

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

August 23, 2002

Teleconference on black bear season and bag limit in Unit 1C, and Moose hunting season in portion of Unit 18

This summary of actions is for information purposes only and is not intended to detail, reflect or fully interpret the reasons for the board's actions

Six of seven board members were present on the call; Rob Hardy was absent. The draft agenda was adopted without objection. Board members offered their disclosure statements and no conflicts were found by the chair.

Unit 1C black bear

The board received a petition from the public to make off limits to hunting a white-colored black bear in the Juneau area. Department staff explained that the department's management options were not well suited for this type of situation and encouraged the board to take action because of the issue is one of resource allocation. The board adopted a finding of emergency based on the unexpected and unforeseen circumstances arising from a high level of public interest in this particular bear to a variety of wildlife user groups, including hunters, wildlife viewers, visitor, and the tourism industry.

The board adopted an emergency regulation that specifies that white-colored black bears may not be taken in Unit 1C. Enforceability of regulation and questions of regulatory wording were considered. The board also noted a similar provision protecting white-colored moose in Unit 20C. The board's intent was to make this regulation permanent. They noted the opportunity for public comment prior to and during the regularly scheduled November 1-7, 2002 Board of Game meeting in Juneau.

Unit 18 moose

The board received a petition from the public to expand the length of the moose hunting season in a portion of Unit 18 downstream of Mountain Village. The board adopted a finding of emergency based on the unexpected and unforeseen increase in the size of the moose population and the lack of alternative resources due to poor salmon fishing and fishing season closures on the Yukon River in 2002.

The board considered a proposal to change the current Sept. 5-15 season to Sept. 1-30 for both resident and non-resident hunters. The board discussed potential vulnerability of bull moose in late September and a possible lowering the bull:cow ratio. Late season meat quality and a concern with opening hunting for non-resident hunters were also noted. The board acted to change only the opening date to Sept. 1 for resident hunters only. It was the intent of the board to have this

regulation apply only to this one year, with the understanding that if a similar situation occurs next year, the petitioners could bring the issue back to the board in the form of another petition.

In other business, the board briefly discussed a board member inquiry about adding to the November meeting agenda member visions about board direction, potential board committees, board role in providing names for Fish and Game commissioner, and workload at the November meeting.