

ADDENDUM TO:

BOARD OF GAME  
FINDINGS OF UNIT 16(B) MOOSE SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS

March 30, 1994

Allowable sustained yield harvests of moose in Unit 16(B)

Unit 16(B) drainages north of Beluga River have an estimated population of 5,850 moose. The population estimate has declined 10% from fall 1990 (a 25% decline north of the Skwentna River). This population exhibits declining productivity yet retains a relatively high bull:cow ratio (21 calves:34 bulls:100 cows). Based on estimated natural mortality and recruitment of yearlings to the population, the allowable sustained yield harvest for 1994 is 220 bulls. Harvest of cows from this population would be additive to natural mortality and would increase the rate of population decline and is not recommended.

The numbers of harvestable moose reasonably necessary for subsistence uses in Unit 16(B)

Unit 16(B) north of Beluga River -160-180 moose.

The fall/winter 1993/94 harvest of moose was approximately 142 moose which included 120 bulls and 22 cows. Approximately 100 bulls were taken during the Aug. 20-Sept. 20 season of which 70 were taken by resident hunters. Approximately 50 non-resident hunters harvested approximately 30 bulls during the fall season. The Tier I, Jan. 10-Jan 23 season allowed 10 additional bulls to be taken by resident hunters. In addition, 45 resident hunters were issued Tier II permits to hunt antlerless moose during Jan. 10-Jan. 23, and they harvested 10 bulls and 22 cows. An estimated 300 residents hunted the fall season, while 90 residents hunted during the Tier I and Tier II hunts in January.

Regulations adopted provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence uses

Unit 16(B) north of Beluga River

The regulations adopted will provide a subsistence and general hunt for spike-fork/50" bulls during an Aug. 20-Sept. 20 season and a Tier II subsistence hunt for any bull during Dec. 1-Jan. 15. The allowable harvest of 220 bulls is in excess of 160-180 moose determined to be necessary for subsistence uses. Therefore, approximately 40-60 additional bulls are available for other uses.

Although spike-fork/50" antler restrictions will continue to be in effect during the 32-day fall season, Tier II hunters will be able to take any bull during a 46-day winter season. Under these regulations, the number of resident hunters during the fall season are not expected to increase substantially over 1993 levels. Therefore, residents are expected to take 60-80 bulls during the fall season. Up to 100 additional bulls will be made available for harvest during the winter hunt. This Dec. 1-Jan. 15 Tier II hunt will be directed at all bulls in the population, including those protected by the fall spike-fork/50" season. In addition, the migratory nature of bulls in this population will make bulls, not previously accessible by hunters, available during this winter hunt. Allowing harvest of up to 100 additional bulls by residents will be accomplished by issuing 200 Tier II permits and providing a 46-day season.

It is necessary to restrict the winter hunt to Tier II permittees because an unlimited participation hunt would likely lead to an overharvest of bulls due to accessibility and herd concentration in wintering areas, unless the seasons were kept very short. However, a short season would probably not provide increased opportunity for documented subsistence uses of this moose population.

Although the opportunity for residents to harvest cow moose is eliminated by these changes, the effect of these changes will be to provide increased opportunity and increased moose harvest by Tier II permittees. Residents receiving Tier II permits will be allowed a total of 78 days of hunting opportunity (if they also choose to hunt during Aug. 20-Sept. 20), 32 more days than allowed during 1993/94. Likewise, changes will allow the total moose harvest by residents to reach 160-180. Residents were able to harvest only 112 moose in 1993/94.

/s/ Richard Burley

Richard Burley, Chair  
Alaska Board of Game