

PROPOSAL 96 – 5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose, and 92.072. Community subsistence harvest hunt area and permit conditions. Eliminate the community subsistence harvest hunt for moose in the Copper Basin area, and establish a registration moose hunt for Unit 13 as follows:

Eliminate the community subsistence harvest moose hunt in Unit 13, 11, and a portion of 12.

Establish a new resident registration moose hunt for Unit 13. Season dates would be August 15–31. The bag limit would be one bull per household with antlers less than 50-inches wide, and at least two brow tines on both sides. If a household registers for this moose hunt, no member of the household may hunt moose outside Unit 13 during the regulatory year. Households would register during the November hunt application period.

This bag limit allows for more hunters to participate in the early hunt opportunity, helping meet subsistence needs, without over harvesting the resource. In addition, allow the department to set a quota for this hunt to ensure the resource is not over harvested.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Eliminate the community subsistence harvest moose hunt in Unit 13, 11, and a portion of 12 (finalize during the next Region III meeting). This hunt offers a few advantages over other moose hunts in the unit, although the complexity of the hunt is not in the best interest of Unit 13 hunters as a whole or the department. The CSH moose hunt offers open designated hunting opportunity amongst group members, early hunt dates, and a limited number of highly coveted any bull moose permits. The demand for any bull moose permits is extremely high in Unit 13 for all hunters, local and non-local, as seen in the number of CSH participants as well as the number of any bull drawing permit applications. The demand for an early and/or longer moose hunting season is also high in Unit 13. Are these things necessary? No. The Unit 13 Amount Necessary for Subsistence is more than being met by other existing resident hunts in the unit. Are these things coveted by all hunters? Yes.

The CSH moose hunt however has morphed into a complicated and convoluted program that has ballooned out of control. In its most recent form following the March 2017 Board of Game meeting, it is now likely sideways of existing state laws governing allocation of game. For example, the Tier II application process has no place inside an otherwise stated Tier I moose hunt, especially considering the moose harvest far exceeds ANS, and nonresidents are still allowed to hunt in the unit. It is time to let go of the CSH moose hunt in Unit 13, 11, and a portion of 12.

To offer a replacement for the additional hunt opportunity for an any bull moose, consider adopting an early season registration bull hunt similar to the past Tier II hunt dates, August 15–August 31. This time period offers a jump on the general season moose hunters, and moose are not overly susceptible to harvest during this time. To accommodate the number of hunters that will be interested in participating, the bag limit must have an antler restriction. Unfortunately, an any bull registration hunt is just not an option given the hunter interest in this unit.

If the Unit 13-specific proxy regulations were also eliminated, and proxy hunting were again allowed for antler restricted bull moose hunts, the vast majority of Unit 13 moose hunters would be able to meet their needs under the existing general season and drawing hunts in the unit.

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