

Regional and Multiple Units

PROPOSAL 26 - 5 AAC 92.108. Identified big game prey populations and objectives. Modify deer population and harvest objectives, or exempt the Southeast Region from objectives as follows:

5 AAC 92.108 sets deer population and harvest objectives for Units 1 through 5, for each unit individually. We recommend that at this meeting the Board of Game take a two-step solution to the problems we have described. (1) Vote to invalidate all of these objectives, because they are outdated and spurious; (2) then deliberate on what range or specific value should be put into the regulations for each objective; and (3) decide whether to recommend to the legislature that it exempt Unit 1 through 5 deer from the requirement that the board set population and harvest objectives.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game set population objectives and harvest objectives for deer in Units 1 through 5 in 2000, and those objectives need to be revised downward.

Audio tapes of that board meeting establish clearly that the understanding of both ADF&G's staff and the board was that the objectives would be reviewed and reconsidered every one or two board cycles. Nonetheless, 14 years later that has never been done. Moreover, the current objectives are excessively high and can be expected to lead to regulatory decisions by the board and management decisions by ADF&G that are non-optimal at best and in some cases harmful. This situation can lead to outcomes that are contrary to the obligations of the board and AFG&G under Article VIII of the Alaska State Constitution.

The audio tapes also reveal that at the 2000 board meeting the board considered the setting of objectives to be a pro-forma, useless exercise that could have no consequences – an exercise it was undertaking only because the Intensive Management Act (IM Act) required it to enact objectives as regulations. The board believed Southeast deer were a poor fit for intensive management and should have been excluded from the IM Act. But the board was stuck, and was required by law to pick objective numbers, even though it had to do so blindly. In fact, the board believed that the lack it was confronted with even precluded it from picking a range for the objectives – a situation unique among Alaska Game Management Units – so single values were set, and they were set at high levels.

However, those levels were even higher than the 2000 board recognized at the time. As is now known, the actual then-current deer populations and harvest figures were at a substantial peak. Also, the U.S. Forest Service modeling for deer habitat carrying capacity that the 2000 board relied upon in part in making its decisions on objectives was based on 1997 methods that substantially overestimated carrying capacity, in comparison to the Forest Service's current modeling. This is in part due to the misapplication of a conversion factor, corrected in 2007, that the modeling uses. This error resulted in an automatic 30% overestimation of carrying capacity. In addition, the forest quality dataset used in the 1997 method was later found to be uncorrelated to habitat quality, giving spurious results that almost always caused further overestimation of

carrying capacity. As examples, the modeled carrying capacity relied upon by the board in 2000 was too high by 40% in Unit 1A and by 20% in Unit 3.

Because of the IM Act, deer population and harvest objectives in Units 1 through 5 have become keystone drivers of deer and predator management, so far in certain places and perhaps in the future in others. If the objectives are set too high, regulations and management decisions that are adverse to deer and predator stocks and the users of those stocks will be made. The current objectives are unrealistic and excessive, and are long past their shelf-life. An immediate downsizing of the objectives is necessary, and that should be done at this meeting.

Further, as a 2000 board member noted after much discussion by the board among itself and with ADF&G staff, the IM Act “was framed for conditions that are totally different than Southeast Alaska.” Therefore we believe that in addition to deliberating on new objectives, the board should recommend that the Alaska Legislature exempt Units 1 through 5 deer from the requirement that the board set population and harvest objectives.

PROPOSED BY: Greenpeace, Center for Biological Diversity and The Boat Company
(EG-C14-321)

PROPOSAL 27 - 5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. Establish deer hunting seasons for elder hunters and individuals with disabilities in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Persons 60 years or older and or persons with a debilitating disability or disabilities, which are recognized by any government board of compensation or doctor, can hunt for deer starting June 15 and ending July 31. Identification showing age and forms or prescription showing disability must be carried by hunters during the hunt.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like for the board to approve an elder and disability hunt for deer in Units 1 - 5 starting on June 15 and ending July 31. I should point out that bucks have antlers then and are easily identifiable.

This hunt should make it possible for disadvantaged people to more easily get their harvest level. The deer are at lower elevations and allow a person who has disabilities or is of age, that don't allow them to walk far to get deer. This hunt would allow them better means of a successful hunt and by them providing for their family will give them a sense of pride.

During this time of year the deer seem to be more relaxed and not so skittish like they are when identifying their area, choosing their mating partners and defending them. The deer appear to be in better shape as they are in a grazing state and have less fat.

PROPOSED BY: Ronald Leighton (EG020713735)

PROPOSAL 28 - 5 AAC 84.270. Trapping seasons and bag limits. Extend the wolverine trapping season in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Extend the wolverine trapping season in Units 1 - 5 to align with the wolf season, November 10 to April 30.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Trappers are catching wolverine in wolf sets November 10 to April 30, so may as well make it legal instead of turning a cripple loose or having to kill it to get it out of the trap.

PROPOSED BY: Nick Yurko (EG-C14-192)

PROPOSAL 29 - 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Require a time limit for checking traps in Units 1 – 5 as follows:

A trapper will check his/her traps within a specified time frame of three to five days.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently there are no limits in time between checking traps or limits to numbers of traps. Animals may unnecessarily suffer and fur will be ruined. The animals, the fur trapper and fur buyer will all benefit. Some trappers may need to work harder.

As the law now stands, a trapper can have unlimited traps and can leave said traps forever without checking them. I propose that a set time limit for checking traps be considered based on the environment and challenges of any particular area of Alaska. This proposal would do a number of positive things. Not only would animals suffer less in traps but their fur would not be ruined by time and predators. The only downside of this would be that trappers would be in the field more often and therefore be present to harvest the fur that they are there to get. A little more field time for more profit, that is what Americans stand for. We're a hardworking country, full of hardworking people. In Alaska we are blessed with fur, fish and fowl.

In Haines there were incidents of animals being caught in traps, three dogs and a moose. The moose, whose nose was caught, was put down. Two of the dogs were rescued right away. One of the dogs was my three-month-old puppy, Taffy. She survived for 12 days in temperatures of seven to 14 below zero and only came home from this wire trap when the trapper, after 12-plus days of not checking, finally checked his traps. I am sure this man was horrified that he trapped a puppy and did not intend for that to happen. However, it did, and illustrates the flaw in the trapping laws now on the books. The wildlife trooper could not find this person so this trapper was not well regulated since he could not be found based on the markings on his traps.

Please consider this proposal for the many positive aspects of changing the law and almost no downside to this change. Not only would the land and people of Alaska benefit, you as board members would only appear as reasonable, caring people with no one mad at you for your actions. I am a bush woman in Porcupine, Alaska. I look forward to hearing on my local public

radio station that board members are considering this valid and humane proposal. Thank you for your time.

PROPOSED BY: Anne Robbins-Shuder (EG-C14-246)

PROPOSAL 30 - 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting black bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Remove the reporting requirement for GPS coordinates for bear bait stations in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Eliminate 5 ACC 92.044(12): “In Units 1 – 5, before a person establishes a black bear baiting station and laces bait at the baiting station, that person shall, at the time of registration, provide the department the location, in a global position system (GPS) format of the latitude and longitude of the baiting station on a form provided by the department.”

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Anyone wishing to bait bear in Units 1-5 must first provide, at a designated ADF&G office, the GPS coordinates of the bait location before a baiting permit will be issued. This creates an undue hardship for hunters wishing to bait. In order to scout and establish a bait station a hunter will have to travel to the hunting area, locate a bait site, obtain GPS coordinates, then travel to the designated ADF&G office, apply for a bait permit during office hours, and then travel back to the bait location before a bait can be established. Please understand, Units 1-5 are large, remote and hard to access. Much of the area is accessible only by boat or airplane.

Hunters are being subjected to unreasonable expense and time. The multiple trips between the hunting area and an ADF&G office may cost upwards of \$2000 or more and two to three travel days. Also, the hunter will have to repeat the process if they wish to change bait site locations. There was a case where hunters made the trip into Craig during business hours for their permits only to find the office closed due to a sick employee.

Since this regulation was implemented four years ago, bear baiting and baiting permits have dropped to a fraction of the historic averages, thus reducing hunting opportunities. There is no biological reason to support such an action.

The GPS regulation was first implemented at the request of the Alaska State Troopers largely due to nonresident baiting issues on Prince of Wales Island. Since then, hunting pressure has dropped dramatically, due in part to draw hunt requirements. While enforcement issues must be considered, wildlife enforcement issues are no more difficult in Southeast than other remote parts of Alaska.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Ashton (EG-C14-236)

PROPOSAL 31 - 5 AAC 92.130. Restrictions to bag limit. Change the bag limit restriction for black and brown bear in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Two possible solutions either one would be acceptable:

- 1) Simply eliminate the regulation that states in Units 1-5, bear wounded by a hunter must count as the bag limit for the year; or 2) Insert the word "mortally" in front of wounded in the regulation. Where mortally could be defined as "any big game animal hit with a hunting projectile which dies or is reasonably expected to die as a result of the wound."

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The regulation which applies only to Units 1-5 & 8 that any bear showing any sign of being hit with a hunting projectile must be considered "taken" as part of a hunter's bag limit is not a good one. It is an attempt to legislate ethics and to assist guides who do not want to put maximum effort into a hunt. It is very difficult to enforce. It discriminates against ethical hunters, who knowing the law will abide by it. It does not limit unethical hunters and guides who may continue to hunt after superficially wounding an animal because they know that their chances of being caught are very remote. There is no other state which has this regulation. Several dilemmas are created by this regulation:

- 1) If a hunter wounds an animal this year and counts it against his bag limit but the animal survives and that hunter kills the same animal in a subsequent year does he NOT need to count it against his bag limit since he already did in the first year?
- 2) If a hunter superficially wounds an animal and considers it taken can he be charged with wanton waste because he was unable to salvage the meat?
- 3) Will a guide be tempted to tell a hunter to shoot a reasonable shot while a hunter wants to wait until he has a 100% certain shot. Thus being at odds with each other in their final goal and reducing the enjoyment of the hunt.
- 4) Will a guide allow a hunter who has superficially wounded an animal to keep hunting for only that animal AND use every resource at his disposal to recover the wounded animal as is required by the guide regulations? Keeping in mind that every resource at his disposal may include bringing other assistant guides and their hunters in to help look for the wounded animal.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost (EG-C14-297)

PROPOSAL 32 - 5 AAC 92.010. Harvest tickets and reports. Allow the transfer of resident harvest tickets to a relative within second-degree of kindred as follows:

In Units 1, 2, and 3 allow resident black bear hunters to transfer one of their two harvest tickets to a relative within second-degree of kindred. Only one bear of which may be a glacier bear. The resident hunter who transferred the harvest ticket would be required to accompany the nonresident relative in the field.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At the November 2010 Board of Game meeting in Ketchikan, a new management system for Southeast Alaska black bears was established which requires nonresident hunters who are not accompanied by a registered guide to draw a permit. The system was put into place to control the significant growth in numbers of unguided nonresident black bear hunters in Southeast with attendant overharvest of black bears and other issues involving conflicts with other user groups. Numbers of resident black bear hunters and guided nonresident black bear hunters had held steady during this time period and were not seen as the problem. In order to make the new system work, however, guides would be held to their 2007-2009 use levels.

There was not a special provision made for second degree of kindred nonresident hunters in the new system. Black bear is not a "guide required" species and so such a provision was not discussed. Since that time, however, there have been resident hunters express unhappiness with their inability to take relatives within second-degree of kindred on a black bear hunt in Southeast without them first drawing a permit.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Professional Hunter's Association (EG-C14-210)

PROPOSAL 33 - 5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful taking of game; exceptions. Remove the restriction against using felt sole waders while hunting in Southeast Region Units as follows:

People hunting in Alaska can legally wear whatever they want while pursuing game, including their choice of foot wear and/or any other personal protective equipment that they deem will make their hunt more safe.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game's (board) ban on wearing felt soles while hunting, making wading and rafting while hunting unsafe and dangerous for people. Anyone who has spent much time in the field—or worse, had unexpected “swims”—knows how dangerous our cold waters are and how quickly one could lose their life. Even a quick dunk can be unforgiving and have dire consequences. The difference between wearing felt and wearing rubber or caulked boots is like night and day. Unfortunately, there are no alternatives, regardless of what you are told. If you personally are unaware of this fact, then you have little experience wading rivers or streams and need to better educate yourself on the issue. Safety wise, it is the same as driving without a seat belt, or running a chainsaw

without a pair of chaps. Sure you may get by without them, but do you want to get into an accident without your seat belt on? In essence, that's what the board's (and the Board of Fisheries) ban does. The ban states loud and clear that our safety, our lives and that of our children and loved ones, is unimportant.

If you do not lift this ban, people will die, drown and perish while hunting, due to our cold water temperatures. It's as simple as that. While the attempt to thwart the spread of invasive plants and animals is noteworthy, the board's lack of adequate analysis of the scientific data on this subject is both troubling and reckless. Can felt soles transport invasive plants and animals? Unfortunately, yes they can. But please look at the research—which is extremely limited at best. This small amount of research, much which has not been peer reviewed, has indicated that felt soles can spread such invasive species as Didymo (rock snot), possibly whirling disease, and one New Zealand mudsnail was proven to be transported by a felt boot. One! Research has also proven that these invasive species can be carried and transported to other waters on shoe laces, socks, inside the wading boots themselves, on the wading material itself and even on rubber wading boots. Furthermore, research has also proven invasive species can be transported from one water body to another by boat trailers and through bilge water of boats and float planes traveling to and from different water bodies. Even Darwin wrote many years ago, about migrating waterfowl transporting plants and animals from one water body to another, both internally and externally. Why not ban all of these vectors then?

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle (EG-C14-298)

PROPOSAL 34 – 5 AAC 92.010. Harvest tickets and reports. Require harvest reporting of migratory birds by species in Southeast Region Units as follows:

For more accurate data, create a harvest ticket with opportunity of reporting harvest by species for migratory birds to gain information presently limited to ADF&G.

Use the system already in place for other species like deer, moose etc.

If reported electronically:

- Once filed online a certified receipt for your report will be returned by email. This receipt is proof that report has been filed.
- Harvest tickets and registration permits are good for a regulatory year, not a calendar year. For example, a harvest ticket for 2013 would be valid from July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014.
- If ADF&G does not receive a hunt report, hunters will not be eligible for future hunts. Online reporting allows hunters to determine which reports have filed and which you have not.

If reported by mail:

Hunt reports will come with harvest tickets attached to them. The report portion need not be carried in the field but must be completed and returned within 15 days of the close of the season even if you did not hunt or did not take an animal. Reports of personal harvest location are confidential.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Electronic online or mail in harvest tickets and reporting required for migratory birds by species.

PROPOSED BY: Sea Ducks Unlimited (EG-C14-235)

PROPOSAL 35 - 5 AAC 92.003, Hunter education and orientation requirements. Require certification for big game hunters using crossbows in the Southeast Region as follows:

All hunters pursuing big game with a crossbow in Southeast Region units must have passed a certification course presented by ADF&G and carry their certification card in the field. This regulation to be effective starting July 2016.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game passed a regulation stating that all hunters hunting with bow and arrow for big game must pass the IBEP Certification and carry their certification card while hunting starting in July 2016. The board did NOT include hunters who hunt with a crossbow in this regulation. There are safety issues involved with use of a crossbow which are unique to crossbows and do not apply to regular archery equipment or firearms. A crossbow is a different implement than bow and arrow but kills in the same fashion with sharp cutting of vital structures rather than shock as with a firearm. Firearms hunters who pick up a crossbow need to learn the limitations of the weapon, acceptable shot angles and target anatomy. In addition they need to learn appropriate follow-up and recovery techniques which may differ significantly from their experience with firearms. Crossbow hunters who wound animals may leave a visible projectile in the animal which can reflect poorly on not only crossbow hunters but also on bowhunters and impact on all hunters. I believe that all hunters who use a crossbow for hunting big game in Alaska should be required to pass a crossbow certification course developed and presented by ADF&G and should be required to carry their certification card while hunting big game with crossbow. The course should include a field day in which the student demonstrates knowledge of safe use of the crossbow and a minimum level of shooting proficiency.

Nothing in this should be interpreted to imply that crossbows are the same as archery equipment. The course must be separate from the IBEP Certification and taught by instructors knowledgeable in use of crossbows and certified to teach the course. Also, nothing in this proposal should imply that crossbows are acceptable for use in special archery only areas or hunts.

This proposal is to cover all regions open for proposals for consideration by the Board of Game during their 2015 meetings. It is my intention to make the same proposal next year to apply to the Interior and Arctic/ Western Regions. This proposal is to be effective starting in July 2016

which would align it statewide with the recently passed regulation for bowhunters and would also give ADF&G time to implement the education programs.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost (EG-C14-293)

PROPOSAL 36 - 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Remove the requirement to clean up contaminated soil from bear bait stations for Southeast Region Units as follows:

Eliminate the requirement for the Southeast Region to "remove all contaminated soil" from a bear bait site at the conclusion of the baiting season.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At bear bait stations the requirement to remove all soil contaminated by the baiting at the end of the season is an excessive nuisance and is perceived by hunters to be a form of harassment by regulators who may be personally opposed to baiting bear in spite of the fact that bear baiting is a legal and accepted means of hunting bear and is often the only practical means of hunting bear in certain areas. This, combined with the requirement to provide accurate GPS locations before a permit is obtained, sends a message to hunters that they are potentially subject to prosecution if an enforcement officer comes into the bait site with a trowel and samples some dirt which may have an increased sugar or fat content by lab analysis. From a practical perspective it is virtually impossible to remove all contaminated soil. Anything that is used for bait is biodegradable and will rapidly be removed by organisms from bacteria to bears. Anything not removed will go to fertilize the soil. There is no guidance with what should be done with the "contaminated soil". Alternatives would be to spread it out, carry it any given distance and throw it out, transport it back to town, and take it to a public dump.

Nothing in this discussion should be interpreted as wanting to change the regulation requiring removal of all trash, litter, bait barrels and other artificial structures at the end of the baiting season.

PROPOSED BY: John Frost (EG-C14-299)

PROPOSAL 37 - 5 AAC Chapter 85. Seasons and bag limits. Add five days to all resident hunting seasons and allocate 75% of the drawing permits to residents in the Southeast Region as follows:

For the benefit of all Alaska residents change current regulations in all Southeast units so the residents of the State of Alaska receive preference in regard to all hunting opportunities.

For all harvest ticket hunts: Allow state residents to start the hunting seasons five days early, or allow state residents to hunt for five additional days after the season has closed for nonresident hunters.

For drawing hunts: change allocation systems to ensure Alaskan residents have been allocated 75% of any drawing hunt opportunity. If state residents do not use that percentage of the pool, then the unallocated portion may be used by nonresident hunters.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I am hopeful that the board will address the inequalities in resident hunter preference. For many years a significant portion of the large game species has been taken by nonresidents. This is due to several factors, as managers of a state resource, the Board of Game should be morally and ethically obligated to ensure that resident hunting opportunities and resident hunting preference are a priority.

PROPOSED BY: Kevin Secor (EG-C14-227)

PROPOSAL 38 - 5 AAC Chapter 85. Seasons and bag limits. Allocate 90% of big game drawing permits to residents for Southeast Region Units as follows:

I'd like to see the Board of Game adopt a new allocation schedule for all big game draw permits in the Southeast Region: 90% to residents and the remainder plus any undersubscribed to nonresidents.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Central/Southwest meeting scheduled for February 2015 and the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At issue is allocation of big game draw permits. Currently a nonresident hunter has equal chance in the lottery as resident meat hunters. Nonresidents, albeit supporting the guide industry, have historically much better success rates no doubt due to the work of their guides. The end result is that more of the real harvest goes to nonresidents, many of whom don't even want the meat; rather than Alaskans who will respect the harvested animal all year long every tasty bite of the way. This is in direct contradiction to our mandate by Alaska's Constitution Article 8 section 3 stating that meat belongs to the residents. Most other states currently allocate only 10% of their draw permits to nonresidents, and guiding is still big business there. A real tragedy to the continuation of hunting tradition will befall us as our kids potentially will lose future opportunities to hunt this great land.

Considered was action to establish a point/preference system like most states to more directly and effectively tackle the issue, but this appears to be a legislative issue and would also take many years to implement. Also considered was a shorter season for nonresidents, but to be fair

especially to mountain hunters, an equal number of weather windows should be provided for both. This would also promote mad-dash boating and bush flying, a dangerous and disrespectful practice. If nothing is done about this issue, meat will continue to be mis-allocated, Alaskan youth may see future opportunities lost, and game resources will decline.

Thank you for considering this 90/10 draw permit allocation, Alaskans appreciate it.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas Malone (EG-C14-240)
