

**PROPOSAL 209**

**5 AAC 85.010(a)(1) Hunting seasons and bag limits for bison.**

Modify the Copper River bison harvest opportunity in Units 11 and 13D as follows:

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(1)		
...		
Unit 11, east of the Copper River, south of the Klawasi River, and west of a line from Mount Sanford to Mount Wrangell to Long Glacier, and west of the Kotsina River, and that portion of Unit 13(D) east of the Edgerton Highway	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – Mar. 31 (General hunt only)
1 bison every 10 regulatory years by drawing permit only; up to <b>50 permits</b> [24 permits] may be issued.		

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** This proposal seeks to increase the number of permits allowable for the Copper River bison hunt in Units 11 and 13D (DI454) to provide additional harvest opportunity for resident and nonresident hunters in response to a growing bison population. The Copper River bison herd has been slowly increasing in abundance from an average of 70 animals in the mid 1990’s to an average of 181 animals over the past five years. The maximum number of permits (24) have been issued annually since 2004, except for 2008 (18 permits) and 2012 (15 permits). Due to an administrative error, there were 30 permits issued in 2017 and 45 permits issued in 2018. Over the past 10 years, permit success averages 38% and hunter success averages 56%, but harvest (average of 10 animals annually) does not optimize the harvestable surplus under maximum sustained yield as the herd grows. Additional permits will allow for additional sustainable bison hunting opportunities and will provide the tools to adjust the trajectory of the herd and prevent negative impacts of increased bison abundance on the range.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F21-020)  
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