



State of Alaska

Department of Public Safety

Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers

Sean Parnell, Governor
Joseph A. Masters, Commissioner

January 15th, 2010

Chairman Judkins
Alaska Board of Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau Ak, 99811-5526

Dear Chairman Judkins:

The following comments give a brief description of the position that the Department of Public Safety, Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers has on the proposals that are up for consideration at the fall 2009, Alaska Board of Game meeting in Nome.

In general, when the board considers seasons and or bag limit changes, the Alaska Wildlife Troopers request that every effort possible be made to align the season dates and bag limits with adjacent game management units and/or sub units. This is mainly due to enforceability of multiple seasons in multiple locations as well as consistency of the regulations for the public. When the board considers proposals having to do with allocation or biological concerns, AWT is generally neutral in position.

AWT recognizes that regulations are developed by the Alaska Boards of Fish and Game through the public process to support management plans. Further, all management plans rely upon public compliance with regulations to achieve success. Enforcement is a crucial element needed to ensure long-term compliance with regulations by the public. The Alaska Wildlife Troopers request the board recognize that the division has limited resources and man power and any new regulation scheme or area restrictions may place an additional burden on AWT.

Comments on specific proposals AWT favors or opposes are included in this letter. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time.

Bernard Chastain

Lieutenant, Alaska Wildlife Troopers
Anchorage Headquarters

Proposal Analysis-

Proposal 11: Support

Alaska Wildlife Troopers support efforts to make it easier to identify hunters taking game for legitimate religious ceremonies.

Proposal 25: Support

Alaska Wildlife Troopers support this proposal. Bear baiting regulations currently restrict using bait or scent lures within one mile of a house or other permanent dwelling. The regulation as written does not encompass all scenarios pertaining to the intent of the law. Locations such as schools and businesses should be included as restricted areas to set bait. A school or business may not be considered a “house” or “other permanent dwelling” under 5 AAC 92.044(5)(B) and falls through the legal cracks and the intent of the regulation. Public safety is the main reason these restrictions were implemented.

Proposal 38 : Oppose

Alaska Wildlife Troopers oppose this proposal. Legalizing the sale of gallbladders will increase bear poaching in all areas of the state and encourage hunters to take bears simply to sell the parts.

Proposal 41: Oppose

Alaska Wildlife Troopers oppose this proposal which seeks to modify the definition of edible meat so that it does not include meat that has been made inedible because of diseases in the animal. Alaska Statute 16.30.010 speaks to wanton waste of big game animals. This statute states in part that:

“It is a Class A Misdemeanor for a person who kills a big game animal or a species of wild fowl to fail intentionally, knowingly, recklessly or with criminal negligence to salvage for human consumption the edible meat of the animal or fowl”.

Wanton waste is arguably the most egregious and morally unethical hunting crime. If this proposal is passed to change the definition of edible meat, it will make wanton waste and fail to salvage statutes and regulations nearly unenforceable. This modified regulation, while written to only apply to GMU’s 23 and 26A, will possibly apply to all hunters statewide; effectively making legal, leaving any animal the hunter does not want to salvage to rot in the field. A possible legal defense of someone leaving game meat in the field anywhere in the state would be that hunters in other parts of the state can legally leave “diseased” meat. This will create an obvious double standard and leave a regulation loophole to be abused. Hunters will be left to decide for themselves when they have a diseased animal and how much, if any, they want to salvage. Who will decide when the animal is diseased? Hunters will have a different opinion on when an animal is considered diseased or not. Enforcement will be unable to return to each kill

site to take meat samples and determine if the animal was diseased or not. Alaska Wildlife Troopers will lose the necessary tools needed to successfully prosecute criminals who leave meat in the field. Current state regulations require hunters to salvage meat from the field for human consumption. Any deviation from this requirement will support waste of game meat.

Proposal 46: Support

Alaska Wildlife Troopers support this proposal because it seeks to create a regulatory definition for “crossbow”. Any attempt to make it easier for the public to identify and understand regulations is supported by AWT.

Proposal 51: Support

Alaska Wildlife Troopers support this proposal.