

Unlawful Methods of Taking Game

PROPOSAL 66 - 5 AAC 92.080(16). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. Allow the use of felt soles as follows:

Abolish 5 AAC 92.080(16).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game's 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 of Game's (and the Board of Fisheries) ban does. Your ban states loud and clear that our safety—our lives, and that of our children's and loved ones—is unimportant to you.

What will happen if this problem is not solved? People will die—drown and perish while hunting, due to our cold water temperatures. It's as simple as that. While your attempt to thwart the spread of invasive plants and animals is noteworthy, your 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 This small amount of research, much which has not been peer reviewed, has indicated that felt soles can spread such invasives as Didymo (rock snot), possibly whirling disease, and one New Zealand mudsnail was proven to be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 invasives 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 invasives 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? Your ban on felt soles is as sensible as an open season on waterfowl, float planes and boats. Perhaps you should just ban people all together. Please—research the information yourself, not just the data and information you have been spoon fed by environmental alarmists.

What solution do you prefer? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say? A better and more proactive approach would be to educate people on invasives and how to prevent spreading them instead of "outlawing" personal protective equipment. Use ADF&G's internal education program to educate people on how to treat their felt soles, waders, bilge water etc. before AND after being in Alaskan waters. According to ADF&G personnel, their concern is not so much with Alaskans spreading invasives as it is with

tourists bringing them into the state. Why punish Alaskans then? Why not educate and target the tourists when they come into the state?

Does your proposal address improving the quality of the resource harvested or products produced? If so, how? NO. But it improves the safety of Alaska hunters. The ban on felt soles does nothing to improve the quality of resources harvested either. And this question addresses an underlying issue to this ban which the Board of Game has implemented. Your mandate is to manage fish and game—not people. Your mandate and charge is to "improve the quality of the resources harvested or products produced" as your question asks above. Seasons, bag limits, methods of taking, harvest areas—not wardrobes, and definitely not personal safety equipment. This ban is an inherent attack on our personal freedoms to travel afield as we see fit. It is also making normally law abiding citizens break the law for the purposes of our personal safety. Our safety and that of our children is more important than any of the perceived benefits you believe are achieved by this ban-especially when there are so many other vectors which you have not addressed. The last time I looked, this country is a free one, with "inalienable rights" of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (which for many of us is the pursuit of fish and game.). When did we give up the right to decide what we should wear and not wear while in the field? What legal authority gives you the right to ban articles of clothing and make our travels less safe and even dangerous? Every time we allow another entity to take away our rights, we lose more of our personal freedoms and your taking of our right to travel afield as we see fit is an abuse of your power. None of us want to see invasive plants and animals overtake our waters and lands, but your ban on felt soles is baseless, unwarranted, poorly thought out, and most of all reckless. The next drowning of an Alaskan hunter, possibly a young hunter, may well be because of your poorly thought out decision to ban felt soles.

Who will benefit if your proposal is adopted? Alaskan hunters—residents and non-residents alike.

Who is likely to suffer if your proposal is adopted? No one--and our streams and rivers will not suffer either.

List any other solutions you considered and why you rejected them. Ban nonresidents from traveling to Alaska with felt soles and hunting and fishing our waters. Impossible to implement and enforce. Not fair, not right, and not smart either given the research available and for all the reasons mentioned above.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle (EG-C15-070)

PROPOSAL 67 - 5 AAC 92.080(1). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. Prohibit hunting and trapping from highway right-of-ways as follows:

Modify 5 AAC 92.080(1) -The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

(1) by shooting, from, on or across a highway;

(a) it is unlawful to hunt or trap within State Federal Aid right-of-ways without written documentation granting permission from private land owner[s].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Regulatory language for hunting or trapping in right-of-ways is non-existent in state regulations. Laws and regulations in Alaska do not specify whether it is legal to hunt or trap in right-of-ways. Members of the Alaska Board of Game need to address the nonexistent regulatory language to clarify where hunters and trappers are allowed to hunt or trap wild game.

Hunters take wild game and trappers set traps in right-of-ways on state and private lands because laws and regulations are nonexistent and unclear whether hunting or trapping can occur in right-of-ways. Taking action to clear up hunting and trapping in federal aid highway right-of-ways will disallow hunting and trapping in right-of-ways crossing through private property.

It may also provide safety for the public to disallow shooting or trapping in a public right-of-way, hunters usually park vehicles in right-of-ways while hunting in the field. Setting traps without land owners' knowledge on private lands is also unsafe. Safety of everyone in crowded hunting areas should be paramount so that accidental shooting of other hunters does not occur. Setting traps without land owners' permission should also be addressed to avoid unsafe trapping practices.

PROPOSED BY: Ahtna Tene Nene' Customary & Traditional Use Committee (EG-C15-050)

PROPOSAL 68 - 5 AAC 92.080(7). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. Prohibit the use of forward looking infrared (FLIR) devices as follows:

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. (a) The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

...

(7) with the aid of a pit, fire, artificial light, laser sight, electronically enhanced night vision [SCOPE], **any forward looking infrared device**, any device that has been airborne, controlled remotely, and used to spot or locate game with the use of a camera or video device, radio communication, cellular or satellite telephone, artificial salt lick, explosive, expanding gas arrow, bomb, smoke, chemical (excluding scent lures), or a conventional steel trap with an inside jaw spread over nine inches.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The use of forward looking infrared scopes and hand held devices have gained in popularity due to the cost and expense of the units dropping dramatically. Currently the regulations only address the prohibition of electronically enhanced night vision scopes. The Alaska Wildlife Troopers have received multiple inquiries over the past year regarding hunters wanting to use FLIR scopes and hand held devices when pursuing game. The current regulations do not prohibit their use when taking game.

The use of FLIR scopes, hand held devices, and electronically enhanced night vision devices give an individual an unfair advantage when taking game. The current regulations do not prohibit an individual from wearing electronically enhanced night vision goggles with iron sights on their

rifle to take game, only with an electronically enhanced night vision scope. Technologies are evolving faster than the regulation can be amended and with the Board of Game on a three year cycle we feel it is imperative the board discuss adding this prohibition to regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wildlife Troopers (EG-C15-042)

PROPOSAL 69 - 5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions. Prohibit hunting with domestic dogs as follows:

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

The use or accompaniment of domestic dogs is prohibited while hunting. Dogs used as service animals as defined under Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act are exempt if the hunter is in possession of a current official certificate of veterinary inspection for the service dog.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There is concern that domestic dogs will transmit diseases to Alaska's wildlife populations. The Department of Fish and Game has stated that Alaska's wild game populations are immunologically naive and wildlife disease specialists expect there to be profound impacts of climate change on animal and parasite distributions. Diseases, primarily transmitted through dog ticks, are serious and potentially deadly to Alaska's wildlife populations according to an ADF&G memo dated April 12, 2014. (see http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/species/disease/pdfs/dog_tick_memorandum.pdf)

ADF&G states that the diseases of concern include Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, tularemia, canine ehrlichiosis, canine babesiosis, Lyme Disease, and Q-fever. Only tularemia and Q-fever are already present in Alaskan wildlife but others could be easily introduced by just a single tick biting an infected pet carrying the infection and passing it on to their next meal. ADF&G along with the Office of the State Veterinarian have detected an increasing incidence of dog ticks that are exotic to Alaska (that is Alaska is not part of the reported geographic range). Other diseases potentially transmitted by canines as identified on ADF&G's website include cystic hydatid disease, alveolar hydatid disease, sarcocystosis, and muscle tapeworm cysts.(see <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=disease.diseaselist>.)

ADF&G states that dog ticks are competent vectors of disease (carriers able to transmit disease) and that tick-borne diseases in other animals will follow.

I propose to prohibit the use of and/or accompaniment of domestic dogs while hunting.

If this proposal doesn't pass, there will be an increased risk of disease transmission to Alaska's wildlife populations. If disease transmission occurs, it will have substantial economic and aesthetic impact. If this regulation is adopted, it could prevent mass die offs that could eliminate any harvestable surplus of big game and/or small game animal populations. This regulation will help to ensure long term population persistence and allow us to harvest according to the sustained yield principle, as well as enjoy the aesthetic benefits of having healthy Alaskan wildlife.

As an alternate solution, a health certification program for dogs was considered, but in many cases the specific microorganisms, diseases, and parasites responsible for these disease outbreaks are either undetectable at certain times of the year, or can persist at low levels in dogs, or in some cases parasites can be transmitted through feces. Also, ticks may leave the dog, cling to vegetation, and then through a behavior called "questing" attach themselves to a new host.

PROPOSED BY: Guy Fulton (EG-C15-036)

PROPOSAL 70 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Restrict the use of aircraft for spotting or locating big game species while hunting as follows:

Changes to "Use of aircraft for hunting":

Aircraft may only be used to place hunters and camps, maintain existing camps, and salvage meat, trophies and associated equipment while used for the purpose of hunting **big game species**. Using an aircraft for the purpose of spotting **big game species** or locating **big game species** during the open hunting season is prohibited.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The use of aircraft while hunting big game species in Alaska. I fully support the Alaska Board of Game's recent passage of proposal 207, option A, at the March 2015 meeting in Anchorage and would like to see that type of regulation extended to all big game species in Alaska.

I strongly feel that this will broaden the efforts to promote and practice ethical, fair chase hunting for ALL hunters that engage in hunting in Alaska and will help strengthen Alaska's conservation efforts. Thank you very much.

PROPOSED BY: Fred Harbison (EG-C15-022)

PROPOSAL 71 - 5 AAC 92.085(8). Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Clarify same day airborne prohibitions as follows:

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. The following methods of taking big game are prohibited:

...

(8) a person who has been airborne may not take or assist in taking a big game animal **and a person may not be assisted by a person who has been airborne in taking a big game animal** until after 3:00 a.m. following the day in which the flying occurred; however, this paragraph does not apply to

- (A) taking deer;
- (B) repealed 7/1/92;
- (C) a person flying on a regularly scheduled commercial airline, including a commuter airline;
- (D) taking caribou from January 1 through April 15, in Unit 22 if the hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of taking;
- (E) repealed 7/1/2009;

(F) repealed 7/1/2008;

(G) a hunter taking a bear at a bait station with the use of bait or scent lures with a permit issued under 5 AAC 92.044, and if the hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of the taking;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current unlawful methods and means listed in regulations prohibit an individual from taking a big game animal the same day they are airborne; however, it does not prohibit an individual from taking a big game animal using information given to them by an individual who was airborne. If any individual takes a big game animal on the same day they receive information from an individual who was airborne on the same day only the individual who was airborne would be in violation of the regulation.

Another loophole in this regulation may include a pilot spotting big game and landing at a strip to provide the location of a big game animal to the hunter. In this scenario, the hunter has not been airborne and therefore could not be charged under this regulation. Since the use of radios to take big game is already prohibited, a person utilizing radios to communicate may be cited for the use of radios from the ground to the aircraft; however, they would not be cited for same day airborne. By changing the regulation as requested, it would allow Alaska Wildlife Troopers to consider charges for same day airborne in very narrow circumstances when a person who has taken a big game animal receives information from the person who was airborne that directly impacts the take of the big game animal. This proposal would make both individuals responsible for violating the regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wildlife Troopers (EG-C15-044)

PROPOSAL 72 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.
Establish minimum caliber ammunition for moose hunts as follows:

Must use any caliber .243 or larger for hunting moose.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? High wounding and loss of game.

PROPOSED BY: Tim Crace (EG-C15-007)

PROPOSAL 73 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.
Establish minimum caliber ammunition for caribou hunts as follows:

Use any caliber .243 or larger for caribou.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lost or wounded animals

PROPOSED BY: Tim Crace (EG-C15-008)

PROPOSAL 74 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Establish minimum caliber ammunition for black and brown bear hunts as follows:

Use any caliber .243 or larger for black and brown bear.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lost or wounded animals

PROPOSED BY: Tim Crace (EG-C15-009)

PROPOSAL 75 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Allow use of blackpowder cartridge rifles and crossbows in bison hunts as follows:

Since the Board of Game has defined a crossbow in its own category, the general regulatory term bow-and-arrow does not include crossbows. Crossbows are comparable to compound bows in many ways, including general range and trajectory limitations. Crossbows have both advantages and disadvantages when compared to bow-and-arrow equipment, but are similar in the way they kill an animal. I would propose that crossbows be added to the list of longbows, recurve bows, and compound bows as legal implements for hunting bison.

Many of the larger blackpowder cartridges were developed specifically for the bison market hunters of the second half of the 1800's. We all know how efficient these cartridges and firearms were in decimating the plains bison during that time. Yet, using the definition developed for centerfire calibers, few blackpowder cartridge loads can be found which meet the energy requirements. Few, if any, muzzleloading loads currently legal to use would meet those same centerfire cartridge requirements.

Replica blackpowder cartridge rifles are becoming fairly common along with the interest in shooting them, both in competition and for hunting. Both the NRA and the NMLRA hold local, state, regional, and national blackpowder cartridge rifle matches at ranges as far as 1000 yards. Regarding hunting, a 45-caliber rifle shooting a 400-grain bullet backed by 70 grains of blackpowder would be a legal muzzleloading load for bison. However, put that same load in a 45-70 blackpowder cartridge rifle and it is illegal. I would prefer not to specify legal blackpowder cartridges, but that method would follow the current muzzleloading specifications. I would propose the following blackpowder cartridges as legal for hunting bison in Alaska: 44-77, 45-70, 45-90, 45-120, 50-70, 50-90, 50-110. These tend to be the more common current chamberings in the more commonly available blackpowder cartridge rifles. There are other calibers which were developed for match shooting which could be considered, but they would be on the "lighter" side for hunting large, tenacious animals.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Hunting bison for food or market goes back to the founding of this country. Alaska established a free-ranging plains bison herd in the Delta Junction area decades ago and two other herds were developed from those animals -- the Copper River herd and the Farewell Burn herd. During the spring of this year

(2015), ADF&G transplanted about 100 wood bison into the Interior to begin re-introducing a native species back into the Alaska ecosystem.

These plains bison herds have been hunted on a limited drawing basis for many years. The hope and intent of the wood bison reintroduction is to also allow limited hunting at some point in the future. Because both the plains and wood bison are large, tenacious animals, the Department of Fish and Game has developed requirements for the hunting implements used to better assure humane take of the animals.

The ADF&G webpage specifies weapons legal for bison hunting. Modern rifles and handguns must meet minimum energy requirements using bullets weighing a specified minimum weight to be legal. Muzzleloaders have minimum caliber requirements for using round balls or conical bullets weighing a specified minimum amount. The bow requirements are spelled out and are the same as the larger category of big game animal equipment requirements. However, two groups of hunters are excluded by these definitions of legal "weapons:" crossbow hunters and blackpowder cartridge rifle hunters.

PROPOSED BY: Howard Delo (EG-C15-038)

PROPOSAL 76 - 5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions. Adopt minimum caliber requirements for use of high-power air rifles to take big game as follows:

Adopt regulations that would contain caliber and feature restrictions to ensure humane harvesting of animals. High powered air rifles are available in calibers from 9 mm to .72 with bullet weights from 92 grains to 1000 grains. In other states they commonly take deer, hogs, and black bears. Even a 2000 pound bison has been taken with one.

Example or revised regulation:

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions: The following methods and means of taking big game are prohibited in addition to the prohibitions in 5 AAC 92.080: (1) with the use of a firearm other than a shotgun, muzzleloader, **air rifle** or rifle or pistol using a center-firing cartridge, except that (A) in Units 23 and 26, swimming caribou may be taken with a firearm using rim fire cartridges; (B) the use of a muzzleloader is prohibited unless the firearm is a shoulder mounted long gun, 45 caliber or larger, with a barrel that is either rifled or smoothbore, and discharges a single projectile; and (C) the use of a muzzleloader equipped with a scope, or a muzzleloader using smokeless powder as a charge, during any permitted, registered, or special season hunt for muzzleloaders only, is prohibited; **(D) the use of an air rifle is prohibited unless the air rifle is .XX caliber or larger (most likely .40 caliber or above) with a rifled barrel and discharges a single projectile.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Provisions for harvesting small and big game utilizing high powered air rifles. Providing another method of harvesting animals.

PROPOSED BY: Zachary Bulacan (EG-C15-046)

PROPOSAL 77 - 5 AAC 92.080(7)(C)(i) Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Allow the use of artificial light for taking furbearers as follows:

Allow the use of artificial lighting **on land only** in all units in the taking of furbearers during each unit’s open trapping season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Adopt a regulation change that will allow trappers in all units the use of artificial lighting for the taking of furbearers on a trapping license.

The proposed regulation change will allow another method of taking furbearers for all trappers. It will also allow physically disabled and senior trappers another method that are unable to run a trap line or hike long distances. Some trappers may opt for this method in populated areas that may reduce conflicts with non-trappers, and may lessen the chance of domestic animals from being caught in snares, conventional traps, and killer style (body grip) traps.

PROPOSED BY: William Wertanen (EG-C15-025)

PROPOSAL 78 - 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Remove all requirements for identification tags on traps and snares as follows:

We recommend that any requirement for use of trap ID tags be stricken from the regulations and that the Board of Game make a statement of “legislative intent” in opposition to future implementation of any regulation which would require trap ID tags.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Trap identification tags are cumbersome, ineffective and can lead to interference with lawful trapping. Regulations requiring trap ID tags should be struck from trapping regulations statewide.

Proponents of trap ID tags claim that this requirement will make trappers more honest and conscious of when and where they set traps. Their view is misguided. Once trap ID tags are required, enforcement officers feel entitled to check traps and snares for presence of the tags. In the process of handling the traps or snares, they often render the sets ineffective by disturbing the immediate area and/or contaminating the gear with human scent.

Opponents of trapping can steal tagged traps and snares and re-set them illegally; before or after legal season or in areas that are closed to trapping.

We are also concerned about the potential for uneven enforcement throughout the state. Regulations should be enforced equally in all areas.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Trappers Association (EG-C15-033)

PROPOSAL 79 - 5 AAC 92.095(a). Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.
Require traps to be checked every 24 hours as follows:

5 AAC 92.095(a)(16) is amended to read:

(16) in Unit 1(C), that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage, by using [(A)] a snare with a cable diameter of 1/32 inch or larger that is set out of water, except under the terms of a registration permit;

[(B) A TRAP OR SNARE, UNLESS THE TRAP OR SNARE IS CHECKED AT LEAST ONCE EVERY 72 HOURS;]

5 AAC 92.095(a) is amended by adding a new subparagraph (21):

(21) use of a trap or snare, unless the trap or snare is checked at least once every 24 hours from the time initially set or last checked, except in the event of severe weather. Documentation is required and must include the time and date of the set, the time and date of each check, and the date and type of severe weather, if a check delay is necessary.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Alaska does not have a time limit for checking traps and snares. Lack of a requirement often results in long periods of suffering for wildlife. This proposal would mandate a statewide 24 hour time limit for checking traps and snares.

Section 5 AAC 92.095(a) of the Alaska Administrative Code addresses Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Paragraph (a) number (16) contains a requirement for a 72 hour time limit for checking traps. However, the requirement applies only to Unit 1(C), that portion west of Excursion Inlet and north of Icy Passage and 72 hours is widely considered an excessive period for an animal to suffer.

This proposal would remove the requirement from number (16) and add a new number (21) mandating a statewide 24 hour time limit for checking traps & snares. An exception to the requirement will allow a delay beyond 24 hours for severe weather like extreme cold, blizzard or windstorm, but the date and nature of the weather must be documented. Dictionary definitions of severe include harsh, extreme, grave, and critical.

Mandating a statewide 24 hour time limit to check traps and snares will accomplish many important objectives.

In considering the requirement 72, 48, and 24 hours were evaluated. More than half of all states require that traps be checked at least once every 24 hours (or "daily"). Alaska has unique issues, but certainly a 24 hour time limit to check traps will greatly reduce wildlife suffering and weather within 24 hours is far more predictable than for longer periods.

Animals are not always killed instantly when trapped. Wildlife can suffer for long periods of time before the trapper returns to the location. This can affect the quality of the desired pelt as well as imparting unnecessary suffering for animals.

The trapped animal will also be at risk of predation the longer it remains trapped which can lead to dangerous situations for trappers and others. People that may be in the area for non-related reasons can be subjected to a dangerous encounter with predators attracted by the trapped animal or possibly endangered by the trapped animal itself.

Traps and snares are indiscriminate. Trapped wildlife could have young present, or nearby. Returning to the trap site within 24 hours will give a trapper a chance to report the presence of any young that could be saved. For many wildlife species, young will not survive unless the mother is there to care for them. Eliminating the mother by indiscriminately trapping her, means her young will likely not survive and numbers will be depleted in an area for future use. Non-targeted species can become trapped. Checking traps within 24 hours would enhance the chances of survival for non-target wildlife species that have been entangled in traps. Such wildlife may be able to be released or sent to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator for medical treatment. Juneau had an instance in December of 2014 involving a bald eagle that became trapped. A local hiker happened to stumble upon the injured animal and got the bird to the local wildlife rehabilitator. Unfortunately, the bird's injuries were so severe, the animal needed to be euthanized. Domestic animals, most often dogs, are often caught in traps. Mandating a 24 hour time limit to check traps could be the difference between life and death for a wandering family pet that has become entangled in a trap or snare.

Alaska trapper organizations, animal welfare groups, and wildlife advocates were invited to review and make suggestions on this proposal. Trapper organizations did not respond. All other responders pressed for a 24 hour limit to check traps, given the predictable amount of suffering being too great over a longer period. One reviewer noted that research biologists frequently check their traps every 12 hours so that animals are not subject to suffering.

Alaska is well known for its precious wildlife. Many visit Alaska JUST to catch a glimpse of a bear, wolf, moose, goat, otter, marmot, and so on. Others move here to live amongst all of the amazing wildlife we are fortunate to have in this great state. It is imperative that we treat our wildlife with as much respect as possible. Mandating a 24 hour limit to check traps and snares will limit wildlife suffering, keep humans safe, and help with the indiscriminate nature of these traps, reducing deaths of young, non-target species, and domestic animals.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle Anderson and Patricia O'Brien (EG-C15-096)

PROPOSAL 80 - 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Move trapping away from cities with a population of 1,000 or more as follows:

5 AAC 92.095 is amended by adding new paragraphs (c) and (d) to read:

(c) In a city with a population of 1,000 or more, unless the city has a more restrictive ordinance, a person may not place a trap or a snare within

(1) one-quarter mile of a publicly maintained road; or

(2) 200 feet of a publicly maintained trail.

(d) Except within a community with a more restrictive ordinance, a person may not place a trap or a snare within one mile of a

- (1) house or other permanent dwelling, except that a trap or snare may be placed within one mile of a cabin, if the cabin is on the opposite side of a major river system, or the cabin is owned by the trapper for use as a trapping cabin;**
- (2) business; or**
- (3) school; or**
- (4) a developed campground or developed recreational facility.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Move trapping away from population centers. Address limiting the location of traps and snares in relation to roads, publicly maintained trails, and other locations where people gather.

The ADF&G trapping regulation booklet, page six, contains this advice: Act responsibly as a trapper and conservationist by trapping in ways to minimize conflict between trapping and other users, e.g. avoid high recreational use areas. Avoid situations where you might catch a domestic dog or cat, such as near homes, or trails frequently used by hikers, skijorers, dog mushers, or other people.

Those conflicts occur frequently. Some are covered in news media, and resentment by the majority of users (non-trappers) has been building in community after community.

Safety for humans, pets, and other non-targeted species is of major concern to the public. In one example two dogs were caught in traps near a high use trail. An excessive amount of bait had been set out. The dog owner was a strong man. He stated that even in following directions provided by a Wildlife Trooper via phone, the traps were extremely difficult to open. Clearly a child or small person would not have been able to open those traps. Similar incidents abound, including pet deaths and fear of walking on popular trails because of traps and snares. It is time for the Board of Game to address this issue.

This proposal would move trapping away from all communities with a population of 1,000 or more. Unless a local ordinance is more restrictive, 27 Alaska communities would have the safeguards offered in this proposal and smaller communities would have protections for home, schools, and recreation sites.

Trap or snare placement at least 200 feet off a publicly maintained trail is less than the 250 feet that failed in the last regulatory round. The average length of a person's stride is a little more than five feet. That means trap placement will be about 40 paces off the trail. That distance is also reasonable to expect a pet to be within voice control.

The model and precedent for these regulations is in 5 AAC 92.044(b)(5) related to hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Those regulations appropriately address public safety. Informal agreements with trapper associations are not adequate. The public deserves the assurance that only regulations and enforcement provide. While the Alaska Trapper's Code of Ethics does not address the concerns of other user groups, support of these measures by trappers would help ease the conflict. The Board of Game would gain esteem for addressing an issue of deep concern from the public at large.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle Anderson and Patricia O'Brien (EG-C15-097)

PROPOSAL 81 - 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Define the term underwater for the purposes of allowing furbearers to be harvested with underwater traps or snares as follows:

5 AAC 92.095 (new section):

In this section, “underwater traps and snares” means the trap or snare must be set below the waterline and a portion the trap or snare must be in the water.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There is some confusion among trappers and enforcement regarding what constitutes underwater traps and snares. The purpose of this proposal is to make clear the board’s intent for allowing the harvest of furbearers during certain seasons to be taken only by underwater traps and snares. In lieu of a definition for underwater, the department has used the word “submerged” in the trapping regulations, which leads the public to believe the entire trap or snare is required to be under the surface of the water.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game at the request of the Board of Game
(HQ-C15-159)
