

**PROPOSAL 15**

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

Lengthen the nonresident, spring brown bear hunting seasons in Units 9D and 9E as follows:

Units 9D and 9E. Nonresident season May 10-31. One bear every four regulatory years by registration permit, RB370.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The shortened spring season for brown bear for nonresidents in Units 9D and 9E. Several years ago, due to guide conflict in Unit 9B and 9C, a proposal was passed to limit the harvest of bears in those subunits due to user conflict and perceived abuse of the resource. Units 9D and 9E were not at all affected by this user conflict and issue. However, the proposal was passed to shorten the seasons for all of Unit 9 from May 10-31 to May 10-25. This cut the last six days of the season and shortened it from 22 days to 16 days. This drastically cut valuable hunting time away from nonresident hunters and placed undue stress and demand on the outfitters to conduct the hunts in a shorter amount of time. Any weather delay or bad winds, which are increasingly common, cuts precious days off a hunters' time. Additionally, the last week of May can be an excellent time for harvesting large mature boars and the weather is getting better and safer to operate. Furthermore, any chance of a "late spring" where bear activity is less early on due to larger snow years and other factors, causes the last week of May to be even more valuable for hunter harvest and success of large mature boars. Then last year, those same units 9B and C that had the issues that caused the shortening of the season, successfully proposed to extend the season back to May 10-31, but Units 9D and 9E were left unchanged at our 16 days.

Consultation with the Unit 9 biologist in King Salmon confirmed the bear population in Unit 9D and 9E is healthy and consistent with the other subunits. Also confirmed the harvest statistics are similar in all Unit 9 subunits for ratio of male/female harvest. This indicates that there is no statistical evidence to suggest a limited season for these two subunits when the other subunits have a longer season.

A longer season would not increase the number of hunters in the field. It will simply increase hunter experience and harvest of mature boars, which is already determined to be a sustainable practice. It will also be adding additional safety factors for operators.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?** In coordination with outfitters in Units 9D and 9E. as well as consultation and insight from the Unit 9 biologists.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jordan Wallace and Dave Leonard (EG-F24-048)  
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