

FINDINGS OF THE ALASKA BOARD OF GAME
Snowmachine Use in the Taking of Caribou
in Game Management Units 22 and 23

BOG 99-129

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At the October 1999, Region V meeting in Barrow, the Board considered a proposal to include Game Management Unit 22 in the exception already accorded Unit 23, which allows the taking of caribou from a snowmachine. After receiving public and staff testimony on the proposal, the Board of Game found that:

- Residents of Units 22 and 23 have a long tradition of positioning caribou using snowmachines to facilitate selection of individual animals for harvest. Before the use of snowmachines, dog teams were used similarly.
- This practice is not strictly in accord with statewide regulations governing the taking of game (5 AAC 92.080); however, neither does it constitute harassment.
- Existing regulations for Unit 23 make an exception to the general regulations and allow this practice, but employ broad language that can be construed to allow harassment and shooting from a moving machine, both of which are not acceptable to the board.
- Regulatory changes are desired to permit the responsible practice of this tradition in Unit 22.

Therefore, the Board of Game:

- adopted a single exception to 5 AAC 92.080 for both game management units;
- explicitly provided that caribou could not be shot from a moving snowmachine;
- permitted only the specific activity of "positioning" caribou using snowmachines to allow selection of individual animals for harvest. Wording was chosen that allowed for causing individual animals to move in a desired direction, but not to the extent of harmful "driving" or "herding" of caribou.

Date: October 29, 1999
Barrow, Alaska

Vote: 6-0-1

Lori Quakenbush
 Lori Quakenbush, Chairman
 Alaska Board of Game