

Joey Klutsch

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BOG,

My name is Joey Klutsch, I am a long resident of King Salmon and I serve on the Naknek/Kvichak Advisory Committee. I am a full time Registered Guide and commercial fisherman during the summer months. I am very familiar with the Brown Bears of the Alaska Peninsula, having spent far more time than most in GMU9E guiding hunters over many years. I would ask you to reconsider Proposal 206.

At this time, I believe that it can only be detrimental to allow for additional season for resident only. It was only back in 2018 when the BOG voted to shorten the fall bear season a week on the front end and shorten the spring season a week on the tail end due to concerns by many of the guides in the area that there were fewer bears, especially on the state lands of the Bering Sea side. That was not that long ago. While I certainly believe that the Alaska Peninsula has healthy populations of brown bears in GMU9E, in my opinion there is too much hunting pressure on the state lands, particularly from Cinder River to South of Port Heiden along the Bering Sea coast, and that the shortening of the seasons, especially the fall, was important to reducing harvest/pressure in this area. These season changes should be left in place at least until the next cycle before seasons are lengthened in any way.

Although in my opinion the conservation concern stemmed mainly from too much pressure in the fall on state lands, I do think that removing a week at the tail end of the has helped. More bears are out of the den = that last week of May than earlier in the month, and there is far more active breeding taking place. Adding a week of season for residents only will only increase hunting pressure on these bears during the time when they are most active in the spring, and easiest to harvest, that is the peak of the breeding season. Therefore it can only be detrimental to the bear population to add an extra week of season in the spring for residents only. These spring bears, the majority of which will be harvested on the Pacific side, are the same bears that would be over on the Bering Sea side in the fall.

Furthermore, I do not believe there is any reason residents need their own separate season dates. There is more than ample opportunity on the Alaska Peninsula for resident hunters. I can tell you for a fact having lived in King Salmon my entire life, the limiting factor for residents is 1. Cost of getting from King Salmon to the hunt areas, which is very high, 2. Limited availability of air taxis (there are only 2-3 out of King Salmon, which is the main hub of the entire region), 3. Weather conditions, which are not favorable for residents flying their own aircraft. There is plenty of room to hunt and no reason to have a separate set of dates for residents only. Furthermore, I will point out that residents living in ANY of the local communities in GMU 9 can take a bear every year by participating in the village registration hunts. This does not count against the one every 4 regulatory years that they can harvest during the general season. So, there is more than ample opportunity for residents to get bears, with plenty of season and space to do it.

I urge you to reconsider 206

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