

**DRAFT  
RECOMMENDATIONS  
BOARD OF GAME PROPOSALS**

**February/March 2009**

*Alaska Department of Fish & Game*

*Division of Wildlife Conservation*

*The department's recommendations are based on analysis of the proposals with available information. These recommendations may change after further analysis based on public comment or additional information.*

**PROPOSAL 1**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Open new hunt areas, create a registration archery hunt, and add a fall hunting season for drawing and registration brown bear hunts in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See Proposals 2 and 3. This proposal would allow brown bear hunting by drawing permit in Eagle River and Eklutna Lake management areas in addition to the Chugach State Park Management Area. The proposal would also allow brown bear hunting in Chugach State Park, Eagle River, and Eklutna Lake management areas by registration permit by archery only. The proposal would extend the season for drawing and registration hunts to the fall (beginning Oct. 1) in addition to spring. We recommend adopting Proposals 2 and 3 instead of Proposal 1.

Proposal 2 would add upper Eagle River drainage (upstream of Icicle Creek drainage) to the portions of Chugach State Park where brown bear hunting is allowed and allow permittees to hunt in the fall, beginning the day after Labor Day, as well as spring. Proposal 2 would have a longer fall hunt period and would not open brown bear hunting in lower Eagle River drainage where hundreds of homes are interspersed with natural habitat and hunting is not allowed for any large game (other than a limited area south of Eagle River where black bears may be hunted by archery and muzzleloaders only).

Proposal 3 would create an archery-only drawing hunt in that portion of Chugach State Park in the Eklutna Lake Management Area with the same fall and spring season (day after Labor Day – May 31) as Proposal 2. The only archery-only brown bear hunts in Alaska are in the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area in Unit 26(B). Success rates for these hunts are difficult to predict; 0-33% of permittees have been successful in recent years, but success depends on whether the hunts are guided and other variables such as weather, terrain, avalanche conditions, and visibility.

Proposal 1 would either create an archery-only registration hunt in the same time and place as a drawing hunt, or it would shorten the drawing hunt for rifle hunters to create a season for less-successful bowhunters. Adopting Proposals 2 and 3 would allow more effective management and enforcement of the hunts, while determining interest and success rate of bowhunters in Eklutna Lake Management Area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 2**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Add upper Eagle River drainage to the area where brown bears may be currently hunted with a drawing permit (DB470) in Unit 14C. The new hunt area would then include Chugach State Park Management Area and the upper Eagle River drainage (upstream of Icicle Creek drainage). This proposal would also extend the drawing hunt season to include a fall hunting season, replacing the current season with a hunt period that extends from day after Labor Day through May 31.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 3**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Open that portion of Eklutna Lake Management Area within Chugach State Park, in Unit 14C, for brown bear hunting by drawing permit by archery only, from the day after Labor Day through May 31 with a bag limit of 1 bear every regulatory year. Up to 25 permits may be issued. The proposal would require bowhunters to obtain an IBEP or equivalent certificate to hunt brown or black bears in the Eklutna Lake Management Area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 4**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Replace the existing drawing permit hunts for goats in the Twentymile River and Lake George drainages of Unit 14C with registration permit hunts.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: In 2007, the Board replaced the 4 goat registration hunts in the Twentymile River and Lake George drainages of Unit 14C with 3 drawing hunts (DG868, DG859 and DG869), 2 early-season, archery-only registration hunts, and a late-season, registration hunt to meet harvest objectives. The new regulation went into effect during the 2008-09 regulatory year.

Prior to the initiation of the new regulations, registration permit hunts in the Lake George and Twentymile drainages had become unmanageable. The popularity of these hunts increased dramatically in 2003 after goat hunts on the Kenai Peninsula switched to drawing permit hunts followed by late-season registration hunts. Increased hunter participation resulted in emergency closures of the Lake George hunts during the 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007 seasons, sometimes as quickly as 2 weeks after opening day. The Twentymile registration hunts were closed by emergency order in 2004, 2005, and 2007. Due to the high numbers of permits issued for each area, it became difficult to manage harvest quotas. When the hunts were closed by EO, there were numerous permit holders in the field, resulting in harvests which exceeded the desired quotas in 2003 through 2007. One of the most significant factors causing overharvests was increased participation of nonresident guided hunters with high success rates. From 2003 through 2007, 53-90% of successful hunters in the Lake George drainage were nonresidents. The Twentymile River drainage has experienced lower participation by nonresident guided hunters, due to guide restrictions on Forest Service lands and more difficult access.

Fall 2008 was the first time that the new drawing/registration hunt system was employed in the Lake George and Twentymile River drainages. Under the new hunt system, the harvest objective of 18 goat units was met in the Lake George drainage. This was the first time since 2003 that the harvest did not exceed the desired quota. Unlike the previous registration hunts, the majority of successful hunters were residents. Many resident hunters appreciate the combination of drawing

hunts and late-season registration hunts for goats because it allows them to hunt other species in September and to harvest goats with prime winter coats. In the Twentymile River drainage, goats were only harvested during the drawing hunt. A total of 2 goats were harvested by resident hunters. While this was lower than the harvest quota, it was not markedly different from registration hunt success in the Twentymile River drainage in previous years.

Overall, the new registration/drawing hunt system has allowed us to meet harvest quotas without overharvesting goats, reduced the administrative cost of the previous registration hunt system, and maintained a late-season registration hunt opportunity for resident hunters.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **PROPOSAL 5**

**EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL:** This proposal would delineate new moose hunting areas in the Anchorage Management Area; require the department to issue a minimum of 20 moose drawing permits, including at least 1 “any-bull” permit; and remove the provision that allows the department to hold these hunts at its discretion.

**DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION:** **Do not adopt**

**RATIONALE:** Most of the Anchorage Management Area is urban/suburban, with limited opportunities for hunting. However, the management area includes portions of Chugach State Park and several large city parks where moose hunting is feasible. The department has the authority to issue up to 50 moose drawing permits in the Anchorage Management Area. In recent years we have issued as many as 8 drawing permits in 2 hunt areas: upper Campbell Creek and McHugh Creek (DM 666). We intend to issue a few more permits next year for these hunt areas; however, upper Campbell Creek is heavily used by other recreationists and continuing to increase the number of moose hunters will eventually lead to a level of conflict that shut this hunt down for 2 decades in the 1980s and 1990s.

One of the proposed new hunt areas is Bicentennial Park, which is a city park. We have been unable to obtain permission from the Municipality of Anchorage to hunt moose in city parks. We hope to do so in the future, in which case we already have the authority to issue additional permits; however, the only way to accomplish this objective is to show the municipality that moose hunting can be conducted in Chugach State Park in a safe and noncontroversial manner.

This proposal would allow at least 1 permittee to harvest a bull moose in the Anchorage Management Area. Upper Campbell Creek is a rutting and post-rut concentration area for moose, and some bulls have antler spreads over 60 inches. This part of Chugach State Park attracts many viewers and photographers. It is not unusual to find crowds of people watching large bulls at very close range. Moose hunting in the Anchorage Management Area has been limited to antlerless moose to maximize the number of cows taken by a limited number of permittees. The objective is to reduce the moose population to a sustainable level. Although many Anchorage residents would like to see fewer moose in neighborhoods and support, or at least tolerate, antlerless moose hunting in local parks, harvesting a large bull moose would provoke controversy among many residents.

When the Board re-established this drawing moose hunt after decades of public resistance, it included the provision that the hunt be held at the department’s discretion to avoid controversial

situations that could eliminate the hunt. Deleting this provision, requiring the department to issue at least 20 drawing permits, creating a trophy hunt, and establishing new hunt areas in city parks and private inholdings without local approval will create controversy and increase opposition to moose hunting in the Anchorage Management Area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 6**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would establish a November 1-10 archery season for bull moose in the remainder of Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Moose populations have been reduced in Unit 14C by a combination of more severe winters and new hunting opportunities, for example, antlerless hunts in upper Campbell Creek and McHugh Creek drainages, and any-moose drawing hunts followed by an any-bull registration hunt in upper Ship Creek.

Moose have not been counted in the remainder of Unit 14C for 10 years. Assuming moose populations are no higher now than during the last surveys, the remainder of Unit 14C count areas have the following estimated numbers of bulls after the hunting season: Lake George (25-30), Knik/Hunter (20-30), and Bird/Indian (25-30).

Moose hunting opportunities in the Anchorage area are in high demand. For example, the registration period for the new any-bull registration hunt in upper Ship Creek was closed in 2008 after over 300 hunters registered in a couple of hours. Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough have the state's largest concentration of bowhunters. An any-bull archery hunt in the remainder of Unit 14C in November, after the other general-season moose hunts were closed, would attract many bowhunters. Bulls would be particularly vulnerable in the Lake George drainage because much of the moose habitat is accessible to hunters using planes equipped with skis. The Knik/Hunter and Bird/Indian areas are road-accessible. We anticipate that bulls would be overharvested in the remainder of Unit 14C in a late-season, archery-only hunt.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 7**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless moose season in the Fort Richardson Management Area in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 8**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless moose season in the Anchorage Management Area in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 9**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless moose season in the Birchwood Management Area and the remainder of Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 10**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless moose hunt on Elmendorf Air Force Base in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 11**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless portion of the any-moose drawing permit in the upper Ship Creek drainage in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 12**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Re-authorize the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile, Portage, and Placer river drainages of Units 7 and 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 13**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require a guide-client agreement for nonresident applicants for drawing sheep hunts in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: A guide client agreement is not necessary for implementation of sheep hunting in GMU 14C.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 14**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Limit the number of drawing permits for nonresident hunters for Dall sheep in Unit 14C to 10% or less.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the coming 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the 2 archery-only hunts.

Currently, there are 19 drawing hunts for Dall sheep in Unit 14C. For the 2009 season, 1-8 drawing permits will be issued for full-curl only hunts, and 25 and 80 permits will be issued for the 2 archery-only drawing hunts. The 10-year average of nonresident permit winners for specific sheep hunts in Unit 14C ranges from 3-33% (16% nonresidents for all hunts combined). The percentage of nonresident hunters participating in Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C has increased in the last five years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 15**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Close sheep hunting to nonresidents in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the coming 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the 2 archery-only hunts.

Currently, there are 19 drawing hunts for Dall sheep in Unit 14C. For the 2009 season, 1-8 drawing permits will be issued for full-curl only hunts, and 25 and 80 permits will be issued for the 2 archery-only drawing hunts. The 10-year average of nonresident permit winners for specific sheep hunts in Unit 14C ranges from 3-33% (16% nonresidents for all hunts combined). The percentage of nonresident hunters participating in Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C has increased in the last five years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 16**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: 1) Limit the number of nonresident permits issued for Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C to one per hunt or 10% of the permits issued for that hunt (whichever is greater); or 2) Create separate drawing permit hunts for nonresident and resident hunters with no more than 10% of the permits allocated to nonresident hunters.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the coming 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the 2 archery-only hunts.

Currently, there are 19 drawing hunts for Dall sheep in Unit 14C. For the 2009 season, 1-8 drawing permits will be issued for full-curl only hunts, and 25 and 80 permits will be issued for the 2 archery-only drawing hunts. The 10-year average of nonresident permit winners for specific sheep hunts in Unit 14C ranges from 3-33% (16% nonresidents for all hunts combined). The percentage of nonresident hunters participating in Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C has increased in the last five years.

Because many of the sheep hunts in Unit 14C have less than 10 drawing permits, the first option would allocate more than 10% of the total permits to nonresidents.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 17**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allocate drawing sheep permits in Unit 14C by specifying the number of resident and nonresident permits to be issued for each hunt. Create additional nonresident-only drawing permit hunts in Unit 14C. Require nonresidents hunting with qualified residents within second degree of kindred to apply for resident-only sheep permits in Unit 14C.

This proposal would allocate drawing sheep permits for existing hunts as follows:

- DS123: 1 permit (resident or nonresident)
- DS124-126: 3 permits each hunt (9 total: residents only)
- DS127-129: 1 permit each hunt (3 total: residents only)
- DS130-131: 8 permits each hunt (16 total: 14 residents, 2 nonresidents)
- DS132: 7 permits (residents only)
- DS133-135: 1 permit each hunt (3 total: residents only)
- DS136-137: 8 permits each hunt (16 total: 14 residents, 2 nonresidents)
- DS138: 7 permits (residents only)
- DS139: 20 permits (18 residents, 2 nonresidents)
- DS140: 80 archery-only permits (76 residents, 4 nonresidents)
- DS141: 26 archery-only permits (23 residents, 3 nonresidents)

Create 4 additional nonresident-only drawing permit hunts in Unit 14C as follows:

Northeast (same hunt area as DS124-126):	1 nonresident, 10 August – 17 September
East Eklutna (same hunt area as DS127-129):	1 nonresident, 10 August – 17 September
Northwest (same hunt area as DS130-132):	1 nonresident, 10 August – 17 September
Upper Eagle River (same hunt area as DS133-135):	1 nonresident, 10 August – 17 September
Southwest (same hunt area as DS136-138):	1 nonresident, 10 August – 17 September

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident sheep hunters; however, the proposal would also freeze the number of drawing permits for Dall sheep in Unit 14C, which could adversely affect the department’s ability to manage the sheep population. All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the coming 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the 2 archery-only hunts.

Currently, there are 19 drawing hunts for Dall sheep in Unit 14C. For the 2009 season, 1-8 drawing permits will be issued for the full-curl ram hunts, and 25 and 80 permits will be issued for the 2 archery-only “any sheep” drawing hunts. The 10-year average of nonresident permit winners for specific sheep hunts in Unit 14C ranges from 3-33%, a 10-year average of 16% nonresidents for full curl and any-sheep combined (13% for rifle hunts and 5% for archery-only hunts). The percentage of nonresident hunters participating in Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C has increased in the last five years.

This proposal would increase the proportion of permits allocated to nonresidents on guided hunts by requiring nonresidents guided by relatives to apply for the resident permits. This proposal would guarantee permits for nonresidents with guides in the earliest, generally most desired hunts, with much longer seasons (about 5 weeks vs. 2 weeks for residents). Not counting the 1 permit (DS123) that could be allocated to a resident or nonresident, this proposal would allocate 75 “rifle” and 99 archery-only permits to residents and nonresidents accompanied by qualified second-degree kindred and 11 “rifle” and 7 archery-only permits to nonresidents with guides. Thus, a total of 13% of the “rifle” and 7% of the archery-only permits would be allocated to nonresidents with guides.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 18**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the bag limit for archery-only Dall sheep permit hunts in Unit 14C (DS140 and DS141) from any sheep to full curl ram only.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. The Board has authorized an “up to” harvest quota to allow area biologists to adjust to fluctuating sheep numbers. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C

where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the archery-only hunts (DS140 and DS141).

Because taking any Dall sheep by bow is difficult, archery-only permits account for a very small proportion of total sheep harvested while providing lots of hunting opportunity, even under an “any-sheep” bag limit. In 2006, 2007, and 2008 a total of 376 drawing permits were issued to bowhunters in Unit 14C. During these three hunting seasons, only 1 ewe, 6 less-than-full-curl rams, and 8 full-curl rams were harvested by bowhunters from a Unit 14C population of over 900 sheep (i.e., only 4% of permittees were successful). The low number of ewes and young rams harvested by bowhunters in DS140 and DS141 is not significant enough to warrant restricting these hunters to full-curl rams only. If the Board changes the bag limit to full-curl rams only, the department will substantially reduce the number of permits for these hunts to avoid having dozens of bowhunters stalking a handful of legal sheep at the same time.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 19**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would restrict the number of nonresident Dall sheep hunters in Unit 14C by either 1) closing the nonresident season entirely, or 2) allocating up to ten percent of all Dall sheep permits to nonresident hunters, and/or 3) closing DS123, DS124, DS127, DS130, DS133, and DS136 (early season hunts: August 10-22) to nonresident hunters.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take No Action**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue between resident and nonresident sheep hunters. All Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C are managed by drawing permit only. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the coming 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full curl ram can now be legally harvested are the archery-only hunts.

Currently, there are 19 drawing hunts for Dall sheep in Unit 14C. For the 2009 season, the number of permits to be issued for full-curl only hunts ranges from 1-8; whereas the number of permits to be issued for the archery-only any sheep hunts are 25 and 80 per hunt. The 10-year average of nonresident permit winners for sheep hunts in Unit 14C ranges from 3-33% (16% nonresidents for all hunts combined). The percentage of nonresident hunters participating in Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14C has increased in the last five years.

DS123 was established and 1 drawing permit is issued each year to make larger rams accessible to hunters bidding for the “Governor’s permit” in Unit 14C. If DS123 is limited to residents only, the hunt area would not be open to nonresidents who are contemplating bidding for the annual “Governor’s permit”, resulting in much lower winning bids.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 20**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close trapping within 1 mile of established trails in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, trapping is prohibited in the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge and the Anchorage, Eagle River, and Eklutna Lake management areas. Trapping is restricted in most of the Chugach State Park Management Area—wolves, otters, and beavers may not be trapped and traps and snares may not be set within one-quarter mile of trailheads, campgrounds, and other developed areas or within 50 yards of developed trails. Furthermore the Chugach State Park enacted additional and more restrictive regulations regarding trapping. Finally, trapping is restricted by the military on Fort Richardson and Elmendorf AFB. This proposal would close trapping in most of the Chugach State Park Management Area and a large proportion of the remainder of Unit 14C where trapping is currently allowed, depending on the definition of an “established” trail.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 21**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C, within 1 mile of community boundaries.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, trapping is prohibited in the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge and the Anchorage, Eagle River, and Eklutna Lake management areas. Trapping is restricted in most of the Chugach State Park Management Area—wolves, otters, and beavers may not be trapped and traps and snares may not be set within one-quarter mile of trailheads, campgrounds, and other developed areas or within 50 yards of developed trails. Finally, trapping is restricted by the military on Fort Richardson and Elmendorf AFB.

The term “community” is not defined and boundaries may be difficult to delineate, especially in areas where houses are far apart. This proposal could presumably prohibit trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area within 1 mile of the following communities: along Knik River Road (in Knik River, Goat Creek, and Hunter Creek drainages); Chugiak (in Peters and Little Peters creek drainages); Indian, Bird and Girdwood (in Indian, Bird, California, Virgin, Glacier, and Crow Creek drainages); and Portage (in Portage Valley).

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 22**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close lynx trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, all trapping is prohibited in those portions of Chugach State Park in the Eagle River, Eklutna, and Anchorage management areas. Lynx trapping is allowed in the Chugach State Park Management Area, which includes the following drainages: portions of Knik River, Hunter Creek, and Goat Creek drainages; most of Peters, Little Peters, and Ship creek drainages; and the Turnagain Arm drainages from Falls Creek to California Creek.

Since 1977, 27 lynx have been reported harvested from Unit 14C; i.e., less than 1/year on average. Trappers are not required to note on the sealing certificates when a furbearer is trapped in Chugach State Park; however, based on the drainages where the lynx were reported trapped, in the past 31 years only 2 of these lynx were certainly trapped in the park, 9 lynx were probably trapped in the park, and 7 lynx could have been trapped in the park. At such low levels, trappers are not taking enough lynx to reduce the population or viewing opportunities in Chugach State Park.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 23**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C, within 5 miles of any road.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, all trapping is prohibited in those portions of Chugach State Park in the Eagle River, Eklutna, and Anchorage management areas. Beavers, river otters, and wolves cannot be trapped in the remaining portions of Chugach State Park. Very few lynx, coyotes, or other furbearers are trapped in Chugach State Park. This proposal would prohibit all trapping in Chugach State Park except in small portions of the headwaters of Hunter, Peters, Ship, and Bird creeks and the ice fields and nunataks in the southeast corner of the park.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 24**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close wolverine trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See Proposal 27. This proposal is the same as the joint proposal by the departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 25**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would prohibit the use of Conibear traps for trapping wolverines and coyotes in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: See Proposal 27. Trappers are not required to seal coyote pelts or submit harvest reports for coyotes, so no data are available on coyote harvests in Chugach State Park; however, due to the low value of coyote pelts, we believe few, if any, coyotes are trapped in the park each year. Fourteen trappers have registered to trap in Chugach State Park Management Area this winter; however, only 2 of these expressed an intent to take coyotes. According to the 2004-05 Trapper Questionnaire, only about 1% of trappers in Southcentral/Southwest Alaska report using

Conibear traps for coyotes. It is unlikely that this proposal would reduce trapping effort for coyotes in Unit 14C or that a dog accompanied by its owner would be caught in a Conibear trap intended for a coyote.

See also proposal 27 would close wolverine trapping in Chugach State Park.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 26**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close wolverine trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See Proposal 27. This proposal is the same as the joint proposal by the departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 27**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Close wolverine trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Joint Department of Fish and Game and Department of Natural Resources proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 28**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Close wolverine trapping in the Chugach State Park Management Area, in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See Proposal 27. This proposal is the same as the joint proposal by the departments of Fish and Game and Natural Resources.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 29**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Modifies the black bear bag limit in Unit 6D; a wounded bear counts as the bag limit

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Black bears in Unit 6D are vulnerable to overharvest because of relatively easy boat access and apparent increasing popularity of Prince William Sound to bear hunters. The department is concerned that black bears are being harvested at an unsustainable rate. Current

regulations have allowed a continued increase in harvest, with a record high occurring during the 2007-08 season. See also proposal 201.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 30**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Changes the black bear bag limit in Unit 6D to 1 bear every 2 years.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department is actively pursuing a reduction in black bear harvest in Unit 6D. We have discussed a bi-annual bag limit among staff in the past and determined that there is no mechanism in place by which it could be effectively monitored. In addition, there are many hunters who confuse regulatory with calendar year; adding the additional complexity of a bi-annual bag limit would confound this situation. We recommend that regulations in Proposals 29 and 31 be tested during the next 2 years to determine of additional measures must be taken to reduce harvest.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 31**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Delays black bear season in Unit 6D by 10 days.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 32**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Extends brown bear season and residency on Montague Island.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 33**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Extends brown bear season and residency on Montague Island.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See Proposal 32.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 34**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Extends the brown bear season in Unit 6D.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Brown bears in Unit 6D are vulnerable to overharvest because of relatively easy boat access and popularity of Prince William Sound to bear hunters. Brown bears are managed conservatively in 6D because of historical problems with overharvest. The season was shortened to the proposed dates in 1992, but department biologists determined that harvest remained too high. The season was shortened to Oct. 15 – May 15 in 1994, and subsequently lengthened to its current dates in 1997. Since 1997 annual harvest has averaged 24 bears, which is within the desired range of 20 – 25 bears harvested in 6D.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 35**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Extends the brown bear season in Units 6A, B, and C by 10 days.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 36**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Prohibit the taking of female mountain goats in Unit 6D

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department has not supported this regulation in the past because of the difficulty in distinguishing nannies from billies in the field. Hunters that kill nannies often state that they mistook the nanny for a billy. Reducing nanny harvest in Unit 6D would, for a few hunts, provide additional hunting opportunity and longer seasons because nannies count as 2 goats toward the harvest quota. Although nanny harvest is a concern to the department, we believe that continuing efforts to educate hunters combined with the regulation prohibiting the taking nannies with kids is currently adequate for Unit 6D. Annual nanny harvest in Unit 6D has averaged 21% over the last decade, compared to 34% on the adjacent Kenai Peninsula. Goat populations in Unit 6D are generally stable under current regulations. See proposal 204 for additional information.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 37**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Closes hunting season for lynx and opens a trapping season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: Lynx are absent to scarce in Unit 6 during most years, with harvests of 0 to 3. Lynx occasionally move to the coast in search of food when interior prey populations begin to cycle downwards. During these sudden and brief periods (2-4 years) lynx are observed and harvested in higher numbers in Unit 6. This last occurred during 2000-2002. Under the Tracking

Harvest Strategy (THS) lynx trapping has been closed during the last 6 years, which is equal to all other closures combined during the previous 35 years. There is no evidence suggesting that trapping closures benefited the ephemeral “sink” population in Unit 6 during the last 40 years. Local trappers are dissatisfied with the long closure, and concerned over incidental catch of lynx in wolverine sets. Therefore, we recommend a lynx trapping season of Nov. 10 – Feb. 28 with no bag limit. The hunting season can remain open during Nov. 10 – Feb. 28, but residents changed to allow both Subsistence and General hunting. We also recommend that Unit 6 be removed from the Lynx Harvest Tracking Strategy.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 38**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change moose harvest quota in Unit 6A (west) from combined to separate quota for residents and nonresidents.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The quota is already separated: up to 30 bulls may be taken by residents under RM160 and up to 5 bulls may be taken by nonresidents under DM160 (see 5 AAC 085.045.(4)).

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 39**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 6A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 40**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 6C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 41**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 6B.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 42**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal shortens fall brown bear hunting season to a 7 day hunt in Katmai National Preserve in Subunit 9C

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This proposal addresses an allocation issue. Similar proposals were considered by the Board in 2005 and 2007 that were not adopted. The proponent requests that the brown bear hunting season in Katmai National Preserve, Subunit 9C, be shortened by 66% in the fall to reduce conflicts between user groups. The resulting 7 day season is not sufficient for brown bear hunting due to unpredictable weather and unnecessarily adds complexity to the Subunit's bear hunting regulations. National Park Service data indicates that very few people visit the Preserve during the bear hunting season to fish or view bears. The result of this proposal is that the primary use of this area's resource would be allocated to non-consumptive users.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 43**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close brown bear hunting in the eastern portion of Katmai National Preserve in subunit 9C, defined by the drainages of Funnel Creek, Moraine Creek, and Battle Creek.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This proposal requests a change in the present allocation of the brown bear resource for hunting to a total ban on hunting brown bear, thereby reallocating 100% of the use of the renewable resource to the nonconsumptive user group in a portion of this subunit. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) Section 203 specified that the administration of the new national preserves, which includes Katmai National Preserve, shall allow hunting and subsistence uses. ANILCA Section 1313 also specified "that the taking of fish and wildlife for sport purposes and subsistence uses, and trapping shall be allowed in a national preserve under applicable State and Federal law and regulation." Approximately 60% of the brown bear harvest in Katmai National Preserve is taken in the portion of Subunit 9C within Katmai National Preserve which this proposal would close.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 44**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would establish a drawing permit hunt for brown bear the Alagnak River Drainage in Subunit 9C, which includes Katmai National Preserve.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between

the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

There are no indications that brown bear harvests in Katmai National Preserve have exceeded sustainable limits. Bear harvest increased from an average of 9 bears annually (1999-2002) to an average of 16 bears (2003-2007). Analysis of harvest indices and brown bear survey data indicate that harvests in the Preserve were sustainable given the number of bears currently using the area.

A drawing hunt in the Preserve is not recommended because reasonable fall harvest objectives can not be calculated before drawing permits are announced. A registration hunt would allow the department to monitor effort and close the season if harvest appears excessive. However a short sealing period would be needed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 45**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the fall brown bear hunting season in the remainder of Subunit 9C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal would close the fall brown bear hunt in the majority of subunit 9C (92%). 40% of the area affected by this proposal is state lands that do not fall under federal jurisdiction. Fall densities on federal lands in the proposed closure area were estimated to be 470 bears/1000 km<sup>2</sup> during the fall of 2006. In 2007 we actually observed 330 bears in the 1000 km<sup>2</sup> area. It can be reasonably concluded that bear densities on federal lands exceed federal mandates for “high concentrations”. Brown bear composition surveys and harvest indices indicate that the bear population is moderately harvested and can sustain current harvests. Additional closures are not warranted based on federal mandates.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 46**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would increase the length of the fall brown bear hunt season in Subunit 9D by 5 days and closes the season 6 days earlier than other portions of GMU 9.

Current Season Dates: October 1 to October 21

Proposed Season Dates: September 20 to October 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal addresses concerns for bear predation on ungulates in GMU 9D and as well as the concern for human safety. The proposed change misaligns brown bear hunting seasons in GMU 9, while doing little to address the issues stated in the proposal.

Brown bears in GMU 9 are a highly sought after species due to the Alaska Peninsula’s reputation for producing trophy bears. Bear harvests from the Subunit 9D have averaged 71 bears annually since 2001, which translates to an exploitation rate of approximately 5% of the population. At this rate of harvest seasons and bag limits should not be liberalized unless the intent is to move away from trophy bear management in GMU 9.

Caribou calf mortality studies conducted in 1999 and 2008 concluded that brown bears were not a significant predator of caribou calves in Subunit 9D. Moose are rare in the Subunit and have not been identified as an intensive management species.

Increasing bear harvests in a large area would do little to address human safety concerns. These issues are best addressed through efforts to reduce attractants in villages and better waste handling.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 47**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal liberalizes brown bear hunting for residents in Subunit 9E by opening the hunting season for residents every year instead of every other year and modifies the bag limit to include one bear every regulatory year for hunters.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The proponents of this proposal modified the issue statement to include concerns for bear predation on ungulates and as well as the concern for human safety that was originally stated. Brown bears are a significant predator of moose and caribou, but managing brown bears on the Alaska Peninsula to benefit ungulate populations remains problematic.

While the exact status of bear population in Subunit 9E is unknown, brown bears do occur at high densities that are believed to be stable. Brown bears in GMU 9 are a highly sought after species due to the Alaska Peninsula’s reputation for producing trophy bears and approximately 50% of the bears harvested are taken in Subunit 9E. Bear harvests from the Subunit have averaged 173 bears annually since 2001, which translates to an exploitation rate of approximately 6% of the population. At this rate of harvest seasons and bag limits should not be liberalized unless the intent is to move away from trophy bear management in GMU 9.

The proposed regulation is expected to increase bear harvests significantly if Alaskan residents perceive this as an opportunity to hunt brown bears on the Alaska Peninsula without competition

from nonresident hunters. The increase in harvests is expected to reduce the quality of the bear population, but will not benefit ungulate populations or address concerns for human safety.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 48**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal allocates the brown bear hunting opportunity on Unimak Island based on hunter residency and would limit the number of nonresidents that can apply for the drawing permit.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do Not Adopt**

RATIONALE: Although this is an allocation issue, a similar proposal was submitted in 2005 and 2007 and was not adopted. Alaskan residents have consistently received 60% of the brown bear drawing permits for Unimak during the past 10 years. There is no reason to think that opportunity for Alaskan residents will decrease with a random-drawing permit structure in place.

Harvest objectives for brown bear on Unimak are currently being met under the current permit structure. There is no difference in the percentage of resident vs. nonresident hunters that use their tags, and it is unlikely that changing the permit structure will increase the number of permits used each year. Why some hunters do not use their permits is unknown, but it is likely that logistics, financial limitation, and various personal reasons prohibit some permit holders from hunting Unimak.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 49**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Create a brown bear predator control permit program in GMU 17B

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Brown bear numbers in GMU 17B are healthy, and have likely increased during the last 10 years. Bears are a predator on moose in this area, but we do not know the extent to which that predation might be influencing the GMU 17B moose population. This recommendation remains consistent with past department recommendations to oppose predator control programs in areas where we have not assessed the influence of predation on ungulate populations.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 50**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Create a brown bear predator control program in GMUs 17B&C

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 49.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 51**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the season and bag limit for brown bears in the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17B.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

Brown bear numbers in GMU 17B are healthy, and have likely increased during the last 10 years. Sealing records indicate that between 1997 and 2008 only 10 brown bears have been reported taken in the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of Game Management Unit 17. Of those, only 4 bears were reported taken between September 10 and September 19 after the season opening date was changed in 2005. No individual hunter has reported taking more than 1 bear from the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17. Past changes in GMU 17 brown bear hunting season and bag limits have not affected the population size of brown bears in the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17B.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 52**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the brown bear hunting season dates in GMU 17.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Brown bear numbers in GMU 17 are healthy, and have likely increased during the last 10 years. The department has received comments from hunters that wish to hunt prior to the present brown bear hunting season opening of September 10 in Game Management Unit 17. Brown bear numbers in GMU 17 are judged sufficient to provide for this additional opportunity.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 53**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal closes the caribou hunting season in Subunit 9D.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 54**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal closes the caribou hunting season on Unimak Island in Game Management Unit 10.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 55**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the Intensive Management population and harvest objectives for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 56**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change caribou bag limit in portions of GMU 17A&C

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 57**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Close nonresident hunting for Mulchatna caribou.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: During March 2007, the board adopted uniform regulations for the Mulchatna Caribou Herd and applied them across the range of the herd in Game Management Units 9, 17, 18 and 19. Hunting activity by nonresidents and reported harvest of Mulchatna caribou by nonresidents has continued to decline. During RY07, only 125 nonresidents reported killing caribou from this herd during the 15 day season. The department makes no recommendation because this is an allocation issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 58**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal changes the moose bag limit for winter hunts in Game Management Unit 9 to one antlered bull.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 59**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal liberalizes the moose season in Subunit 9B by adding 12 days to the hunt and requires antlers to be destroyed in the field prior to September 5.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The proposed regulation exacerbates problems facing moose management in Subunit 9B. Moose occur at low densities in Subunit 9B and are difficult to monitor due to poor winter survey conditions. Population growth is limited by low calf recruitment and their range is limited in much of the Subunit by a lack of suitable habitat. Also of concern is the disregard for seasons and bag limit shown by some hunters, which has likely depleted moose numbers in easily accessible areas. Extending the moose season is not an advisable solution for local concerns regarding a lack of moose in favored hunt areas. The additional requirement that antlers be destroyed on all moose harvested before September 5<sup>th</sup> will be difficult to enforce and is not expected to be a large deterrent for many moose hunters.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 60**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Expand area open for moose hunting during December registration hunt in GMU 17C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See issue statement for Proposal 62.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 61**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change RM587, the nonresident registration moose hunt in GMU 17B.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No Recommendation**

RATIONALE: The department makes no recommendation because this is an allocation issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 62**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Expand area open for moose hunting during December registration hunt in GMU 17C and change bag limit to antlered bulls only.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 63**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Extend fall moose hunt in GMU 17B&C by 2 days.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Previous reports to the Board of Game indicated that fall warming trends have not affected timing of moose rut. The proportion of the annual kill of moose taken during the last week of the fall hunting season in GMU 17B&C has not changed appreciably in recent years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 64**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal reduces wolf hunting seasons and bag limits in National Preserve lands in Game Management Unit 9.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

This proposal reduces opportunity to hunt wolves in areas that can sustain additional harvest without harming wolf populations. Additionally the proposed regulation adds complexity to wolf hunting regulations for Game Management Unit 9 without benefit to the wolf population or resource users. Very few hunters harvest wolves near National Preserve lands in GMU 9 during

the month of May, and no one has harvested more than 3 wolves in GMU 9 without a trapping license.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 65**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal requests that a predator control implementation plan be developed in Subunits 9C and 9E.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal was submitted by the Lower Bristol Bay Advisory Committee and was amended at their spring meeting to address concern for moose and caribou populations in Subunits 9C and 9E.

The proposal’s intent is to address concerns for the population status of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd and moose populations in Subunits 9C and 9E. Similar proposals were submitted in 2005 and 2007 that were not adopted.

The decline of the Northern Alaska Peninsula Caribou Herd was attributed primarily to nutritional limitations, but predation and disease were also contributing factors. Current restrictions on the use of predator management federal refuge lands combined with poor snow conditions during winter will limit the effectiveness of such a program for caribou in this area.

The size and status of moose population in Subunit 9 are difficult to assess, but are believed to be above the intensive management objectives. Population trends and harvest indices appear stable based on the information available. Populations are likely limited by predation on neonates, but it is unlikely that the habitat can support significantly larger populations in most areas. Liberal hunting seasons, particularly during winter months, may be contributing to localized shortages in easily accessible areas. These seasons should be reduced prior to initiating predator control programs to benefit moose in these areas.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 66**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal liberalizes the wolf hunting season in Game Management Unit 10 by changing the closing date from April 30 to May 25 and increasing the bag limit to 10 wolves per season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department does not support proposals to extend the wolf hunting season into the period when pups may be vulnerable, except on a case by case basis associated with predator management programs. This proposal would align wolf seasons in Game Management Units 9 and 10. The range of wolves in GMU 10 is limited to Unimak Island. Though we have limited information about the population, a hunting guide believes that the population is increasing based on his observations. Current wolf harvests on Unimak vary from 0 to 4 wolves

annually. If adopted the additional hunting opportunity is not expected to increase the wolf harvests substantially.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 67**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the bag limit for wolves in the Lake Clark National Preserve part of GMU 17B.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

Wolf numbers in GMU 17B are healthy, and have likely increased during the last 10 years. Sealing records indicate that between 1997 and 2008 only 2 wolves have been reported taken in the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17B. No individual hunter has reported taking more than 1 wolf from the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17B. Past changes in GMU 17 wolf hunting bag limits have not affected the population size of wolves in the Lake Clark National Preserve portion of GMU 17B.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 68**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Create a predator management plan in GMUs 17B&C to reduce the wolf population.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: Wolf numbers in GMU 17 are healthy, and have likely increased substantially during the last 10 years. Wolves are an important predator on moose in this area in this herd, but we do not know the extent to which that predation might be influencing the GMU 17 moose population. This recommendation remains consistent with past department recommendations to

oppose predator control programs in areas where we have not conducted studies documenting the influence of predation on ungulate populations. See proposal 69.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 69**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would establish predator control programs in GMUs 9 and 17.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Wolf numbers in GMUs 9 and 17 are healthy, and have likely increased during the last 10 years. Wolves are an important predator on moose in these areas but we do not know the extent to which that predation might be influencing moose or caribou populations. In addition, land status (specifically the proportion of the area under federal ownership) would make success of a program questionable. This recommendation remains consistent with past department recommendations to oppose predator control programs in areas where we have not evaluated the influence of predation on ungulate populations. However the Board has liberalized the take of bears and wolves in these areas allowing hunters and trappers the opportunity to take additional animals.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 70**

EFFECT OF PROPOSAL: This proposal closes ptarmigan season in subunit 13B on Nov 30 and increases the bag limit in 13 A & E to 10 per day for the entire season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 71**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal reduces the Unit 13 coyote trapping season by 56 days, going from a 15 Oct – 30 Apr to a 10 Nov – 31 March season. This proposal would change the alignment of the current season from being the same as wolf to making the opening date align with lynx and fox seasons.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The coyote season in Unit 13 was lengthened 2 years ago by the board in response to a public proposal to liberalize season dates. The justification was that coyotes were abundant and important predators and there was little trapping pressure because of low pelt value. The department and the board recognized there could be some incidental lynx and fox harvest but felt it would not be significant. To date, no incidental catch has been reported during this extension to the coyote season.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 72**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would increase the size of the Copper River bison hunt by moving the northern hunt boundary approximately 10 miles, from the Nadina River to the Klawasi River.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: As the bison herd increased, the herd has expanded its range. Harvests are controlled by a drawing permit hunt. This extension will allow more hunter dispersal and opportunity to take accessible bison.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 73**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would increase black bear baiting season in subunit 13E by 15 days from 15 June to 30 June.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take No Action**

RATIONALE: Bear baiting season dates are set by the department based largely on hide quality, potential user conflicts, and effectiveness. Bear baiting activity in Unit 13E peaks in week 7 (May 27- June 2), and declines afterwards. During the last week (week 9; June 10-15) of the season, an average of only 0.6 bears are taken over bait annually (1987-2007). Extending the baiting season until the end of June would not be expected to increase the bear harvest or impact overall bear numbers. While increasing the baiting season would create additional baiting opportunity, our main concern is that by mid-June, fishing and other outdoor activities greatly increase. If bait stations were kept open until 30 June, bears would still be coming in during peak fishing periods, especially over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 74**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal adds 15 days (June 15-30) to the period black bears could be baited during the spring in GMU 11 and 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Bear baiting season dates are set by the department based largely on hide quality, potential user conflicts, and effectiveness. Bear baiting activity in Unit 13E peaks in week 7 (May 27- June 2), and drops off afterwards. During the last week (week 9; June 10-15) of the season, an average of only 0.6 bears are taken over bait annually (1987-2007). Extending the baiting season until the end of June would not be expected to increase the bear harvest or impact overall bear numbers. While increasing the baiting season would create additional baiting opportunity, our main concern is that by mid-June, fishing and other outdoor activities greatly increase. If bait stations were kept open until 30 June, bears would still be coming in during peak fishing periods, especially over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. In GMU 11 and 13 most bait

stations are close to the road system or waterways and very few are remote, thus increasing the probability of user conflicts with no expected measurable increase in harvest.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 75**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSALS: This proposal would establish a bear control permit hunt in GMU 13 and would allow permittees to bait brown bears.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Brown bear harvest has increased in GMU 13 since hunting regulations were liberalized. The yearly harvest has gone from an average of 84 a year in the early 1990s to 138 a year since 2003. Whether the bear population is stable or has been reduced has not been determined. The department has spent a considerable amount of effort and funding trying to enumerate bear numbers in GMU 13. Some methods suggest a decline; others, a stable population. A large study in 13A is in its third year and is examining this issue. Moose numbers are increasing in some of the unit within the wolf control area. Bears are still an important factor in the rate of increase because of the neonatal mortality. The importance of bear predation will decrease as moose increase and more calves are produced.

Bear baiting in GMU 13 will not have an overall impact on bear numbers. Most bear baits are close to roads for logistic reasons. Areas where bears are most numerous and have the biggest impact on moose calf survival are remote with poor access. Also, effective baiting sites are hard to find in tundra and brush covered habitat types where large trees are absent. The negative consequences of this regulation would far outweigh any benefits that may occur. Fundamentally, baiting brown bears presents a different situation than using bait for black bears, as brown bears are more aggressive and have larger home ranges. Because of the larger home range, bears habituated to human supplied food would be expected to become problem bears at home sites and cabins. GMU 13 has a lot of recreational users who could stumble on bait sites. While baiting is the only option for taking black bears in heavily timbered habitats, there are other ways to harvest brown bears over most of GMU 13.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 76**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create a 2 brown bear bag limit per year in subunit 13E.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 79. Any bag limit changes should be on a unit wide basis.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 77**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would shorten the brown bear season by 3 months changing from year-round to 1 Sept – 31 May for the portion of subunit 13C within the Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

Since bear hunting regulations were liberalized in 1995, only one bear has been reported taken from this area. The current harvest has no biological impact on the bear population of the Wrangell St. Elias National Park and Preserve. Changing the season dates will have virtually no impact on the bear harvest in this area and will only confuse hunters. It will take away the opportunity to take a bear while moose hunting during the August portion of the moose season which opens as early as August 1<sup>st</sup> for federal subsistence hunters.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 78**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal changes brown bear hunting regulations by putting all brown bear hunting in GMU 11 by registration permit only and establishes a harvest quota of 16 bears in all GMU 11 per year. The season would be closed when the quota is reached.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

“The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State

regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

This proposal assumes that pre-park harvests were natural, healthy and sustainable and that any increase would result in population declines. GMU 11 is a large unit with over 60% of the land classified as “hard park” with little if any hunting pressure because of extremely restrictive NPS regulations on access and subsistence hunting. Most bears are taken from preserve lands and near access points. This situation leaves large areas of refugia where bears are unharmed. Since harvest regulations went to year-round in 2003, harvests have averaged 17 (range = 13 – 24) bears a year with 69% being males. These harvest rates are actually lower than the 5 year period of 1974-1979, before the park was created, when a yearly average of 20 bears (range = 17 – 23) were reported. Current brown bear harvests in GMU 11 have no overall impact on the brown bear population.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 79**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create a 2 brown bear bag limit per year in all GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department recommends keeping the one bear bag limit in GMU 13. A survey of successful GMU 13 bear hunters and a review of the harvest data indicate few hunters wanted to take more than 1 bear unless they found an exceptional trophy. Only 275 (9%) out of 3048 hunters have sealed more than one brown bear from GMU 13 since 1980. By not having a bear taken in GMU 13 count against the state wide bag limit, this would add another layer of complexity to the state’s bag limit definition.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 80**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would take the portion of the Tonsina walk-in area south and east of the Uranatina and north and east of the Tiekkel Drainage out of the mountain goat drawing permit hunt area (DG719) and put it into the GMU 11 and 13D registration hunt (RG580). The remaining mountain goat habitat in the walk-in area would remain in the drawing hunt area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Mountain goat counts in the Tonsina walk-in area (Tonsina Controlled Use Area; TCUA) have declined from a high of 79 in 1993 to 36 in 2008. Given the survey range of 40 to 80 goats, the yearly harvest objective is between 2 – 4 goats for this area. The southern half of the walk-in area is considered goat habitat (about 15 mi<sup>2</sup> across; the west half is highway

accessible, the east half is accessible by boat from the Copper River). This area would be split by this proposal (half drawing, half registration) but goats move freely throughout. Because of this, it is necessary to look at the total harvest; thus the entire goat habitat in the walk-in area should be managed under the same hunt. In the last 10 years there have been a total of 13 goats (range= 0 – 5) taken from the walk-in area. The harvest of goats in this area would increase if put in a registration hunt because more hunters would be interested in the area. This would be the only accessible combination goat/sheep hunt in GMU 13 with unlimited participation. The TCUA averages 37 hunters a year over the past 10 years and this would increase if goats could be hunted under a registration permit.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 81**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would prohibit the use of clips that hold more than 5 rounds in rifles used in the Tier II Nelchina Caribou Hunt.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: Although this is a weapon-type of allocation issue and the department has no recommendation, we note that wounding and crippling loss is a serious problem in herd animals, including the Nelchina Caribou Herd (NCH). Rifles that are capable of holding 10 or more rounds in the magazine promote shooting behavior that increases crippling loss. Multiple, rapidly delivered shots at herd animals allow hunters to rely more on repeated shooting to drop an animal than careful shot placement. Development of new, modern high powered repeaters is rapidly increasing. Hunters need to exhibit hunting behavior that includes restraint in the number of shots fired at game, and this proposal helps accomplish this without restricting caliber or rifle type. Given heavy hunting pressure and the development of more accurate repeaters with large shot capacity, this is an important resource conservation issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 82**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the requirement to salvage the head, hide, heart, liver and kidneys for the Tier II NCH in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 83.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 83**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the salvage requirement for the head and hide and kidney of caribou taken in the Tier II NCH in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: Salvage of the hide and head has created problems with improper disposal of these unwanted items. Heads and hides were hauled out from kill sites, but then left on roadsides

and filled roadside waste receptacles. The BLM facilities along the Denali and Richardson highways were overwhelmed with hides and heads. This situation is undesirable as it creates highly visible hunting ‘waste’, and is considered offensive to many. We remain neutral on the salvage of the kidneys.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 84**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create a community harvest permit administered by the Ahtna Tene Nene customary and traditional use committee. This committee would administer the hunt by determining who and how many permits would be issued to Ahtna tribal members. The committee would be responsible for all aspects of administering the hunt, including monitoring and reporting harvests. The season dates for moose would be 10 Aug to 20 Sept, a 21 day increase from the current fall season and a new 92 day winter season from 1 Nov to 31 Jan. The caribou season would remain the same with date 10 Aug to 20 Sept and 21 Oct. to 31 Mar. The moose bag limit would be any bull. The caribou bag limit would be any caribou.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Under consideration**

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 85**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would repeal the requirement to destroy the trophy value of subsistence moose and caribou taken in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: The original rationale for this regulation was to keep subsistence hunters from taking and entering exceptional quality animals in trophy scoring books. Considering this is a tier II hunt it is not open to the general public, any large animals taken cannot be entered under existing trophy scoring rules, therefore the antler destruction regulation does not accomplish the original desired result. Regardless, under existing regulations, hunters will continue to take the largest legal animal they have a chance at for personal reasons, whether they are interested in the larger amount of meat, large antlers, or both.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 86**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would allow Tier II moose and caribou permit holders to hunt in other units. Currently Tier II permit holders for Unit 13 moose and caribou cannot hunt for these species in other units.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: In 2007 the Board restricted tier II hunters from hunting in other units in an effort to better define a Unit 13 subsistence user. In 2008 the results from tier II hunters indicated that in fact more Unit 13 residents participated in this hunt (both permits received and

animals harvested) indicating an efficiency and economy of effort as established in the Board of Game Findings 2006-170-BOG.

This caused problems for some communities on the border of unit 13. There are a number of communities and permit holders that live near the unit boundary or even outside the unit. The current regulation prevents them from opportunistically hunting near home. The board could consider changes to the existing areas by including small areas near the villages.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 87**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The proposal recommends several changes to the Tier II hunt scoring system for GMU 13 hunts. These include:

1. Eliminate household income as a factor in scoring Tier II applications, and redistribute the 20 points now allocated to the income question to the other 2 questions that measure Factor B (“the ability of a subsistence user to obtain food if subsistence use is restricted or eliminated”): cost of food (increase from 15 to 25 points) and cost of gasoline (increase from 20 to 30 points).
2. Increase the percentage of total points allocated to questions that measure Factor B, “the ability to obtain food.” Under AS 16.05.258, applicants for Tier II hunts are scored based on questions that measure 2 factors: customary and direct dependence on the game population as a mainstay of livelihood (Factor A) and the ability to obtain food if subsistence use is restricted or eliminated (Factor B). Currently, responses to questions measuring Factor A may provide a maximum of 85 points, 61% of the total maximum of 140 points, and responses to questions that measure Factor B may provide up to 55 points (39%). The proposal does not specify what the percentage of points for each factor should be changed to.
3. Change the number of years required to obtain a maximum score for questions 14 and 15 from 50 years to 30 years.
4. Increase the maximum number of points awarded for Question 17 (cost of food) and Question 18 (cost of gasoline). This change is related to 2, above, in that increasing the maximum points for these questions increases the percentage of total points allocated to Factor B.
5. Reduce the number of points awarded to applicants with a lower number days spent hunting and fishing in the Tier II hunt area. Presently, points are awarded for each response category in a fixed scale.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Tier II scoring system allocates subsistence hunting opportunity. Therefore, the department makes no recommendation. The department has prepared a report that analyzes potential changes to the distribution of GMU 13 Tier II permits based upon 6 scoring systems.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 88**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The proposal would eliminate household income as a factor for scoring applications for Tier II hunts in GMU 13. Presently, the scoring system for GMU 13 Tier II hunts under 5 AAC 92.070(b) allocates up to 20 points based on the applicant's household income, as a measure of Factor B, "the ability of a subsistence user to obtain food if subsistence use is restricted or eliminated." If the board chooses to adopt this proposal, it should consider reallocating these points to other questions that measure Factor B (Question 17, cost of food, and Question 18, cost of gasoline); otherwise, only 35 points of a potential 120 points (29%) would be allocated to Factor B. See also Proposal 87.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Tier II scoring system allocates subsistence hunting opportunity. Therefore, the department makes no recommendation.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 89**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The proposal would increase the percentage of total points on Tier II hunt applications allocated to questions that measure Factor B, "the ability to obtain food," but the proposal does not specify what the percentage should be changed to. Under AS 16.05.258, applicants for Tier II hunts are scored based on questions that measure 2 factors: customary and direct dependence on the game population as a mainstay of livelihood (Factor A) and the ability to obtain food if subsistence use is restricted or eliminated (Factor B). Currently, responses to questions measuring Factor A may provide a maximum of 85 points, 61% of the total maximum of 140 points, and responses to questions that measure Factor B may provide up to 55 points (39%). Note that this is also one of several changes to the Tier II scoring system proposed by Proposal 87.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Tier II scoring system allocates subsistence hunting opportunity. Therefore, the department makes no recommendation.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 90**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The current system for awarding points for GMU 13 Tier II hunt applicants based on household income (Tier II application question 20) allocates points based upon federal poverty guidelines. Applicants with household incomes below the federal poverty guideline (which are based in part on household size) receive the maximum of 20 points; applicants with household incomes 130% above the guideline receive no points. Other households receive points in an inverse proportion to their income. The proposal would replace this procedure with one that awards points based upon a fixed set of categories that are not related to federal guidelines and not based on household size. It also reduces the maximum number of points awarded based on income from 20 to 5.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Tier II scoring system allocates subsistence hunting opportunity. Therefore, the department makes no recommendation.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 91**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the extra salvage requirements in GMU 13 subsistence hunts that require meat on the bone, heart, liver, kidneys salvage for moose and salvage of heads and hides for caribou.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposals # 83 and #92.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 92**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the salvage requirements of leaving meat on the bone, for moose taken in subsistence hunts in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: GMU 13 is different from many hunt areas that require salvaging meat on the bone. This requirement started because of waste in hunts predominately along rivers where successful hunters often had long, wet floats after taking a moose. This situation led to spoilage. Hunting in GMU 13 is mostly in upland habitats where moose are spread out and packing a moose a longer distance to trails, air strips and vehicle access points is often necessary. ORV's and aircraft are the primary means of transportation, not boats. The meat on the bone requirement puts a requirement on older or less physically conditioned hunters to pack entire quarters with the bone. This requires a hunter to pack excessively heavy loads that could cause injury. We recommend the board amend the proposal and exclude the meat from ribs of caribou and moose.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 93**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the requirement to salvage the liver from subsistence taken moose shot after 10 Sept in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 83.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 94**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal increases the Tier II moose season by 20 days, going from 15 Aug – 31 Aug to 10 Aug – 20 Sept.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. Success rates for the Tier II hunt have been steadily increasing and in 2008 approached 50%. With the proposed season it would be much higher with another 25 days. While the moose harvest can now be increased in some areas, the Tier II hunt is unit wide, so some areas close to the road may be overharvested. There would be some expected enforcement problems as the public will stop reporting small moose being taken during the 1 – 20 September season which has antler restrictions. There also may be complications with this change considering the Tier II hunt has historically been separated from the general season hunt dates in order to describe different ‘populations’.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 95**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal eliminates the Tier II hunt and creates drawing moose hunts for any bull in portions of Subunits 13A, B, and C from 1 Sept – 20 Sept.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 96**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The proposal recommends that the current finding that 600 moose is the amount necessary to provide reasonable opportunities for subsistence hunting in GMU 13 (an ANS finding; 5 AAC 99.025) be reexamined. The present ANS finding of 600 moose dates to 1992. It is appropriate for the board to periodically review and if necessary modify ANS findings based on new information such as updated harvest and participation data. The board is required to make ANS findings under AS 156.05.258 (b).

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: ANS determinations allocate hunting opportunities, and the department therefore makes no recommendation on the ANS amount. We recommend that the board review harvest information (summarized in a department report) and public testimony to decide if a revision to the current finding of 600 moose is advisable. If so, we recommend expressing the ANS as a range, and basing the finding on data regarding harvests, numbers of hunters, success rates, transportation methods, and other information provided to the board by the public.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 97**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal changes the bag limit for moose in GMU 13 from Spike/Fork, 50 inch, 4BT to 36 inch, 3BT and creates a non-resident season for 50 inch, 4BT bulls.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: Moose numbers have increased in much of the unit with wolf management. However, large portions of the unit still have moose at low densities and cannot support a liberalized bull bag limit. Non-residents taking a 50 inch or 4 BT moose is an allocation issue only. See proposal # 95.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 98**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would change the bag limit on moose unit wide from bulls having 4 brow tines to those with 3 brow tines.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 95. Changing the bag limit to 3 brow tines was considered as a method to allow an increase in the bull harvest. However, there are large areas of the unit where moose have not increased and increased harvests probably should not occur. Also, by establishing small permit hunts, the department may liberalize or restrict hunting effort quickly, based on current count data.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 99**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: For Unit 13, this proposal lengthens the moose season by 1 day from 20 to 21 days, opens the season on 25 August instead of 1 September and closes the season on 15 September instead of 20 September. It changes the bag limit from Spike/Fork, 50 inch, 4 brow tines to 36 inch, 3 brow tines for residents and creates a season for non-residents with 50 inch or 4 brow tines. It also creates a 1 moose household bag limit.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: The one moose household bag limit and non-resident season are allocation issues. The 36 inch, 3 BT bag limit should not be adopted at this time because large portions of the unit still have moose at low densities and cannot support a liberalized bull bag limit. See proposal # 95. Moving the general moose season to an earlier time period could potentially reduce harvest given the warmer temperatures, leaf cover and bull inactivity. Hunter success increases during the season, coinciding with leaf fall and increased bull activity with the onset of the rut. Many hunters also prefer the end of the regular season due to the increased ability to call moose. There also may be legal complications with this change considering the Tier II hunt has historically been separated from the general season hunt dates in order to describe different ‘populations’. Currently, the only household bag limits are for Tier II hunts. Administering and monitoring a household bag limit for general hunts is impossible.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 100**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal creates a resident and nonresident bow hunting season from 1 Nov – 10 Nov for 50 inch, 4 brow tine bull moose in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Late fall hunts are not recommended in GMU 13 because bulls are considerably more susceptible. There is snow cover, lakes and streams are frozen, and access is good. Bulls are concentrated in upland habitats and are very accessible and highly visible. Bulls are vulnerable because their behavior at this time is focused on feeding in order to put on weight for the winter and recover from stress of the rut. Even though bow hunters are less successful individually, participation would be very high and so could the harvest. With this tremendous increase in hunting opportunity at a time where travel is easy and bulls vulnerable, even the success for bow hunters would increase.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 101**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal opens a nonresident season for bull moose with 50 inch or 3 brow tine requirement in subunit 13D.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Nonresident hunting is an allocation issue, but the regulation for non-residents should be consistent, and if allowed, on a unit wide basis. Also, the bag limit for nonresidents should not be more liberal, with a 3 brow tine regulation, but should be at least the same 4 brow tine requirement in effect for residents. With a 3 brow tine regulation, many more bulls would be legal for nonresidents than residents.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 102**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal creates a drawing permit hunt for non-residents in GMU 13D for 50 inch bull moose with season dates 10 August to 20 September.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 101. This is an allocation issue. Season dates should be the same as the resident season, not more liberal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 103**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal establishes a nonresident moose hunting season from 8 September – 17 September for moose with 50 inch, 4 BT in GMU 13.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Allowing nonresident moose hunting in GMU 13 is an allocation issue. However, for enforcement purposes the season dates should coincide with open dates for residents.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 104**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would change the resident bag limit for Dall sheep in GMU 11 from ¾ curl to full curl.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: As the sheep populations in GMU 11 have changed over time, the department has responded with regulatory proposals to maintain sustainability. The resident hunting regulation was any sheep through 2000, when it changed to any ram. Most recently we suggested the regulation change to ¾ curl ram in 2003. This bag limit is considered sustainable throughout GMU 11 given current ram:ewe ratios >30:100. The percentage of these rams classified as full-curl is also quite high throughout much of GMU 11. This regulation also allows for a subsistence priority under state law in a unit that is almost entirely federal land, where maintaining a subsistence priority is important to many local area resident hunters. We recognize the possibility that some rams may be harvested elsewhere, though reported taken in GMU 11. Over the past 3 years, genetic samples have been collected from over half of the rams harvested in GMU 11 (those sealed in Tok, Glennallen, and Palmer). These samples are being used in an US Geological Survey – Alaska Science Center research project looking at the variability in sheep from the Wrangell Mountains. Preliminary results have not suggested any false reporting locations.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 105**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would change the resident bag limit for Dall sheep in GMU 11 from ¾ curl to full curl.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 104.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 106**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create additional archery-only drawing permits for Dall sheep in 14A and 13D from 1-10 October, following the rifle season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue however the department does have concerns with the season dates. Permit numbers are currently based on the desired harvest and expected success rates in these units, and then allocated based on a split set by the Board (13D: 80% resident and 20% nonresident; 14A: 90% resident and 10% nonresident). Adding additional permits for archery, even given low success rates, would add to the harvest creating a conservation concern. The department would need to reduce the number of permits offered during the main drawing hunt if we were to maintain the desired harvest level. Additionally, creating a late season hunt is not recommended for the north side of the Chugach Mountain range in 13D due to weather considerations. The hunt access is almost entirely by aircraft, and even with the current season

dates, many pilots will not fly out hunters any later than September 10<sup>th</sup> given the potential for snowfall. There is already opportunity for archery participation during the regular season.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 107**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create additional archery-only drawing permits for sheep in 13D from 10 August – 15 October, with a bag limit of 1 full curl ram.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 106.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 108**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would do one of three things to sheep hunting regulations in GMU 13A:

- create harvest quotas for residents and nonresidents and allow the department to close the individual seasons once quotas are met
- create an early and a late season and allow the department to close individual seasons once quotas are met
- allow nonresidents to hunt only under a drawing hunt permit

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: There was limited background associated with this proposal; therefore it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed changes. Sheep hunting pressure in subunit 13A (eastern Talkeetna Mountains) has declined in recent years from a high of 441 hunters in 1995, to 276 in 2007. The percentage of nonresident hunters has been stable since 1998, averaging only 13%. Lower sheep numbers appear to have effectively reduced the number of hunters in this area, resident as well as nonresident. In general, establishing quotas for sheep hunts would be very difficult to enforce given the length of some individuals' hunts, and is not recommended. In recent surveys, the percentage of observed rams classified as full-curl or greater has averaged ~25%, and no trends are evident. Count numbers have been stable to increasing since 2006, and no further action is warranted to protect the population.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 109**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would establish drawing sheep hunts for nonresidents in the Talkeetna Mountains in 14A and 13A, and limit nonresident participation to 10% of the hunters in the field.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: See proposal # 108. Participation in the 13A general sheep hunt averages 87% resident and 13% nonresident, and participation in the Talkeetna portion of subunits 14A and 14B general sheep hunt averages 80% resident and 20% nonresident. In 2007 the Board adopted

new regulations in portions of Unit 13D and 14A within the Chugach range. The desire at the time by the department was to evaluate this new program before any new areas are added in a similar program. So far only one hunting season has taken place with the new system and there is not enough information to adequately evaluate.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 110**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would restrict the use of motorized vehicles and aircraft in GMUs 13 and 14. Specifically no use of an airplane up to 5 days before the start of a big game season. In addition it requests making subunit 14C a Controlled Use Area and closing the area to the use of motorized vehicles.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This proposal has allocation implications. The proposal as written also has far reaching and broad implications to management in these areas. Additionally it may be functionally impossible to determine if a plane that flew 5 days earlier was the same plane and passenger used to take a specific animal. Enforcement would be difficult. The board has the authority to restrict the use of an airplane for the purpose of hunting however does not have the authority to restrict the use of an airplane for other purposes.

Parts of subunit 14C are already closed to the use of motorized vehicles. Other areas have seasonal and even daily restrictions to the use of motorized vehicles. This mix of access opportunities allows hunters with different abilities and preferences to utilize the access of their choice.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 111**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require guide client agreements for all Dall sheep and goat hunts in Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See rationale for proposal 223.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 112**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would change the wolf bag limit subunit 13C that is in Wrangell St. Elias National Preserve from 10 wolves per day to 5 wolves annually.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on Federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The

Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

This change would complicate hunting regulations, confuse hunters and have no biological impact. Over the past 10 years, only one shot wolf has been sealed with the reported kill site close enough to this area to have possibly been taken on park lands. Trappers are the ones more likely to take the wolves in this area and they do not have a bag limit. The current bag limit for hunting has no impact on the wolf population in this area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 113**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would take a portion, the exact size and location not specified, of GMU 13A out of the wolf control implementation area in order to create a ‘control’ area not subject to wolf take.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Wolf predation has been studied in Unit 13 and elsewhere state-wide for many years. When the Unit 13 wolf and moose populations were modeled, using predation and productivity rates from past studies within the unit, the results showed that moose would continue to decline given the pre-control wolf densities. The observed increase in moose numbers in trend counts and in the harvest since the start of wolf control fall within the predicted response from the model. The current Unit 13 program is a good example of applying past years of research results to a management problem. In a sense, all of Unit 13 was a study control area between 1993 and 2000 when only trapping and hunting were legal methods of taking wolves. Wolves increased to a predicted record population level and moose declined by over 50%.

Additionally, the current Unit 13 wolf control implementation area essentially has a ‘control’ area south of the Glenn Highway in subunit 13D, the only subunit completely outside the implementation plan area. While moose numbers have increased north of the Glenn Highway, the number of moose counted in area 15 (central subunit 13D) has averaged 166 since 1988, nearly identical to the 171 counted in 2008. No trends are evident; the area continues to have low calf recruitment and overall survival.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 114**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would add the small strip of land between the Alaska Railroad and Susitna River from Gold Creek to the Talkeetna River into the wolf control area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Susitna River is a travel corridor for wolves and provides the only landing spots within this area. The current boundary somewhat limits the effectiveness of the program because of a lack of landing areas. The board should be aware that approximately 20 miles of this small strip of land is within Denali State Park.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **PROPOSAL 115**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create a preference point system for drawing hunts.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 241. Any point system adopted should apply statewide and not just to a few game management units. A preference point system would likely increase the chance of drawing a permit for those individuals that continually apply for, but haven't been drawn. The issue at hand is largely a perception of fairness. Some individuals have drawn multiple permits while others have gone years and never drawn one.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **PROPOSAL 116**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate use of all motorized vehicles for hunting in GMU 13A from 1 August to 30 September, as well as restrict the use of aircraft for hunting purposes unless flying into Department of Natural Resources permitted camps.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal would eliminate hunting over large portions of 13A during the fall for ORV users as well as resident hunters flying in to hunt. This area includes the Nelchina Public Use area which was specifically set aside for recreational purposes, including the use of ORV's for hunting. The western half of 13A is one of the most heavily used ORV areas in the unit because access elsewhere in the unit is limited. Displaced ORV hunters would be crowded into the remaining areas of GMU 13 as well as adjacent units with ORV access. Requiring aircraft to land only at permitted DNR camps for hunting purposes is also unrealistic. These permits are only issued to commercial users; this proposal would eliminate the ability of the transporter or private pilot to land hunters out-side of these commercial camps.

While hunter numbers and ORV trails may appear to be increasing in this area, current use is still lower than what it was during the early 1990s. Despite the unethical acts of a few individuals, wildlife populations are adequately protected through season dates, bag limits, antler regulations and quotas. Moose numbers are increasing in this area and the potential exists to increase

harvests due to successful predator management; this proposal would eliminate our ability to achieve higher harvests.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 117**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: The proposal does not address specific regulations, such as bag limits, season dates, or other rules, but presumably the desired action would restrict guided sea duck hunting in Unit 15 to control exploitation rates and maintain abundance in localized areas.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: No specific regulatory changes are requested, although the intent is to prevent local depletions of wintering sea ducks by restricting guided hunting in Kachemak Bay. The department and board have considered and addressed the concerns inherent in this proposal several times over the past ten years. A key issue in this proposal is concern about potential local depletions. The department and other wildlife agencies frame management efforts primarily at the population level, with consideration of status and trends of resources within regions. Currently, the department is managing waterfowl at the scale of regions, such as Cook Inlet and the Gulf Coast regulation zone. There is no evidence that wintering sea ducks are structured in small discrete subpopulations, and movements of many ducks within seasons and across years suggests substantial interchange of sea ducks within Cook Inlet and other regions. Aside from the lack of rationale for maintaining wintering ducks in individual small bays, coves, or estuaries, the department also has no practical way to monitor ducks or rationale for controlling harvest at that scale.

The department has concluded that sea duck harvest is not excessive in Kachemak Bay or in Cook Inlet. Boat surveys conducted during 1999-2003 indicate that 15-30,000 ducks winter in Kachemak Bay. State harvest survey data 1986-1992 show a 10-year average harvest of 1,500 sea ducks in all of Cook Inlet. More recent federal harvest are consistent with earlier state data, indicating that, statewide, less than 1,000 hunters harvest 4-5,000 sea ducks annually out of wintering areas that host over 250,000 sea ducks. In this context, guided hunting is not creating undue harvest; guiding is providing better quality public access to this specialized hunting.

Despite the lack of evidence that harvest is excessive, the board restricted sea duck bag limits for residents and non-residents in 1999 and further reduced resident daily bag limits for harlequin and long-tailed ducks from 10 to 6 in 2001. The department does not have concerns that sea ducks are being overharvested, either at local or regional scales, and concludes that further restrictions to hunting will not provide conservation benefits to regional winter aggregations or populations of sea ducks.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 118**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would close sandhill crane season in Unit 15C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal asserts that sandhill cranes around Homer constitute a “distinct and separate Homer subpopulation” that numbers about 200 cranes. The proposal cites results from incomplete and non-systematic surveys, but the data/results have not been made available to the department. The department and other Pacific Flyway wildlife agencies manage migratory birds primarily at the population level, with consideration of regional situations as needed. Cranes in the Kachemak Bay area are part of the Pacific Flyway Population (PFP) of lesser sandhill cranes which breeds from Cook Inlet westward to Bristol Bay and the Alaska Peninsula. The department works with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Pacific Coast states to manage all PFP cranes as a population. Although cranes are generally philopatric to breeding and wintering areas, there is no evidence that sandhill crane populations are structured in discrete subpopulations in small geographic areas. Satellite telemetry studies on PFP cranes by the department and studies of lesser sandhill cranes in the midcontinent have documented movements of cranes within and across years, indicating exchange of individuals and genetic composition across the range of populations. So far, cranes marked in the Homer area during summer 2008 have followed the fall migration path of other PFP cranes to their traditional wintering grounds. Thus, the department finds no reason to conclude that cranes in the Kachemak Bay area are a discrete population unit that warrants separate management.

Based on the assumption that Kachemak cranes are a separate population, the proposer argues that even a small harvest is detrimental. The department does not recognize Kachemak Bay cranes as a valid population unit and believes that harvest of PFP cranes is modest at best. Although breeding ground surveys are not feasible, winter estimates in California suggest a population of 15-20,000 PFP lesser sandhill cranes. There are no hunting seasons for PFP cranes in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California, but only because the PFP mix with small populations of greater sandhill cranes that are at risk or listed as threatened or endangered south of Alaska. Therefore, crane hunting in southern Alaska constitutes the only harvest of PFP cranes, averaging 375 cranes (3%) annually over the past 10 years. Harvest in the Cook Inlet region has averaged 130 cranes since 1971.

The proposal cites other threats to Homer cranes, largely based on the assumption that they are a small, separate population. Although all migratory birds face habitat degradation and disturbance, the Pacific Flyway has not identified any critical threats to PFP cranes, and continues to focus conservation efforts mainly on greater sandhill cranes. In Homer, the city is taking steps to phase out eagle feeding that occurs in winter when cranes are not present.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 119**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Lengthen trapping season for beaver in units 7 and 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: For almost 50 years, the beaver trapping season in units 7 and 15 has not started earlier than November 10. The current season (November 10 - March 31) has been in place since 1997. The season ended on April 30 in Unit 15 during the 1960s and 1970s, but has ended on March 31 in units 7 and 15 since 1982. The bag limit has been 20 beaver in units 7 and 15 since 1982.

Extending the season to April 30 would align units 7 and 15 with the season dates for Unit 6 (subunit 6D shares a common boarder with Unit 7). There are areas that could sustain more harvest, but if the season is extended, we recommend that traps must be set under water/ice because all other trapping seasons are closed by March 31 in units 7 and 15. Also, if modifications are made to existing State seasons we prefer that the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge adopt the same season dates.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 120**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Prohibit trapping beaver in a portion of GMU 15C around Homer.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, it is illegal to trap within the city limits of Homer. Information from sealing reports suggests that harvest is within sustainable limits. The harvest around the proposed area has fluctuated between 2-40 beaver for the past 20 years. Interest in beaver trapping is currently very low. The department has no knowledge that trapping in the proposed area has depleted the beaver population within these drainage systems. However, even if excessive harvests have occurred in some localized areas, there are existing source populations along the Anchor River and nearby systems that would allow for dispersal and reestablishment.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 121**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Closes the trapping season for red fox in Units 7 and 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: By all current standards, red fox on the Kenai Peninsula are not considered a unique subspecies and do not require special protections for this reason. Fox farming was common on the Kenai Peninsula in the early 1900s, but once the industry ended, it was not uncommon to simply release any remaining stock. Today, red fox are uncommon on the Kenai Peninsula and it is likely that those that remain have genetic influences from fox released after the fox farming industry collapsed. Also, fox numbers likely suffered with the growth of coyotes in the 1920s -1930s and wolves in the 1950s.

Currently in units 7 and 15, there is a bag limit of one fox per year by trapping and there is no fox hunting season. On the rare occasion that a fox is trapped, it is caught incidentally in a trap set to catch other species. If it became illegal to trap red fox, there may actually be less information provided by trappers who fail to surrender a fox caught incidentally in order to avoid a fine and confiscation of the pelt. The department does not object to adding red fox from units 7 and 15 to the list of furbearers that require sealing and requiring the skinned carcass to be turned in at the time of sealing. The department recognizes the concern of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge but believes we would potentially lose the opportunity to collect biological data if the trapping season for fox were closed in units 7 and 15.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 122**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Limits bag limit for marten in Unit 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The marten season in units 7 and 15 has been November 10 - January 31 since 1982. Sealing marten was initiated in 1988 in order to track harvests. Since 1988, over 96% of the marten harvest in units 7 and 15 has occurred in Unit 7. In the past 20 years, only 56 marten have been sealed from Unit 15, averaging 3 marten a year. Unit 15 is not prime marten habitat and they only occupy limited areas, although their range may be expanding to some areas in Unit 15A not previously known to support populations. This apparent expansion occurred under the existing season and unlimited bag limit. At this time the department does not see any benefit to limiting the season or bag limit for marten in Unit 15.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 123**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Limit season and bag limit of wolverine in Unit 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The wolverine season in units 7 and 15 was from November 10 - March 31 from the 1960s through 1988 when it was restricted to November 10 - February 28. There has never been a bag limit restriction in units 7 and 15. The wolverine harvest has fluctuated between 6-48/year in Units 7&15 and has averaged 22/year for over 30 years. The department does not support a restricted bag limit or a shorter season length at this time. There are areas either closed to trapping (Kenai Fjords National Park) or effectively closed due to isolation or snow machine restrictions imposed by other federal land managers (Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, Chugach National Forest) which affords the population a large effective refugia. There are no indications that the population requires additional trapping restrictions at this time.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 124**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Remove requirement of leaving evidence of sex on the hide of brown bears and black bears and allow the option of salvaging the meat or the hide of black bears taken from July 1 – December 31 in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: A mandatory sealing program for bears was established in 1973. The requirement to leave evidence of sex on the hide of bears was initiated in 1992 in order to provide accurate sex ratio information of the harvests. In 1997, the salvage of black bear meat was required for bears taken between January 1 - May 31. Accurate assessment of the sex of both black and brown bears taken on the Kenai Peninsula is still a tool needed by managers. Brown bears are a high profile population on the Kenai and managers need all information

currently taken from skulls and hides brought in by hunters. Inspecting brown bear hides allows managers to inspect for tattoos which provide valuable information on marked bears. Leaving evidence of sex on the hide and having the hide sealed is the best method currently available to provide this important information.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 125**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allows for the sale of black bear hides in units 7 and 15 under a predation control plan

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Over 70% of units 7 and 15 is managed by federal agencies (Kenai Fjords National Park, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, and Chugach National Forest). Of the remaining 30% of the land, most is private or native land holdings and is within the main human populated areas. There currently is no predator control plan for units 7 and 15. Initiating a predator management effort in an area with limited state land would not be efficacious. The current harvest of black bears has grown significantly in the past several years and the department does not currently recommend liberalizations that would greatly increase harvests. (See rationale for proposal 126).

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 126**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Liberalize the bag limit for black bears in units 7 and 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: The bag limit for black bears in units 7 and 15 was 3 bears/year from statehood until 1994 when it was restricted to one bear in the spring (January 1 - June 30) and one bear in the fall (July 1- December 31) due to concerns by the department of a growing harvest. Since the restriction was made in 1994, the harvest has continued to increase, especially the nonresident portion of the harvest. Much of this nonresident harvest occurs through the use of non-guided transporters based out of Seward or Homer and focus hunters exclusively along the coastal areas. It is believed that an increase in the nonresident bag limit to >1 bear could greatly increase the harvest in a relatively localized area and could negatively impact the bear population along the coast. A nonresident hunter who is already spending a lot of money on plane travel/hotel/transporter expenses would likely buy a second or third black bear tag (\$225/black bear). Transported hunts are a very important industry locally and black bear populations appear to be stable under current bag limits.

We recommend changing the resident bag limit to 2 bears/year and not have the split season between spring and fall. We believe that would provide a better opportunity for residents that wish to hunt more than one bear during a particular trip without greatly increasing the overall harvest numbers. We recommend a nonresident bag limit of 1 bear/year. While this recommended change would actually restrict the non-resident harvest from 2 bears (1 in the spring and 1 in the fall) to 1 bear/ year, records show that of the 1143 black bears killed by non-

residents in the past 10 years, only 1 non-resident hunter (who resides part time in Seldovia) has taken 2 bears within a regulatory year. Our proposed amendment allowing a 2 bears/year bag for residents and a 1 bear/yr bag limit for non-residents would simplify the current regulations while allowing for an increment change in hunting opportunity for residents.

The number of females in the harvest is low. Managers believe that the current harvest levels are sustainable but wish to make incremental changes in allowing additional opportunities. If our amendment is adopted, we could assess the effect of this regulation change in the harvest over the next several years. If there are no negative population trends and additional opportunity is available, the department would consider supporting additional liberalizations.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 127**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Increases black bear baiting season and changes bag limit in Units 7&15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: About 20% of the current black bear harvest occurs through baiting. We believe the current season dates provides adequate opportunity to harvest black bears over bait. By mid-June there is an increase in other recreational activities on the Kenai, and the potential for user conflicts would increase. Also, see analysis and recommendation for proposal 126.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 128**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow for the sale of black bear hides in Unit 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The only area where the sale of black bear hides is legal is in areas that have approved predator control plans in place and the Kenai does not have any approved predator management programs. Also, see rational for proposal 126. Reclassification of black bear to furbearer status should happen at a statewide meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 129**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Open a nonresident brown bear season in Unit 7 requiring a guide-client agreement.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The current drawing season for brown bears in Units 7&15 has been in place for 2 years. Therefore, the board could allow for a nonresident season for brown bears in Units 7&15 with the department deciding on which hunting units to open and the number of permits to issue for non-residents. The department does not see the need to require a guide/client agreement before nonresidents apply.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 130**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Open a general hunt for brown bears in Unit 7

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: The department currently has flexibility in how many drawing permits to issue (up to 50) and in the creation of discrete hunting units. We will continue to adjust and adapt the drawing hunts to address existing problems.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 131**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Creates and archery hunt for brown bears in Unit 7

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation proposal. See proposals 132 and 129.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 132**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Liberalizes the drawing season for brown bear in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: The current drawing season for brown bears in units 7 and 5 is October 1 - November 30, and April 1 – June 15. The maximum number of permits the department can issue is 50. We recommend that the fall portion of the brown bear season open on September 15 to allow additional opportunity to permit holders. We do not recommend changing the current spring season dates.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 133**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Recommends guidance on how to liberalize brown bear quota to allow more hunting and increase mortality of bears in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: The department determines the management guidelines used to control brown bear hunting in units 7 and 15 based on various factors depending on trends in mortality and other information.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 134**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Limits and changes the season dates for the brown bear drawing hunt in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: This proposal would reduce the current hunting opportunity for brown bear in units 7 and 15. See analysis and recommendation for proposal 132.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 135**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Recommends focusing the harvest of brown bears in areas where most defense of life or property (DLP) take occurs in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: The department appreciates the proposal author’s intent on advising the department regarding management of Kenai brown bears and allowing field staff the ability to make management determinations. The department currently has the flexibility to create and adjust the management guidelines used to determine desired harvest pressure for brown bears.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 136**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Shifts fall portion of the brown bear season (units 7 and 15) one month earlier, recommends management guidelines used to open fall brown bear hunting (units 7 and 15), and recommends the ‘delisting’ of Kenai brown bears (units 7 and 15) as a Species of Special Concern.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposals 132 and 129. Regarding the ‘delisting’ of Kenai brown bears (units 7 and 15), the department is currently reviewing all species listed under this administrative designation in order to reassess whether the listing is warranted. This action is outside of the authority of the Board of Game.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 137**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Lengthens brown bear season and creates a baiting season for brown bears in units 7 and 15

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 132.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 138**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allows for an earlier spring season and a later fall season for brown bears in Unit 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 132.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 139**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Recommends issuing more brown bear drawing permits in Unit 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendations for proposals 130, 132, 135, 136.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 140**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Opens a fall general season for brown bears in unit 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 130 and 132.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 141**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Creates an archery hunt for brown bears in Unit 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 130 and 132.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 142**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Decrease goat bag limit for nannies to one every 5 years in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 143**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require a guide-client agreement for nonresident goat hunters in Unit 7

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Typically, the number of drawing permits for goats in units 7 and 15 awarded to nonresidents is less than 5% of the total number of permits issued. A portion of these nonresident hunters are likely 'guided' by a second-degree-kindred relative. We believe that the current low level of nonresident hunting does not require a guide-client agreement at this time. Registered guides are certainly able to encourage prospective clients in applying for drawing hunts and securing agreements without a formal guide-client agreement requirement in regulation.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 144**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Eliminate restrictions of the Seward Closed Area by allowing for a new drawing hunt for mountain goats in the area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The Seward Closed Area is about 16 mi<sup>2</sup> in size and is west of the city of Seward. It was established in the early 1970s and was amended in 1974 from a restriction of no hunting to restrict only big game hunting. Black bears were allowed to be hunted in the area in 1999. Therefore, currently the area is closed to the taking of big game, except black bear. Much of this area is outside the Seward city limits, therefore not subject to the current city ordinance not allowing hunting. The department does not have a recommendation regarding eliminating this area from its current hunting closure; that is an allocation issue. There are no biological concerns with opening the area to hunting. Regarding creation of a goat drawing area, the department currently has flexibility to change hunt boundaries or create a new hunt area for mountain goats should the closed area restriction be lifted. However, the current closed area is small and not likely able to hold a large enough goat population to sustain an independent hunt. If the closure was lifted, the department would likely add the current closed area boundaries to the current goat hunt area 347. This would give permit winners of DG347 more area to spread their hunting efforts but would not likely result in an increase in the number of available permits.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 145**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require that all moose taken in units 7 and 15 have their antlers sealed by ADF&G within 15 days of the kill.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Requiring moose antlers to be sealed by the department would certainly allow for the assessment of legal vs. illegal moose harvest, assuming that hunters who take illegal moose would still bring in their moose antlers for sealing. The current Kenai Peninsula staff of 3 individuals would have a difficult time conducting the sealing. It is likely that staff would not be able to conduct normal job duties during this period due to the added task of sealing moose antlers. The department is confident that the Alaska Division of Wildlife Troopers would be

willing to investigate reports of illegal activity regarding moose harvests, even without the sealing requirement.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 146**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Eliminate the general moose hunting season in units 7 and 15A and create a limited drawing hunt for spike-fork bulls only in these units.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The moose population in subunit 15A peaked in the 1980s in response to the significant fire that occurred in 1969. Since that time, the population has steadily declined and is currently about half the size it was in the 1980s. The moose population in this area has historically been driven by the frequency and extent of wildfire. No significant fires have occurred since 1969. The moose harvest has declined concomitantly with population size. There has not been a formal census of the moose in Unit 7; however our trend count areas show that moose numbers have been relatively low in Unit 7 for decades. With the advent of the S/F-50" antler restriction in 1987, managers believe that there is no population-based reason to eliminate the general season and replace it with a limited drawing hunt. Despite declines in subunit 15A and continued low densities in Unit 7, the department believes that the protections afforded in the current regulations allow for sustainable hunting while keeping the bull:cow ratios within management objectives even during our current population decline in subunit 15A.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 147**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Close all moose hunting in Units 7&15A for 3 years.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 146.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 148**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Shifts the season dates for moose hunting in units 7 and 15 later in the season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The season in Units 7&15 has been August 20 – September 20 since 1993. (An archery-only season from August 10 - 17 was initiated in subunits 15A and B in 1995 and 1999, respectively). The season was September 1 - 20 from 1975 through 1992 in Unit 15 and ranged between a 10-20 day season in September in Unit 7 during this period. Recent composition data (fall 2008) indicate the number of large bulls (50"/3 brow-tines) may be decreasing in some areas. If the limited data that were obtained in 2008 accurately reflects the bull:cow ratios over larger areas, we would be below management objectives. The additional 5 days (September 21-25) identified in this proposal would likely increase the harvest of large bulls. The proposed shift

in the season date would effect the date specific restrictions in the Kenai Controlled Use Area in subunit 15A and the Lower Kenai Control Use Area of subunit 15C. Most notably, the department prefers to keep season dates in units 7 and 15 generally aligned with other south-central units. The proposal would also create an archery-only season in units 7 and 15C. Currently, only subunits 15A and B have an archery-only season. The department appreciates the effort by the author to move the starting date back to promote better meat care and to address the issue with antler development, but we would anticipate little change in the moose harvests in units 7, 15B and 15C, given the current federal subsistence seasons in those units.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 149**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Eliminate the spike-fork portion of the bag limit for moose in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The bull:cow ratios throughout units 7 and 15 have generally been above management objectives, but limited data from fall 2008 indicate bull:cow ratios may be dropping below objectives in some areas. Spike-fork antlered bulls account for a large portion of the yearly harvest, however, if the trend in lower bull:cow ratios is consistent over large areas and persists, the department will likely recommend eliminating fork antlered bulls as a legal moose to harvest at a future Board of Game meeting.

At this time, managers believe that maintaining the spike-fork component of the bag limit in units 7 and 15 would not negatively impact the overall health of the moose populations. Removal of the spike-fork portion of the bag limit would greatly reduce harvests and put subunit 15C below intensive management harvest objectives.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 150**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: expands the bag limit for subunit 15B-east drawing permits for moose to include spike-fork bulls.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 151**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorizes antlerless moose season in a portion of subunit 15C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 152**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize antlerless moose season in portion of 15A, the Skilak Loop Management Area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 153**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish wolf control plan for units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Over 70% of Units 7 and 15 are lands under federal land management (Kenai Fjords National Park, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, and Chugach National Forest). Of the remaining 30% most is private or native holdings and within residential areas. Initiating a predator management effort in units 7 and 15 would not be efficacious unless federal land managers allowed the program to occur on federal lands as well. Moose populations on the Kenai Peninsula have been identified for intensive management in subunits 15A and 15C.

The population objective for subunit 15A is 3000-3500 with a harvest objective of 180-350. The last census conducted in subunit 15A in 2007 estimated 1405-1934 (95% confidence interval) moose, well below the objective. The harvest in subunit 15A has been within the objective only once in the past 10 years. Almost all of the land in subunit 15A is within the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

The population objective for subunit 15C is 2500-3500 with a harvest objective of 200-350. The moose population in subunit 15C is currently within the intensive management population objective according to the last survey conducted in 2002 (2508-3454, 95% confidence level). The harvest in subunit 15C has been within the objective every year except one in the past 10 years.

Hunting regulations allow for wolves to be taken with a 5-wolf bag limit. The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge further restricts the bag to 2. There is no bag limit for wolves taken under a trapping license.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 154**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish new predator control area in Unit 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See analysis and recommendation for proposal 153.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 155**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allocates a portion of the drawing permits for Dall sheep, mountain goat, and brown bear in Unit 7 to nonresidents.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. Currently there are no drawing permits allocated specifically for nonresidents for goats and sheep in units 7 and 15. Typically, the number of drawing permits for goats in units 7 and 15 awarded to nonresidents is less than 5% of the total number of permits issued. A portion of these nonresident hunters are likely ‘guided’ by a second-degree-kindred relative. There are only 2 small areas that are only open for drawing hunts for sheep in units 7 and 15. Historically, less than 1% (2 out of 295) of sheep drawing permits issued in the past 10 years in units 7 and 15 have gone to nonresidents. The drawing hunt for brown bears in units 7 and 15 was established 2 years ago as a resident-only hunt. We recommended in proposal 129 that the board give the department the ability to designate some brown bear permits to non-residents. The department believes that there can be some nonresident hunting for brown bears on the Kenai Peninsula while still maintaining bear management goals.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 156**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Removes restrictions of the Seward Closed Area and overrides Seward City Ordinance by allowing discharge of firearms within city limits.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: It is the board’s authority to change, amend, or maintain the restrictions of the Seward Closed Area. The Seward Closed Area is about a 16mi<sup>2</sup> area west of the city of Seward. It was established in the early 1970s and was amended in 1974 from a restriction of no hunting to only restrict big game. Black bears were allowed to be hunted in the area in 1999. Therefore, currently the area is closed to the taking of big game, except black bear. Much of this area is outside the Seward city limits, therefore not subject to the current city ordinance not allowing hunting. The department does not have any biological concerns with eliminating this area from its current hunting closure; that is an allocation issue. However, this closure has had support from the local advisory committee in the past.

There currently is a Seward City Ordinance that does not allow for discharge of firearms.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 157**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Changes wording on the date of the close of trapping seasons to account for Leap years in units 7 and 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: This is essentially a house keeping proposal and probably should be addressed in a statewide meeting. There are no population level reasons to oppose this proposal for units 7 and 15. It allows trapping 1 additional day every 4 years (leap years) for certain species. The real issue is if a trapper forgets that it is a leap year, he/she cannot be cited for trapping certain species on February 29<sup>th</sup>.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 158**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Eliminate the need for bear hunters to check in and out of Kodiak.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The current drawing hunt system for Kodiak bears was established in 1976-77, including dividing the Unit into small hunt areas, requiring successful permittees to pick up their permits in person at the Kodiak office, and requiring that all bears killed in Unit 8 be sealed within the Unit. These regulations were established to: 1) better distribute hunting pressure around the Unit; 2) assure that hunters knew where they were allowed to hunt and the unit-specific restrictions; and, 3) keep accurate and timely records of all bears that were harvested. This system has proven successful during the past 32 years and there has been an increase in both the number of bears harvested and the percentage of bears that were trophy-class. While the current program presents an additional burden to both hunters and staff, with rare exception, most agree that the inconvenience is a small price to pay for the privilege of being able to hunt this world-class resource. To minimize the hassle, area wildlife staff volunteer to seal bears for hunters that come in after normal working hours and during weekends.

We feel that the current system provides critical information for managing the hunt, has worked well for a long time, and is well-accepted by most hunters. Wildlife staff at other area offices cannot be expected to understand the intricacies of the Kodiak bear hunt while dealing with their own areas of responsibility, so allowing permits or sealing to occur in those areas would increase their workload and reduce the quality of the information given to and obtained from hunter. Consequently, we are opposed to any relaxation of the in-unit permitting or sealing requirements.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 159**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Initiate sustained-yield management of feral reindeer in Unit 8 by restricting bag limit and open season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: In 1932, 24 reindeer were introduced the south end of Kodiak Island to establish a reliable terrestrial meat source and economic opportunity for local residents. The industry never became established, and by the 1950s the herd was no longer managed and the reindeer ran free. They were declared feral in the early 1960s. The department continues to monitor herd status with periodic surveys and by documenting reported harvests, but we do not manage the herd. Hunters are required obtain a caribou harvest ticket (nonresidents must also have a caribou

tag) prior to pursuing Kodiak reindeer and all meat must be salvaged; however, there is no closed season or bag limit and same-day-airborne hunting has been authorized since 2001/02. Average annual reported harvest prior to 2002 was less than 10, and average annual harvest from 2002-2007 was 20.8 (range 17-31). Herd sizes have ranged from 200 – 300 animals for at least the past 30 years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 160**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Initiate sustained-yield management of feral reindeer in Unit 8 by restricting bag limit and prohibiting same-day-airborne hunting.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: In 1932, 24 reindeer were introduced the south end of Kodiak Island to establish a reliable terrestrial meat source and economic opportunity for local residents. The industry never became established, and by the 1950s the herd was no longer managed and the reindeer ran free. They were declared feral in the early 1960s. The department continues to monitor herd status with periodic surveys and by documenting reported harvests, but we do not manage the herd. Hunters are required obtain a caribou harvest ticket (nonresidents must also have a caribou tag) prior to pursuing Kodiak reindeer and all meat must be salvaged; however, there is no closed season or bag limit and same-day-airborne hunting has been authorized since 2001/02. Average annual reported harvest prior to 2002 was less than 10 reindeer, and average annual harvest from 2002-2007 was 20.8 (range 17-31). Herd sizes have ranged from 200 – 300 animals for at least the past 30 years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 161**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Initiate a harvest report card for Unit 8 deer hunters with specific questions on the testicular development of all male deer that are harvested.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Deer harvest activity is currently monitored by a questionnaire that is sent out to a random sample of individuals who obtained deer harvest tickets. Each year approximately half of harvest ticket holders are sent questionnaire surveys in January and two reminder letters are sent to non-respondents. Those selected for the survey are asked if they hunted, and for each hunting trip: how many deer of which sex they killed, how many days they hunted, and where they hunted. The survey results are statistically expanded on a community-level basis to give an estimate of deer kill, hunting effort, and success rates for all hunters. Data derived from survey results are statistically extrapolated to reflect total harvest activity by hunt area and time period. In addition to statistically-valid harvest and effort estimates, this technology allows detailed analysis of harvest distribution (down to the watershed level), determination of areas important to particular communities, and provides hunter success by location which is useful to the public. Although effort and harvest estimates are obtainable via harvest tickets, we believe the data quality and quantity from mail-out surveys is much better and that the questionnaires are a cost effect tool. The mail-out questionnaire survey was developed to address problems with harvest

ticket reporting and we have seen acceptable results for over 20 years, and our recommendation remains the same as in 1999, 2001, and 2003 when similar proposals were considered. We have been collecting data on abnormal deer periodically since 1999, however, we do not ask questions as specific as those recommended in this proposal because of variance in hunter perception of deer anatomy. The results of those questions suggest that unitwide the proportion of abnormal deer was: 1999 – 2.6%, 2000 – 1.2%, 2002 – 1.9%, and 2003 – 1.3% with the majority of incidents reported from the Aliulik and Hepburn Peninsulas on the south end of Kodiak Island.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 162**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Initiate an archery-only elk hunting season from September 1 – 25 on all of Afognak Island.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: We do not have a recommendation on the establishment of an archery-only season because that is an allocation issue; however, we are opposed to the season dates. Elk numbers on Afognak Island have decreased from 960 in 2005 to 640 in 2008 due to higher than anticipated overwinter mortality and reduced productivity. We plan to reduce harvest rates to < 10% of the herd this fall by reducing the number of drawing permits in all areas and closing registration hunts by emergency order as soon as herd harvest targets are met. We do not favor adoption of this proposal because it would increase the hunting season by 15 days during the rut and potentially increase harvest and disrupt rutting activities at a time when we are working toward increasing herd sizes.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 163**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Increase harvest opportunities on a growing portion of the Kodiak mountain goat herd by combining the Unit 8 drawing mountain goat hunts DG 475 and DG 477 and the registration hunts RG 475 and RG 477 into a single registration hunt that runs from August 20 – December 15.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal was developed in close coordination with department and Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge staff as well as members of the Federal Regional Advisory Committee and local residents. The logic and biology behind the proposal is sound and represents a viable way of increasing hunter opportunity without jeopardizing the mountain goat population.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 164**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allocate 30% of all Unit 8 mountain goat permits to nonresident hunters.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The department received 2,736 applications for the 500 drawing permits available in Unit 8 in 2008, including 14% that were from nonresident hunters. This proposal would essentially double the chances that nonresident hunters would be chosen for a permit. In recent years the mountain goat population on the northern part of Kodiak Island has been stable to decreasing while the number of goats on the southern part of the island has increased substantially. If Proposal 163 were adopted nonresident hunters would have an unlimited number of registration permits available to them in those southern areas. This may satisfy the desires of the proposer without impacting the odds of resident or nonresident hunters getting a permit for the northern areas.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 165**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow all Kodiak goat registration permits to be issued in-season.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: Current mountain goat permit issuance restrictions were adopted by the board in 2005 after consultation with the departments of Law and Fish and Game and with the Kodiak Fish and Game Advisory Committee. The restrictions help minimize over-crowding and potential over-harvest of goat herds that can provide only limited hunter opportunities after the drawing hunts are finished. In many areas, elimination of the permit issuance restrictions would result in elimination of the registration hunts. If Proposal 163 is adopted, over half of Kodiak Island will be open for registration goat hunts and permits will be available in a several venues, thereby addressing the concern that it is difficult for non-local Alaskans to obtain a goat permit.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 166**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Open bear baiting in Unit 16 Predator Control Area (PCA) to all summer, reduce the distance from bait stations to cabins to 600 feet, allow the taking of black bears with snares, and allow the taking of up to 2 brown bears at black bear bait stations

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently available data suggests that the majority of the predation on moose is on calves taken by black bears. This proposal as written is not supported by the department; however the desire to allow the taking of bears with snares is addressed in the A&R's regarding black bear predator control in proposals 170 and 171. There is sufficient justification to support bear baiting season under control throughout the summer and this is addressed in proposal 168.

Although there has been a two brown bear bag limit in effect in Unit 16B since 2005, there is not a brown bear control program in Unit 16 and as such the department is opposed to the taking of brown bears over bait. Also, reported brown bear harvests in the unit during recent years are much larger than historic averages. Based on recent brown bear harvest levels and reports by bear guides and other hunters, the department intends to monitor the brown bear take through the next BOG cycle before considering brown bear control measures such as brown bear baiting.

The department is opposed to reducing the distance from bait stations to cabins to 600 feet because of the large number of recreational cabins located in the Unit 16 PCA and the likelihood that bears would become more of a nuisance. There is adequate open area in the unit to allow for optimal baiting opportunities without having to jeopardize private property and create potential conflict between homeowners and control activities in the area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 167**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Increase the bag limit to 3 black bear per year in subunit 14A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Based on the rationale that subunit 14A has no closed season and the one bear a year bag limit provides ample opportunity while minimizing nuisance bear complaints in and around Palmer, Wasilla, and associated communities. There is no biological data or justification to raise the limit on black bears in the unit. The moose population is above objective and shows a high calf to cow ratio. There is currently no reason to believe raising the black bear bag limit in subunit 14A will do anything other than provide less desire by the public to travel to the Unit 16 predator management area to take black bears. This proposal would be counter productive in the Board of Game’s desire to increase harvest of black bears in Unit 16.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 168**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow the use of helicopters in the Unit 16 Predator Control Area, no closed baiting period, youth under 16 can participate in predator control under the permit of parent or guardian, permittees may establish, maintain, and hunt on other permittees bait stations with written permission, and non-residents may be permitted to participate in the program

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and Adopt**

RATIONALE: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

The department supports the addition of methods and means to increase the overall effectiveness of the black bear predation control program in unit 16. Helicopter use would be allowed within guidelines established by the department for permittees as outlined in a separate permit issued to the pilot with specific conditions. This would allow for permittees to access otherwise inaccessible areas to take bears.

The department supports the continuation of the baiting period through the summer with a fall closing date the same as or earlier than the current date in regulation. This will allow the taking of bears from 1 July to 9 August, a currently restricted time period.

Resident youth participation would be supported while under the direct supervision and accompaniment of a permitted adult while any bears taken would be recorded and sealed by the adult as part of his/her reported control black bear take. Other permittees may currently maintain and hunt on the other permittees bait stations as long as they have a black bear control permit and registration permit control bait station. The department would support other permittees taking bears over another's control bait station without being registered as long as the permittee has written permission to do so and does not independently participate in establishing and/or maintaining the bait in any manner. This is similar to the current general bear baiting regulations except that the department will require that all bears taken by said permittee must record the control bait site's registration number on all reports regarding any bears taken over the control bait.

The department is opposed to the participation of nonresidents in any control program because of the similarity in costs associated with sport hunting and control activities (i.e., non-resident license and tag fees, transportation costs, etc.). Also, the perception that hunting by non-residents is the same as non-resident control activities would blur the distinction between the two activities thereby jeopardizing the current public support for sport hunting and control programs.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 169**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow youth under 16 to participate in predator control under the direct supervision of a permit holder.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 168.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 170**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Amend regulations to allow the use of traps and snares for predator control.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: See the "additional predator management comments" link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

This proposal outlines the specific regulatory language to be changed to allow the department to participate and/or allow others to trap or snare bears for the purpose on predation control. Given the desire by the public, the board, and the department to realize measurable increases in moose calf recruitment in the Unit 16 Predation Control Area, there is sufficient justification to consider and employ non-traditional methods to effectively reduce predator numbers and predation on moose calves. Trapping and /or snaring of black bears is one of the methods that has been proposed and is considered for the current predation control program. There is support for this method provided that certain conditions are met as described in a permit issued to selected individuals who have demonstrated appropriate knowledge and ability. Selected private individuals or contracted professionals such as USDA –APHIS control agents would be permitted to conduct trapping and/or snaring of black bears. Training for permittees would be provided by the department or other qualified individuals and protocols established to address non-target catches (e.g., brown bears) when they occur.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 171**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow the use of traps for black bear control in Unit 16.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 168.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 172**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the brown bear bag limit in Unit 14(B) to one bear a year.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: Although Unit 14 has met or exceeded the brown bear human-use objective of 10 to 15 bears, subunit 14B has unique characteristics as compared to subunits 14A and 14C and shows a significantly reduced moose population. The brown bear harvest objective for Unit 14 was established in 1999 based partially on average brown bear harvests during the 1990’s. Since 2000, the reported harvest has averaged 19 bears per year for all of Unit 14 and 10 bears for subunit 14B.

The department does not have recent data on the size of the brown bear population in subunit 14B. Anecdotal evidence, nuisance complaints, and reports by guides, hunters, and anglers indicate that the population is healthy. Given that most of the unit is remote, rugged, thickly vegetated and with limited access, increasing the brown bear limit to one bear a year is not likely to have a negative effect on the population.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 173**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change brown bear season dates in subunit 16A from September 1 to May 31, to August 10 to May 31.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, there is limited information available on the brown bear population in subunit 16A. The reported harvest is typically low, although reports of brown bear activity at black bear bait stations is fairly common. There are periodic nuisance reports and occasional calls from the public for brown bear reductions. Given the largely roadless nature of the area and the thick spruce forests and alder stands, there is little reason to believe that an earlier starting date for the brown bear season in subunit 16A would result in any significant changes in harvest.

The change would result in an alignment of season dates with the adjacent subunit 16B. It is possible that a few more bears could be taken, although the unit is bordered to the north by Denali National Park and to the east by the thickly forested and rugged subunit 14B. Because of the reduced or lack of harvest opportunity in these adjacent areas, these areas provide natural refugia for the brown bear population in this part of the middle Susitna River drainage.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 174**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: In the Denali National Preserve portion of subunit 16B change the brown bear bag limit to 1 bear every 4 years and change the season dates to September 1 to May 25.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

No hunter in the Denali Natural Preserve portion subunit 16B has reported taking more than one brown bear in that area since the liberalized season and bag limits have been in place. Creating separate bag limits for areas inside and outside of the preserve would unnecessarily create more regulation and confuse hunters (20 bears have been taken in Uniform Coding Units - UCU's 1101, 1201, and 903 since 1998, all from different hunters).

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 175**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the caribou season in subunit 16B from August 10 to September 30, to August 10 to October 5.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The Board of Game generally does not support extending hunting into the season that is considered the beginning of the rut. The season in subunit 16B was lengthened 10 days at the last BOG Southcentral spring meeting in March 2007. The area has not been surveyed to evaluate the caribou population in over 12 years. The adjacent Area Management Biologist for subunit 19C (McGrath) does not support expanding the season. There is no reasonable justification to expand the current season without at first considering season expansion in adjacent subunit 19C, where these animals spend a considerable amount of their time in the fall.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 176**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Move the archery season for moose in subunit 14A from August 10 to 17, to September 23 to 30.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: The department is not in support of moving an archery season to a period previously subject to general season hunting opportunity. It would effectively become an allocative discussion. Also, this proposal should be considered relative to the direction the board takes on proposal 180.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 177**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Make some antlerless moose permits in subunit 14A archery only.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. However, the department will examine the permit allocation with and without archery permits. We assume that more total antlerless permits would be available with the additional archery antlerless permits because of the shorter archery season and lower bow hunter success rates.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 178**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize antlerless moose hunts in subunit 14A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 179**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change moose archery season dates for subunits 14A and 14B from August 10 to August 17, to November 1 to November 7.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: Based on the rationale that the board fails to adopt proposal 180. In addition, a post rut open archery hunt may subject already stressed bulls to further harassment and snow levels could make it easier to find and pursue bulls. Biologically, the department is not supportive of an open late-season hunt for moose, regardless of the type of weapon allowed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 180**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change moose season dates for subunits 14B and 16A from August 10 to 17 (archery) to August 20 to 28 (archery) and August 20 to September 20 (general season), to September 1 to 25 (general season).

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: The department would like to add subunit 14A to this proposal. These dates provide an opportunity to manage harvest with a more desirable season structure and align season dates in the south-central region with the addition of subunit 14A and a probable Tier I hunt in subunit 16B. The later start dates would decrease the possibility of meat spoilage. However the later end date may provide a greater opportunity for success when bulls may be more susceptible to calling. Based on the review of the previous two years' reported harvest with the earlier ending date, we believe this difference would be negligible and offset by reducing the general season by 5 days.

Over the last 5 years, staff has observed bull/cow ratios decreasing in subunit 16A and increasing in subunit 14A. We believe the latter is an artifact of a reduced moose population with less than desirable recruitment and consistent hunting pressure in recent years. In subunit 14A, it is possible that the shorter season has had a positive effect on the bull/cow ratios due to less opportunity for sublegal take during a shorter length season. Continuing to promote a shorter season in subunit 16A is prudent, while aligning seasons to reduce the potential for "unit-hopping" is justified given the close proximity of these three road-accessible units to a majority of the state's hunters. The ending date of 25 September would provide more opportunity than the current date while avoiding a later end date that could potentially draw more hunters to the units resulting in excessive pressure on the available bulls and increased sublegal take.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 181**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change moose season dates for subunits 14A, 14B and 16A from August 10 to 17 (archery) and August 20 to September 20 (general season), to August 22 to 30 (archery) and September 1 to 30 (general season).

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 180.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 182**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Eliminate non-resident archery season in subunits 14A, 14B, and 16A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. At this time only 2 nonresident archers have harvested moose in these areas during the archery only season in the past 18 years.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 183**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize antlerless moose hunt on Kalgin Island, subunit 16B.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 184**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: In subunits 14A and 14B make nonresident Dall sheep hunting by permit only with permits available to nonresidents limited to 10% of the average annual historical harvest data in the unit.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Assuming the proposer is referring to the Talkeetna portion of subunit 14A and unit 14B, this is an allocation issue. However given that the Chugach portion of subunit 14A has been administered as a draw hunt for only one season, the department would prefer to have more time to analyze the effects of limiting non-resident sheep hunters in order to determine where the re-distribution of these hunters will occur. The department does not see the need to create additional drawing hunts in south-central at this time. Increases in hunting pressure relative to new drawing hunts have been reported by guides and hunters in the Alaska Range but not in the Talkeetna Mountains.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 185**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Align Unit 16 wolf and coyote trapping season with Unit 13 (October 15 to April 30)

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: The department does not believe the take on wolves or coyotes during an earlier opening period would have an effect on either canid population. Access is difficult during the 15 October to 9 November period and would provide little if any additional opportunity to take wolves or coyotes. However, there have been reports of good coyote numbers and the majority of Unit 16 is currently managed as a predation control area, including wolf control.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 186**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reduce the wolf hunting bag limit in the Denali National Preserve portion of subunit 16B from 10 wolves to 5 wolves.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Congressional recognition of the authority of the States to manage fish and wildlife on federally administered lands, including those by the National Park Service, is very evident through legislation in ANILCA Sections 203, 1313 and 1314 and 43 CFR Part 24, Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Policy: State and Federal Relationships. The Statute and Policy are implemented through the Master Memorandum of Understanding between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the US National Park Service (MMOU). The MMOU notes that:

The taking of fish and wildlife by hunting, fishing and trapping on certain Service lands in Alaska is authorized in accordance with applicable State and Federal law unless State regulations are found to be incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.”

The implementation of intensive management practices, adopted under state management plans that assure sustainability of populations, are not incompatible with documented Park or Preserve goals, objectives or management plans.

No hunter in subunit 16B in the last 20 years has taken more than 4 wolves in any single season. Creating separate bag limits for areas inside and outside of the preserve would unnecessarily create more regulation and confuse hunters and have little effect if any on total take.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 187**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Expand the black bear predator control area to include all of Unit 16.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Expansion of the predator control area into the populated areas of subunit 16A could lead to conflicts between user groups and the general public. With the taking of cubs with sows allowed, no meat salvage requirement and allowing permittees to maintain twice as many bait sites, an expanded control area could create conflict and erode support for current management and control activities in the Unit 16 Predation Control Area (PCA).

Currently there remains an underutilized opportunity for black bear baiting with a general season limit of three bears in the non-PCArea portion of subunit 16A. Also, because the non-PCA portion of subunit 16A is more road-accessible there is opportunity for hunters who use pursuit dogs to put additional pressure on black bears in this area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 188**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Changes the moose population objectives of Unit 16 to 10,000 – 11,500 and harvest objectives 500 to 960.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The current management objectives as stated in the Intensive Management Law (5 AAC 92.108) state that the moose population and harvest objectives are 3500 – 4000 and 190 – 360 in Unit 16(A) and 6500 – 7500 and 310 - 600 in subunit 16B, respectively. Added together these numbers equal the proposed objectives in this proposal. The combination of the objectives as outlined in this proposal will not affect the public or managers’ desires to promote recovery of the moose population in either unit. It will make it more difficult to reach goals for either area as combining objectives for the two subunits dilutes the significance of the goal in each of the subunits. Both units have already been identified with a positive finding under the Intensive Management Law (5 AAC 92.106) for providing high levels of harvest for human use. This underscores the necessity of managing and recognizing these units as distinctly different areas with unique issues and characteristics.

The proposer was concerned that the department would not continue efforts to recover the moose population in subunit 16A once the objectives were met in subunit 16B. This was based on total numbers presented in a department published information pamphlet on predator control. The department intends to follow regulation and manage for both subunits 16A’s and 16B’s population and harvest objectives, even if objectives are met in either unit. Given that both units are subject to at least some level of predation control activity, it is often practical to combine numbers for these subunits in general information publications and other documents so as not to confuse the public and dilute the explanations with details.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 189**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow the use of helicopters to access bait stations and camps, and allow baiting all summer.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 168.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 190**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Review the intensive management options to be used by the Department of Fish & Game or contracted government agents of the department.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

RATIONALE: Department proposal. This proposal was printed with the intent to gather public input. For area specific recommendations by the department see the web link above referencing the specific predator management programs.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 191**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Clarify the definition of firearms allowed for hunting and trapping in the Palmer - Wasilla Management Area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 192**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow the use of helicopters for bear and wolf control.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

The department supports changes to regulatory language in order to provide additional options for conducting predation control activities in Intensive Management Areas. This proposal specifically allows for the use of helicopters in wolf and bear predation control programs as referred to in regulation (5 AAC 92.039, 92.080, 92.110, and 92.115). Also, language added to the Unit 16 Predation Control Area Plan (5 AAC 92.125) would describe the use of helicopters to access black bear bait stations and associated camps. The department recommends that

permits for the use of helicopters be issued to pilots in the Unit 16 predator management program. Also, any permits issued should be done so according to the recommendations described in the analysis and recommendations for Proposal 168.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 193**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Prohibit the use of vehicles in the area known as Government Peak in Hatcher Pass State Park, subunit 14A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: Based on the rationale that the area is currently closed by reference in DNR regulation (11 AAC 55.010-.030) to the Hatcher Pass Management Plan Amendment (November 1989). The board does not need to take action, however the current regulations regarding motorized vehicle restrictions are not enforced due to confusion in the existing regulations and plan. Also, there is currently a planning process taking place to revise and update the Hatcher Pass Management Plan and State Park’s staff intends to address this issue in this revised plan.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 194**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would align the region II coyote hunting season, open it year round, and increase the bag limit to 10 per day.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: The department supports uniform seasons and bag limits wherever they can be applied. Presently there are 3 different seasons and 2 different bag limits across the region for hunting coyotes. None of these seasons are year round. The department may consider supporting a uniform season that focuses on hide quality or outside the denning period. We would recommend amending to the August 10-April 30 season. The department has no position on the increase to 10 per day. We suspect the bag will rarely if ever be achieved.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 195**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would align the region II coyote hunting season and open it year round.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 194.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 196**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would put a lifetime bag limit of 1 bison from units 11 and 13 and reduce the application waiting period for another bison permit from 10 to 5 years for unsuccessful bison hunters.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. The waiting period was just recently increased to 10 years because of this perception of unfairness. The Copper River and Chitina Bison hunts offer a unique experience for a wild bison hunt. Permit numbers are extremely limited, yet a few individuals have killed multiple bison because of the luck of the draw. For such a unique, high quality hunt the permit conditions should be drafted so the maximum number of different individuals has the opportunity to experience this hunt. Because the total number of bison that can be harvested is so low and the demand so high, a lifetime bag limit of one bison is a fair distribution of the resource and few individuals would be impacted.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 197**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Change the black bear sealing requirements in Region II to exempt residents that live off the road system.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Brown bear sealing has been in place since 1962 and since 1974 for black bear for most game management units in Southcentral. The purpose for sealing bears is to gather information on the age, sex, size of the bear and the location of the take. Information is even more important in areas where intensive management programs are in place. Area staff has recognized that in some instances hunters and trappers who live in remote settings sometimes have difficulties meeting reporting requirements. In most if not all cases the hunter or trapper can work with the local area biologist to see the department has the information they need and the hunter seals the animals in a timely manner but sometimes in excess of the 30 days. This information is vital to our management and in some cases the only information we have for managing these species. If the board should consider this proposal there would need to be a clear definition of who actually lives “on” or “off” the road system.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 198**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow guides to establish bait stations for clients.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The board considered a similar proposal at the January 2008 statewide Board of Game meeting and failed to adopt it. If passed this regulation would only apply in Region II/Southcentral and it requests that guides be exempted from the current limit of two bait stations per hunter. The guide would be responsible for establishing, maintaining, and cleaning up all bait sites. If the guide is allowed to establish bait stations for clients, it would be difficult to determine whether the person using a bait station knew where the bait station was located or understood the conditions of the permit. The department would also need to develop some method of verifying that the guide had permission to select a site, bait it, and clean up on behalf of the client. If passed, this regulation will require a special guided bait station permit adding

more complexity to an already complex set of regulations, both for the hunter and the department. The board should consider whether this topic should be addressed on a statewide rather than regional basis.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 199**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would lengthen the bear baiting season in units 7, 14, 15, and 16A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The current baiting season for these areas is April 15-June 15. In subunit 16A the baiting dates are longer in the portion managed as an intensive management area. These seasons were set primarily to address hide quality and potential for conflict with other uses. As hunters transition from winter/spring related activities to summer related we suspect that the interest in bear baiting during the latter part of June will decrease. We do not believe there would be a substantial increase in bear harvest with the addition of the last 2 weeks. However there may be additional conflicts with other users and the potential for additional encounters with brown bear. In addition the black bear harvest from the Kenai Peninsula was an all-time high.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 200**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Modify the bag limit for brown and black bear taken in intensive management or predator control areas to not count against the statewide bag limit in other areas of the state.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal would create an exception to the statewide rules regarding bag limits, which say that "...no person may take a species of game in any unit or portion of a unit if that person's total statewide take of that species already equals or exceeds the bag limit for that species in that unit or portion of a unit..." (5 AAC 92.130(a)). The department asks the Board to establish the most conservative bag limits in units where there are the fewest number of animals to be harvested. In many instances, hunts with the most conservative bag limits are those closest to population centers, most easily accessible, or have desirable trophy value, thus subject to some of the highest hunting pressure. We prefer to be able to provide hunting opportunity for the largest number of hunters possible. By retaining the current regulation, for a hunter to take an animal in a 1-bag limit hunt it must be the first animal taken in the regulatory year. We believe this regulation is necessary to allow some hunts to be open at all, and allows for the greatest opportunity for all hunters. If adopted, this proposal would allow those who had already harvested bear elsewhere in intensive management areas or predator control areas, to take another bear anywhere in the state resulting in a significant increase in pressure on specific populations.

Another argument against the adoption of this proposal is the complexity it would add for a questionable gain. Hunters would gain flexibility in being able to hunt in any hunt at any time

during the open season, regardless of whether they had previously harvested a bear in another area. An important harvest-limiting conservation tool would be lost.

Finally, the potential for bootlegging would greatly increase. If passed the department would anticipate a desire by hunters to expand this type of regulation to other species such as caribou and deer.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 201**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would include most Southcentral units under the definition of a wounded brown bear counting towards their bag limit.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This proposal refers more to an ethical and social issue than a biological problem. Currently wounded bears counts towards a hunter’s bag limit in units 1-5 and Unit 8. Specifically “wounded” means there is sign of blood or other sign that the bear has been hit by a hunting projectile. If the board considers adopting this proposal we recommend they use the existing language.

See also proposal 29 for unit 6 black bear.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 202**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize brown bear tag fee exemption.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 203**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would limit the number of nonresidents to 10% of the total mountain goat permits available per unit.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: The department recommends the board review its policy (2007-173-BOG) on nonresident permit allocation when considering this aspect of this proposal. Depending on the interpretation of this proposal there may be different alternatives. If the board applied a 10% allocation then in most instances this would result in an increase in the number of permits issued to nonresidents. However the author may be just suggesting that a cap on the number of nonresidents be placed on any game management unit with drawing hunts. For most areas this would not be an issue since most game management unit have less than 10% nonresident participation in drawing hunts. However in 2008 the nonresident participation in Unit 8 was 14%. If passed the department would then have to design a system that would cap individual

hunt areas so that the total game management unit participation by nonresidents would not exceed 10%.

See proposals 223 and 111 for additional information.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 204**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would require that hunters attend an orientation course and/or be required to purchase a nanny penalty tag once a female mountain goat was taken.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Only the legislature has the legal authority to establish a fee structure.

The department is concerned that the use of a penalty tag (similar to a post harvest trophy tag in other states) would discourage hunters from accurately reporting their harvest or even wasting an animal accidentally taken. Presently most areas in Southcentral Alaska manage their populations within sustained yield by counting female goats as 2 towards the quota.

The department has produced new educational materials for hunters interested in learning to distinguish males from females. We support the use of these optional educational materials and are making them on line.

See also proposal 142 where the department proposed to further restrict the bag limit for female goats. We recommend testing this management strategy on the Kenai Peninsula for effectiveness in reducing the take of females.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Proposal 205**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Allow rescue of moose calves less than two years of age by organizations operating under permit of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for purpose of rehabilitation and relocation of calves older than one year to Native Corporation owned wilderness, or remote areas away from the transportation corridors.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department applauds efforts to reduce moose collisions with vehicles along roads in Southcentral. However, the department does not support any program to rescue moose calves, hold them for a year or two and then release them to the wild. It is unclear from the proposal if the proponents desire to rescue and hold only moose calves associated with their mothers being killed in vehicle collisions, or if they desire to obtain all orphaned moose calves.

Direct public involvement in “rescue” of “orphan” moose calves is problematic for several reasons, including logistical and liability issues, husbandry problems and disease concerns. Every year the department and zoo facilities in the state receive frantic phone calls from

members of the public demanding rescue of “orphan” moose calves. The department investigates credible reports as time and resources allow and frequently discover that calves are not orphaned, but rather separated from the cow. For example, in the Anchorage area in 2008, 8 of 9 healthy calves were reunited with cows by staff. Although some calves are obviously orphaned by vehicle collisions, most collisions occur after June, when moose calves can no longer be caught by hand and must be chemically immobilized. The drugs used to immobilize moose are Class II narcotics; their possession and use is tightly regulated by the US Drug Enforcement Agency. Encouraging well-intentioned, but untrained, inexperienced, and uninformed members of the public to take “orphan” calves into captivity would be counterproductive to the stated goal of increasing the moose population. Private individuals engaged in rescue activities potentially place themselves, other people, and the calf in danger and may exacerbate the problem in public safety situations. Finally, it is unclear to what extent private individuals would be given authority to conduct activities on public or private property without obtaining prior permission from the landowner.

The department does not support game ranching moose as suggested in the proposal. Moose calves are notoriously difficult to raise and are far more difficult to deal with in captivity than a species like reindeer. In 2007, a moose calf that was picked up by the public died of aspiration pneumonia and dehydration because it was not cared for properly. Moose nutritional requirements are not well understood, but it is clear they do not thrive in a captive environment without access to natural forage. Moose maintained in semi-captive facilities by the department for research must have access to large acreage of forage just to survive and have not been successfully raised without natural forage. Likewise, moose held at several private exhibition facilities under permit from the department have failed to thrive and trace mineral deficiencies are suspected in some cases. For this reason, the department has denied some applications for moose calves from accredited zoos outside of the state because they lack access to large quantities of natural browse. Furthermore, moose raised in captivity for extended periods of time not only become habituated to humans, but also lack the skills, behaviors, and experience necessary to survive in the wild, including appropriate anti-predator behaviors.

Farming moose for two years and then releasing them onto wild lands owned by Native Corporations will result in the movement of diseases and parasites from one location to another. For example, domestic cattle and sheep are common in southcentral and rare to non-existent in other areas of the state. Serologic testing of moose, caribou, Dall’s sheep and bison demonstrate that southcentral populations of these species are exposed to domestic animal diseases to which domestic animals are resistant, but that are potentially highly pathogenic to wildlife. Other wild populations in the state have not had exposure to these diseases and could suffer catastrophic morbidity or mortality events because there is no circulating antibody resistance. One example is Bovine Respiratory Syncytial virus. This virus was detected in the two moose calves that the Alaska Moose Federation picked up in 2007. A young bull moose in Palmer that died in January is also suspected to have died of this disease. These three cases from southcentral are the only cases of viral pneumonia detected in moose anywhere in Alaska, despite more than 10 times as many moose undergoing diagnostic necropsy north of the Alaska Range. Recently, the department co-authored a paper on a new (yet to be named) nematode parasite in a moose and caribou south of the Alaska Range that has not been detected elsewhere in the state. DWC policy does not permit the translocation of wildlife that may carry diseases or parasites to another

location where those diseases or parasites do not already occur. Therefore the DWC cannot authorize a private entity to conduct activities the DWC itself is prohibited from conducting.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 206**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would create 2 late season archery seasons throughout Region II except units 6 and 17 including one just prior to the rut and one just after the rut. In addition the proposal suggests that hunters will have to choose which weapon type they use in a given year.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation proposal. However in many game management units the harvestable surplus is fully allocated. If the board considers these late season hunts they will have to adjust the other existing seasons for each area. The department is concerned that additional hunter pressure around the time of rut may place additional stress on animals. In areas where there are federal subsistence seasons addition of hunts may prompt federal users to request more opportunity.

As proposed choosing a specific weapon type at the time of license purchase will require changes to licenses and a commitment from the hunters that they know what weapon type they will use throughout the season. This will restrict hunter who use more than one weapon type.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 207**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would add numerous complicated mid-winter youth hunts across southcentral Alaska.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department supports and encourages youth participation in hunting across Alaska. Recently the board has created a special youth hunt for antlerless moose in subunit 14A and throughout much of the state youth can take big game under the direct supervision of an adult provided the animal counts towards the adult bag limit. However the creation of mid-winter hunts poses additional management and biological issues. In some parts of Region II the temperature is well below zero which may not be the best time to encourage youth to hunt. In areas where there are federal subsistence seasons addition of hunts may prompt federal users to request more opportunity.

This proposal also has an allocation part to it. However, in many units the harvestable surplus is fully allocated. If the Board considers these late season hunts they may have to adjust the other existing seasons for each area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 208**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate drawing Dall sheep ewe permits in units 14C and 7.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: All Dall sheep hunts in units 14C and 7 are managed by drawing permit only. The board has authorized an “up to” harvest quota to allow area biologists to adjust to fluctuating sheep numbers. As a result of declining sheep numbers, since 2002 we have reduced the number of available permits each year. For the 2009 season, we have eliminated all “ewe-only” hunts in units 14C and 7 and have removed the ewe portion of the “full curl or ewe” hunts in Unit 14C. The only hunts in Unit 14C where a ewe or less than full-curl ram can now be legally harvested are the archery-only hunts (DS140 and DS141).

Because taking any Dall sheep by bow is difficult, archery-only permits account for a very small proportion of total sheep harvested while providing lots of hunting opportunity. In 2006, 2007, and 2008 a total of 376 drawing permits were issued to bowhunters in subunit 14C. During these three hunting seasons, only 1 ewe, 6 less-than-full-curl rams, and 8 full-curl rams were harvested by bowhunters from a subunit 14C population of over 900 sheep (i.e., only 4% of permittees were successful). The low number of ewes and small rams harvested by bowhunters in DS140 and DS141 is not significant enough to warrant restricting these hunters to full-curl rams only; however, if the board changes the bag limit to full-curl rams only, the department will substantially reduce the number of permits for these hunts to avoid having dozens of bowhunters stalking a handful of legal sheep at the same time.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **PROPOSAL 209**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the drawing Dall sheep hunts in units 14A and 13D, and return to a general season sheep hunt.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The drawing hunts in these areas were recommended to the board by the department, as well as others, to help return these populations to a more balanced structure with more large mature rams. These drawing hunts will help maintain the highly desirable trophy traits that exist in these areas, as well as help improve hunt quality. If the board decides to return to an open general season hunt, the number of large mature rams will remain very low in these areas (<10%). We do not have a clear understanding of what this will do to the population in the long run, although it is likely that highly desirable trophy quality traits could be lost, genetic variability may be reduced, and over time, the fitness of this population could decline.

The board authorized this hunt with the understanding that this harvest regime would be evaluated over a several year period. At this time, the harvest scheme has been in place for only 1 year and we have insufficient data to evaluate this strategy or draw definitive conclusions. These drawing hunts, and the any ram bag limit, were established in response to extremely high levels of harvest, and public complaints of overcrowding. Prior to the establishment of drawing hunts, in most years the number of rams taken equaled or exceeded the number counted during

annual surveys. Many rams were harvested the year they became legal. In addition, multiple complaints from the public suggested that crowded hunting conditions and increased competition led to ethically questionable behavior. As currently written, these limited entry drawing hunts that allow a small number of hunters to take ‘any ram’ will, in the long term, benefit sheep populations and hunters in the following ways: Some mature rams will survive hunting season and grow and breed, both becoming truly exceptional rams and subsequently passing on those highly desirable genetic traits, and therefore maintaining the highly desirable trophy traits that exist in these areas. Hunt quality will improve, and, finally, the any ram regulation will eliminate any questions about ram legality. If the board decides to return these areas to a general season hunt with a ‘full-curl’ bag limit, the number of large mature rams will likely remain extremely low in these areas. While this harvest scheme provided acceptable management with the higher sheep populations of the 1980s and 1990s, given current –decreased—sheep population levels a general harvest hunt in these areas does not appear sustainable. While several factors—including nutrition, density, and genetics— contribute to horn and body size, extremely high levels of harvest of mature rams have the potential to generate selective pressure. This limited –entry harvest scheme with a bag limit of any ram on a drawing permit counteracts any potential genetic effects and minimizes the possibility for overcrowding, while maintaining harvest at a sustainable level.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 210**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would add early season archery only sheep hunts throughout southcentral Alaska in subunits with existing permit hunts.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation proposal. However in many game management units the harvestable surplus is fully allocated. If the board considers these early season hunts they will have to adjust the other existing seasons for each area. Permit hunts exist in the following Game Management Subunits 7, 13B, 13C, 13D, 14A, 14C and 15A. It is unclear if the new permit hunts would encompass the entire subunit or be restricted to a to-be-determined hunt area.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 211**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would add a late season Archery only Dall sheep hunt throughout southcentral for any sheep in all subunits where permit hunts already exist. The number of permits was not specified

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department would have conservation concerns if this proposal would pass as written however we do recognize that the actual success rates would probably be low. Permit hunts exist in the following Game Management Subunits 7, 13B, 13C, 13D, 14A, 14C and 15A. However in many units the harvestable surplus is fully allocated or the take of ewes would be contrary to sustained yield. If the Board considers these early season hunts they may have to adjust the other existing seasons for each area or identify new hunt areas. While not as popular

as the early season exclusive ram hunts proposed in 210 this proposal would provide exclusive hunting opportunity for a number of archers in each unit for “any sheep”. In many units the take of females is prohibited because sheep numbers are declining or have declined.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 212**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish a quota for nonresident harvest of sheep in all Region II hunts.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. AS16.05.258 requires the Board to adopt regulations that provide preference to residents for the taking of moose, elk, deer and caribou for personal or family consumption. The board is not required to provide such a preference for sheep. The department recommends seasons and bag limits based on the number of sheep available for harvest in each area. The Board will have to determine the allocation for nonresident hunters. The department recommends examining the policy regarding allocations for nonresident hunters for species like Dall sheep and that it be consistently applied so that guides and hunters have a clear understanding of the allocation rules.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 213**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would convert all sheep hunting in Region II to drawing hunts and allocate a fixed number of permits to nonresidents.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation proposal however the department recommends the board review its policy on nonresident permit allocation when considering this aspect of this proposal. In 2007 the board authorized a new permit hunt in subunits 13D and 14A including allocation of permits to nonresidents. The department recommended at that time that we be given a few years to evaluate this new hunt strategy before applying it in other areas. The fall of 2008 was the first year for these new hunts. We cannot evaluate the effectiveness of these hunts or their applicability to other areas with only one data point. Therefore we do not support a whole scale change to sheep management in southcentral as proposed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 214**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would allocate a fixed number of harvested animals to nonresidents.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 213. This is an allocation proposal. This will be difficult to administer during a general season. An in-season system that enumerates the number of

harvested animals and the proportion taken by nonresidents will be difficult to manage given reporting times and the relatively few in-season management options.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 215**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would extend the sealing regulation to all Dall sheep rams harvested in Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: The current sheep sealing regulation applies only to areas with horn restrictions. Current any ram drawing hunts require sheep to be measured under department discretionary permit conditions, although it would be more logical to include these hunts in the general sealing regulation. This regulation would also require sheep harvested under federal subsistence regulations to be sealed. By including all sheep in the sealing regulation, a loophole will be closed, and all hunters will be held accountable for when and where they harvested their sheep. While this proposal could be postponed to the next statewide meeting, the resource will be better served by implementing the proposal on a regional basis. Sealing sheep throughout Region II within 30 days is manageable, while there are some remote areas in Region III and V where this may not be possible.

This proposal will establish consistency in the sealing program across all state-administered sheep hunts in Region 2. The sealing program allows the department a valuable opportunity to obtain data on sheep age at harvest, horn size and growth, and obtain genetic samples, all of which allow the department to monitor the effects of different harvest regimes. Now that there is a sheep research program in place, this information will be compiled, analyzed, and used. When sheep are sealed, additional biological information can be collected. Reports of conditions on sheep ranges, reports of diseased animals, and reports of overall sheep numbers are all examples of this type of information that has been collected and would not have been available to biologists without the sealing program.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 216**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the ‘any ram’ bag limit in some drawing Dall sheep hunts in region 2, including DS 160, 260, 170, 270, 175, 275, 180, 280, 185, 285, 190, 195.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: See comments for proposal 209.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 217**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would eliminate the sealing requirement for Dall sheep in Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal was submitted in March 2007, and was deferred to the following statewide meeting. It failed.

Dall sheep have been subject to a statewide sealing program since 2004. All ewes and rams harvested in subunit 14C drawing hunts were previously required to be brought in for a check-in process with the department. The statewide program expanded this effort to all rams harvested statewide in areas with horn restrictions. In 2004 and 2005 rams were marked with removable plastic seals. Since 2006, ram horns have been marked (above the core) with permanent plugs bearing unique identification numbers. Beginning in 2008, all rams taken in any-ram drawing areas will also be subject to sealing under discretionary permit conditions.

Very few rams harvested statewide are not sealed. These rams are from the limited any-sheep or any-ram hunts that take place. All sheep hunters are tracked via state harvest tickets, state permits, or federal permits. Of the rams harvested under state permits and harvest tickets, <5% have been taken in sealing exempt areas. Even though not required, many of those hunters brought in their rams to the department for measuring/aging.

With the requirement to bring ram horns in for sealing, hunters must be confident of the legality of the animal prior to pulling the trigger; otherwise they know they will face consequences. This has changed hunter attitude statewide, and hunters are increasingly showing interest in the definition of full-curl (even though the same definition has been used in Alaska since the 1980s).

The hands-on approach has also allowed for the collection of important information from sheep hunters, including observations and data previously unavailable to biologists. By having a small pool of biologists, technicians, and law enforcement officers taking horn measurements and aging rams, the error in this data is reduced dramatically compared to having hundreds of different hunters collecting and reporting the data.

In addition to age and basic horn measurements, additional biological information is collected at the time of sealing. Horn core shavings have been collected from all rams sealed. With hunter concern over the status of sheep populations statewide, the department is dedicated to maintaining this sealing program. Sealing is time consuming, and it is an expense to the department. However, the benefits of hunter contacts and hands-on data collection seem to outweigh the proposer's concerns.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 218**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would change the Dall sheep hunting dates to allow residents a 7-day advantage before non residents were allowed to hunt.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation proposal-see rationale for proposal 212. The board failed a similar proposal at the March 2008 meeting. Given that the season dates result in only a 5 day

increase from current regulations we suspect that the harvest will be similar. This type of strategy may encourage additional participation by resident hunters who do not like to compete with nonresidents and their guides. This will also disenfranchise nonresidents if they feel there will be fewer rams available.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 219**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would extend the sheep sealing requirement to ram-only bag limit hunts in Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 215.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 220**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Prohibit clients of transporters from harvesting any game located while being transported.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Restricting one user group is outside of board authority. Such a regulation would also have enforcement implications.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 221**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Modify the existing same-day-airborne regulation to prohibit taking of big game until 24 hours after flying or after 12 pm the following day.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The existing regulation prohibits the taking of big game until after 3 am following the day the hunter has been airborne. This regulation has been in effect for many years, and essentially prohibits the “spot and stalk” technique defined in the proposal. Changing the time does not make the regulation any more enforceable than the current regulation. Any change to the same-day-airborne regulation should be done statewide.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 222**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would prohibit shooting within 50 feet of the drivable surface of a road within Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: Many versions of this type of proposal have been submitted during several meetings and the board has failed to support any of them. Issues like difficulty in enforcement

and what constitutes a road should all be considered. In addition 50 feet is a relatively short distance that may only get the hunter to the bottom of the road bed. It will not stop road hunting as suggested.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 223**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require guide client agreement prior to the application deadline for all brown bear, Dall sheep and mountain goat hunts in Region II.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The current board requirement for guide client agreements began in 2006 for selected hunts. The department does not support the broad prescription of guide client agreements for all nonresident drawing hunts and it places a significant burden on nonresident hunters. Under Big Game Commercial Services Board regulations, a guide must have selected the guide use area prior to signing a contract with a client. Under the Board of Game regulations, the guide must have selected the guide use area for the year in which the hunt occurs. This often results in requiring a guide to select the guide use area for two consecutive years.

The client is required to sign a guide client agreement, then apply for the drawing hunt. At the time of his application, he submits his guide's name on the application form. Neither the client nor the guide submits a copy of the completed guide-client agreement. A nonresident hunting with a resident relative must submit his relative's name on the application form.

The department then must:

- 1) determine which names are guides and which names are resident relatives
- 2) request a list of guides with selected guide use areas from the commercial services board
- 3) determine which guide use areas are contained within the hunt in question
- 4) verify that the guide is qualified to provide services in the guide use area and
- 5) reject the application if the guide has not selected the relevant guide use area.

This process for a few individual hunts requires time, communication between two different agencies, and delays the drawing results for all hunts. Shifting the drawing period will allow more time for all the drawing to be completed, but applying the guide client agreement for all drawing hunts in Region II will further complicate the existing process.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 224**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would prohibit the harvest of white-phased black bears by defining the coloration and establishing a percentage of pelt coverage.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: In August 2007 the board passed an emergency regulation prohibiting the harvest of white-colored black bears in subunit 1D in response to a black bear, with this coloration, being observed in Skagway. Public sentiment in Skagway to protect this animal

prompted this request for action. The regulation became permanent in November 2007. In June 2008 a black bear, believed to be the same bear, was harvested. An investigation following the harvest determined that the taken bear did not meet the regulatory requirement of a white-colored bear. The hunter was not charged with a crime, and the hide and skull of the bear was returned to him. Many Skagway residents were upset with the inability of this regulation to protect the animal that it was designed for.

A public meeting was held in Skagway on January 10, 2009 to discuss several options and ideas generated at the November 2008, Southeast board meeting. Both consumptive and nonconsumptive user groups were represented at the meeting. Potential regulatory language discussed at the meeting included: allowing only the harvest of black and cinnamon-phased black bears; and prohibiting the harvest of light-phased black bears in a defined area around Skagway. Neither of the above ideas were agreed upon by both consumptive and nonconsumptive groups.

Three themes emerged from the discussions during this meeting. First, consumptive users are reluctant to give up any hunting opportunity, and noted that the white bear was generally seen in an area around Skagway where the discharge of firearms is prohibited and is therefore protected. Consumptive users also expressed concern in defining dark color phased bears, and the complexity of any regulation that may lead to hunters unknowingly committing violations. Second, nonconsumptive users feel that prohibiting the harvest of light-phased bears is a small concession considering dark colored bears would still be available for harvest. However, those that supported prohibiting the harvest of light colored bears did not agree on the area to apply the regulation (i.e., subunit 1D, Skagway Borough, or small area around Skagway). Lastly, both groups agreed that additional effort is needed to address what appears to be a growing number of urban black bears in Skagway.

The department is reluctant to provide a recommendation because it extremely difficult or impossible to protect an individual animal. The department manages game on a population level; light-phased black bears are black bears and are managed as such. Identifying and offering protection to an individual animal or a specifically colored cohort of a population is an allocation decision.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 225**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt within Berners Bay drainages in Unit 1C.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

No permits were issued in 2008 due to continued low moose numbers. An aerial survey conducted in December 2008 detected only 33 moose, however, survey conditions were poor. Additional surveys will be conducted during the winter of 2008/09 to better assess the status of this herd.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 226**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt in the portion of Unit 5A known as Nunatak Bench, a small area located along the north shore of Nunatak and Russell Fjords, northeast of Yakutat.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

No permits were issued for this area in 2008. An aerial survey will be conducted during the winter of 2008/09 to assess the present status of this herd.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 227**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions in Region V.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 228**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt in a portion of Unit 18.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 229**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt in Unit 23.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 230**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reconsider the amount necessary for subsistence for moose in Unit 18.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Defer**

RATIONALE: The proposal requests a reconsideration of the finding for moose in Unit 18. This proposal has been previously deferred and the department requests that the board consider it at

the Region V November 2009 meeting in Nome when staff and public from the area are available.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 231**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt in Units 22C and 22D.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 232**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunt in Unit 26A.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 233**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions in Region III.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 234**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would reauthorize the existing antlerless moose hunts in units 20A, B, and D.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Department proposal.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 235**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize subunit 19A predator control program.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

The subunit 19A Predation Control Implementation Plan will expire on June 30, 2009. The department recommends amending this proposal to reauthorize the subunit 19A predator control program for a 5 year period beginning July 1, 2009 to increase the moose population and achieve intensive management objectives. Updates to the existing regulatory language for reauthorization of the control program can be viewed on the Board of Game website at the web location listed above. A wolf control implementation plan was first adopted for Unit 19A by the Board of Game in March 2004. Data suggest that the moose population south of the Kuskokwim River showed signs of possible improvement. Continuation of the subunit 19A wolf predation control program is necessary to continue rebuilding the moose population and to better provide for human consumptive uses.

Prior to implementation of the subunit 19A wolf control plan in 2004, the Central Kuskokwim Advisory Committee (CKAC) advocated for wolf predation control in Unit 19A for several years based on their concerns about the declining moose population and their belief that numbers of wolves in the area had increased. In March 2002 the Board of Game authorized the taking of wolves by snowmachine. This method has not proven effective in reducing wolf numbers enough to increase moose calf and adult survival and promote growth of the population. The board has identified moose in Unit 19A as being important for providing high levels of moose for human consumptive purposes. The current moose population and harvest estimates are well below the Intensive Management population and harvest objectives established by the board.

The Central Kuskokwim Moose Planning Committee (CKMC) established by the Department and composed of diverse stakeholders with an interest in Central Kuskokwim moose management evaluated all available data on moose populations, harvest levels, habitat and predation. The committee also heard testimony of local residents and other hunters who reported a decline in the moose population and an increase in wolf numbers in the area. The majority of the CKMC members endorsed wolf predation control and sought expedited implementation.

The CKMC drafted the Central Kuskokwim Moose Management Plan, which was endorsed by the board and is intended to help rebuild the moose population in Unit 19A. Predation control is an integral part of this plan which includes recommendations involving moose harvest reductions and habitat management, as well as predation control.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 236**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Reauthorize Unit 19D East predator control program.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

The subunit 19D-East Predation Control Implementation Plan will expire on June 30, 2009. The department recommends reauthorization of the plan to increase the moose population and help achieve intensive management objectives. Updates to the existing regulatory language for reauthorization of the control program can also be viewed at the above website

Reducing predator numbers through a wolf, black bear, and brown bear predation control program, combined with temporary reductions in moose harvest is the approach most likely to succeed in increasing the moose population. Before the start of the wolf predation control program, implementing restrictions on moose hunting and liberalizing bear hunting and wolf trapping and hunting seasons did not result in reducing predation on moose sufficiently to allow the moose population to grow.

The current predator control program was first authorized by the Board of Game in March 2003. Nonlethal removal of black and brown bears from the 528 mi<sup>2</sup> Experimental Micro Management Area (EMMA) surrounding McGrath was completed in May 2003 and 2004. Aerial wolf control by public permittees in and around the EMMA began in December 2003. As a result of these efforts, bear and wolf numbers within the EMMA were reduced to a low level and the moose population increased in that area from 1.0 to 1.7 moose/mi<sup>2</sup>. Efforts to remove additional bears from the EMMA by making control permits available to the public began in fall 2006, but have been unsuccessful.

While moose numbers in the EMMA have substantially improved, intensive management objectives for subunit 19D-East have not been achieved. We recommend reauthorization of the plan with aerial wolf control focused in an area surrounding the villages of McGrath, Takotna, Medfra and Nikolai to concentrate wolf control actions in a relatively small area where moose are most accessible to hunters. We also recommend reauthorization of black and grizzly bear control in the EMMA to allow continued exploration of methods achieve reductions in bear numbers.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 237**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Modify the predation control plan for Unit 20E to establish additional methods and means for increasing the take of grizzly bears.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and adopt**

RATIONALE: See the “additional predator management comments” link on the Department of Fish and Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

for additional information.

The department recommends amending this proposal to reauthorize the Upper Yukon/Tanana predation control program for another 5 years beginning on July 1, 2009 and to continue current methods of grizzly bear control in Unit 20E. Updates to the existing regulatory language for reauthorization of the control program can be viewed at the website listed above.

The Upper Yukon–Tanana Predation Control Implementation Plan will expire on June 30, 2009. We recommend reauthorization of the plan to increase Fortymile Caribou Herd (FCH) and moose population to achieve intensive management objectives.

A predation control implementation plan was first adopted for this area by the Board of Game in November 2004 to benefit the moose population in southern Unit 20E and a portion of northern Unit 12. The plan was expanded in May 2006 to benefit moose in all of Unit 20E and in northern Unit 12 and the FCH in its entire range in Alaska.

Prior to implementation of this predator control plan in 2004, the Central, Delta, Eagle, Fairbanks, and Upper Tanana/Fortymile Advisory Committees advocated for predator control in the area for several years based on their concerns about the declining caribou and moose populations and their belief that numbers of wolves in the area had increased at the end of a nonlethal wolf control program. Lethal wolf control and grizzly bear control are integral components of management actions needed to increase the caribou and moose populations. The board has identified the FCH and moose in units 20E and 12 as being important for providing high levels of caribou and moose for human consumptive uses. The current caribou and moose population and harvest estimates are well below the intensive management population and harvest objectives established by the board.

Wolf predation is a major cause of mortality among Fortymile caribou and should be reduced through a lethal wolf control program to promote herd growth and achieve intensive management population and harvest objectives. The FCH has traditionally been an important subsistence resource for residents of interior Alaska and western Yukon. It may have numbered 350,000–568,000 animals during the 1920s and ranged over 85,000 square miles from Whitehorse, Yukon to the White Mountains north of Fairbanks. Since 1995, when the FCH numbered 23,000 caribou, management actions to increase the caribou population and restore the FCH to its former range have been directed by plans that were endorsed by the board. These management actions, including nonlethal reductions in the wolf population, were successful, and the FCH numbered 43,375 caribou by 2003. However, the herd has not continued to increase due to a combination of poor birth and survival rates. We recommend reauthorization of the wolf control program to continue rebuilding the FCH population.

The 2006–2012 Fortymile Caribou Herd Harvest Plan continues to provide for conservative harvest management to promote continued herd growth. Members of the advisory committee coalition that developed the plan recognized the importance of reducing wolf mortality, and agreed that wolf predation control is necessary to ensure that the FCH reaches the intensive management population and harvest objectives and is restored to its former range.

Moose populations in a portion of southern subunit 20E show signs of improvement following 4 years of predator control and we recommend reauthorization of the wolf control program. Although brown bear control has not reduced the brown bear population enough to contribute to the increase in the moose population, we also recommend it be continued until additional analysis of moose survival rate data and population trend data has been completed.

The department does not support the taking of any grizzly bear by trapping, snaring, or same-day-airborne, or the sale of tanned bear hides, even in brown bear predator control areas. Over the past few years, existing liberalized methods of take in the Upper Yukon/Tanana Brown Bear Predation Control Area have not significantly increased bear harvest. The department does not recommend further liberalized methods that do not have broad public support, and may only detract from on-going control efforts.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 238**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish a predator control program in Unit 21E.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See issue statement in proposal 239.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 239**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish a predator control program in Unit 21E.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: This proposal was submitted by the department at the request of the Board of Game and the Yukon-Innoko Moose Management Working Group. See issue statement in the Board of Game Proposal Book and the Adaptive Plan for Intensive Management of Moose in Unit 21E that is posted on the Board of Game website at

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/gameinfo/meetinfo/gcal.php>

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 240**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Increase the number of drawing permit hunts allowed per applicant.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: In the existing drawing permit hunts, each applicant is allowed only three hunt choices per species. The number of drawing hunts has continued to increase over the years, so this would allow an applicant additional opportunity to be drawn.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 241**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: This proposal would establish a bonus point system for some drawing hunts.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This board proposal will create a system for some drawing hunts whereby a hunter who pays careful attention to the application rules will increase their chances of being drawn in subsequent years when they accumulate more points (chances). How much their probability of being drawn in a subsequent year will increase will depend on 1) the number of applicants, 2) the number bonus points they have and 3) the established rules.

The department is neutral on the many allocation decisions associated with setting up this system. The department remains concerned about the cost to implement and maintain a bonus point system. Whether the Board adopts bonus points for a few or many hunts is largely irrelevant to the computer programming necessary to implement the system. However, if the board passes the regulation, the department supports starting small with a few hunts so that the bugs can be corrected in a new system.

State fish and game agencies that have bonus or preference point systems charge additional fees to maintain these systems, with any additional funds being used for big game management and conservation. The department is unable to subsidize development and maintenance of this system by taking away hunter dollars from other game management programs. Testimony from proponents of bonus points (avid Alaskan hunters) has consistently indicated a willingness to pay a modest increase in application fees to offset the cost of this system. This will require legislation allowing the department to recoup the cost to operate a bonus point system. If passed by the board, the department will institute the bonus point system if and when an administrative/application fee can be collected.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 242**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish hunts for disabled veterans to take big game.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Take no action**

RATIONALE: See proposal 243.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 243**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Create special management areas to provide drawing permit hunts to disabled veterans.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **No recommendation**

RATIONALE: This is an allocation issue. The department has identified several existing moose hunts that have suitable access and relatively high moose densities to provide for this type of hunt.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 244**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Prohibit the use of any caliber full metal jacket bullets for taking big game statewide.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Do not adopt**

RATIONALE: The department agrees that a reduction in wounding loss is a laudable goal and that this is a serious issue for hunters and managers alike. The department has worked on addressing the issue through better hunter education. We believe these educational efforts will help to reduce wounding loss in the future.

The department agrees with the proponent that certain types of ammunition may contribute to wounding loss. However, with current technologies and the variety of bullet types available, clearly delineating which bullets that should be prohibited for big game hunting, while allowing all other types, is challenging.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 245**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require archers hunting black bear over bait anywhere in the state to be IBEP certified

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Currently, only archers taking black bear at a bait station in Units 7, 14, 15 and 16 are required to be IBEP certified. This would make the certification requirement consistent across the state, for all bow and arrow hunters using a bait station.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 246**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Require black bear hunters to obtain a harvest ticket before hunting black bear in units where sealing is required.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Adopt**

RATIONALE: Staff proposal, see issue statement.

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 247 – (this proposal was added by the board as an agenda change request)**

EFFECT OF THE PROPOSAL: Establish a fall moose season in the Unit 18 portion of the Kuskokwim River drainage and remove any regulatory conflicts that would restrict moose hunting within the Kuskokwim Closed Area.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: **Amend and Adopt**

RATIONALE: The Kuskokwim River drainage in Unit 18 has experienced colonization and expansion of moose populations during the last five years while the area was closed to hunting through protection afforded by the Kuskokwim Closed Area. Both the 5-year-period of closure and the minimum population of 1000 moose have been met and it is timely to offer limited hunting opportunity for residents. The department recommends amending the proposal to allow antlered bull hunting by registration permit to facilitate prompt harvest reporting and allow successful management of harvest quotas established for the hunt.

\*\*\*\*\*