

# **Nome Area Proposals - Unit 22**

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## **PROPOSAL 30**

### **5 AAC 5 AAC 92.011(k). Taking of game by proxy.**

Include muskox on the list of species that can be taken under a proxy permit in Unit 22 as follows:

Add language to 5 AAC 92.011(k) Proxy hunting under this section is only allowed for

- (1) caribou;
- (2) deer;
- (3) moose in Tier I hunts, any-bull hunts, and antlerless moose hunts; [AND]
- (4) emperor geese; **and**
- (5) Muskoxen in Tier II hunts.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** This proposal seeks to allow proxy hunting in Tier II muskoxen hunts in Unit 22B through 22E. The trophy value is destroyed in the field subject to permit conditions. These hunts are allowed for the harvest of meat, horn, and fiber by Alaskan residents. These products are distributed throughout the community and because the harvest rate is high there is rarely excess permits about the harvestable surplus. Families/communities have missed opportunities for harvest when the permit holder becomes disabled for whatever reason.

**PROPOSED BY:** Charlie Lean

(EG-F19-010)

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*Note: This proposal is also scheduled for the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting as Proposal 74.*

## **PROPOSAL 31**

### **5 AAC 85.050. Hunting seasons and bag limits for muskoxen.**

Establish a registration permit hunt for muskox in Units 21D, 22A, and 24D as follows:

Establish a limited quota muskoxen season; Units 21D, 22A, 24D; up to 5 bulls; February 1 – April 30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Muskoxen have occurred in Units 21D, 22A, and 24D for many years, but there is no open season in these units.

Muskoxen are frequently observed in the Nulato Hills during the winter and during spring bear hunting and have been observed near the villages of Galena, Ruby, Nulato, Kaltag, and Huslia. Dispersing muskoxen have had to be killed under defense of life and property (DLP) conditions and near Ruby, Galena, Nulato and the Kateel River during the fall moose season. Muskoxen in the Nulato Hills would provide an additional hunting opportunity that is not being utilized and could provide an additional source of meat for Alaskan hunters.

**PROPOSAL 32**

**5 AAC 85.025. Hunting seasons and bag limits for caribou.**

Allow caribou to be taken east of and including the Nuluk River drainage in Unit 22E as follows:

Most hunters are targeting mature caribou bulls during this time and the possibility of domestic stock reindeer being harvested is very slim. We ask that the Alaska Board of Game to change Unit 22E to say “**east of and including the Nuluk River drainage**” [EAST OF AND INCLUDING THE SANGUICH RIVER DRAINAGE] One bull however, calves may not be taken / harvest ticket / August 1-September 30.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Currently the Alaska Board of Game does not allow hunting caribou west of the Sanaguich River drainage due to domestic reindeer herds “possibly” being in the area. The concern is domestic reindeer may accidentally be harvested in this area. I believe the differences are distinguishable as the breed is shorter in height, heavier in weight, darker and in most cases is equipped with identification tags (red, green, and yellow Ear Tags). These characteristics makes the reindeer easy to identify, from caribou.

This proposal would be a return to historical resource management of the caribou in Unit 22E that ended back in 2016. The caribou are found in higher areas of the continental divide specifically on the northern side. A huge geographic area that holds these caribou has been closed and if nothing is done hunters will be limited to one third of the area that caribou are frequenting during the set hunting season.

**PROPOSAL 33**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Modify hunting seasons and require a registration permit for moose hunting in Unit 22D Remainder as follows:

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. (a) ...**

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
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(20)

Remainder of Unit 22(D)

RESIDENT HUNTERS: Aug. 10 – Sept. 14

1 bull moose **by registration permit only**; only antlered bull moose may be taken from Dec 1-Jan 31;

**Dec. 1**[Oct 1] – Jan. 31  
**(To be announced)**

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

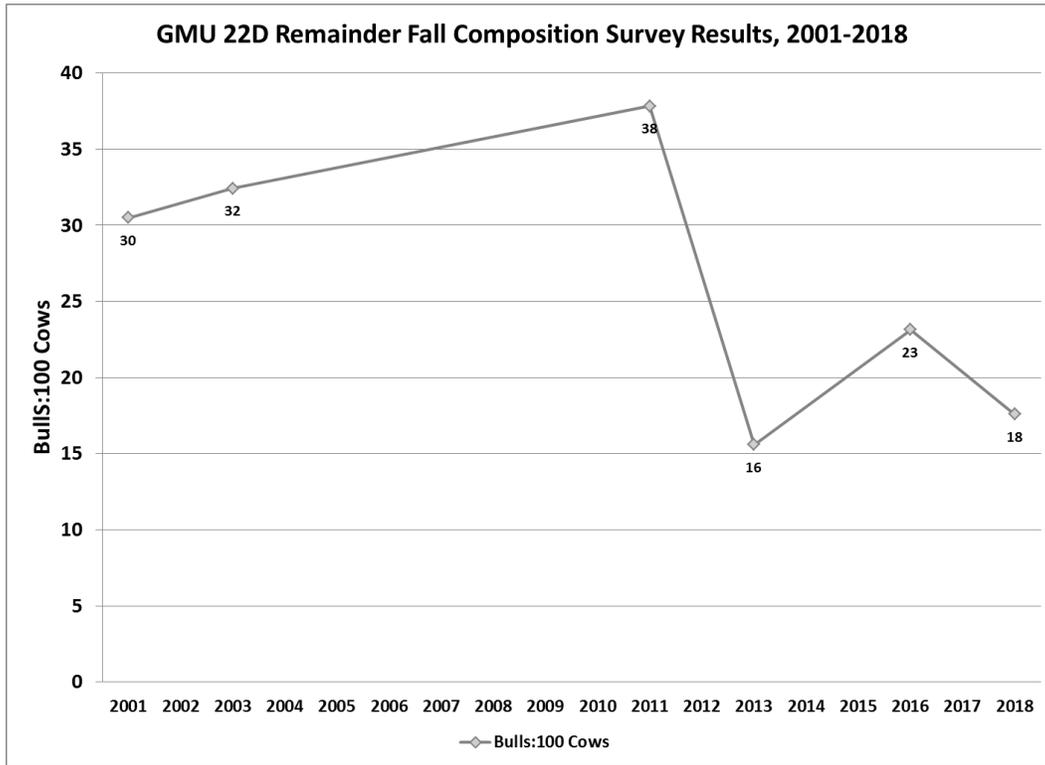
No open season

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Moose abundance in Unit 22D has persisted at low density since dramatic declines in abundance occurred throughout Unit 22 in the late 80's and early 90's. Moose abundance in Unit 22D Remainder was last surveyed in 2014 at which time the population was estimated at 491 moose (95% CI: 410-571) with 18% recruitment. This represents a 14% annual rate of decline 2011 – 2014. The Department of Fish and Game unsuccessfully attempted to complete a moose survey during the spring of 2018, but plans to attempt another abundance survey in the area during the spring of 2020. A spring recruitment survey completed in 2018 observed 977 moose and found 11% recruitment throughout Unit 22D suggesting that the population of moose has not continued to decline 13% annually however recruitment in the area is low.

Fall composition surveys completed in the area 2001 – 2018 indicate that the bull:cow ratio has declined to below our management objective of 30 bull:100 cows. Surveys completed 2013 to present have consistently resulted in bull:cow ratio estimates below 30 bull:100 cows. A survey completed in 2018 found 18 bulls:100 cows (Figure 1). Declines in the bull:cow ratio suggest that the current level of harvest is not sustainable and that management action should be taken to reduce harvest in the area.

The Unit 22D Remainder hunt area is remote and not immediately accessible along the Nome road system. Such challenges have historically limited hunter participation and harvest in the area, as a consequence liberal seasons and bag limits persisted in the area. Elsewhere in Unit 22, registration permit hunts with harvest quotas (RM840) have been implemented in hunt areas immediately accessible along the Nome road system in order to maintain harvest at sustainable levels.

Figure 1. Unit 22D Remainder Fall Composition Survey Results, 2001 – 2018



Hunter participation in Unit 22D Remainder has steadily grown 2000 – 2018. Hunters seeking to take advantage of more liberal moose seasons coupled with advances in the capabilities of off-road vehicles have likely reduced some of the challenges associated with hunting in the area and facilitated the increase in hunter participation.

Reported harvest during RY2017 and preliminary estimates of reported harvest during RY2018 were 34 and 33 bulls respectively. Compared to the long-term average annual reported harvest 2001 – 2016 of 20 bulls per year this information indicates harvest in the area is increasing. Reported harvest should be considered a minimum estimate of harvest as a portion of the moose harvested from Unit 22D Remainder is not reported to the department. Household subsistence surveys completed by the subsistence division in the communities of Teller and Brevig Mission 1988 – 2016 suggest an average harvest of 15 and 5 moose respectively. Conversely, average annual reported harvest from residents of Teller and Brevig Mission for the period 2006 – 2017 is <1 moose and 1 – 2 moose, respectively.

The proposed regulatory changes would improve harvest reporting in the area as well as provide the department the tools necessary to maintain harvest in the area at sustainable levels. Changes to the season dates eliminate the opportunity to hunt moose in Unit 22D Remainder during the month of October and November. Given the status of the population and the observed declines in the bull:cow ratios, providing protections for breeding bulls as well as reducing hunter disturbance during the rut is necessary to ensure future productivity.

A series of small incremental changes have been enacted by the Board of Game in response to declines in abundance and poor productivity. In 2014, antlerless moose hunts in the area were eliminated. In 2017, nonresident hunting was closed. Additional steps are warranted at this time to address biological concerns. The department has considered only making changes to the season dates in the area. Although such changes may reduce the reported harvest in the area, such measures are considered inadequate since they will not improve harvest reporting within the area and do not provide the department with the tools necessary to prevent over harvest.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-148)

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**PROPOSAL 34**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose**

Open a nonresident drawing hunt for moose in Unit 22D Remainder as follow:

We propose that the Alaska Board of Game look into opening a limited nonresident drawing hunt in Unit 22D Remainder for: **one bull with 50-inch antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on one side, by permit from September 1- September 14.** Allow a harvest quota of five – eight.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** There is currently not a nonresident moose season for Unit 22D Remainder. This area has been closed for two years as a previous limited quota registration hunt for a 50-inch or four brow tine bull moose. While resident hunters have a very liberal season of *any bull* that lasts for over five months in Unit 22D Remainder. It would make sense that nonresidents would have an opportunity at a mature bull moose in this same area. More nonresident hunting pressure has been placed on Unit 22E with it being the only nonresident moose hunt in the area, RM855.

In the past, with a registration hunt, an emergency closure has been issued to close the season. This would allow for harvesting over the quota limit. A drawing tag would only allow the biological harvested quota that was limited for the area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Justin Horton (EG-F19-085)

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**PROPOSAL 35**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Change the availability of Unit 22 registration permits for moose hunting with an option to require a registration permit for the Unit 22D Remainder hunt as follows:

**Option 1: By permit available in person in Nome or at license vendors in Unit 22 villages July 15 – July 31.**

**Option 2:** Unit 22 moose harvest under a quota hunt and to include Unit 22D remainder.  
**By permit available in person in Nome or at license vendors in Teller, White Mountain, Golovin. Unit 22B Remainder, 22C, 22D Kuzitrin River Drainages and SW area & Unit 22D Remainder beginning July 15 – July 31. By permit available in person at license vendors in**

**Unalakleet beginning July 15 – July 31.** [BY PERMIT AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [HTTP://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV](http://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV), BEGINNING JULY 24].

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The timeframe in which moose harvest tickets are made available in Unit 22. The moose population for most of Unit 22 has been in decline since the late ‘90’s with about half of the subunits under a very strict quota system and strict reporting timeframes. Examples:

Unit 22A Unalakleet River drainage imposed a local moratorium on moose hunting, once hunting resumed very strict quotas and reporting requirements were imposed.

Since the late ‘90’s Unit 22B Remainder had a quota that started in the low teens which is now in the low 20’s.

Unit 22C in the past had a quota as low as nine, fall 2018 was 16 and a reporting period of 24 hours.

Unit 22D Kuzitrin/Pilgrim/Teller had a quota around 54 but is now down in the low 20’s, reporting requirement of 24 hours. Unit 22D is still under a general moose harvest ticket but moose population surveys by ADF&G have shown that moose population has drastically declined also with very low bull to cow ratios.

Hunters are now going into Unit 22E because of the lack of moose in the other units. Local hunters who are the most dependent on harvesting a moose to put in the freezer for winter cannot afford to go someplace else; they are having a hard time competing with outside hunters who come to the region.

**PROPOSED BY:** Kawerak, Inc., Subsistence Program (HQ-F19-143)  
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### **PROPOSAL 36**

#### **5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Change the availability of Unit 22 registration permits for moose hunting as follows:

**By permit available in person in Nome or at license vendors in Unit 22 villages July 15 – July 31**[BY PERMIT AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [HTTP://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV](http://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV), BEGINNING JULY 24].

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Timeframe in which moose harvest tickets are made available in Unit 22. The moose population for most of Unit 22 has been in decline since the late ‘90’s with about half of the subunits under a very strict quota system and strict reporting timeframes. Examples:

- Unit 22A Unalakleet River drainage imposed a local moratorium on moose hunting, once hunting resumed very strict quotas and reporting requirements were imposed.
- Since the late ‘90’s Unit 22B Remainder had a quota that started in the low teens which is now in the low 20’s.
- Unit 22C in the past had a quota as low as nine, fall 2018 was 16 and a reporting period of 24 hours.

- Unit 22D Kuzitrin/Pilgrim/Teller had a quota around 54 but is now down in the low 20's, reporting requirement of 24 hours. Unit 22D is still under a general moose harvest ticket but moose population surveys by ADF&G have shown that moose population has drastically declined also with very low bull to cow ratios.

Hunters from Units 22B, C & D are now going into Unit 22E because of the lack of moose in the other units. Local hunters who are the most dependent on harvesting a moose to put in the freezer for winter cannot afford to go someplace else; they are having a hard time competing with outside hunters who come to the region.

**PROPOSED BY:** John Bahnke III (HQ-F19-144)

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**PROPOSAL 37**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Close the nonresident moose hunt in Unit 22C as follows:

**Residents:**

One bull by permit available online at <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or in person in Nome or at a license vendors in Teller, White Mountain and Golovin beginning July 24. Harvest quota to be announced. Season will be closed by emergency order when quota is reached. RM840. Sept. 1 – Sept 14.

**Nonresidents:**

**No open season**

[ONE BULL WITH 50-INCH ANTLERS WITH 4 OR MORE BROW TINES ON AT LEAST ONE SIDE BY PERMIT AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [HTTP://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV](http://HUNT.ALASKA.GOV) OR IN PERON IN NOME BEGINNING JULY 24. HARVEST QUOTA TO BE ANNOUNCED. SEASON WILL BE CLOSED BY EMERGENCY ORDER WHEN QUOTA IS REACHED. RM 840. SEPT 1 – SEPT 14]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Eliminate the nonresident moose hunt in Unit 22C. Moose populations in Unit 22C have declined since the mid to late '90's and they have had a difficult time bouncing back. The moose harvest in Unit 22C has been and currently still is under a very strict quota hunt with a reporting time of 24 hours. In previous years the quota has been as low as nine. In 2018 the quota was 16. This shared quota is for approximately 3-400 hunters mostly from the Seward Peninsula. This very strict quota has local residents asking why this hunt open to nonresidents when this particular moose population is so low. Hunters who reside in region are the most dependent upon this resource to fill freezers for the long winter. AS 16.05.258 clearly states that subsistence use is first priority above all else including commercial and sport use.

**PROPOSED BY:** Kawerak, Inc., Subsistence Program (HQ-F19-142)

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**PROPOSAL 38**

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.**

Modify the hunting season and bag limit for moose in Unit 22A as follows.

**5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. (a) ...**

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(20)		
Unit 22(A), that portion in the Unalakleet River drainage and all drainages flowing into Norton Sound north of the Golsovia River drainage and south of the Tagoomenik and Shaktoolik River drainages		
1 [ANTLERED] bull by registration permit only; or 1 antlered bull by registration permit only; during the period Dec 1-[Dec 31] <u>Jan 31</u> , a season may be announced by emergency order	Sept. 1 – Sept.[20] <u>30</u> Dec. 1 –[Dec 31] <u>Jan. 31</u> (Season to be announced)	No Open Season

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Changing the season dates for moose in Unit 22A would provide the Department of Fish and Game the flexibility to administer registration permit hunts RM841 and RM844 during the full range of season dates adopted by the Alaska Board of Game without the need to extend the season by emergency order.

The department began administering registration permits RM841 and RM844 during RY2008 following a closure to moose hunting in the area RY2005-RY2007. A season extension was issued annually RY2011-RY2015 to allow permit holders to harvest the remaining harvest quota during the fall season. In 2017, The Board of Game changed the season dates for RM841 from Sept 1-Sept 14 to Sept 1-Sept 20 in order to align the hunting regulations with the season dates historically provided through season extensions. These season dates have historically been sufficient to meet the harvest quota.

In the spring of 2017, the department completed a spring GSPE moose survey within the RM841 hunt area which resulted in a moose abundance estimate of 840 moose (90% CI: 747-933). These results indicated that the population had grown 9% annually over the period 2012-2017. As a result, the harvest quota for RY2017 was increased to 34 antlered bull moose.

At the conclusion of the fall hunt on Sept 20, 2017 the total reported harvest in the RM841 hunt was 27 moose. The department denied requests to extend the season during the fall season and issued an emergency order to open the winter hunt, RM844, with a harvest quota of seven antlered bull moose. The department subsequently issued a season extension January 9, 2018 to extend the winter hunt through January 31, 2018 after 0 moose were harvested during the December season. No moose were harvested during the RY2017 RM844 hunt and the season closed on January 31, 2018.

During RY2018 the harvest quota for RM841 was again set at 34 antlered bull moose. At the conclusion of the fall hunt on September 20, 2018 the reported harvest was 24 antlered bull moose. The department received a request from the Native Village of Unalakleet to extend the season to September 30, 2018. A written petition signed by RM841 permit holders was also received which conveyed a preference for fall hunting opportunity over that provided in the winter hunt, RM844.

On September 21, 2018 the department issued an emergency order to extend the season from September 21-September 30. The season subsequently closed on September 30 with a total reported harvest of 35 antlered bull moose.

The events of RY2017 and RY2018 seem to indicate that the current season dates in regulation do not provide adequate opportunity for permit holders to harvest the available quota. Harvest during either season may be strongly influenced by weather, animal movements, travel conditions, as well as other subsistence and commercial activities in the area. As a result the department would like to extend both seasons to cover the full range of season dates historically provided for through season extensions; provide additional administrative flexibility in hunt management; and eliminate the need to issue season extensions in the future.

If adopted, the department does not anticipate the extended season will create a conservation concern. Both the fall and winter hunts are administered as registration permit hunts and managed with harvest quotas. Successful hunters are required to report their harvest to the department within two days of the kill resulting in timely harvest information, and the department has the authority to issue an emergency order closure.

The department does not have any biological justification for administering RM841 with an antlered bull bag limit. The number of antlered bulls is theoretically equal to the number of bulls within the hunt area during the fall season. As a result, applying an antlered bull bag limit during the fall hunt does not have any management implications. Changing the bag limit in the RM841 hunt to one bull would allow permit holders to harvest moose under proxy hunting regulations.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-159)  
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**PROPOSAL 39**

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

**5 AAC 92.132. Bag limit for brown bears.**

Extend the hunting season for brown bear in Unit 22D and 22E, and increase the resident bag limit as follows:

To address this issue, we respectfully request the Board of Game adopt into regulation the following:

**Open to Residents All of Unit 22D/ 22E Two bear [ONE BEAR] every regulatory year August 1- June 15 [MAY 1].**

**Nonresidents All of 22D/ 22E One bear every regulatory year Aug. 1- June 15 [MAY 1].**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The more recent changes in the bear hunting regulations for the neighboring Units 22B and 22C the current bear harvest has shown to be sustainable. Bear reproduction has increased from one bear to three bears per litter. The last couple of years the moose quota has dropped substantially, and local ADF&G staff have attributed some of the moose population decline in Units 22D, 22D Remainder, 22D Southwest, to predators within Unit 22E. What used to be a general harvest ticket with no quota to a quota of 50 moose the quota is now in the low 30's. Cow season has been closed in a few of these areas. If this new bear bag limit regulation is adopted for all of Unit 22D and 22E it will match the bag limits that are already in place for Units 22A and 22B.

**PROPOSED BY:** Kevin Bahnke (EG-F19-114)  
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**PROPOSAL 40**

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

Require a registration permit for brown bear hunting in Unit 22C as follows.

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. (a) ...**

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(20)		
Unit 22(C)		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:	Aug. 1 – Oct. 31	
1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit; or	Apr. 1 – May 31 (subsistence hunt only)	
1 bear every regulatory year	Aug. 1 – Oct. 31	

**by registration permit**

Apr. 1 – May 31

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bear every regulatory year by drawing permit only; up to 27 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 22(B)

Aug. 1 – Oct. 31

Apr. 1 – May 31

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Regulatory changes implemented by the Board of Game in 2017 further liberalized brown bear hunting regulations in Unit 22C. The Department of Fish and Game (department) proposes the Board of Game establish a registration permit for all residents hunting brown bear in Unit 22C in order to evaluate and monitor hunting activity and if necessary, take management action to limit brown bear harvest in Unit 22C.

Unit 22 brown bear regulations were liberalized during the 1997, 1999 and 2001 Western/Arctic Board of Game meetings. A series of changes were made during this time to season dates, tag fee requirements and bag limits. These changes were not universally applied. During the period RY2002-RY2011, brown bear hunting in Unit 22C was managed with a bag limit of one brown bear every four regulatory years and seasons dates of August 1 – October 31 (fall) and May 10-May 31 (spring). The average annual reported harvest of brown bears in Unit 22C was 16 bears per year during this time period.

Brown bear hunting regulations in Unit 22C were liberalized during the 2011 Board of Game meeting when the spring season was extended from May 10-May 31 to May 1-May 31 and again during the 2014 meeting when the bag limit changed from one brown bear every four regulatory years to one brown bear every regulatory year. In years after these regulatory changes went into effect, the average annual reported harvest of brown bears in Unit 22C increased 43% from 16 bears per year RY2002-2011 to 23 bears per year RY2012-RY2016.

In 2017, the Board of Game again liberalized brown bear regulations in Unit 22C by extending the spring season from May 1-May 31 to April 1-May 31. Bear hunters throughout Unit 22 primarily use snowmachines to access bears during the spring season. Extending the Unit 22C brown bear season into April provides bear hunters the opportunity to pursue brown bears during a period of time when travel conditions are generally more reliable and better. These regulatory changes took effect in RY2017. Sealing records indicate that adequate travel conditions persisted in Unit 22C throughout the spring season. The total reported harvest of bears taken in Unit 22C during RY2017 was 38 bears, 76% of which were harvested during the spring season. This is the highest reported harvest of brown bears ever recorded for Unit 22C.

The department considered changes to Unit 22C brown bear season dates and bag limits as a way to limit the effects of recent regulatory changes on Unit 22C brown bear harvest. However, the department lacks the information necessary to recommend small incremental changes to regulations that would provide meaningful data and information without significantly restricting

opportunity. A registration permit would provide the department the means to collect data and information to maintain harvest at the levels previously observed 2012-2017 until the department has a chance to evaluate the status of the Seward Peninsula brown bear population and the effects of increased harvest. The department is planning to participate in a brown bear abundance survey in cooperation with the National Park Service using mark re-sight methods in the spring of 2020.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-157)  
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**PROPOSAL 41**

**5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.**

Extend the season dates for brown bear hunting in Unit 22B and 22C as follows:

Align closing dates of brown bear/grizzly bear season with adjacent portions of Unit 22A. The existing regulation closes the hunt on May 31, but hunts in Unit 22A run through June 15. If adopted, the new regulation would extend closing date of DB685 to June 15 and the resident general season hunt in the same area to June 30.

Unit 22B

**RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

2 bears every regulatory year by registration (Subsistence hunt only) permit only; or Aug. 1 – **June 30** [MAY 31]

2 bears every regulatory year Aug. 1 – **June 30** [MAY 31]

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bear every regulatory year by drawing permit only; up to 27 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 22C Aug. 1 – **June 15** [MAY 31]

Unit 22C

**RESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bear every regulatory year by registration permit; or Aug. 1 - Oct. 31  
Apr. 1 – **June 30** [MAY 31]

1 bear every regulatory year Aug. 1 - Oct. 31  
Apr. 1 – **June 30** [MAY 31]

**NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:**

1 bear every regulatory year by drawing permit only; up to 27 permits may be issued in combination with Unit 22B

Aug. 1 - **June 15** [OCT. 31] [APR. 1 – MAY 31]

The new regulation would read August 1 – June 15 for nonresidents and August 1–June 30 for residents.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The DB685 nonresident brown/grizzly bear hunt in Units 22B and 22C currently closes on May 31. The season in adjacent areas in Unit 22A runs through June 15, and the adjacent areas in Unit 21D are open through June 30. Hunts in both adjacent areas are open for both residents and nonresidents under general season regulations. It would benefit hunters with DB685 permits if they could hunt both the drawing and general season areas up to the same closing dates, or at least for an additional 15 days. There does not appear to be a biological concern with the bear population in this area as adjacent units and subunits are open to general season hunting. Season dates for resident general season hunts in the same areas should also be extended to avoid confusion and could be extended beyond the requested nonresident season to June 30 in order to provide additional opportunity.

**PROPOSED BY:** James Smith (EG-F19-037)

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**PROPOSAL 42**

**5 AAC 92.080(4)(B)(i). Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.**

Allow the use of snowmachines to position brown bears for harvest in Unit 22 as follows:

The new regulation would be modified to read “In Unit 22, snow machines may be used to position caribou, wolf, wolverine and grizzly bear for harvest and they may be shot from a stationary snow machine.”

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The current regulation does not allow a hunter to use a snow machine to position a grizzly bear for harvest and for a hunter to shoot from a stationary snow machine. However, they can for caribou, wolf, and wolverine. This is a standard and accepted practice in the area when snow conditions allow.

Currently the most practical and safe way to harvest bears in the spring is by snow machine. If this regulation is not changed, bears will not be managed effectively and eventually a predator control program may have to be established. I suggest that the regulation be changed to reflect standard practices that already are conducted for other game in the area. Spotting a grizzly bear from a snow machine and then trying to pursue in closer on foot is very dangerous in soft snow conditions.

**PROPOSED BY:** Justin Horton (EG-F19-083)

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**PROPOSAL 43**

**5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.**

Address customary and traditional use findings for Alaska hares in Unit 22, and modify the season and bag limit.

**5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game. (a)(2)**

<b>Units and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(2)		
Snowshoe and Alaska hares		
Units 1-5	Sept. 1 – Apr. 30	Sept. 1 – Apr. 30
Units 6 – 26, except 14(A) and 14(C) and Alaska hares in Unit 9 <b><u>and Unit 22</u></b>	No closed season	No closed season
No limit		
Unit 9, Alaska hares only 1 per day, 4 total	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30
<b><u>Unit 22, Alaska hares only</u></b> <b><u>2 per day</u></b>	<b><u>Sept. 1 – Apr. 15</u></b>	<b><u>Sept. 1 – Apr. 15</u></b>
Unit 14(A) 5 per day	No closed season (General hunt only)	No closed season
Unit 14(C) 5 per day	Day after Labor Day– Apr. 30 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day– Apr. 30

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The once-abundant Alaska hare populations in Unit 18 and Unit 9 are now at very low density. Residents of these areas have raised concerns about dramatically lower abundance than historically observed as recent as the 1980s and 1990s.

Alaska hares are also present in Unit 22. Local residents consider them to be common in the area and although they are believed to be below historic levels of abundance local residents suggest hares numbers are not as low as those observed in Units 18 and 9.

The board has not yet considered whether there are subsistence uses of Alaska hares in Unit 22.

Although the Department of Fish and Game does not survey Alaska hare ranges and no population or density estimates are available in Unit 22 regulations should be revised to acknowledge the apparent low density of this species found elsewhere within its range. The proposal may result in a slight decrease in hunting opportunity; however, when climatic and habitat conditions are favorable for Alaska hares, a low hunter harvest could protect localized populations for quicker recovery and recolonization.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-156)

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