

## **PROPOSAL 28**

### **5 AAC 92.108. Identified big game prey populations and objectives.**

Reduce population and harvest objectives for moose in Unit 17B as follows:

<b>Population</b>	<b>Finding</b>	<b>Population Objective</b>	<b>Harvest Objective</b>
...			
Moose			
...			
GMU 17B	Positive	<b><u>2,800–3,500</u></b> [4,900-6,000]	<b><u>100–250</u></b> [200-400]
....			

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Current population objectives for moose in Unit 17B have never been met and harvest objectives have rarely been met. Robust moose population surveys across the Unit have been conducted by the department six times since 2000 but are challenging to complete due to the distance from Dillingham and poor survey conditions. Unit 17B is split into two survey units, 17B-West comprised of the Tikchik and upper Nushagak River watersheds, and 17B-East comprised of the Mulchatna watershed. Between 2000 and 2009, 17B-West was surveyed three times with an average population estimate of 1,183 (range of 1,137–1,210); 17B-East was surveyed twice with an average population estimate of 1,709 (range 1,466–1,953). Ideally, survey units are completed in consecutive years which occurred in 2000 and 2001 and 2008 and 2009. The combined estimates from 2000 and 2001 resulted in 3,155 moose, and from 2008 and 2009 resulted in an estimated combined 2,603 moose. Neighboring Unit 17C has similar moose habitat quality and quantity (~ 5,450 mi<sup>2</sup> moose habitat), a defined objective of 0.5 moose/mi<sup>2</sup> (~5,800 mi<sup>2</sup>), and a population objective of 2,800–3,500. Unit 17B population estimates from the robust surveys have never been documented within the existing lower population management objective of 4,900, nor the upper objective at 6,000.

Table 28-1. Unit 17B moose population estimates, regulatory year (RY) 2000–2009

<b>Year</b>	<b>17B-West</b>	<b>17B-East</b>	<b>Total Estimate</b>
2000	1,202	-*	
2001	-*	1,953	3,155
2005	1,210	-*	
2008	-*	1,466	
2009	1,137	-*	2,603

\*Survey not completed.

The reported annual harvest for Unit 17B over the last 40 years demonstrates that the minimum harvest objective has only been achieved in two independent years. The current harvest objectives for Unit 17B are not attainable due to a lack of resident hunter participation within the subunit and difficult access for nonlocal resident and nonresident hunters. The proposed new harvest objective for Unit 17B is 100–250 moose, which includes the 40-year average harvest of 121 moose, and also reflects the most recent harvest levels.

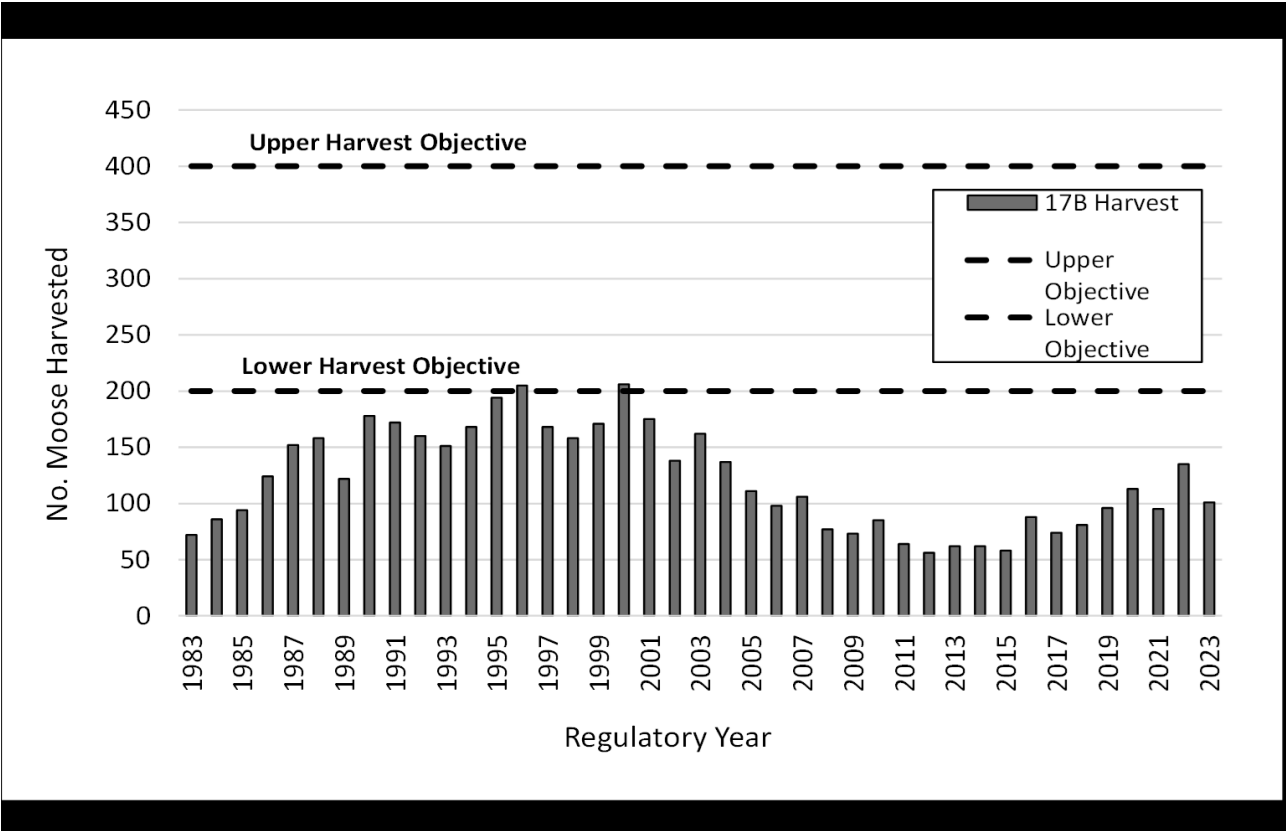


Figure 28-1. Unit 17B moose harvest RY1983–2023

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?**

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-077)  
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