

Miscellaneous Permits

PROPOSAL 88 - 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. Add sugar gliders to the list of animals allowed to be sold and possessed without a permit as follows:

Sugar glider species (*Petaurus breviceps*) has been added to the Alaska Board of Game “clean list” of animals legally recognized as pets.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like the sugar glider species *Petaurus breviceps* added to the clean list.

What is a sugar glider? The sugar glider (*Petaurus breviceps*) is a small, omnivorous, arboreal, and nocturnal gliding possum belonging to the marsupial infraclass. They have very similar appearance and habits to the flying squirrel, but are not closely related. Sugar gliders are characterized by their gliding membrane, known as the patagium, which extends from their forelegs to hindlegs. Gliding serves as an efficient means of both locating food and evading predators. They are covered in soft, pale grey to brown fur, which is lighter in color on their underside. The sugar glider is endemic to mainland Australia and New Guinea and its surrounding islands; and was introduced to Tasmania in 1835.

Where are they native? Sugar gliders are native to the treetops of Australia, Tasmania, Indonesia, and Papua-New Guinea. The International Union for Conservation of Nature gives the *Petaurus breviceps* its Least Concern rating and there are no conservation efforts in any of their native lands due to their abundance in the wild. They tend to make their homes in the hollows of trees located in the canopy of their native lands.

Compare to animals already on the “clean” list. This animal is unique and has no equivalent on the clean list. The introduction of this animal to Alaska brings no new diseases or problems that aren’t already represented by other animals already on the clean list.

Already present in Alaska. While doing research for this proposal, I contacted quite a few of the veterinarians in the Anchorage and Mat-Su communities. All but two had current sugar glider patients. Sugar gliders are already present in Alaska.

Breeding: Sugar gliders mostly breed once, sometimes twice in a year usually resulting in a single joey. This occurs between August and December. There are no recorded instances of a Sugar glider breeding outside of its species resulting in offspring.

Why “should” we allow them? This is an opportunity to add an animal to the clean list with minimal risk. The risks associated with the introduction of sugar gliders to Alaska are significantly lower than animals that have already been introduced through the clean list. These are becoming very popular pets with a nonexistent possibility of a population establishing in the wild.

Why “shouldn’t” we be concerned? Any and all concerns with sugar gliders are already represented by other animals on the clean list. Other significant reasons are listed below.

1. Is it capable of surviving in the wild in Alaska? No, for a couple of reasons: Sugar gliders would not be able to survive in any part of Alaska that hits freezing or below. They are not hibernating animals and they start minimizing activity and grouping together to help conserve heat beginning at about 50 degrees. Sugar gliders are extremely social animals. In the wild, they are typically found in groups of 15 to 30. Solo sugar gliders kept in captivity have shown a deterioration in behavior including self-mutilating and have even died from health conditions developed as a result of loneliness.

2. Is it capable of causing a genetic alteration of a species that is indigenous to Alaska? No, as a marsupial, it has very specific breeding requirements. Gestation is 16 days while the other 60 days of development occur in the mother's pouch. The only North American marsupial is the opossum, of which none are native to Alaska and cross-breeding wouldn't be possible.

3. Is it capable of causing a significant reduction in the population of a species that is indigenous to Alaska? No, sugar gliders cannot survive in the Alaskan climate. Therefore cannot generate the numbers to be a contributing factor in the reduction of any indigenous population. They are small, a little bigger than a hamster, so they tend to fall toward the bottom of the food chain.

4. Is it capable of transmitting a disease to a species that is indigenous to Alaska? A very few reports of laboratory-confirmed cases of human salmonellosis associated with exposure to sugar gliders have been described. There have also been a couple of cases of leptospirosis transfer to humans attributed to sugar gliders. This is with over 20 years of data since sugar gliders started being utilized as pets in the United States. Both of these are much more commonly found in animals already on the clean list such as dogs, birds, cattle, swine, lizards, rodents and turtles. Both salmonella and leptospirosis are prevented by good cage cleaning practices.

This is the information I found while researching zoonoses and zoological transfer. While no species to species transfer was listed, it is fair to extrapolate that if these can be transferred to people, they can also be transferred to other animals. Again, as stated previously, both of these pathogens are much more commonly found in animals already on the clean list than in sugar gliders.

5. Does it otherwise present a threat to the health or population of a species that is indigenous to Alaska? No. I believe all concerns were addressed in previous questions.

References:

Brust, D. (n.d.). What Every Veterinarian Should Know About Sugar Gliders. Retrieved June 24, 2015, from http://www.sugargliderinfo.org/wp-content/uploads/gre_fc_pdf/exotic-dvm-11-3-complete.pdf

Corriveau, L. (n.d.). Sugar Gliders. Retrieved June 24, 2015, from [https://www.vet.purdue.edu/vth/files/documents/Sugar Gliders.pdf](https://www.vet.purdue.edu/vth/files/documents/Sugar%20Gliders.pdf)

GliderVet #3: Gut Loading, Glider "Love Bites", Transferable Diseases. (2002). Retrieved June 23, 2015, from <http://www.sugar-gliders.com/glidervet-3.htm>

Margulies, E. (2010, February 4). Zoonosis. Retrieved June 24, 2015, from <http://www.sugarglider.com/gliderpedia/index.asp?Zoonosis>

Pignon, C., & Mayer, J. (n.d.). Zoonoses of Ferrets, Hedgehogs, and Sugar Gliders. Retrieved June 24, 2015, from http://www.academia.edu/9818248/Zoonoses_of_Ferrets_Hedgehogs_and_Sugar_Gliders

STATE RESTRICTIONS. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2015, from <http://www.angelfire.com/nb/sugarglider/stateres.html>

(2014). Statewide Regulations, Cycle A Schedule – March 14-18, 2014 [Radio series episode]. In *Board of Game*. Juneau:

Sugar Glider Health Issues. (2009). Retrieved June 24, 2015, from <http://www.exoticnutrition.com/suglheis.html>

Sugar Gliders. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2015, from <http://avianandexotic.com/mammals/care-of-sugar-gliders/>

Sugar glider. (2015, June 16). Retrieved June 24, 2015, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sugar_glider

What Every Veterinarian Should Know. (n.d.). Retrieved June 24, 2015.

Wildlife Queensland - Sugar Glider. (2013). Retrieved June 24, 2015, from http://www.wildlife.org.au/wildlife/speciesprofile/mammals/gliders/sugar_glider.html

PROPOSED BY: John Hammonds (EG-C15-127)

PROPOSAL 89 - 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. Add sugar gliders to the list of animals allowed to be sold and possessed without a permit as follows:

Add sugar gliders (*Petauru brevieps*) to the list at 5 AAC 92.029(b).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Adoption of sugar gliders (*Petauru brevieps*) to the list of animals allowed to be possessed, imported, exported, bought, sold or traded without a permit from the Department of Fish and Game.

Why: Due to the Animal Welfare Act, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service regulate the licensing and breeders of sugar gliders in the United States. They are animals that cannot survive unless in a sub tropic environment. They are not a threat to wildlife or living in Alaska environment. It is too cold and more importantly Alaska does not support its natural food, eucalyptus. They do not carry any diseases that cats, dogs, cattle and other animal species not required to get a permit to enter Alaska already can potentially carry into the state of Alaska. I would personally like to become a licensed USDA breeder and feel that the state of Alaska is prohibiting me from doing so with the USDA is already controlling these animals in America.

PROPOSED BY: Deanna Thornell (EG-C15-082)

PROPOSAL 90 - 5 AAC 92.029. Permit for possessing live game. Eliminate domestic sheep (*Ovis aries*) and goats (*Capra hircus*) from the “Clean List” and require a permit for possession with stipulations if located within 15 air miles of all sheep habitat as follows:

(b) **Domestic sheep and goats will be removed from the “Clean List” regulation.**

Any person in possession of domestic sheep (*ovis*) or goats (*capra*) must obtain a permit from the department within one year of implementation of this section. Animals located within 15 air miles of Dall sheep habitat must be contained within a Department approved facility (double fence, etc.) and certified disease free when testing becomes available. Animals located more than 15 miles from Dall sheep habitat will be issued a permit without stipulation online.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Domestic sheep and goats have been proven to carry diseases that are devastating to wild sheep populations. This proposal will be a good start to prevent the spread of disease into wild sheep populations. Hobby farming is growing rapidly in Alaska including areas that would be considered Dall sheep habitat. Entire populations of bighorn sheep are presently being eradicated due to these unintentional disease transmissions.

Justification:

#1 We have a constitutional mandate to manage for sustained yield, this includes doing what we can to maintain healthy native wildlife populations.

#2 Online permitting has become mainstream and is simple.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wild Sheep Foundation (HQ-C15-128)

PROPOSAL 91 - 5 AAC 92.029(d)(2). Permit for possessing live game. Include cow in the definition of feral game as follows:

92.029(d) Under this section, and in accordance with the definition of “game” in AS 16.05.940 (which includes feral domestic animals), a

...

(2) musk oxen, bison, **cow**, or reindeer that is lawfully owned, or an elk held under a valid game mammal farming license, that is not confined or is not confined under positive control is feral unless the animal is a free-ranging animal on a state or federal grazing lease; however,

...

(C) any free-ranging musk oxen, bison, **cow**, reindeer, or elk for which ownership cannot be demonstrated is presumed to be game;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Year-round open hunt to eradicate the non-indigenous species on our lands. I would like the Board of Game to adopt regulations to allow hunting of feral cows, such as those on Baldy Mountain Unit 14A. I also would like the board to consider adding a regulation for feral cow statewide.

PROPOSED BY: Sean Lund (EG-C15-039)

PROPOSAL 92 - 5 AAC 92.037. Permits for falconry. Modify the allocation provisions for nonresident falconry permits as follows:

5 AAC 92.037. Permits for falconry:

...(g) The taking, transporting, or possessing a raptor for falconry by a nonresident is allowed under the following conditions: (1) a valid **state falconry** permit and a valid, current nonresident hunting and trapping license is required for submitting an application, taking, transporting, possessing, and transferring a raptor to another state's falconry program; (2) the nontransferable permit will be issued under standards, procedures and conditions set out in the Alaska Falconry Manual No. 9, dated July 1, 2012; that manual, including its conditions related to nonresident take, is hereby adopted by reference; (3) take is limited to nonresidents who are citizens of the United States; (4) only the raptor species listed under (f) of this section are eligible for nonresident take; (5) **Harvest dates, harvest species and bag limits are the same as resident falconers**; [up to five permits for taking, transporting, or possessing a raptor for falconry by a nonresident shall be issued annually by the department; (6) a targeted hunt system will be used to determine permit winners if the number of applicants exceeds the number of permits available; (7) take is limited to one passage, hatching-year raptor; (8) the annual nonresident season for acquiring a passage raptor is from August 15–October 31;] (6) the department shall specify other permit conditions as required to be consistent with the federal falconry laws and regulations, Alaska Falconry Manual, and export requirements; (7) the department may, in its discretion **based on justifiable state or public interests through the least prejudicial means available**, establish additional permit conditions necessary to administer this program; (8) the department may, in its discretion **based on justifiable state or public interests through the least prejudicial means available**, close areas for nonresident take; (9) if live birds or mammals are to be imported to assist with trapping raptors, all federal and state import requirements shall be met; including the requirements of 5 AAC 92.029; deleterious exotic wildlife and species not listed in 5 AAC 92.029(b) may not be imported to Alaska for use in trapping raptors; resident pigeons and starlings, if used as lure birds, shall not be released into the wild; (10) permits are nontransferable.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal is a request to modify existing Alaska provisions to allow nonresidents the same rights to harvest falconry raptors as residents. The purpose of this proposed rule change is to ensure reasonable access to a healthy resource, and thus be in harmony with the Privileges and Immunities Clause (U.S. Constitution, Article IV, Section 2, Clause 1), as it will allow for equal opportunity for all interested parties.

In 2011 the American Falconry Conservancy (AFC) drafted a proposal (P40) with the assistance of several Alaska falconers to allow nonresident take of raptors, and we submitted the proposal to the Alaska Board of Game (board). During the 2012 statewide meetings cycle, the board received a substantial amount of testimony and comment on the proposal. The science- and legal-based testimony reasoned that the Alaska raptor resource was healthy, and that there was no justification for not allowing non-resident take of raptors. Testimony included Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) summaries of raptor numbers, the manner in which USFWS derived their conservative 5% take levels, the support of both resident and nonresident falconers, the concerns of a few Alaska resident falconers, and discussions on all of the concerns.

At the January 2012 meetings, the board decided to defer their decision on P40 until the 2014 cycle.

During the 2014 cycle, the board resumed their discussions on non-resident take of raptors (P40 renumbered P174) and adopted ultra conservative provisions in order to provide time to create administrative procedures. The board allowed for the issuance of five non-resident take permits annually and placed a tight restriction on the take season, especially for peregrines. Federally, Alaska peregrines may only be taken as juveniles during a season that ends on September 31, and the Alaska provisions do not allow non-residents to take peregrines until September 15. This allows nonresidents only a two-week window to harvest peregrines.

Additionally, despite ADF&G's recommendation to allow seven nonresident permits annually, including eyasses (See P174 A (RC72) of the March 2014 board meetings), and the board's decision to allow five nonresident permits, ADF&G limited their permit issuance to only three in 2014. It was noted by ADF&G that their original seven-permit limit was based on a percentage of what Alaska resident falconers harvest, not on resource sustainability.

In 2015, 21 nonresident applications were received for the three permits which clearly shows a demand greater than what was approved and well below the most conservative sustainable use principles. Supreme Court decisions have upheld that absent any compelling public or government interest there is no justification in restricting nonresidents more than residents.

PROPOSED BY: American Falconry Conservancy (EG-C15-067)

PROPOSAL 93 - 5 AAC 92.037. Permits for falconry. For nonresidents, allow the take of eyas raptors, increase the allocation for falconry permits, and lengthen the season as follows:

5 AAC 92.037. Permits for falconry.

(g) The taking, transporting, or possessing a raptor for falconry by a nonresident is allowed under the following conditions:

...

(5) up to **10** [5] permits for taking, transporting, possessing a raptor for falconry by a nonresident shall be issued annually by the department;

...

(8) the annual nonresident season for acquiring a **eyas or passage** [PASSAGE] raptor is from **May 15–October 31** [AUGUST 15–OCTOBER 31].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow for a nonresident take of eyas raptors. Increase the number of permits from five to ten annually. This year there were 23 applicants for the three permits issued. Of the ten permits available only five should be issued for the take of large falcons (i.e. peregrine and gyrfalcons).

PROPOSED BY: Donald Fox (EG-C15-104)

PROPOSAL 94 - 5 AAC 92.033. Permit for scientific, education, propagative, or public safety purposes; and 92.047. Permit for using radio telemetry equipment. Require the implementation of state wildlife plans before issuing permits for education or telemetry as follows:

Add a section to 5 AAC 92.033 and 92.047 to read:

No permits for use of wildlife for science or telemetry shall be issued until and unless the agency, organization or educational unit agrees in writing to fully implement or allow the state to implement all state approved wildlife plans, conditions and regulations for a game management unit or subunit. This section shall apply to all state or private lands and federal lands where those uses are identified by ANILCA.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Federal agencies choose to refuse to recognize the state authority for wildlife management, planning and regulations on land(s) identified under ANILCA for the specified use of hunting, fishing and trapping. Even “federally qualified” rural Alaskans are restricted or have been eliminated from these historic activities. The state needs to take action to clearly demonstrate the federal abuse. The proposed action would help to build a record and bring attention to the problem.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C15-059)
