

PROPOSAL 224

5 AAC 84.045(a)(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts) | Nonresident Open Season |
|--|--|------------------------------------|
| (12) | | |
| Unit 14(A) 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: ... | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 antlerless moose permits may be issued; or | Aug. 20—Sept. 25 (General hunt only) | No open season |
| 1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun or bow and arrow only; up to 200 permits may be issued | Nov. 1—Dec. 25 (General hunt only) Winter season to be announced (General hunt only) | No open season |
| Unit 14(B) 1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows: ... | | |
| 1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued. | Winter season to be announced (General hunt only) | No open season |

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board of Game. There are two types of antlerless moose hunts in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley – a drawing permit hunt used to regulate growth of the moose population in Unit 14A and targeted hunts used to mitigate public safety concerns in Units 14A and 14B.

Moose surveys conducted in November 2020 yielded an estimate of 7,112 moose in Unit 14A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 6,000–6,500 moose and less than the 2019 survey estimate of 7,900 moose indicating that the increased antlerless harvests are having the desired effect of reducing the population. A sex and age composition of the 2020 survey demonstrated a bull ratio of 30 bulls:100 cows and a calf ratio of 36 calves:100 cows.

Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized in Unit 14A since 2001 in order to regulate the growth of the population. The permit level was increased from 450 to 1,000 in 2013 to account for the continued increase in the population and again in spring 2018 from 1,000 to 2,000. Continued increased harvest based on the increased permit levels is expected to bring the population back to within the objective for the unit of 6,000–6,500.

The current increases in the harvest have seemingly slowed the population growth; however, it has not reduced the moose population to within objectives. An increase the number of moose-human conflicts is anticipated as the moose density increases, and moose may experience nutritional stress as the population nears carrying capacity. Cow harvests are warranted to control the moose population’s growth and recommended to provide additional moose hunting opportunity in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

The targeted moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B are an effective tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collision and nuisance management issues. Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of 338 moose per year were killed in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley area during the last five years of average snowfall and substantially more are killed during higher snowfall years. ADF&G also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F21-027)
