hunters to pursue sheep. This also gives incentive to go out and hunt sheep before the general season. The early season would also allow for more guided hunts for nonresidents by extending another nine days to the left. Archery hunting has very low success rate and would not effect the overall population of sheep in this area. With the success rate being less than one percent, over harvest would not be an issue. The new season would only be for Unit 14A and 14B remainder, by general season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Create more opportunities for archery hunters in Alaska. Archery hunting in Alaska is gaining popularity and it only makes sense to create more seasons and opportunities for Alaska's archery hunters. Making an early season for Dall sheep archery only would allow archery hunters to hunt sheep that have not been pressured by fellow hunters yet. Even with an early season for archery hunters, the success rate would still be low and the sheep population would not be affected.

PROPOSED BY: Drew Kress (EG-F20-057)

PROPOSAL 89

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Establish a registration hunt for Dall sheep open to certified bowhunters only, by longbow or recurve bow only within Unit 14A, Metal Creek area as follows:

Institute a registration hunt open to certified bowhunters only with season dates starting on October 5 and closing on October 15 or by emergency order. Hunters participating in this hunt would be limited to the use of longbows or recurve bows only. The area would be the same as already established in DS170. The bag limit for residents would be one ram with full-curl horn or larger and the bag limit for nonresidents would be one ram with full-curl horn or larger every four regulatory years. Successful hunters would be required to report within three days of kill while unsuccessful hunters must report within 15 days of season end.

This new registration hunt would be for the Metal Creek area only.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A registration hunt limited to the use of traditional bowhunting equipment would give more hunters the opportunity to spend time in the field pursuing sheep within Unit 14A while having no impact on the resource. Only about 1% of sheep taken in Alaska are done so with archery equipment and even less are taken with longbows or recurves. Traditional bows, while just as lethal as compound bows, require the hunter to get much closer to game in order to make an accurate shot, thus increasing the challenge by a large margin. Bowhunters using traditional equipment must usually get within approximately 20 yards of game, while compound archers are generally able to take shots on game at much greater distances. The limitations of traditional bows would make it very difficult to harvest sheep while still allowing more hunters the opportunity to pursue them.

The purpose of this new hunt being a registration hunt would be so that the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) can monitor the participation and success rates more closely.

The purpose of the season being October 5 to October 15 would be so not to conflict with already existing hunts in the unit while at the same allowing ADF&G to determine an acceptable harvest quota based on reports already received from the preceding drawing permit hunts.

This hunt would fall under the full-curl regulation ensuring that the breeding population of rams will not be affected.

Having an additional hunt would bring in more revenue to the state of Alaska as well as to local communities.

DS140 and DS240 are held in Unit 14C and are good comparisons for archery success rates. These two hunts are open to certified bowhunters only and are both held from October 1 through 10. Even with the opportunity to use conventional compound bows, only 31 of 376 bowhunters have been successful from 2009 to 2018. These hunts do not have size or age restrictions and some of the sheep taken during this time were also recorded as ewes. Hunters limited to the use of traditional longbows and recurves would have even less success taking mature rams than have been experienced in these established bow only drawing permit hunts.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Harris (EG-F20-119)

PROPOSAL 90

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

Extend the brown bear hunting season in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

I recommend extending brown bear season through June 30 allowing these bears to be taken through the baiting season. The new regulation change would read “One bear every regulatory year September 1 - June 30 in Unit 14A and “One bear every regulatory year August 10-June 30 in Unit 14B.”

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The population of brown bears in Unit 14 is growing rapidly. In the span of four years my trail cameras in Unit 14 over bait have shown 1-2 brown bears and 5-6 black bears in 2015 and in 2019 7-8 brown bears and only 1 black bear. Brown bear season closes on May 31 and there is no closed season on black bears

currently in Unit 14. If the population of brown bears is not controlled I believe we will continue to see increasing brown bear populations and decreased black bear populations until eventually the area will be depleted of black bears completely.

PROPOSED BY: Landon Albertson (EG-F19-145)

PROPOSAL 91

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

Establish a general season by bow and arrow only for brown bear within Units 14A and 14B as follows:

Unit 14A **June 1 – June 30 by bow and arrow only; or** September 1 - May 31; one bear every regulatory year.

Unit 14B **June 1 – June 30 by bow and arrow only; or** August 10 - May 31; one bear every regulatory year.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extending the general season for bow and arrow only would give more hunters the opportunity to spend time in the field pursuing bears within Unit 14A & 14B without having a negative impact on the resource. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, only one of 87 brown bears were taken with a bow in Unit 14A and 14B from 2014 to 2018. These reported archery harvests show the extremely low impact to the population.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-F20-054)

PROPOSAL 92

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

Open a year-round season for brown bear in Unit 16 as follows:

Change Unit 16 brown bear season back to **No Closed Season.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the Unit 16 brown bear season back to NO CLOSED SEASON. There is no closed season for black bear in this unit and the baiting season runs from April 15 to October15. With this season closed a hunter can't take a brown bear at their bait station if one appears during the closed portion of the season. There is an abundance of both black and brown bears in this area with a high predation rate on moose calves. There is no threat of over harvest in this very heavily forested unit and by opening this back up, it gives hunters a little more opportunity to hunt and potentially alleviate problem bears without the process of a defense of life and property (DLP) bear situation.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-005)

PROPOSAL 93

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

Open a year-round season for brown bear in Unit 16 as follows:

The new regulation would read " no closed season."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would propose to change the season dates for brown bear to be open all year round as it was before. This will give opportunity for hunters with limitations to hunt while bears are lower on berries as well as on the salmon streams. It would also avoid DLP (defense of life and property) issues for anyone encountering trouble bears while fishing. With the loss of the spring season and a likely hood that less nonresident and resident hunters will be hunting this fall or even into next season. We need to stay ahead of this curve. The additional income to ADF&G will be well needed to make up for loss of license and tag sales from hunt cancellations. I saw no justification to have closed the June 15 to August 10 period that was historically in place for many years. This caused a loss of opportunity for archery hunters and youth hunters that could more easily hunt the streams and low berry areas.

If the season remains closed from June 15 to August 10 the population will increase faster with the loss of our past spring season and moose will become more at risk with predation in a short period of time. Resident hunters and nonresident hunters will benefit from opportunity and the state will recover some of the license and tag money as well as Pittman Robinson triple matching funds. Guides, charter services as well as local economies would also benefit from the economic side, and help recover some Covid-19 losses. There does not appear to be any negative conservation issue and most likely a positive for future moose populations.

PROPOSED BY: Steven Perrins (EG-F20-138)

PROPOSAL 94

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

Establish a general season by bow and arrow only for brown bear within Units 16A and 16B, remainder as follows:

Unit 16A: **June 16 – August 9 by bow and arrow only; or** August 10 - June 15; two bears every regulatory year.

Unit 16B, that portion within a one-mile radius of the mouth of Wolverine Creek (at 60.80° N. lat., 152.31 ° W. long.); September 15 - May 31; two bears every regulatory year.

Remainder of Unit 16B **June 16 – August 9 by bow and arrow only; or** August 10 - June 15; two bears every regulatory year.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extending the general season for bow and arrow only would give more hunters the opportunity to spend time in the field pursuing bears within Unit 16 without having a negative impact on the resource. According to the Alaska

Department of Fish and Game, only 65 of 460 brown bears were taken with a bow in Unit 16 from 2014 to 2018. These reported archery harvests show the extremely low impact to the population.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-F20-060)

PROPOSAL 95

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

Lengthen the brown bear season in Unit 16B for residents and nonresidents as follows:

Brown bear season dates for residents and nonresidents, Unit 16B: August 10 - June 30. Made effective by emergency order for spring 2021.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? ? In 2018 the brown bear season in Unit 16B was changed from "No Closed Season" to August 10 - June 15. Most of Unit 16B has an extremely high snow pack and is difficult access during the month of May. June is the prime time for hunting bears in most of the unit and the season now closes June 15. With the loss of the nonresident brown bear season during April and May of 2020, there will be a surplus of bears in 2021. I believe it is important to lengthen the season through the end of June and make it effective immediately.

PROPOSED BY: Jonah Stewart (EG-F19-160)

PROPOSAL 96

5 AAC 92.085 (8). Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Allow the take of black bear in Unit 16B the same day a hunter has flown as follows:

Under same day airborne EXCEPTIONS: You may hunt black bear the same day airborne in Unit 16B (provided you are 300 feet from the airplane).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since the closure of the black bear predator control program in Unit 16B there has been limited participation amongst resident hunters hunting black bears in much of Unit 16B. Running bait stations is time consuming and flying in and camping overnight is more than many residents want or have time for.

PROPOSED BY: Jonah Stewart (EG-F19-159)

PROPOSAL 97

5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Allow beaver to be taken with firearm or archery equipment in Unit 16 as follows:

Re-write regulation to read: and in Unit 16 beaver may be taken throughout the trapping season with a firearm or archery equipment.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change regulations in Unit 16 to allow beaver to be taken with archery equipment as well as firearms.

Unit 16 has had a beaver population explosion the last 15 or so years. The Department of Fish and Game now allows beaver to be taken with a firearm in Unit 16 throughout the trapping season, as well as in many other units of the state. I have had several clients ask if they could shoot them with their bow and arrow while they are hunting with us, and the answer has to be NO. We need to thin out the beavers, and although, I don't feel there will be a lot of archery effort, I know there will be some and those folks will also need to purchase a hunting license. Archery equipment is plenty capable of killing a beaver and with a fishing/bow they would also have no trouble retrieving them. In fact, most likely better than with a rifle.

Of course, it would be much more effective if they approve my other proposal to open the season in August as well.

Please open the opportunity to more sportsman and help me get rid of a few more dam engineers in the process!! Thank you.

PROPOSED BY: Steven Perrins (EG-F20-155)

PROPOSAL 98

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the beaver trapping season in Unit 16 as follows:

Change beaver trapping season in Unit 16 to August 10 - May 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change trapping season in Unit 16B to start August 10. The beaver in Unit 16B have increased in population to a nuisance level in many areas. The flooding has caused major issue to hunters access to much of the good moose hunting as well as flooded historic trails. The Department of Fish and Game is willing to issue permits to harvest out of season, but this is not as effective. If the hunting season was open in August when resident and nonresident hunters are in the field we could sell non-resident trapping licenses to many hunters and they could thin out the beaver population a bit and at the same time contribute to revenue to the state. With the low price of furs for so many years, beaver are not worth the effort for most trappers to dig through several feet of snow and then ice to set traps for a furbearer that brings in \$30 after lots of skinning and fleshing. Clients and resident hunters would be more likely to harvest the beaver when it is convenient and could keep the hides and donate the meat to folks with dog teams that would love to have it. With nonresident trapping/hunting licenses selling for \$405 the state would again benefit the well needed income and the match from Pittman Robinson funds.

I see no downside to this as it is not going to turn into a commercial harvest, but will definitely help get the beaver population back in check. At the least open it August 25 one month earlier and give it a shot.

PROPOSED BY: Steven Perrins (EG-F20-153)

PROPOSAL 99

5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping.

Close areas within Units 14A, 14B, and 16A to trapping as follows:

Furbearer trapping should be closed in the following areas: (1) within one quarter mile of any permanent dwelling; (2) within 50 yards of any developed hiking trail or groomed ski trail; (3) within one quarter mile of any trailhead for a developed hiking trail, or groomed ski trail; (4) within one quarter mile of any developed campground; (5) within the Hatcher Pass Public Use Area; and (6) within the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge.

The following regulatory language is suggested:

5 AAC 92.550 Areas Closed to Trapping.

(1-6) No change.

Add:

(7) One quarter mile of permanent dwellings, which are defined as buildings used primarily as permanent residences or businesses; but which definition does not include cabins with less than 800 square feet of livable space which are unoccupied a majority of the time.

(8) 50 yards of a developed hiking trail or groomed ski trail. Developed hiking trails are defined as trails for which public funds have been spent within the previous five years for construction and maintenance; and groomed ski trails are defined as trails which are routinely maintained and groomed to provide the public with recreational skiing venues. A list of developed hiking trails and groomed ski trails shall be maintained by the department.

(9) One quarter mile from the trailhead for any developed hiking trail or groomed ski trail.

(10) One quarter mile from any developed campground. Developed campgrounds are defined as campgrounds for which public funds have been spent in the previous five years for construction or maintenance; a list of which shall be maintained by the department.

(11) The Hatcher Pass Public Use Area as designated in AS 41.23.130.

(12) The Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge as designated in AS 16.20.032.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game should address the danger to people and their pets, primarily dogs, that is posed by traps placed in developed areas with numerous permanent dwellings, and the danger to people and pets posed on or near developed hiking trails, and groomed ski trails; and also address the need for watchable wildlife in areas visited by large numbers of recreational hikers, mountain bikers, ice skaters, boaters, and skiers.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor (EG-F20-045)

PROPOSAL 100

5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Remove the requirement that traps and snares for beaver be submerged in Unit 16 as follows:

For a solution remove the restriction in the trapping regulations on page 31 in Unit 16 that states a trap must be submerged.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? For fall beaver trapping. I would like to change the part that snares and traps must be submerged from September 24 - November 9.

During the fall on the river, water fluctuates and usually goes down. An example would be you set a trap that is submerged. The next day you come back and water has dropped over six inches so the trap is exposed. You now have an illegal set trap because the trap is not submerged.

PROPOSED BY: James Hoehn

(EG-F19-148)
