

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
STAFF COMMENTS
SOUTHCENTRAL REGION II PROPOSALS
ALASKA BOARD OF GAME MEETING
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA
MARCH 13-17, 2015



The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Game meeting, March 13 - 17, 2015 in Anchorage, Alaska, and are prepared to assist the public and board. The stated staff comments should be considered preliminary and subject to change, if or when new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral testimony presented to the board.

PROPOSAL 131 – 5 AAC 85.065 Seasons and Bag limits for Small Game

PROPOSED BY: Sea Ducks Unlimited

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce the goldeneye duck bag limit to three in the Southcentral Region (Region II; GMUs 6, 7, 8, 14C, and 15). We assume the author refers to the daily bag limit. No reference is made to possession limit, but by federal regulation it cannot be more than 3 times the daily bag limit. To alleviate misidentification by hunters between goldeneye sub-species, limits would need to be a combination of both Barrow’s and common goldeneyes.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Although taxonomically classified as sea ducks, goldeneyes (Barrow’s and common) harvested in Alaska are included in the general duck bag limit along with most dabbling and diving ducks.

General Duck Bag limit:

GMUs 6, 7, 14C and 15 – 8 per day/24 in possession
GMU 8 – 7 per day/21 in possession

Season start and end dates:

Sep. 1 – Dec. 16.
Oct. 8 – Jan 22.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Duck hunters would not be permitted to harvest more than 3 goldeneyes per day and 9 in possession in the south central region.

BACKGROUND: *Harvest estimates:* Statewide and regional estimates of waterfowl harvest were once calculated by the department, but were discontinued with the inception of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Harvest Information Program (HIP) in 1998. HIP estimates are statewide estimates; regional (i. e., south central region) estimates of harvest are not currently available. Historical data from state harvest estimates (most years 1971-1976 and 1982-1997) indicate that 44%-59% (average 51%) of the general duck harvest takes place in the south central region. We have no reason to believe that this proportion has changed in recent years. The species composition of the harvest, however, was not estimated during state harvest surveys, and the current HIP composition data are only suitable for statewide species harvest estimates; they are not adequate for regional level estimates. Annual harvest estimates (HIP) for Barrow’s and common goldeneyes in the entire state are relatively consistent, averaging 1,905 and 1,261, respectively. Total duck harvest in Alaska has averaged 72,000 birds since 1999.

State abundance estimates: Indices of waterfowl abundance have been generated from aerial surveys conducted annually in the spring since 1955 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Statewide indices are calculated by combining spring counts from 11 survey strata distributed throughout the state in areas with relatively high waterfowl concentrations. These surveys are

not optimally designed to estimate goldeneye abundance. Thus, abundance estimates for goldeneyes from these surveys have been highly variable ranging from 24,000 in 1964 to 130,000 in 1968. More recent estimates (past 10 years) have ranged from 88,000 in 2006 to 35,000 in 2014.

Local abundance estimates: The department has conducted a waterfowl survey in Kachemak Bay (KB) during winter from 1999-2003 and 2012-2014. Goldeneye survey estimates in KB ranged from 3,569 to 5,354 (average 4,055 birds) with no significant trends during the 8 years of surveys, suggesting that current harvest rates are not adversely impacting the local goldeneye population. Waterfowl surveys in other areas of the south central region (Prince William Sound and Kodiak Island) also suggest no long-term declines in goldeneye populations.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department OPPOSES this proposal because available harvest and abundance data indicate that goldeneyes are not being overharvested in Alaska.

COST ANALYSIS: This proposal is not expected to result in any additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 140 - 5 AAC 085.045.(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunt in Unit 6C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4)		
...		
Unit 6(C) 1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 40 permits for bulls and up to 20 permits for antlerless moose may be issued	Sept. 1-Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	No open season.
1 moose by registration permit only	Nov. 1- Dec. 31	No open season
...		

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes antlerless hunts in GMU 6C as required by statute. Resident hunters would be able to continue to harvest antlerless moose during hunts administered by ADF&G on state-managed lands in Unit 6C.

BACKGROUND: Antlerless moose seasons must be re-authorized annually. The population objective is 400-500 moose. A population survey completed during February 2014 yielded an estimate of 610 moose, 25% of which were calves. We have managed this hunt cooperatively with the U. S. Forest Service and the available antlerless harvest quota in Unit 6(C) is currently harvested under a federal subsistence season. We have not held the state antlerless hunt since the 1999-2000 season. In 2013, a registration hunt was established that could be used to harvest moose, including antlerless moose, if the federal subsistence hunt is not held or it does not result in the desired amount of harvest. At this time, quotas have been raised in both the federal and state programs to bring the population to within its objectives. Continuation of the antlerless hunts is necessary to achieve population at objectives.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to reauthorize antlerless moose harvests in Unit 6C

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 141 - 5 AAC 085.040.(4) Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

PROPOSED BY: Copper River/Prince William Sound Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Adoption of this proposal would limit hunters from shooting a goat for five years if they take a nanny in GMU 6, similar to the same regulation in place in Unit 7 and a portion of Unit 15. The proposal will add the following language to the Unit 6 goat seasons and bag limits “However, if a nanny is taken, the hunter is prohibited from taking a goat in Unit 6 for five regulatory years.”

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
...		
Units 6(C) and 6(D)	Sept. 15-Jan. 31	Sept. 15-Jan. 31

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

Remainder of Unit 6

Aug. 20- Jan. 31

Aug. 20- Jan. 31

1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal is attempting to reduce overall nanny harvest by encouraging hunters to avoid taking nanny goats. Since nannies count as two goat units against the maximum allowable harvest (MAH) level, more goats may be taken without a population impact, and more hunters may participate. Hunters that shoot a billy would not be directly affected by this regulation but would be indirectly affected by longer seasons and higher MAH. Hunters that shoot nannies would still have the option of hunting goats in other game units. Harvests of goats in units 6C and 6D for subsistence uses may decline.

BACKGROUND: Mountain goats are slow to reach sexually maturity relative to other ungulates. Mortality is also high among young animals as they fall victim to avalanches, extreme winter weather, and predation. In some years, low amounts of kid production/survival have been observed (16 kids:100 adults in Unit 6C.) It is important to maintain high numbers of females in our goat populations. Because correctly identifying a female goat can be difficult in the field, it is legal to harvest a nanny as long as it does not have a kid. The abundance of females, particularly older females which are more successful at achieving recruitment of young into the adult population, has been found to have the greatest influence on population dynamics of goats (Hamel et. al 2006).

Nanny harvest is particularly high on road system hunts, with some areas experiencing 50% nanny take in 5 out of 10 years. In two hunt areas, high nanny take has been followed by a drop in observed goats and a subsequent prolonged closure of the goat season (hunt areas RG231 and RG248).

While some hunters harvest a nanny incidentally, others prefer nannies for the quality of the meat. Recent implementation of a mandatory education program on road accessible hunts may have reduced nanny take this year. However, this will not reduce harvest by individuals that select female goats as their preferred animal.

Road system hunts in Unit 6 have a high number of repeat participants. Hunt records were analyzed to illuminate the number of repeat hunters and their preponderance for taking nannies. If this proposed regulation were in place in previous years, it would have redistributed 1-3 goats in most years in two Cordova road system hunts. Considering that these hunts have a small MAH (less than 8 goats), and that some of these repeat goats were nannies counting as two, this provides a significant increase in opportunity. The presence of this regulation may further encourage hunters to harvest billies which may leave more breeding females in the population.

The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for goats in units 6C and 6D, and found that 15–26 goats are reasonably necessary for subsistence.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal to reduce nanny harvest as the current regulations present no conservation concerns. The proposed regulations may impact users who prefer to take nannies for meat or other reasons. All hunters may benefit from additional hunting opportunity (bag limit and season length) if others refrain from taking nannies, but those hunters that prefer taking nannies for meat will have reduced opportunity. If the board adopts this proposal we recommend they use similar language to the existing language for Units 7 and 15. The board should also consider whether reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses of the goat population in units 6C and 6D is still provided.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 142 - 5 AAC 085.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Adoption of this proposal would reduce the nonresident bag limit in Unit 8 from three deer of either sex (buck only before Oct. 1) to two bucks.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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...

(6)

Unit 8, that portion of Kodiak Island north of a line from the head of Settlers Cove to Crescent Lake (57° 52' N. lat., 152° 58' W. long.), and east of a line from the outlet of Crescent Lake to Mount Ellison Peak and from Mount Ellison Peak to Pokati Point at Whale Passage, and that portion of Kodiak Island east of a line from the mouth of Saltery Creek to the mouth

of Elbow Creek, and adjacent small islands in Chiniak Bay

1 buck; or	Aug. 1–Oct. 31	Aug. 1–Oct. 31
1 deer, by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only	Nov. 1–Nov. 14 Nov. 16–Dec. 31	Nov. 1–Nov. 14 Nov. 16–Dec. 31
Remainder of Unit 8	Aug. 1–Dec. 31	Aug. 1–Dec. 31

3 deer; however, only bucks may be taken before Oct. 1

5 AAC 092.530. Management Areas.

(26) the Kodiak Road System Youth Hunt Management Area:

(A) (paraphrased) Unit 8, the Kodiak road system as described above is open to deer hunting by a child aged 10 to 17 by bow and arrow or muzzleloader only from Nov. 16–Dec. 31 with a bag limit of one deer of either sex.

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the non-resident bag limit from three deer of either sex to two bucks in the Remainder of Unit 8 (non-road system). In addition, this proposal would limit non-resident deer hunters to a buck only harvest along the road system. This proposal would have no direct impact on resident hunters in Unit 8 but may have a negative economic impact on villages, outfitters, and the Kodiak community.

BACKGROUND: Deer are an important subsistence, economic, and recreational resource throughout the Kodiak Archipelago. Venison has surpassed marine mammals as a primary source of mammalian protein for community residents, and income generated from services provided from resident and non-resident deer hunters is a major factor in the local economy.

Although hunting is an important consideration, deer mortality in Unit 8 is primarily driven by winter severity. Unlike the areas where they originated (southeast Alaska); much of the archipelago lacks dense coniferous forests which provide thermal cover, reduced snow depth, and vegetative forage during harsh winters. As a result, the deer population on the Kodiak archipelago is primarily affected by weather patterns and fluctuations in winter severity.

We assess annual winter mortality by searching for and examining deer carcasses in known coastal wintering areas. We periodically assess winter conditions and physical appearance of deer using aerial surveys. We also gather information from local hunters and guides on deer mortality, body condition, and general appearance throughout the season. The Unit 8 deer population experienced substantial winter mortality during the harsh winter of 2011-2012, with an estimated 40% loss of the deer herd. Recent surveys and reports from hunters and guides indicate the deer population throughout the archipelago is recovering, rebounding faster

in the southern portions of Kodiak Island and throughout Afognak Island. Deer recovery in the interior portions of the island and along the road system is somewhat slower. Deer mortality surveys conducted in spring 2013 and spring 2014 suggest winter mortality was minimal.

On average, there are approximately 3,000 hunters afield each year, resulting in a 70% success rate. Successful hunters harvest approximately 1.5 deer/year, with an annual harvest of 3,000–5,000 deer, of which 77% are male. Nonresidents comprise about 16% of hunters (average ~500) of which ~65% are successful. This results in an average nonresident harvest of 300-400 deer/year (1 deer/hunter) of which 85% are male. Although nonresident harvest of deer is an important consideration, hunter harvest is presumed to have minimal impact on the overall population size. The total number of nonresident hunters appears to fluctuate with weather (i.e., winter severity) and deer population forecasts. Nonresident hunter participation decreases significantly following harsh winters when deer hunting forecasts are bleak. A reduction in nonresident deer harvest will have minimal impact on the overall population.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal to reduce the nonresident bag limit for deer in Unit 8 because of the allocative nature of the proposal. Most nonresidents target male deer and the average harvest per hunter is lower than what is proposed. Adoption of this proposal would not result in a measurable positive or negative effect on the population recovery.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 143 - 5 AAC 092.130. Restrictions to bag limit.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal either eliminates the regulation requiring bear (black bear and brown bear) hunters to count wounded bears towards their bag limit; or would add language to the regulation further defining “wounded” in Unit 8.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? As stated in 5 AAC 92.130(f), in Units 1-5 and Unit 8, a black or brown bear wounded by a person counts against that person’s bag limit for the regulatory year in which the bear is taken. However, in Units 1-5 and Unit 8, a brown bear wounded by a person does not count against that person’s one bear every four regulatory years bag limit established in 5 AAC 92.132.

As stated in 5 AAC 92.130(h), “wounded” means there is a sign of blood or there is sign that the animals has been hit by a hunting projectile.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Only mortally wounded bears would count toward a hunter’s bag limit or no wounded bears would count toward the bag limit.

BACKGROUND: This regulation has been in effect since 2007. The intent of the current regulation is to avoid the additive harvest of bears that may be caused by hunters either continuing to hunt, or taking additional bears, after they have wounded a bear. Previously the Board defined “wounded” to provide a benchmark from which a judgment could be made concerning whether or not a bear had been hit by a projectile by all parties involved in the taking of a bear.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: Oppose. Through hunt reports and conversations with hunters and guides the current regulation appears to be useful in reducing the number of bears taken that could otherwise have been in addition to those considered wounded. While not common, on occasion bears are reported as wounded on harvest ticket and permit report cards and this information provides some insight to the extent of wounding loss on bears to managers, which is factored into management strategies.

The concerns outlined by the author of the proposal are largely ethical and enforcement considerations. At all times, the department encourages hunters who have wounded game to make every attempt to recover the animal. If a bear is not recovered in the same regulatory year as it was wounded a hunter has a new bag limit, as provided by in 5 AAC 85.015 and 5 AAC 92.130(h), the following regulatory year. Hunting guide regulations and guiding concerns are managed and administered through the Big Game Commercial Services Board under the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 144 - 5 AAC 85.060. Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the resident and nonresident hunting regulations for Unit 8 to include Arctic fox (*Vulpes lagopus*).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
(2) Arctic fox (including		

white and blue phases)

Units 9, 17, 18, 22, 23, and 26 2 foxes	Sep. 1–Apr. 30 (General hunt only)	Sep. 1–Apr. 30
Unit 10 No bag limit	No Closed Season (General hunt only)	No Closed season
Units 24 and 25 2 foxes ...	Sep. 1—Mar. 15 (General hunt only)	Sep. 1—Mar. 15
(3) Red fox		
Unit 8—10... 2 foxes	Sep. 1—Feb. 15 (General hunt only)	Sep. 1—Feb. 15

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would add an Arctic fox hunting season from September 1–February 15 with a bag limit of two foxes to the resident and nonresident hunting regulations.

BACKGROUND: Arctic fox exist in harvestable numbers in certain areas within Unit 8, specifically on Chirikof Island. Historical records indicate an early settler, Niels John Jacobsen, secured twenty-one pairs of blue (Arctic) foxes from the Semidi Islands in 1891 and brought them to Chirikof in hopes of starting a fur farm. Since then, the Chirikof Island Arctic fox population has continued to expand unimpeded across the island. In 1980, Chirikof Island was added to the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge as part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in which certain state lands reverted to federal ownership. The current federal management plan for the island involves removing all non-native mammals from the island and restoring the island’s native bird species. This plan involves the removal of all fox species inhabiting the island. In an effort to provide Kodiak hunters an opportunity to harvest fox prior to the federal removal, the department would like to open an Arctic fox hunting season throughout GMU 8.

The board has found there are customary and traditional uses of foxes in all units with a harvestable surplus, and that 90% of the harvestable surplus is reasonably necessary for subsistence uses.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to add an Arctic fox hunting season in Unit 8. If the board considers adopting this regulation we recommend they consider adopting the same season and bag for Unit 8 red fox or one of the existing seasons and bag limits for Arctic fox.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

Intra-departmental Coordination (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): Region II

Inter-departmental Coordination (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): Alaska Wildlife Troopers; Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

PROPOSAL 145 - 5 AAC 084.270. Furbearer trapping.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the resident and nonresident trapping regulations for Unit 8 to include Arctic fox (*Vulpes lagopus*).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Species and Units	Open Season	Bag Limit
...		
(3) Fox, arctic, white, or blue		
Units 9 and 10	Nov. 10–Last day of Feb.	No limit.
Unit 17	Nov. 10–Mar. 31	No limit.
Unit 18	Nov. 10—Mar. 31	No limit
Units 22, 23 and 26	Nov. 1—Apr. 15	No limit
Units 24 and 25	Nov. 1–Last day of Feb.	No limit.
...		
(4) Fox, red (including cross, black or silver color phases)		
Unit 8	Nov. 10–Mar. 31	No limit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would add an Arctic fox trapping season from November 10–March 31 with no bag limit for residents and nonresidents to the current trapping regulations.

BACKGROUND: Arctic fox exist in harvestable numbers in certain areas within Unit 8, specifically on Chirikof Island. Historical records indicate an early settler, Niels John Jacobsen, secured twenty-one pairs of blue (Arctic) foxes from the Semidi Islands in 1891 and brought them to Chirikof in hopes of starting a fur farm. Since then, the Chirikof Island Arctic fox population has continued to expand unimpeded across the island. In 1980, Chirikof Island was added to the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge as part of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in which certain state lands reverted to federal ownership. The current federal management plan for the island involves removing all non-native mammals from the island and restoring the island’s native bird species. This plan involves the removal of all fox species inhabiting the island. In an effort to provide Kodiak hunters an opportunity to harvest fox prior

to the federal removal, the department would like to open a fox trapping season throughout GMU 8.

The board has found there are customary and traditional uses of foxes in all units with a harvestable surplus, and that 90% of the harvestable surplus is reasonably necessary for subsistence uses.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to add an Arctic fox trapping season in Unit 8. The proposed trapping season would mirror that of the existing Unit 8 red fox trapping season.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

Intra-departmental Coordination (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): Region II

Inter-departmental Coordination (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): Alaska Wildlife Troopers; Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

PROPOSAL 146 - 5 AAC 085.060. Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the resident and nonresident hunting regulations for Unit 8 to remove coyote (*Canis latrans*) and lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) from current hunting regulations.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(1) Coyote		
Units 1–5, 18, 22, 23, and 26(A)	Sept. 1–Apr 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1–Apr 30
2 coyotes		
Units 6–17 , 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26(B), and 26(C)	July 1–June 30	July 1–June 30
No limit		

...

(4) Lynx

Units 1–5, 8, and 10

No open season.

No open season.

Units 6, 7, 11, and 13–16

Nov. 10–Feb. 28
(General hunt only)

Nov. 10–Feb. 28

2 lynx

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would remove coyote and lynx from current resident and nonresident hunting regulations.

BACKGROUND: Coyote and lynx do not exist in GMU 8. Typically the codified regulations only list seasons and bag limits for species of animals that occur within the boundaries of the GMUs. The department would like to remove these species from the current hunting regulations to alleviate confusion of resident and nonresident hunters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to remove coyote and lynx from current resident and nonresident hunting regulations.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

Intra-departmental Coordination (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): Region II

Inter-departmental Coordination (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): Alaska Wildlife Troopers; Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

PROPOSAL 147 - 5 AAC 084.270. Furbearer trapping.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the resident and nonresident trapping regulations for Unit 8 to remove lynx (*Lynx canadensis*) and wolverine (*Gulo gulo*) from current trapping regulations.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Species and Units

Open Season

Bag Limit

...

(5) Lynx

Units 1–5	Dec. 1–Feb. 15	No limit.
Units 7, 11, and 13–16	Nov. 10–Last day of Feb.	No limit; season may be closed by emergency order
Units 8 and 10	No open season	

...

(14) Wolverine

Units 1–5	Nov. 10–Feb. 15	No limit.
Units 6–8, 9(A), 9(C), 9(D), 9(E), 10, 15, and 16(B)	Nov. 10–Last day of Feb.	No limit.

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would remove lynx and wolverine from current resident and nonresident trapping regulations.

BACKGROUND: Lynx and wolverine do not exist in GMU 8. Typically the codified regulations only list seasons and bag limits for species of animals that occur within the boundaries of the GMUs. The department would like to remove these species from the current trapping regulations to alleviate confusion by resident and nonresident trappers.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to remove lynx and wolverine from current resident and nonresident trapping regulations in Unit 8.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

Intra-departmental Coordination (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): Region II

Inter-departmental Coordination (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): Alaska Wildlife Troopers; Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge.

PROPOSAL 148 – 5 AAC 85.045(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are:

<u>Units and Bag Limits</u>	<u>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</u>	<u>Nonresident Open Season</u>
(12)		
...		
Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area	Day after Labor Day —Mar 31 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day —Mar 31
1 moose per regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood Management Area	Day after Labor Day —Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day —Sept. 30
1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Day after Labor Day —Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area		
1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or	Day after Labor Day —Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day —Sept. 30

1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Nov. 30
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Day after Labor Day—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day—Sept. 30
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits may be issued; or	Day after Labor Day—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 bull by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 10 permits may be issued	Oct. 20—Nov. 15	No open season
...		

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal is necessary for the hunts to continue. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in Unit 14(C) at the desired population objective (1,500 moose). At this population level we have seen reductions in over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, moose-human conflicts in urban areas, and starvation during severe winters. At this level, the moose population will be healthier due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages.

BACKGROUND: Moose in Unit 14(C) are managed intensively for a population objective of 1,500-1,800 moose and an annual harvest objective of 90-270 moose (5AAC 92.108). In 2013, we estimated a moose population of approximately 1,533 moose in Unit 14(C) from a combination of population census, composition surveys and extrapolation to un-surveyed areas. At this population level, we have experienced a decline in human-moose conflicts and decreased winter mortalities. Harvesting cow moose is paramount to maintaining the population within objectives while providing harvest opportunity.

Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The number of antlerless permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality (Table 148-1).

Table 148-1.

Regulatory Year	Either Sex Permits	Antlerless Permits	Cows Harvested
2003	55	60	32
2004	57	80	20
2005	100	46	33
2006	110	46	33
2007	110	40	37
2008	110	35	36
2009	110	25	29
2010	110	23	32
2011	67	23	25
2012	58	23	18
2013	58	23	25

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain antlerless hunts in Unit 14(C). These hunts have been successful in providing additional moose hunting opportunities in the state’s human population center with little controversy. In addition, the harvest of antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at the low end of the population objective.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): None.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): None.

PROPOSAL 149 – 5 AAC 085.045(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(5)		
...		

Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with nonresident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued	Aug. 20—Oct. 10 (General hunt only)
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NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with resident hunts	Aug. 20—Oct. 10
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...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area at a population level low enough to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. The moose population will be healthier and more productive due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages.

BACKGROUND: The moose population in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area has a history of rapid increase following mild winters, and sharp reductions during severe winters. In 2009, antlerless permits were issued for the first time since 2004. Thirty antlerless permits (in addition to 40 bull permits) were issued for 2009, 2010, and 2011, and twenty antlerless permits (in addition to 25 bull permits) were issued for 2012 and 2013. Harvests for 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 were 25 bulls and 17 cows, 15 bulls and 15 cows, 19 bulls and 8 cows, 12 bulls and 7 cows, and 10 bulls and 7 cows respectively. A November 2013 aerial composition count of moose in the Twentymile, Portage, and Placer river drainages found 155 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 23 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 27 calves per 100 cows

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain antlerless hunts in Units 7 and 14(C). These hunts have been successful in creating additional

moose hunting opportunities with little or no controversy. In addition, the harvest of antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at a level to avoid die-offs during harsh winters.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): None.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): None.

PROPOSAL 150 – 5 AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Ira Edwards

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to establish a weapons-restricted, antlerless moose drawing permit hunt for physically disabled residents in Kincaid Municipal Park in the Anchorage Management Area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12)		
...		
Unit 14(C), that portion Known as the Anchorage Management Area	Day after Labor Day --Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloader only; up to 50 permits may be issued		
...		

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would establish an annual drawing hunt in Kincaid Municipal Park for up to ten antlerless moose during the month of October, the time period during which the park sees the least amount of use. Eligible hunters would be those with a physical disability of 70% or greater

as noted under AS 16.05.940(25), who require a wheelchair or other mobility device, and who have taken a department approved Hunter Education course. Hunters would be required to pass a hunt orientation and proficiency test provided by ADF&G. Legal weapons would be shotgun or muzzleloader. The entire moose would be required to be removed from the kill site. Since all hunters would be mobility impaired, they would be allowed to shoot from the trail from a motorized vehicle. ADF&G may require that another licensed hunter with valid hunter's education accompany the permitted hunter. A safety orange vest provided by ADF&G would be worn at all times by all hunt participants.

BACKGROUND: Year-round recreational use of Kincaid Park has increased in recent years due to new facility and single track bike trail development. As a result, there has been an increase in negative moose-human interactions in the park, especially during spring calving. Some of these conflicts have resulted in human injuries or property damage. Mountain bikers appear to suffer the most negative encounters and injuries, as they are traveling quietly at high speeds on narrow trails with little sight distance. While some recreational park users are concerned with public safety, others value moose for viewing. Many people specifically go to Kincaid Park in the fall to photograph and view rutting behavior.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the allocative aspects of this proposal to establish an antlerless hunt in Kincaid Park in Unit 14(C). The department **SUPPORTS** the concept of a hunt that would reduce moose-human conflicts in the park. This is an allocation issue between consumptive and non-consumptive users. This hunt would provide additional opportunity for mobility impaired hunters, and has the potential to reduce moose-human conflicts in Kincaid Park. Under current regulations, ADF&G has the ability to issue more antlerless moose permits in the Anchorage Management Area. However, by municipal regulation, Kincaid Park is currently closed to hunting and trapping without approval from the municipal park director. Therefore, if the Board supports this hunt, it would only be held if the park director provided similar support. Recently the Municipality of Anchorage sent a letter to the board of game opposing this hunt.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal would require some minor costs to the department due to the need to conduct proficiency tests and hunter orientations.

PROPOSAL 151 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Anchorage Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the current bag limit for drawing permits hunts DS140, DS141, DS240, and DS241 in Unit 14(C) from any sheep to any ram.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(7)

...

Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area	Day after Labor Day—Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day—Oct. 31
--	--	-----------------------------

1 sheep by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

...

1 sheep by bow and arrow only, By drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued.	Oct. 1—Oct. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Oct. 10
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...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If this proposal were adopted, bow hunters would only be allowed to harvest rams in Unit 14(C), reducing their opportunity to harvest a sheep.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14(C) are managed by drawing permit hunts, with separate hunts for residents and nonresidents. Currently, in Unit 14(C) ewes or rams less than full-curl can only legally be harvested in archery-only permit hunts (DS140, DS141, DS240 and DS241). Current archery hunts have little to no effect on the total population (Figure 151-1). Since 1993, archery harvest has never exceeded 1% of the total estimated sheep population, and harvested ewes have comprised less than 0.01% of the total population.

Since 2009 the Dall sheep population in Unit 14(C) has exceeded 1,000 sheep, with the most recent count in 2014 at 1,062 sheep (Figure 151-1). In 2011, 56 full-curl ram rifle permits were issued and 11 full-curl rams were harvested (23% success rate). In addition, 87 any sheep archery only permits were issued which resulted in a harvest of 3 ewes and 3 less than full-curl rams (7% success rate). In 2012, 53 full-curl ram rifle permits were issued, and 13 full-curl rams were harvested (25% success rate). No sheep were harvested in 2012 in the archery hunts. In 2013, 53 full-curl ram rifle permits were issued, and 15 full-curl rams were harvested (28% success rate); 86 archery only permits were issued and 7 rams and 1 ewe were harvested (9% success rate). Since 1993, the total harvest of sheep in Unit 14(C) has averaged 3% and therefore should not impact the overall population status or growth.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Department is **NEUTRAL** given the allocative nature of this proposal. Eliminating the ewe portion of the archery-only hunts will reduce the opportunity for bow hunters to harvest a sheep. However, the overall population impact of ewe harvest is negligible, and the current population of Dall sheep in Unit 14(C) is stable to increasing.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): None.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): None.

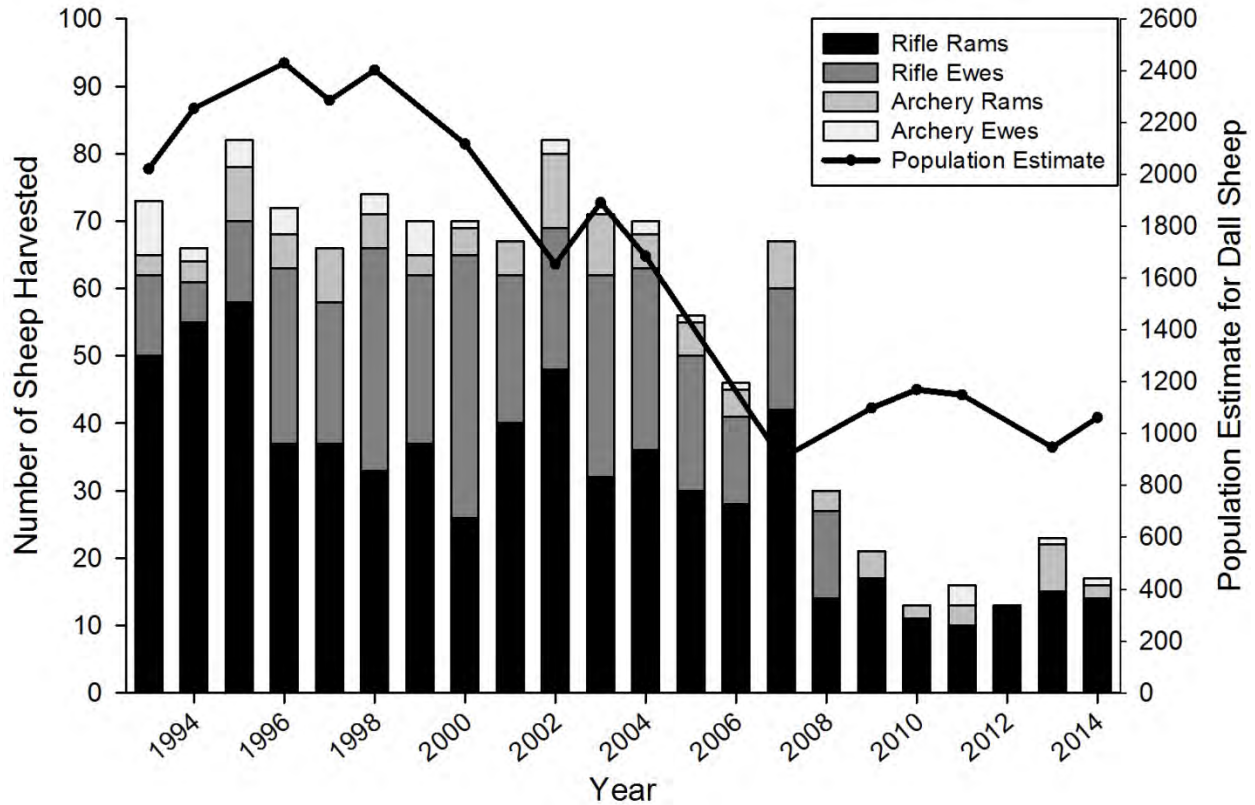


Figure 151-1. Harvest and population count of Dall sheep in Unit 14(C) from 1993-2014.

PROPOSAL 152 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Frank Neumann

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish Chugach State Park in Unit 14(C) as a resident-only sheep hunt area. This area would also be open to the recipient of the Governor’s permit.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Units and Bag Limits		

(7)

...

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger or 1 ewe by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued; or 1 ewe by drawing permit only; up to 150 permits will be issued

Aug. 10—Oct. 31
(General hunt only)

Aug. 10—Oct. 31

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would make all sheep hunting in Unit 14(C) open to residents only.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14(C) are managed by drawing permit hunts, with separate hunts for residents and nonresidents. The DS123 drawing permit hunt is open to 1 resident hunter only and the Governor’s permit recipient. This area includes: Falls Creek drainage on the west and Indian Creek drainage west of Indian Creek, excluding a ¼ mile buffer along Powerline Pass trail; and the south side of Eagle River drainage downstream of Heritage Falls Creek drainage to, but not including, the South Fork Eagle River drainage; and Ram Valley. Other hunt areas in Unit 14(C) are open to both residents and nonresidents.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident hunters. Even though the proposal says it would like the hunt to be open to residents only and the recipient of the Governor’s permit, if this proposal passed, the recipient of the Governor’s permit will no longer be able to hunt sheep in 14C. According to 5 AAC 93.080 the recipient of the Governor’s permit may only hunt in areas open to nonresidents. 5 AAC 93 contains department program regulations, commonly referred to as Commissioner’s regulations, and are not created at the direction of the board, nor can the Board alter those regulations.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 153 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Lance Kronberger

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create two additional drawing permit hunts (one permit each) in Unit 14(C) for second degree of kindred, nonresidents only. One of these hunts would be archery only. The remainder of the existing nonresident permit hunts would be exclusive for guided nonresidents. Additionally, the proponent requests that these hunts “rotate between the rifle and archery sheep hunts within Unit 14(C);” however, the mechanism of this rotation is not specified.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(7)		
...		
Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area	Day after Labor Day—Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day—Oct. 31
1 sheep by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger or 1 ewe by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued; or 1 ewe by drawing permit only; up to 150 permits will be issued	Aug. 10—Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	Aug. 10—Oct. 31
1 sheep by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued.	Oct. 1—Oct. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Oct. 10
...		

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If this proposal were adopted, nonresident permits would be divided between those hunting with resident relatives within second degree of kindred and guided nonresidents. By adopting this proposal as written, nonresidents hunting with resident relatives within second degree of kindred would only receive two permits to harvest Dall sheep annually in Unit 14(C). This would be a reduction in hunting opportunity for nonresident hunters that do not utilize a guide but intend to hunt with a relative within second degree of kindred who is an Alaska resident.

BACKGROUND: Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14(C) are managed by drawing permit hunts, with separate hunts for residents and nonresidents. This separation of hunts for residents and nonresidents occurred in 2009 when the Board of Game allocated 13% of all rifle permits and 5% of archery only permits to nonresident hunters. This allocation was based on a 10 year average of nonresident drawing success. In 2014, 45 resident and 8 nonresident rifle permits were issued for full curl rams in Unit 14(C). In addition, 81 resident and 4 nonresident archery-only permits were issued for any sheep. Under the current scenario, 1 out of 8 (13%) of the nonresident rifle permits and 1 out of the 4 (25%) archery permits would be allocated to second degree of kindred, and the remaining nonresident permits would go to guided hunters only. Of

nonresidents that hunted sheep in Unit 14(C) during the period 2004-2013, 26% indicated they were not guided.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The Department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is an allocation issue between nonresident guided hunters and nonresidents hunting with resident relatives within second degree of kindred. If the board chooses to adopt the proposal as written, hunting opportunity would be reduced for unguided nonresident hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (other area offices, Subsistence, Habitat, etc.): None.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION (Alaska Wildlife Troopers, federal agencies, etc.): None.

PROPOSAL 154 – 5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

PROPOSED BY: Lance Kronberger

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish new goat drawing permits in Unit 14(C), open only to guided nonresident hunters.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(7)

...

Unit 14(C), the drainages of Eagle River, Bird Creek, Glacier Creek, and the East Fork of the Eklutna River

1 goat by drawing permit only, up to 150 permits may be issued; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited;

Sept. 1—Oct. 15
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1—Oct. 15

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would establish new goat drawing permit hunts in Unit 14(C) by creating one additional

drawing hunt for one permit only in the following Unit 14(C) drawing goat hunt permit areas: DG852, DG854, and DG858. These hunts would have separate permit numbers and only nonresident hunters who are guided by a licensed guide for Unit 14(C) would be eligible.

BACKGROUND: Goat hunting in Unit 14(C) consists of a mix of resident hunters (who are usually unguided), nonresidents hunting with an Alaska resident who is within the second degree of kindred as described in AS 16.05.407(a), and nonresidents hunting with a guide. Mountain goats are vulnerable to overharvest, so it is important to limit the number of goats being harvested from any particular area. The Nonresident Drawing Permit Allocation Policy (2007-173-BOG) states that allocation of nonresident drawing permits will be based on the historical data of nonresident and resident permit allocation over the last ten years. During the period 2004-2013, there were 21,647 applicants for the three hunts in question (DG852, DG854, and DG858), 8% of which were nonresidents. There were 112 permits issued, 9% of which were issued to nonresidents. Of nonresidents who hunted, 67% indicated they were guided.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. This is an allocation issue between resident, and guided and unguided nonresident hunters. The author is requesting additional hunting opportunity and creation of exclusive hunts for guided nonresidents. There would be no change to the existing permit hunts which would allow nonresidents to apply twice for each hunt area. The department manages mountain goats on a quota based system.

If the board considers adopting this proposal we would recommend a system of resident and nonresident hunts. Administration of this hunt area would result in the existing hunts (DG852, DG854, and DG858) being changed to resident only and result in a reduction of permits allocated in them. New hunts would be created for nonresidents hunting with a guide. If adopted, the department recommends that separate hunts for nonresidents hunting with relatives be created to clarify the allocation.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 155 –5 AAC 85.015, Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to create a drawing permit hunt for black bears in the JBER Management Area in Unit 14(C).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Units and Bag Limits		

(3)

...

Unit 14(C)

No closed season
(General hunt only)

No closed season

1 bear

...

5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.

The Eagle River Management Area: Black and brown bear hunting by permit; a person wishing to hunt a black bear must complete a hunter safety course for which a certificate of completion is issued.

The Eklutna Management Area: Black bear may be taken by bow and arrow only, from the day after Labor Day through May 31; a person wishing to hunt a black bear must have successfully completed a department approved hunter safety course.

5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.

(1) the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area:

(B) the area is open to the taking of big game by permit only; and small game, and fur animals in areas designated by the base commander; the department will set conditions under 5 AAC 92.050;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The adoption of this proposal would create additional hunting opportunity for black bears in Unit 14(C) through creation of a permit hunt on JBER.

BACKGROUND: The majority of Unit 14(C) is open to black bear hunting, either by general season harvest ticket or by registration permit, with a bag limit of one bear per year. Black bear hunting in Chugach State Park is restricted to the day after Labor Day to June 15 to avoid potential conflicts with other park users, while the Remainder of Unit 14(C) has no closed season. Areas closed to bear hunting include the densely populated areas of the Anchorage Bowl and Eagle River. While the Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER) Management Area is open to big game hunting by permit only, no bear hunting has been permitted on the military lands to date. Since hunting is prohibited in city parks by municipal regulation, the remaining large portion of bear habitat that is currently not being utilized for hunting opportunity is located on JBER. We propose to create a shotgun only drawing permit hunt for black bears in the JBER Management Area of Unit 14(C).

Black bear hunting is a popular activity within Unit 14(C), and black bear harvest has increased in the last 20 years. Total annual mortality, including hunter harvest, as well as defense of life and property and road kills, averaged 70 bears per year from 2008 to 2012. In 2013 overall mortality of black bears declined to 36 bears, which included 6 road kills, five defense of life and property kills, and 25 harvested bears.

Overall in Unit 14(C), the percent of females in the harvest has shown an increasing trend since 1994. In the last three years, the percentage of females in the harvest was 41% in both 2011 and 2012 and 52% in 2013. Regardless of the somewhat high take of female bears recently in Unit 14(C), we do not believe that creating a drawing permit hunt on JBER will have an impact on overall bear harvest or contribute to a population decline in black bears in Unit 14(C). It is probable that most harvest on JBER will be compensatory to current mortality, since bears on JBER also use areas of 14(C) that are currently open to bear hunting. The intent of this proposal is to create a hunting opportunity where there is currently none. In addition, harvesting a limited number of black bears on JBER may address some human-bear conflicts on base and in adjacent Anchorage and Eagle River/Chugiak neighborhoods.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** creation of this hunt. The management of this hunt will be a joint effort between ADF&G and JBER Natural Resources personnel and will operate using the same process for JBER moose hunters. In addition to Basic Hunter Education certification, hunters will be required to attend an orientation, pass a proficiency test with the weapon with which they intend to hunt, and check in and out daily using the base recreational access system.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 156 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Ross

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?

Adoption of this proposal would delay the start of the archery only moose hunting season in most of Unit 15 for 22 days, shorten the number of days for the archery only season by 1 day, delay the start of the general season by 19 days, add 1 day to the end of the current general moose hunting season, and shorten the overall length of the general moose hunting season by 25 days. The archery season would be from September 1 – 7, and the regular season would be from September 8 – 21.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(13)

Unit 15(A), the Skilak Loop
Wildlife Management Area

1 bull with spike-fork antlers by drawing permit only; up to 30 permits may be issued	Sept. 15 - Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 15 - Sept. 30
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Unit 15(A), that portion east of the Mystery Creek Road and the Pipeline Road, and north of the Sterling Highway

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 10 - Aug. 17 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side by drawing permit only; up to 25 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 7, that portion west of the Resurrection Creek Trail and north of the Sterling Highway	Oct. 10 - Nov. 10 (General hunt only)	Oct. 10 - Nov. 10
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Remainder of Unit 15(A)

1 bull per regulatory year, only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side, by bow and arrow only; or	Aug. 10 - Aug. 17 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull with spike or 50-inch	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20	No open season.
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antlers or antlers with 4 or more
brow tines on one side

(General hunt only)

Unit 15(B), that portion
bounded by a line running
from the mouth of Shantatalik
Creek, Tustumena Lake,
northeastward to the head
of the westernmost fork of Funny
River; then downstream along
the westernmost fork of Funny River
to the Kenai National
Wildlife Refuge boundary;
then east along the refuge
boundary to its junction
with the Kenai River; then
eastward along the south
side of the Kenai River and
Skilak Lake; then south
along the western side of
Skilak River, Skilak Glacier,
and Harding Icefield; then
west along the Unit 15(B)
boundary to the mouth of
Shantatalik Creek

Sept. 1 - Sept. 20
(General hunt only)
Sept. 26 - Oct. 15
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1 - Sept. 20
Sept. 26 - Oct. 15

1 bull with 50-inch antlers
or antlers with 3 or more
brow tines on one side, by
drawing permit only; up to
100 permits may be issued

Remainder of Unit 15(B)

1 bull per regulatory year,
only as follows:

1 bull with spike or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with 4 or more
brow tines on one side,
by bow and arrow only; or

Aug. 10 - Aug. 17
(General hunt only)

Aug. 10 - Aug. 17

1 bull with spike or 50-inch
antlers or antlers with 4 or more
brow tines on one side

Aug. 20 - Sept. 20
(General hunt only)

Aug. 20 - Sept. 20

Unit 15(C), that portion southwest of a line from Point Pogibshi to the point of land between Rocky Bay and Windy Bay	Aug. 25 - Sept. 30 (Subsistence hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull by Tier II subsistence hunting permit

Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay

1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20
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Remainder of Unit 15(C)	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	No open season.
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1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adopting this proposal would reduce the amount of time available to harvest moose during the general season in Unit 15. However, delaying the start of the moose hunting season would allow antlers more time to fully develop and the cooler temperature would allow for better meat care.

BACKGROUND: The board has made a positive customary and traditional use finding for moose in a portion of Unit 15C that is outside the Anchorage–Matsu–Kenai Peninsula nonsubsistence area (near Port Graham and Nanwalek), and the subsistence opportunity there is managed under a Tier II program. This proposal, as well as proposals 157–168 do not address that moose population: they address management of the general hunt on the portion of the Kenai Peninsula that is inside the nonsubsistence area.

Current season dates for the general hunt moose season in Unit 15 were established in 1993. The intent of the August 20 start date was to increase hunter opportunity and to provide the opportunity for children to hunt moose prior to the start of the school year. Since that time, most

public schools have adjusted their start date so the advantage of an early start date no longer exists.

The current archery season dates were established in 1995 for Unit 15A and 1999 for Unit 15B. The dates were established so they occurred before the general hunt season and allowed the opportunity to harvest legal bulls (mainly yearling bulls) that frequented residential areas.

The latest census and composition data for Unit 15A were collected in February 2013 and November 2013 respectively. The population estimate from the February census indicated there were 1,296-1,843 moose (95%CI, point estimate 1,569) and the November composition counts indicated the bull:cow ratio was 29:100 and the calf:cow ratio was 25:100. Currently, the Unit 15A moose population is about half the size of the estimated moose population during 1991(2,921-3,943 at 95% CI, point estimate 3,432).

The latest census and composition data for Unit 15C were collected in February 2013 and November 2014 respectively. The population estimate from the February census indicated there were 2,554-3,855 moose (95%CI, point estimate 3,204) and the November composition counts indicated the bull:cow ratio was 26:100 and the calf:cow ratio was 31:100. Currently, this portion of the Unit 15C moose population is more than 60% higher than the estimated moose population during 1992 (1,424-2,734 at 95% CI, point estimate 2,079).

We have attributed higher bull:cow ratios observed in surveys to the 50 inch or 4 brow tines on at least one side bag limit restrictions imposed in 2011 (previously, a legal bull was defined by antlers that were at least 50 inches wide or had at least 3 brow tines on at least one side or had a spike or a fork antler on at least one side). During 2013 the Board of Game liberalized the general hunt bag limit to include bulls with no more than a spike on at least one side due to the increased bull:cow ratio.

We expect that the Funny River fire in much of unit 15B will affect moose but those effects will be monitored and regulatory action recommended later as the moose population responds. The moose population in unit 15C is at or above management objectives and we are proposing to provide additional opportunity to harvest antlerless moose in this unit.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

We are **NEUTRAL** with respect to the allocation between user groups and weapons restrictions. Additional opportunity to harvest bull moose currently exists in Unit 15C. In general, moose populations by subunit are relatively stable. If the board wishes to adopt this proposal, the department recommends the following **AMENDMENTS** to regulations so that this portion of the Kenai Peninsula is manageable as a whole, with similar seasons and bag limits.

- 1). Retain the existing general hunt bag limit of spike or 50-inch or 4 brow tines.
- 2). Modify the general hunt season to be slightly shorter and later in the fall. Season dates for the general hunts for moose in Units 7 and 15 will be September 1-25.
- 3). If the board chooses to retain an archery season at the current length, we recommend the season date for archery only in Units 15A and 15B be August 24-31.

4). Establish a second antlerless moose drawing hunt in Unit 15C outside of the current DM549 hunt area. This hunt would allow for issuing up to 50 permits for a cow not accompanied by a calf or a calf not accompanied by a cow. Season dates should be September 1-25 unless the Board changes hunt DM549 to November 1-30 as requested in Proposal 166. The department recommends that the new antlerless drawing hunt and the DM549 hunt have identical season dates.

5). If these amendments are adopted, the department would also recommend adjustment to the Kenai Controlled Use Area in Unit 15A so that the closure would apply until 12:01 a.m. September 16 (currently it applies until September 11). The department would also recommend that the Lower Kenai Controlled Use Area in Unit 15C be amended so that the closure would apply September 16-19 and September 22-25 (currently it applies September 11-14 and September 17-20).

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 157 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas Malone

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO?

This proposal seeks to shift the start and end dates of the current general hunt moose season to a later date in Unit 15. Adoption of it would change the general bull moose season dates in Unit 15 to September 1-30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

If adopted this proposal would shift the start of the general hunt moose season in Unit 15 twelve days later and extend it 10 days past the current season dates.

BACKGROUND:

See Proposal 156.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The board may want to **TAKE NO ACTION** depending on actions in Proposal 156.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 158 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Willard

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to open a nonresident moose season in a portion of Unit 15C with season dates of September 1-20 and with a bag limit of 1 bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on at least 1 side.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Nonresidents would be allowed to hunt moose in a portion of Unit 15C.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Game closed nonresident moose hunting in Unit 15C during the March 2011 meeting. This action coincided with a restricted definition for a legal bull (due to a decline in the bull:cow ratio in that area), and adoption of an Intensive Management (IM) Plan for Units 15A and 15C. With the new restrictions on residents and adopting an IM Plan that included predator control, the Board felt it was necessary to close nonresident moose hunting opportunity in Units 15A and 15C.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. The moose population in unit 15C is at or above Intensive Management objectives (2,500-3,500) and could support a limited nonresident harvest. Nonresident harvest of moose 50 inch or 4 brow tines in unit 15C for the 5 years prior to the closure (2006-2010) averaged 8.6 (range 5-11).

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 159 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Frank Casey

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would create nonresident moose drawing permit hunts in unit 15; however, after a discussion with the author he is interested in a harvest ticket hunt rather than a permit hunt specifically in units 15A and 15C where harvest by nonresidents is currently restricted. This proposal assumes that the bag limit will eventually return to a spike or a fork antlered bull. The proposer is requesting that nonresidents be allowed harvest opportunity before additional opportunity is provided to residents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The board would create a drawing permit system for nonresident moose hunters. The department would need additional guidance about season and bag limit restrictions.

BACKGROUND: During the March 2011 meeting the Board removed a spike or fork antlered bull as a legal bull for harvest in GMU's 7 and 15 in the nonsubsistence area due to decreased bull:cow ratios. Large bulls were restricted to 50+ inch or moose with 4 or more brow tines.

The spike or fork on at least one side regulation had been in place since 1987 and over time the “spike or fork” definition was commonly abbreviated to spike/fork. This may have led some members of the public to believe that a spike and a fork antlered bull are the same thing when they are clearly defined differently in the Alaska Hunting Regulations. In 2013 the board added spike moose as legal animals. Harvest by nonresidents continued to be restricted in Units 15A and 15C.

Currently a bull with antlers 50 inches or greater, or with 4 or more brow tines, or with an antler with no more than a spike on at least one side is legal for harvest so this proposal may not be appropriate at this time.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal since it is allocative. The moose population in unit 15C in the nonsubsistence area is at or above management objectives and may be able to support a limited nonresident harvest. Nonresident harvest of moose with 50 inch antlers or 4 brow tines in unit 15 C for the 5 years prior to the closure (2006-2010) averaged 8.6 (range 5-11). The moose population in Unit 15A is below population objectives. Should the board consider this proposal, the department recommends subunitwide drawing permit hunts with up to 50 permits per subunit. We anticipate issuing 20 permits during the first hunt and adjusting the quota in the future to maintain nonresident hunting opportunity. Unit 15B is currently open to nonresident harvest. Alternatively the board may wish to consider a nonresident general hunt season for 50 inch or 4 brow tines only.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 160 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Derek and Bunny Alexander

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal requests either opening up Unit 15C to moose hunting by nonresidents or implementing predator control in Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a hunting opportunity for nonresidents would be open in Unit 15C or the department would implement a predator control program in Unit 15C.

BACKGROUND: The Board of Game approved a predator control program for Unit 15C during the March 2013 meeting. The last moose census for Unit 15C was conducted during February 2013. The estimated moose population from that census was 2,554-3,855 moose, which is in the upper portion of the Intensive Management (IM) objective of 2,500-3,500 moose. The department has not implemented a predator control program in Unit 15C because the moose population estimate is within IM objectives. The moose harvest in Unit 15C is below IM harvest objectives of 200-350, but has been increasing (112 in 2013 and at least 149 in 2014).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: See recommendations and comments for proposals 156 and 158. The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the nonresident season because this is an allocation issue. Although the harvest is currently below IM harvest objectives, harvest is increasing and the department believes there will be additional harvest opportunities in Unit 15C through adoption of the suggested amendments in Proposal 156.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 161 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas and Helen Netschert

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would change the bag limit so that a legal bull in units 7 and 15 would have an antler spread of at least 50 inches or have at least 3 brow tines on at least 1 antler.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?
Eliminating the spike component from the existing regulations will reduce hunter opportunity and harvest of small bulls.

After a discussion with the authors, they clarified that their request is to change the existing definition of a 50-inch moose and return it to the original definition of 50 inch or 3 brow tines). This change would result in an increase in opportunity for large bulls.

BACKGROUND: See proposal 156. In 2013, 70 spike antlered bulls were harvested, and in 2014, 63 spike antlered bulls were harvested (preliminary numbers).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL on** this proposal. The board may want to **TAKE NO ACTION** depending on actions in Proposal 156.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 162 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Garcia

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to eliminate all weapon restricted hunts in Unit 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156. There is currently an early season for archery hunting in GMUs 15A and 15B. There are no other special weapon hunts in unit 15.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal will eliminate the archery only moose hunts in Units 15A and 15B.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 156.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because this proposal is allocative in nature.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 163 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to eliminate the archery only hunts for moose in Units 15A and 15B.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would be a loss of hunting opportunity through the loss of these archery only moose hunts in Units 15A and 15B.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 156. For the previous 5 years archers have taken 27% of the total moose harvest in units 15A and 15B in 2010; 9% in 2011; 15% in 2012; 38% in 2013; and 25% (preliminary) in 2014 during the archery only season (August 10-17).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because this proposal is allocative in nature. If this proposal were adopted, most of the moose available during the archery season would likely be harvested during the general season.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 164 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to allow for a 7 day archery only season for moose in units 7 and 15 (in the nonsubsistence area) that begins 1 day after the close of the general moose hunting season. Under existing regulations this proposal would allow IBEP certified hunters to hunt moose in Units 7 and 15 from September 21-27 using a bow and arrow only.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would provide additional hunting opportunity for IBEP certified hunters.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 156.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because this proposal is allocative in nature. If Proposal 156 is adopted as amended and this proposal is also adopted, the department recommends adjusting the archery season date because it would potentially extend the extra archery season into October.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 165 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: David Hanrahan

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to include Unit 15C (in the nonsubsistence area) in the August 10-17 archery only moose hunting season for Unit 15. This proposal would allow IBEP certified hunters to hunt moose using a bow and arrow from August 10-17 in most of Unit 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would provide additional hunting opportunity for IBEP certified hunters.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 156.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because this proposal is allocative in nature.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 166 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to change the season dates for the resident antlerless drawing hunt DM549 (Unit 15C) from the current date of August 20-September 20 to November 1-30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal would provide antlerless moose hunting opportunity later in the year.

BACKGROUND: This hunt was originally adopted in 1995 with an October 20 November 20 season to target moose that were over-browsing the available habitat. Season dates were eventually changed to coincide with the general hunt season due to recommendations by local residents. Season dates of November 1-30 would likely expose some of the migratory moose to potential harvest but the department does believe the moose population in this portion of Unit 15C can handle additional antlerless harvest without adverse impacts on the overall moose population (see Proposal 156). By having season dates of November 1-30, it is likely there will be snow cover that will aid in tracking moose, and the colder temperatures will allow for better meat care.

The goal of the original program was to reduce the wintering population in the Homer area to allow browse to regenerate. The recommendation at the time was to continue the hunt until the wintering population was approximately 360 animals. Initially the hunt ran from October 20 to November 19 for years 1995 and 1996, and then to November 1–30 for 1997 and 1998. In 1999 the board moved the antlerless season to coincide with general season (August 20–September 20); however, no permits were issued in 2000 and 2001 due to high winter mortality.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The original hunt was established as a late season November hunt. It was moved to coincide with the general season to avoid additional conflicts with homeowners. The department can manage either season effectively and recommends that any other Unit 15C permit hunts in the nonsubsistence area have similar dates to avoid confusion.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 167 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Hagberg

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow for the harvest of moose that are a potential hazard to vehicles traveling the Sterling Highway in Unit 15C by issuing a limited number of permits that would target moose within 1 mile of the Sterling Highway. The number of permits issued will be at the discretion of the department, with up to 100 permits issued. The season dates will be November 15-February 28, and the bag limit would be 1 cow or calf moose.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 156.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Adoption of this proposal would provide an opportunity later in the year to take antlerless moose that may be attracted to roadside vegetation or causing problems for homeowners.

BACKGROUND: Moose–vehicle collisions have been an ongoing issue throughout Unit 15 for years. There have been recent efforts by the Department of Transportation to clear vegetation from the right-of-way, which does provide better visibility as long as the right-of-way is cleared on a regular basis (ideally on an annual basis during mid-late summer or fall). The department

does believe there are opportunities to increase antlerless harvest opportunities in Unit 15C as identified in Proposal 156. It may be difficult to identify the moose that may cause issues with vehicle traffic, and there could be issues with land owners who oppose this type of hunt. Targeted hunts were first created in the Matanuska Valley and expanded to the Fairbanks area.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is expected to result in additional costs to the department through administration of a hunt by local staff and through management of a separate permit system.

PROPOSAL 168 - 5 AAC 085.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose season in a portion of Unit 15C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

Seasons and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(13)		
... Unit 15(C), that portion south of the south fork of the Anchor River and northwest of Kachemak Bay		
1 bull with spike or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side; or	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	No open season.
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; the taking of calves, and females accompanied by calves, is prohibited; up to 100 permits may be issued	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20	Aug. 20 - Sept. 20
...		

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. Adopting this proposal would allow this hunt (DM549) to continue.

BACKGROUND: During December 2014, composition surveys were flown in the northern portion of unit 15C. A total of 897 moose were classified, including 571 cows, 150 bulls, and 176 calves. This resulted in 26 bulls:100 cows and 31 calves:100 cows. Lack of adequate snow cover prevented composition surveys from being flown in the area affected by this hunt during 2014, but the 2013 surveys provided ratios of 19 bulls:100 cows and 44 calves:100 cows. We have issued 50 permits during the past 13 years and have an average annual harvest of 22 cows. This hunt targets the resident moose population on the “Homer bench”. This is an important wintering area for moose and provides winter browse to moose that migrate here when snow accumulation forces them out of the high country. Allowing this hunt to continue will increase the availability of winter browse for both resident and migratory moose.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 169 - 5 AAC 085.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bowhunters Association

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allow for an early season sheep hunt for archery hunters by creating a resident archery only season for Dall sheep in units 7, 14C, and 15 with season dates August 1-9, for areas that currently have general season sheep hunts by harvest ticket only. A legal sheep would be a full curl ram, a ram with both tips broomed, or a ram that is at least 8 years old.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

There are two areas managed with drawing hunts (Crescent Lake and Round Mountain) and one closed area (Cooper Landing closed area) to sheep hunting in Units 7 and 15. The remainder of Units 7 and 15 have general seasons for Dall sheep with season dates of August 10 – September 20, and a bag limit of 1 full curl ram or a ram that is at least 8 years old or a ram that has both horn tips broomed.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would provide additional sheep hunting opportunity for archery hunters.

BACKGROUND: The general season dates and definition for a legal ram have been in place for Units 7 and 15 since 1989. Management objectives are to adequately monitor population trends and allow for hunting opportunities with a sustainable harvest. During the past 5 years (2010-2014) the average harvest during the general season has been 8.4 full curl rams. An average of 1.4 additional rams were taken by hunters in the drawing hunts.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because this proposal is allocative in nature. The department expects that any rams taken by archers would have been taken by rifle hunters so adoption of this proposal would allocate from one weapon type to another.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 170 - 5 AAC 085.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bears.

PROPOSED BY: US Fish and Wildlife Service, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the current harvest management strategy for brown bears on the Kenai Peninsula, Units 7 and 15 as follows:

- 1) Reduce the human caused mortality cap of 17 adult females to 12 adult females.
- 2) Delineate “front country” and “back country” areas in Units 7 and 15 and establish season dates and harvest caps for those areas.
- 3) Amend current hunting season dates by changing the season dates of September 1 – May 31 to a “back country” season of October 15 – November 30 and April 1 – April 30 and a “front country” season of September 1 - November 30 and April 1 – May 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

The current season dates for brown bears in Units 7 and 15 is September 1 – May 31, with a bag limit of one brown bear per regulatory year. Harvest of cubs or females accompanied by cubs is prohibited. There is a human caused mortality cap of 17 adult females or 70 total brown bears per calendar year. Brown bears can be harvested at registered black bear bait sites.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would be overall reduced hunting opportunity for brown bears in Units 7 and 15.

BACKGROUND: Brown bear hunting opportunities for Units 7 and 15 have been liberalized several times in the past 15 years and most recently in 2013. Recorded human caused mortality is at an all- time high (71 in 2013 and 69 during 2014) and the number of brown bears dying from non-hunting human causes decreased noticeably during 2014. The increased harvest was a result of liberalization to the seasons and bag limit that the Board of Game adopted starting in 2012 in response to a new population estimate and public requests for additional take. The department believes this strategy has successfully reduced the brown bear population and is now recommending a strategy to maintain the current population and continue to provide for hunting opportunity.

Research staff has been conducting demographic studies of brown bears on the Kenai Peninsula for several years. There are currently 35 collars deployed on Kenai female brown bears. Five additional bears are missing. Fall 2013 captures were not conducted. During spring of 2014 research staff captured 15 bears (14 adult females; 1 sub-adult male).

Mean female survivorship from 1995-2013 was 0.94 (SD=0.056); however, hunting regulations changed in 2012. In 2012 female survivorship was 0.89 and in 2013 it was 0.79. The mean female survivorship from 2012-2013 was 0.84. Unreported mortality of the population from 1995-2013 was 4.09 % (SD=0.77) with a range of 3.03 – 4.76 (based upon female deaths). Unreported mortality can be calculated only for 1996, 1998, 2002, 2010, and 2013.

The mean age of reproduction through 2010 was 11 years (SD 4) with a range of 3-23 years. The inter-birth interval has been 3.08 (3.05 to 3.17), and lambda (through 2013) was calculated to be 1.0451 with upper and lower bounds of 0.9693 and 1.1216, respectively.

Through fall 2013 maximum survival of Coy, Yearling, Two-year old, and Three year old cubs was 0.63, 0.54, 1.0, and 1.0 respectively. Mean litter size for Coy, Yearling, Two-year old, and Three year old cubs was 2.15, 2.03, 2.0, and 2.11 respectively.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department OPPOSES the proposed reduction in harvest cap. The current “up to” language provides the department the latitude to manage Kenai brown bears the current population size and to reduce human-bear conflicts. The department believes the number of brown bears in Units 7 and 15 has been reduced and it is time to manage harvest associated with total human caused mortality and adult female mortality to retain the population at its current size. The department uses empirical data and population modeling to determine the harvest of total bears and adult females that will keep the population at its current size. The board has a found that a cap of 17 adult females and 70 total bears is appropriate. The department agrees with that finding, however, quotas are likely to be lower in the near future. The “front” and “back” country management concepts identified in this proposal allow leaving seasons more liberal in areas with high bear-human conflicts without resulting in closure of KNWR lands by federal staff based on harvest taken off the refuge. Closure of the KNWR lands results in a substantial reduction in bear hunting opportunity on the Kenai. If desired, this can be accomplished through discretionary authority.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 171 - 5 AAC 085.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bears.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Modify the brown bear harvest management strategy in Units 7 and 15 as follows:

Pending.

PROPOSAL 172 - 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bears, 92.044 permit for hunting of bear with the use of bait or scent lures, 92.220. Salvage of game meat, fur and hides, 5 AAC 92.990 (17) definition of edible meat.

PROPOSED BY: Robert White

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to lengthen the brown bear season in Units 7 and 15 and remove the meat salvage requirement for brown bears taken over bait as follows:

- Season dates 1 September -- 30 June, and may be taken over black bear bait stations (April 15 – June 30, no salvage of meat required).
- Add the month of June to the current brown bear hunting season which would extend the ability to harvest brown bears at black bear bait stations through the month of June.
- Eliminate the meat salvage requirement for brown bears taken at black bear bait stations.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 170 for season and bag limit regulations.

Hunters are required to salvage all edible meat from a brown bear taken at a registered black bear bait site.

“Edible meat” means, in the case of a big game animal (except a bear), the meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters as far as the distal joint of the radius-ulna (knee), hindquarters as far as the distal joint of the tibia-fibula (hock), and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters; in the case of a bear, the meat of the front quarters and hindquarters and meat along the backbone (backstrap).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this proposal will increase hunting opportunity for hunting brown bears in Units 7 and 15 through longer seasons, and eliminate the meat salvage requirement for brown bears harvested at black bear bait stations.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 170. In 2013 the board allowed the take of brown bears over established black bear bait sites with the first season in 2014. The US Fish and Wildlife Service prohibited this activity on Kenai National Wildlife Refuge lands. Hunters took 40 bears at black bear bait sites on remaining lands open to baiting. When adopted the board required the salvage of brown bear meat, recognizing the importance of this food source.

At the March 2014 statewide meeting the board heard testimony and debated the salvage of brown bears. The decision and direction at the time was to retain the principle of salvaging brown bears taken at black bear bait stations. The board also modified the requirement by having hunters salvage the same parts as black bears.

Salvage requirements for brown bears taken over bait are currently aligned across the state. At the February 2014 Interior Region meeting there were 3 proposals to remove the salvage requirement in those units, and the board deferred them to the March 2014 Statewide meeting because it was a statewide issue. Also at the March 2014 statewide meeting was a proposal to remove the salvage requirement for brown bears taken over bait at a statewide level. The proposal to remove the salvage requirement at the statewide level failed and the requirement was retained. Due to that action, there was no action taken on the three proposals deferred from the Interior meeting.

Hunters would be required to salvage only the hide and skull of a bear taken at a black bear bait site.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding the salvage of meat requirement, however, this is a statewide regulation and it was just addressed at the March 2014 meeting. If the board wishes to modify the regulation statewide, the department recommends deferral to the March 2016 statewide meeting. The harvest quota is calculated as noted in Proposals. A longer season will just change when the quota is reached.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 173 - 5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, fur and hides.

PROPOSED BY: Anchorage Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to remove the meat salvage requirement for brown bears taken over bait in Southcentral Region.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Hunters are required to salvage the edible meat of brown bears taken over bait.

“Edible meat” means, in the case of a big game animal (except a bear) the meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters as far as the distal joint of the radius-ulna (knee), hindquarters as far as the distal joint of the tibia-fibula (hock), and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters; in the case of a bear, the meat of the front quarters and hindquarters and meat along the backbone (backstrap).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Because the proposal requests the removal of the meat salvage requirement for brown bears and the alignment of salvage requirements with black bears, it is unclear what the intended outcome of this proposal would be. Meat salvage requirements for brown bears taken over bait are currently aligned with the meat salvage requirements for black bear baiting during the spring, when brown bear baiting is authorized to occur.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 172.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it is a statewide issue that should be considered at the appropriate statewide board meeting.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 174 - 5 AAC 92.220. Salvage of game meat, fur and hides.

PROPOSED BY: Joel Doner

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would remove the meat salvage requirement for brown bears taken over bait in Region II Southcentral. The proposal also requests that salvage requirements be aligned with black bears, which requires meat salvage in the spring.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Hunters are required to salvage all edible meat from a brown bear taken at a registered black bear bait site.

“Edible meat” means, in the case of a big game animal (except a bear), the meat of the ribs, neck, brisket, front quarters as far as the distal joint of the radius-ulna (knee), hindquarters as far as the distal joint of the tibia-fibula (hock), and the meat along the backbone between the front and hindquarters; in the case of a bear, the meat of the front quarters and hindquarters and meat along the backbone (backstrap).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Because the proposal requests the removal of the meat salvage requirement for brown bears and the alignment of salvage requirements with black bears, it is unclear what the intended outcome of this proposal would be. Meat salvage requirements for brown bears taken over bait are currently aligned with the meat salvage requirements for black bear baiting during the spring, when brown bear baiting is authorized to occur.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 172.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the adoption of this proposal at a regional Board of Game meeting because it is a statewide regulation, and adoption of the proposal would misalign the regulations currently in place.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 175 – 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Willard

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would shorten the ptarmigan hunting season and decrease the daily bag limit in that portion of GMU 15C north of Kachemak Bay and the Fox River. New season dates would be August 10-February 1, and the new bag limit would be 5 birds per day, 20 in possession, for both residents and nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Ptarmigan hunting season in GMU 15C is open from August 10 to March 31. The daily bag limit is 10 per day, 20 in possession for the duration of the season.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? By reducing the daily bag limit from 10 to 5 per day it would likely not reduce overall harvest between August 10 and February 1. However, because an average of $\geq 50\%$ of the harvest occurs in late February and March in GMU 15 (based on three years of the statewide wing collection program), harvest would likely be reduced in GMU 15C with a season closure of February 1.

BACKGROUND: Beginning in May 2013, three springtime abundance surveys were initiated in GMU 15C for willow ptarmigan. In May 2014, those routes were revisited and three additional survey routes were added: 1 in GMU 15C and 2 in GMU 7. The density of territorial males in GMU 15C was estimated at 2 male/mi² which is among the lowest for statewide roadside surveys and similar to areas that are heavily hunted in GMU 13E.

Hunters harvested an average of 2 ptarmigan per day in GMU 15 based on the regulatory year 2013 statewide Small Game Hunter Survey. Overall harvest potential would likely not be reduced by lowering the daily bag limit to 5 per day; however, closing the season on February 1 would likely reduce annual harvest.

Areas near Bald Mountain, Eagle Lake, and Caribou Hills are easily accessible after late February. Daylight is increasing, temperatures are often warming during the middle of the day, and snow conditions are generally more favorable for snowmachine access. The scientific and regulatory community in other areas of North America with heavily hunted grouse and ptarmigan populations in accessible areas have documented that harvests in winter, particularly late winter (beginning in late February peaking in April) are additive to natural mortality. Adult male rock and willow ptarmigan often overwinter in or adjacent to springtime breeding territories and begin exhibiting territorial breeding behavior by early to mid-March. This very conspicuous behavior increases their exposure to human harvest during the breeding season and further impacts localized and easily accessible ptarmigan populations. The Department has begun to examine the effects of late winter hunting in subunits 13B and 13E. Preliminary data suggest that wintertime hunting may be contributing to a reduction in population abundance of willow ptarmigan in subunit 13E where hunting has been allowed through March 31.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is Neutral on the reduced daily bag limit and a January 31 season closure (generally seasons do not close on the first day of the month) in the northern portion of Unit 15C. While the decreased season length and bag limit should eventually result in increased populations, there are no conservation concerns with the current regulations.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 176 – 5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas Malone

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to reduce the bag limit for ptarmigan in that portion of Unit 15C north of Kachemak Bay and the Fox River, and increase the daily possession limit to 5 birds per day and 20 in possession for both residents and nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 175.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would reduce the daily bag limit to 5 per day but increase the possession limit to 4 daily bag limits, or 20 birds.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 175. Similar to Proposal 175, this proposal requests to split unit 15C into 2 different areas and maintain the southern portion current season and bag limit.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The board may wish to **Take No Action based on action taken on** Proposal 175.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 177 – 5 AAC 85.270. Trapping seasons and bag limits.

PROPOSED BY: John Dahman

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to shift to an earlier opening date for beaver trapping in Units 7 and 15 and close the season a month earlier.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current season dates for beaver trapping in Units 7 and 15 are November 10 – April 30, with a limit of 20 beavers.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal will begin the beaver trapping season 21 days earlier and close trapping for beaver by 31 days earlier for a net loss of 10 days.

BACKGROUND: The department has no resource concerns for beavers in units 7 and 15. If the season did open earlier, it would increase the possibility of incidental catch of non-target species. In some years the earlier season would result in shallower ice depths or the potential for open water trapping. It is generally believed that beaver pelts are of higher value during the current season dates. The average annual beaver harvest in units 7 and 15 during the past 5 years has been about 95 beavers, which includes about 5 beavers per year taken under nuisance beaver permits issued by the department.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: **NEUTRAL.** A slightly shorter season length and a modest change to the start date will not likely result in a substantial difference in harvest. Most trapping seasons on the Kenai begin on the traditional day of November 10. It is unknown if trappers will take advantage of the earlier opportunity

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 178 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Adopt the wording used for trap identification in Units 1-5 and require traps to have the owner identification permanently attached to the trap unless the trap is set within 50 yards of a sign that has the trapper’s identification listed on it.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is no state requirement for trap identification in Units 7 and 15. The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge requires everyone trapping on Refuge lands to have identification on all their traps and snares.

For Region I the regulations are: Trappers are prohibited from using a trap or snare unless the trap or snare has been individually marked with a permanent metal tag upon which is stamped or permanently etched the trapper's name and address, or the trapper's permanent identification number, or is set within 50 yards of a sign that lists the trapper's name and address, or the trapper's permanent identification number; the trapper must use the trapper's Alaska driver's license number or state identification card number as the required permanent identification number; and if a trapper chooses to place a sign at a snaring site rather than tagging individual snares, the sign must be at least 3 inches by 5 inches in size, be clearly visible, and have numbers and letters that are at least one-half inch high and one-eighth inch wide in a color that contrasts with the color of the sign.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Trappers would be required to have identification associated with their traps and snares similar to the requirement in Region I.

BACKGROUND: Conflicts between trappers and non-consumptive users have occurred on the Kenai Peninsula for a long time. One of the common suggestions to alleviate some of the conflicts, or at least to identify the offending trapper, is to require trappers to mark their gear with an identifier. The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge adopted their own regulations that require everyone trapping on Refuge lands to have identification on all their traps and snares.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because there is no conservation issue. The desire for identification of traps in the field is primarily for enforcement purposes. Occasionally traps are found in closed areas or with non-target species. Enforcement personnel cannot usually identify the individual trapper who set the traps and the public believe this proposed regulation would help. If approved, trappers would likely need to affix ID tags to all gear or produce signs to post near sites. Because regulations on Kenai Refuge lands are similar, but possibly not as restrictive, trappers who participate on Refuge lands would also likely need to retool their gear as well.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 179 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish a trapper identification numbering system for Units 7 and 15 in which the department would be responsible for issuing ID numbers to trappers.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 178. There currently is no database maintained by the department to track trappers. As mentioned in the staff comments for

Proposal 178, the US Fish and Wildlife Service does require trap and snare ID and maintains a database.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The department would have to establish trapper ID numbers and maintain a database with the IDs.

BACKGROUND: See Proposal 178.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **Neutral** on this proposal because there are no conservation concerns. The desire for identification of traps in the field is primarily for enforcement purposes. Occasionally traps are found in closed areas or with non-target species. Enforcement personnel cannot usually identify the individual trapper who set the traps and the public believe this proposed regulation would help. See comments for Proposal 178.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal would result in additional costs to the department by requiring the department to develop and maintain an additional database and work with trappers and enforcement to manage this file.

PROPOSAL 180 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Ken Green

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? The proposal prohibits trapping at distances from a road, and prohibits trapping on private property and on public land 250 feet from all private land. In addition, trapping would be prohibited within 250 feet of most public trails, trailheads, and campgrounds in the Cooper Landing area. Special closures would also occur on portions of Kenai Lake and the Cooper Landing “Organic” dump.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The areas identified in the proposal are open to trapping.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would be lost trapping opportunity, but also a reduction in user conflicts.

BACKGROUND: This area has a long history of conflicts between trappers and other recreational users and residents of the area, especially in relationship to dogs getting caught in traps or snares.

The department has worked with the author of this proposal and other members of the community to identify solutions acceptable to all. This proposal was drafted and submitted before the user group meetings. At the meetings, some compromises were noted but not agreed upon. Generally, a voluntary setback by trappers from some of the highest use areas was suggested by the group for the winter of 2014-15. The department is currently evaluating the success of this voluntary program.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because there are no conservation concerns.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 181 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Luttrell

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal prohibits trapping at distances from a road, and prohibits trapping on private property and on public land 250 feet from all private land. In addition, trapping would be prohibited within 250 feet of most public trails, trailheads, and campgrounds in Unit 7 from Tern Lake to Seward. Special closures would also occur on portions of Kenai Lake and several identified locations within this corridor.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The areas identified in the proposal are open to trapping.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? There would be lost trapping opportunity, but also a reduction in user conflicts.

BACKGROUND: This area has a long history of conflicts between trappers and other recreational user and residents of the area, especially in relationship to dogs getting caught in traps or snares.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** because there are no conservation concerns. See Proposal 180.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 182 – 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit taking of big game from a boat in coastal or estuarine waters in Units 7 and 15 except by a person with a disability under authority of a permit issued by the department.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Hunting from a boat is currently illegal. Similar regulations from other parts of the state are as follows:

5 AAC 92.085 (9) from a boat in Units 1—5; however, a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

(12) shooting black bear from a boat in Unit 6(D); however a person with physical disabilities, as defined in AS 16.05.940, may hunt from a boat under authority of a permit issued by the department;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Some hunters will have to change their hunting strategy.

BACKGROUND: Other areas of the state (Game Management Units 1-6) have implemented regulations similar to those identified in this proposal due to issues with hunters wounding animals and then not recovering them. Some feel this type of regulation has helped reduce wounding loss. While this type of regulation appears to have improved situations in other areas of the state, this is not been identified as a significant resource concern for Units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department’s position is **NEUTRAL** because of the allocative nature of the proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 183 – 5 AAC 92.530. Management areas.

PROPOSED BY: Kachemak Bay State Park Citizens Advisory Board

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Create a management area for Kachemak Bay in Unit 15C.

The “new” management area would include Kachemak Bay State Park and hunting opportunities in this area would be decided by the Kachemak Bay State Park Citizens Advisory Board.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is currently no area designated as a Kachemak Bay Management Area, and no delegations of authority to a citizen’s advisory board for management of restrictions to uses of wildlife.

The Alaska Board of Game is the primary rulemaking authority for the conservation and development of the game resources of the state. Management authority primarily rests with the Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game. The board has statutory authority to create game reserve areas, refuges, and sanctuaries, subject to the approval of the legislature.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? A special game reserve area, refuge, or sanctuary would be created. It is unclear if the board has authority to delegate management.

BACKGROUND: The lands and waters around Kachemak Bay are important to many user groups, for consumptive and nonconsumptive uses of fish and wildlife and their habitats, for economic development, for transportation, and many other uses. The Alaska State Park system (within the Alaska Department of Natural Resources) manages access and other uses of lands under their authority. In 1974 the legislature created the Kachemak Bay State Park in the Alaska State Parks system, with additional management provisions to guide permitting activities that may impact fish and wildlife habitat. Other agencies also have their respective authorities and responsibilities, such as the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, US Coast Guard, City of Homer, the Kenai Peninsula Borough, and nearby village tribes of Seldovia, Nanwalek, and Port Graham.

In court decisions, other delegations of authority to manage game have been found invalid.

Currently the board and department enjoy close consultation with over 85 Fish and Game Advisory Committees across the state of Alaska, including in Homer. The meetings of the board are widely publicized, and members of the public and agencies have many opportunities to submit proposals, as well as written and oral comments to inform the board's decisions.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on this proposal because there are no identified conservation issues.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 184 – 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Lamal

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would begin the resident sheep hunting dates 7 days earlier than nonresidents in Southcentral GMUs.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no sheep in Units 6 and 8. All hunting in unit 14C is by permit only. Most permit hunts are for full curl ram or for archery hunts open to any ram. In GMUs 7 and 15 outside permit areas the season is August 10–September 20 with a bag limit of one full curl ram. The drawing permit season also runs from August 10 through September 20 with a bag limit of one full curl ram.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted the resident seasons in Unit 7 and 15 would begin August 3 and the nonresident season would begin August 10. Both seasons would close September 20.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years. The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. Because most areas are managed with a full-curl bag limit or with a drawing permit for any sheep, the additional hunting opportunity is not expected to increase harvest beyond what is sustainable for the sheep populations. Increasing resident hunting opportunity will increase resident hunter success and reduce the number of legal rams remaining in the population as the season progresses

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 185 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would begin the resident sheep seasons 7 days earlier than nonresident seasons in Units 7, 14, and 15. This proposal is identical to Proposal 118 in the board’s 2015 Region IV Central Southwest meeting and Proposal 41 in the board’s Region III Interior meeting from the previous year.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Resident general harvest seasons would begin on 3 August, 7 days before nonresident seasons. In permit drawing hunts, the nonresident seasons would need to be determined based on direction from the board. The GMU 14C permit hunts are currently allocated to residents and nonresidents.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years. The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

This proposal is not likely to affect sheep populations because the current full-curl bag limit adequately guards against overharvest, at least in most cases. Increasing resident hunting opportunity will increase resident hunter success and reduce the number of legal rams remaining in the population at the end of the hunting season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is NEUTRAL on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. Because most areas are managed with a full-curl bag limit or with a drawing permit for any ram, the additional hunting opportunity is not expected to increase harvest beyond what is sustainable for the sheep populations. Increasing resident hunting opportunity will increase resident hunter success and reduce the number of legal rams remaining in the population as the season progresses.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 186 – 5 AAC 055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Keenan Zirkle

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would reduce sheep hunting opportunity for nonresidents in Region II by authorizing shorter seasons for nonresidents than residents, or limiting drawing permits, or by some other method of reducing the number of nonresident hunters. This proposal is the same as Proposal 116 in the board’s 2015 Region IV Central/Southwest meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? To adopt this proposal, the board will need to develop and adopt regulations to reduce sheep hunting opportunity for nonresidents. The proposal only requests that nonresident opportunity be reduced through some mechanism and suggests using shorter season dates for nonresidents than residents or a drawing permit hunt structure as 2 possibilities.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years. The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

This proposal is not likely to affect sheep populations because the current full-curl bag limit adequately guards against overharvest, at least in most cases. In heavily harvested areas, limiting nonresident hunting opportunity may increase the number of legal rams available to residents, but the extent to which this might occur is unknown. In areas heavily hunted by residents, this proposal may provide only limited benefits to resident sheep hunters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. The suggestion to use shorter season dates for nonresidents than residents or a drawing permit hunt structure are both feasible ways of reducing nonresident hunting opportunity

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 187 – 5 AAC 85. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Lamal

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal limits nonresident participation in sheep hunts to a maximum of 10% of sheep hunters in Region II Southcentral. This proposal would be identical to Proposal 109 in the board’s 2015 Central/Southwest meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184 above.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The board would need to create nonresident drawing permit hunts for all sheep hunts in Region II to regulate participation in these hunts. If a resident drawing permit hunt is not adopted, the requirement to allocate a maximum of 10% of the sheep hunting opportunity to nonresidents will be more difficult to achieve. The nonresident permit allocation would be based on a 5-year average of information collected 2 years in advance of the hunt from licensing information.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years.

The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

This proposal is not likely to affect sheep populations because the current full-curl bag limit adequately guards against overharvest, at least in most cases. In heavily harvested areas, limiting nonresident hunters may increase the number of legal rams available to residents, but the extent to which this might occur is unknown. In areas heavily hunted by residents, this proposal may provide little benefit to resident sheep hunters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocation between resident and nonresident hunters. This proposal closely mirrors other proposals to allocate sheep hunting opportunity throughout Alaska. Limiting participation by nonresidents to 10% of all hunter participation would require creating some form of permit system. If the board adopts the nonresident drawing permit hunt requirements needed to administer this allocation without a resident drawing permit hunt, the department will need guidance from the board on how to administer the nonresident permit allocation to conform to regulatory requirements.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 188 – 5 AAC 85. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal is identical to Proposal 110 in the board’s 2015 Central/Southwest meeting. This proposal would limit nonresidents to 10% of the total sheep harvest in Units 7, 14 and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Limiting harvest by nonresidents to 10 % would require creating some form of permit system for the existing general season in units 7 and 15 that would allocate the number of participants and then allocate between residents and nonresidents. The remainder of the Kenai permit hunts would require separate permit hunts with individual allocations for nonresidents. Unit 14C is already separated by residents and nonresidents and previously allocated to 13 for rifle hunters and 5% for archery hunts.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years. The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been discussed previously by the board at meetings covering the other regions.

All Anchorage area sheep hunts have previously been considered by the board under their 2007 policy. These would need adjustment to meet the proposed intent of this proposal, which would result in a slight decrease in the number of nonresident rifle permits issued and an increase in the number of nonresident archery permits.

For the Kenai permit hunts, the number of permits issued is very small (6 for DS156 and 3 for DS150). For the previous 10 years, only 2 nonresidents were issued permits for DS 156, and neither was successful. For DS 150, one nonresident drew a permit and was unsuccessful.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS:

The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. Because resident participation and success change over time, it will be difficult to accurately achieve the proposed harvest allocation, even if resident and nonresident hunting opportunity is regulated by a drawing permit hunt. In-season management to achieve the harvest allocation will also be extremely difficult, even with a short reporting period requirement for successful hunters. To achieve the desired harvest reduction we would likely need reduce the number of nonresidents participating in southcentral hunts.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 189 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Ferucci

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal is identical to Proposal 117 in the 2015 Central/Southwest meeting. This proposal would limit the number of drawing permits awarded to nonresidents to 10% of the permits available. Successful applicants (residents and nonresidents) would not be allowed to apply for the hunt again, making the permits a “once in a lifetime” hunt.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted the allocation of sheep permits to nonresidents in 14C would decrease for rifle hunters and increase for archery hunters. Very few nonresidents participate in Kenai permit hunts (see Proposal 188). Successful applicants would be prohibited from applying for the same hunt again during their lifetime; however it is not clear if this restriction is intended to apply only to nonresidents or to residents as well, based on the proposal’s issue statement.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years.

The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation

of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

This proposal is not likely to affect sheep populations because the current full-curl bag limit adequately guards against overharvest, at least in most cases. In heavily harvested areas, limiting nonresident hunters may increase the number of legal rams available to residents, but the extent to which this might occur is unknown. In areas heavily hunted by residents, this proposal may provide little benefit to resident sheep hunters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 190 – 5 AAC 85.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Gossen

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal is identical to proposal 137 in the 2015 Central/Southwest meeting. This proposal limits the nonresident harvest to 10% of the sheep harvest in Region II

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? See Proposal 184.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

If this proposal is adopted, the department would issue drawing permits to nonresidents with the goal of limiting the sheep harvest by nonresidents to 10% or less of the total harvest. Because there is no mechanism to restrict participation in general season hunts, the board would need to establish a drawing permit hunt structure for nonresident sheep hunters in the remainder of Region II.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years.

The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of sheep hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at meetings covering regions III (Interior), IV (Central/Southwest), and V (Arctic/Western).

This proposal is not likely to affect sheep populations because the current full-curl bag limit adequately guards against overharvest, at least in most cases. In heavily harvested areas, limiting nonresident hunters may increase the number of legal rams available to residents, but the extent to which this might occur is unknown. In areas heavily hunted by residents, this proposal may provide little benefit to resident sheep hunters.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of harvests between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. Because resident participation and success change over time, it will be difficult to accurately achieve the proposed harvest allocation, even if resident and nonresident hunting opportunity is managed by a drawing permit hunt. In-season management to achieve the harvest allocation will also be extremely difficult, even with a short reporting period requirement for successful hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 191 – 5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful taking of game; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal is identical to Proposal 33 in the board’s 2015 Region I Southeast meeting and proposal 133 in the region IV meeting. This proposal would allow the use of felt soled waders and wading boots in Units 6-8, 14C, and 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? On or after January 1, 2013, the use of footwear with soles of felt, or other absorbent fiber material, is prohibited while wading in freshwater streams in this state.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Felt soled waders or felt soled boots would be legal for wading in streams while hunting.

BACKGROUND: In 2012, the Board adopted regulations prohibiting the use of felt soled waders and wading boots to emulate regulations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 2009. The prohibition on the use of felt soled wader and wading boots is an effort to reduce or prevent the introduction of invasive species and diseases to freshwater bodies in Alaska.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: Oppose. This is a statewide regulation. The relationship between Alaska’s freshwater systems, fish, and wildlife is extensive and well documented. Negative impacts from invasive species and/or disease to freshwater systems will ultimately impact wildlife species in some manner. Adoption of this proposal may create confusion with fishers and hunters since prohibitions on felt soles will differ. If the board desires to remove the prohibition on felt soles, the department requests that it be lifted statewide.

Negative impacts from invasive species and/or disease to freshwater systems will ultimately impact wildlife species in some manner. Adoption of this proposal may create confusion with fishers and hunters since prohibitions on felt soles will differ. If the board desires to remove the prohibition on felt soles, the department requests that it be lifted statewide.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional cost to the department.

PROPOSAL 192 – 5 AAC 92.010 Harvest tickets and reports.

PROPOSED BY: Sea Ducks Unlimited.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the state to implement a mandatory reporting system (electronic and/or mail) for the harvest of migratory game birds, by species, in Region II Southcentral Units. This proposal is identical to Proposal 34 in the board's 2015 Southeast Region I meeting materials and Proposal 132 in the board's 2015 Central/Southwest meeting materials.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Although no state codified definition exists, migratory game birds in Alaska are considered to be all waterfowl, as well as cranes and snipe.

- 1) **AS16.05.340(17)(A).** Waterfowl conservation tag. A person may not engage in waterfowl hunting without having the current year's waterfowl tag in the person's actual possession, unless that person (i) qualifies for a \$5 license fee under (6) of this subsection; (ii) is a resident under the age of 16; (iii) is 60 years of age or older and is a resident; (iv) is a disabled veteran eligible for a free Alaska hunting license under AS 16.05.341.
- 2) **5 AAC 92.018.** Waterfowl conservation tag. A person required to possess an Alaska waterfowl conservation tag or "stamp" under AS16.05.340(17)(A) shall
 - (1) Register in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program and carry proof of the registration while hunting migratory birds; and
- 3) State and federal stamps are not required when hunting only **snipe** and **cranes**, thus snipe and crane hunters need **not** be enrolled in the Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this proposal would require the state to develop, implement, and enforce a mandatory reporting system (electronic and/or mail) for the harvest of migratory game birds, by species, in Region II Southcentral Units. Hunters would be required to record and report all harvested migratory game birds, by species, or forfeit migratory game bird hunting privileges the following year.

BACKGROUND: Methods for estimating migratory game bird harvest and species composition have varied since early attempts by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) beginning in 1952. Many states also have long histories of conducting their own harvest surveys, including Alaska.

The State of Alaska conducted waterfowl harvest surveys from 1971–1997 using several methods. From 1971 - 1976 federal duck stamp data, a state mail questionnaire sent to all licensed hunters in Alaska, and limited hunter bag checks were used to estimate harvest. In 1982, sampling by mail was improved and hunter bag checks discontinued. Sampling was further improved in 1987, when mail-in questionnaires were assigned to purchasers of state duck stamps, thus focusing the state survey on waterfowl hunters (eliminating the need to sample all Alaskan-licensed hunters), and improving collection of harvest location data. From 1988–1992, additional refinements were made to the survey.

The national Harvest Information Program (HIP) (50 CFR Part 20 § 20.20) was implemented in all states beginning with the 1998-99 migratory bird season and supplemented other state harvest

efforts. HIP was developed in recognition of long-standing problems with traditional state and federal surveys to assess nationwide harvest of migratory game birds, including inadequate sampling of migratory bird hunters; lack of information on non-waterfowl species (e.g., snipe, sandhill cranes, doves); lack of information on less frequently hunted species (e.g., sea ducks, brant); poor accuracy of harvest estimates; and differing survey methods among states, preventing consolidated flyway and national harvest estimates. The Department (Division of Subsistence) also conducts migratory bird harvest surveys in communities outside the Anchorage-Kenai Peninsula-Mat-Su Borough Nonsubsistence areas to compare to the HIP survey.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: Oppose. Statewide harvest estimates and species composition for migratory game birds are being provided to the state by the federal HIP (harvest estimates) and Parts Collection Survey (species composition), as well as by other department surveys. The community harvest surveys conducted by Division of Subsistence also provide bird harvest survey data. With some exceptions (see **AS16.05.340(17)(A)** and **5 AAC 92.018**, above), all persons that hunt waterfowl in Alaska are required to buy an Alaska Waterfowl Conservation Tag (i.e., duck stamp). Hunters that buy a duck stamp are automatically enrolled in the HIP program. Harvest estimates for cranes and snipe are generated from surveys of waterfowl hunters. The HIP registration requirements include obtaining information on: (a) identity of migratory bird hunters by name, address, and date of birth; and (b) their previous-year activity and level of harvest for categories of migratory birds (e.g., ducks, geese, brant, sea ducks cranes, snipe). Registration data gathered by the states are used by USFWS to conduct a stratified harvest survey from a sample of hunters to produce harvest estimates for migratory bird groups.

To implement a mandatory statewide harvest survey for migratory game birds would be redundant, costly, and unnecessary while the HIP program and other survey efforts are in place

The HIP survey generates the best harvest estimates at the state level, and lacks resolution for less commonly hunted species (sea ducks, cranes). Generally this is not critical since the state manages waterfowl hunting on a large geographic scale (zones), and migratory bird regulations are primarily designed to address population level goals over broad geographic areas which is generally well-served by HIP. Granted, with the implementation of HIP, good harvest estimates for migratory birds in Alaska are generally unavailable at the regional and local level for many species. At times this has affected the Department’s ability to address board proposals to regulate localized harvest of sea ducks. However, there are cases where the state has implemented mandatory reporting for local harvest data collection. These include the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge registration permit WU001, and Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge registration permit (WU002). As necessary, the department or public is able to request more specific harvest reporting requirements through the board.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal would result in additional cost to the department for the development, annual printing, and administration of migratory bird harvest tickets and reports.

PROPOSAL 193 – 5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require the development and implementation of a crossbow hunter education program and certification.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are currently no regulations requiring crossbow hunter education. Crossbows may be used in unrestricted weapons hunts throughout the State of Alaska as long as they meet the following requirements (5 AAC 92.085 Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions):

(15) [allowed] with a crossbow, unless the

- (A) bow peak draw weight is 100 pounds or more;
- (B) bow has a minimum draw length of 14 inches from front of bow to back of string when in the cocked position;
- (C) bolt is tipped with a broadhead and is a minimum of 16 inches in overall length and weighs at least 300 grains; and
- (D) Crossbow has no attached electronic devices, except for a scope or electronic sight hat does not project light externally;

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would require current and future crossbow hunters to successfully complete a crossbow hunter education course prior to hunting with a crossbow. In addition, adoption of this proposal would require the Department to develop and implement a new hunter education course.

BACKGROUND: There is an increasing interest in using crossbows for hunting in Alaska. As described above, currently there are no education and certification requirements for crossbow hunters, with the exception of applicants who have applied for a methods and means exemption and who wish to use crossbows in archery only hunts. In these situations, the department currently requires applicants to complete the crossbow-specific workbook in the department's online archery education course ("Today's Crossbow"), and to pass a proficiency shoot with a crossbow. As noted by the proposal author, crossbows are not traditional bow and arrow gear: there are equipment-specific safety concerns, functions, and shooting techniques. Due to the increasing interest in the use of crossbows in the state and the differences from education programs for other hunting implements (e.g., firearms and archery) the development of a crossbow hunter education program and certificate may be warranted.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: **Oppose.** This is a statewide regulation and it would be better implemented on a statewide basis. This proposal was submitted for the 2015 Region I Southeast (proposal 34) and the Region IV Central/Southwest (proposal 134) board meetings. Should the board wish to adopt this proposal the department recommends statewide implementation. The board may wish to consider deferring the proposal until the next statewide board meeting (in 2016). Should this proposal be adopted the department recommends that implementation be postponed order to develop the education program, train HIT staff and volunteers, and offer courses for interested hunters prior to the effective date of the regulation.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal will result in additional costs to hunters who wish to hunt with a crossbow, and to the Department in the form of HIT staff and volunteer training,

and travel to deliver field day courses. The Department currently contracts with a vendor to deliver and support online hunter education courses; the vendor does not currently charge for the development of a new course, customer support, or student data sharing with the Department. The student fee is estimated to be \$30.

PROPOSAL 194 – 5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful taking of game; exceptions.

PROPOSED BY: Al Barrette

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would prohibit the use of hunting dogs for taking upland game birds after October 31 in the entire Southcentral Region.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are no regulations currently that limit the timing or use of hunting dogs for upland game birds.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal attempts to address the issue of hunting dogs getting caught in traps or snares during lawful trapping seasons.

BACKGROUND: This region has a long history of conflicts between trappers and other recreational users and residents of the area, especially in relationship to dogs getting caught in traps or snares. In this case the author suggests that there is a problem with dogs used in pursuit of upland game getting caught in traps. Since this proposal was published it has received considerable attention by many hunters and hunting dog organizations.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: **Oppose.** This is a regulation with statewide implications that should be taken up at a statewide board meeting. The department routinely gets reports or complaints of dogs caught in traps or missing dogs that were suspected of being trapped. Most reports are addressing dogs along popular maintained trails and near human settlements. However, most of the reports are from non-hunters and many of the caught dogs are free ranging dogs. In a few cases bird hunters (ptarmigan and grouse) have had their dogs caught in either snares or leg hold traps. However these hunters usually have the knowledge and ability to safely remove their working animals from these devices.

Trapping seasons begin as early as October 15 in Region II Southcentral and as late as December 1 for some species. Having a set date for prohibiting hunters from using dogs will unnecessarily affect opportunity for this activity.

Note: The author requested that this proposal be withdrawn at the region IV meeting (RC45).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal will result in no additional costs to the Department.

PROPOSAL 195 – 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would remove the requirement to clean up contaminated soil from bear bait stations in Region IV. This proposal is identical to Proposal 36 taken up by the board at the 2015 Region I Southeast meeting and Proposal 129 taken up by the board at the 2015 Region IV Central/Southwest meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

5AAC 92.044 (10) requires bear baiting permittees to remove bait, litter, and equipment from the bait station site when hunting activities are complete.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Hunters would no longer be required to remove contaminated soil from bait stations.

BACKGROUND: The requirement to remove all soil contaminated by baiting at the end of the season is considered to be an excessive nuisance and a form of harassment by regulators to some members of the bear baiting community.

Grease poured onto the ground and spread at bear bait sites constitutes “bait” by definition. Bear baiting has strict regulations to ensure public safety and to ensure that bait stations do not continue to attract bears beyond the period when baiting is permitted. Contaminated soil can continue to serve as an attractant to bears after the season, thus falling under the legal definition of bait which must be removed from the site. Use of grease at a bait site can also kill vegetation and create unsightly “grease pits.”

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to the adoption of this proposal at a regional Board of Game meeting because it is a statewide regulation, and adoption of the proposal would misalign and complicate the regulations currently in place. The requirement to clean up contaminated soil is a tool to ensure that bears are not attracted to a closed bait station.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in additional costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 196 – 5 AAC 85.XXX. Seasons and bag limits.

PROPOSED BY: Kevin Secor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal suggests two allocation changes to current hunt management strategies. First, resident hunters would be allowed to hunt five additional days more than nonresident hunters in general season hunts (e.g., general season deer hunts) either in the beginning or ending of the hunt; and second, would allocate 75% of all Region II drawing permits to state residents (drawing permits are not currently allocated to any one hunter demographic group).

This proposal is identical to Proposal 37 taken up at the board’s 2015 Region I Southeast meeting and proposal 135 in the region IV Central/Southwest meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are various regulations that presently allocate between resident and nonresident hunters. There are also many hunts (both permit and general season) where the allocation has not been separated.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? All permit hunts would need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. In some cases where the board has made previous determination the allocation to nonresidents would decrease. In some cases the allocation would increase the proportion of nonresident participants. Many permit hunts without an allocation would likely see an increase in the number of nonresidents participating. All hunts without allocations would need to be divided into a resident hunt and a corresponding nonresident hunt.

BACKGROUND: Board policy (2007-173-BOG) indicates that allocations for specific hunts will be decided individually, based upon historical patterns of nonresident and resident use over the past 10 years. The board can allocate hunting opportunity between resident and nonresident hunters by modifying season dates or by allocating permits. Similar requests for board changes in allocation of hunting opportunity have been addressed previously by the board at various meetings using the above policy and analysis.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of hunting opportunity between residents and nonresidents. Because this proposal applies to the entire region, the department recommends that the board review each of the affected hunts to determine if the proposed changes would be sustainable.

COST ANALYSIS: This would have a large cost to the department by redefining many hunts, educating the public and changing all printed materials.

PROPOSAL 197 – 5 AAC 85.XXX. Seasons and bag limits.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas Malone

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would allocate 90% of all drawing permits in Region II Southcentral to residents of Alaska. If a drawing hunt is undersubscribed by nonresidents, the remaining nonresident permits would be awarded to resident hunters. This proposal is identical to Proposal 38 taken up by the board at the 2015 Region I Southeast meeting, and Proposal 136 taken up by the board at the 2015 Region IV Central/Southwest meeting.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There are various regulations that presently allocate between resident and nonresident hunters. There are also many hunts (both permit and general season) where the allocation has not been separated.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? All permit hunts would need to be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. In some cases where the board has made previous determination the allocation to nonresidents would decrease. In some cases the allocation would increase the proportion of nonresident participants. Many permit hunts without an allocation would likely see an increase in the number of nonresidents participating. All hunts

without allocations would need to be divided into a resident hunt and a corresponding nonresident hunt.

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DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocation of hunting opportunity between residents and nonresidents.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.
