

Unlawful Methods & Means

PROPOSAL 126

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Allow the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers statewide as follows:

5 AAC 92.080. The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

(7) with the aid of.....

(E) electronically enhanced night vision; **except that electronically enhanced night vision can be used for taking furbearers;**

(F) any forward looking infrared device; **except that forward looking infrared devices can be used for taking furbearers;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game adopted proposal 52 in March 2024 to allow the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward looking infrared devices for Region III. This proposal requests the board expand that opportunity to statewide. There is a small but growing number of hunters in other regions that would benefit from the adoption of this request.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This proposal was supported by several hunters and will be presented at the next local advisory committee meeting.

PROPOSED BY: Ted Spraker

(EG-F24-040)

PROPOSAL 127

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Allow the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers statewide as follows:

We are proposing 5AAC 92.080(7)(C) artificial light, except that artificial light, night vision goggles, and forward-looking infrared devices may be used:

(I) for the purpose of taking furbearers under a trapping license during an open season November 1 - March 31 in all units.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Make the Region III changes apply statewide. The board discussed, amended and passed this proposal for some units at its recent Region III meeting. This proposal could/should be applied to all units unless there is a unit specific reason not to do so.

The original intent was, and is, to provide more opportunity for harvest when short "daylight" hours restrict opportunity. Adding the use of night vision devices as they are now defined in the regulation for some units to the exceptions under unlawful methods would allow hunters and trappers many more hours each day besides what is defined as "daylight". There are healthy populations of furbearers and the harvest would be sustainable and provide additional "reasonable opportunity" for harvest personal use and subsistence. We anticipate that any additional harvest would not be a conservation issue. This change would be expected to add some burden on the Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? Local committee and discussions with trappers and some Board of Game members.

PROPOSED BY: Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F24-054)

PROPOSAL 128

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Allow the use of night vision and thermal optics taking furbearers statewide as follows:

Proposed solution:

Night vision and thermal optics may be used to take furbearing animals with a trapping license during open trapping seasons in all game management units and sub-units.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The taking of furbearing animals with night vision or thermal devices should be allowed with a trapping license in all game management units not just a select few that was permitted in earlier game review board.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? Self-developed.

PROPOSED BY: Don Coatney (EG-F24-039)

PROPOSAL 129

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions

Establish a minimum standard of centerfire rifle cartridges for taking big game as follows:

Legal rifle cartridges for big game must have a barrel bore of at least .25 inches and be chambered to fire a centerfire cartridge of not less than two inches overall length including the bullet which is designed to expand.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I have personally been aware of several moose that were shot and lost after being hit with too small of a caliber rifle. Some were shot several times with .223 rifles. The shooters in some cases said, "They shot an entire AR-15 magazine of ammo but must have missed."

I recovered two moose that a shooter said they must have missed. I had people tell me about shooting a brown bear over "eighteen times with a .223 and then it died slow."

I have spent 16 years summer through fall in rural Alaska. I have heard about the lack of moose-hunting opportunities. The waste of game due to the use of insufficient cartridge size is a significant contributor to the dwindling game populations. A larger cartridge size would reduce the loss of animals significantly. Most state game regulations require a cartridge minimum size for big game hunting. Alaska, having the largest big game animals surely should also establish minimum cartridge sizes.

PROPOSED BY: Robert Hammond (EJ-F23-679)

PROPOSAL 130

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Establish a minimum standard of centerfire rifle cartridges for taking moose as follows:

A minimum of .243 caliber rifle is required for taking of moose.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like an established minimum caliber requirement for moose statewide as follows: Require a minimum of .243 caliber centerfire rifle for the harvest of moose.

Unfortunately, moose are shot with rifles and ammo that inadequate to kill them.

Moose are one of the largest North American big game species and unfortunately, some moose are shot with rifles and ammo that are inadequate to kill them. The common rifle to hunt moose in some parts of the state is the .223 Remington. With the high number of variables, perfect shot placement is not a guarantee every time a trigger is pulled, and often can end in a dead and

unharvested moose with the .223. Because of this, the true number of moose killed is higher than what is reported at harvest, thus negatively impacting the number of moose that can be harvested.

Finally, one of the most common uses of the .223 and other centerfire 22 caliber rifles and smaller in North America is predator/varmint hunting. As a result, a majority of the ammo loaded commercially for the .223 use hollow point or other fragmenting ballistic tip bullets, none of which are made for the deep bone breaking penetration needed to effectively kill moose. Rather, ballistic tip and hollow point bullets so commonly loaded for the .223 are designed to penetrate and explode inside the body of the coyote, fox or other predator/varmint targeted. Frequently, when these types of bullets are used for big game, especially moose, the targeted animal is maimed by a bullet that comes apart before getting adequate penetration to effectively kill the moose.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This is a proposal by the Bethel Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Bethel Fish & Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-018)

PROPOSAL 131

5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Require identification tags be attached to traps and snares as follows:

5 AAC 92.095 should be amended to add a provision stating as follows:

A person may not set a trap or snare unless there is attached to the trap or snare an identification tag. Identification tags must provide either the person's name, or a personal identification number (PIN) registered with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The Department will make identities of trappers who register their traps and snares with the Department available to law enforcement, but otherwise keep identities confidential except in circumstances where children or pets are trapped or snared, in which circumstances the identity of the owner of the trap or snare shall be released to the parent of a child caught in a trap or snare, or a pet owner whose pet has been caught in a trap or snare..

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The need for identification of illegally set traps and snares to assist law enforcement; and also pet owners and parents whose pets and/or children are caught in traps or snares.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? I submitted a similar proposal previously, and law enforcement very strongly supported the proposal when it was considered by the Board of Game at the January 2022 meeting held in Wasilla. I am a member of the Anchorage Advisory Committee and a member of its Game subcommittee, the Anchorage Advisory Committee does not meet again until October 2024, and does not usually submit proposals, I expect the game subcommittee and full advisory committee will support this proposal when we review the proposal book.

PROPOSAL 132

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game, exceptions.

Prohibit nonresidents from using snowmachines to approach and pursue the take of wolves and wolverine as follows:

Section 5 AAC 92.080 - Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

(4)(B)(ix) **Alaska residents may use** a snowmachine [MAY BE USED] to approach and pursue wolves and wolverine; an approach and pursuit under this sub-subparagraph is not harassment under (5) of this section, but may not come in contact with a live animal;

Limit the trapping methods and means exception to taking of wolves and wolverines by use of a snowmachine to approach and pursue animals to only Alaska residents.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The trapping methods and means exception for use of a snowmachine to approach, pursue and take wolves and wolverines affords nonresident trappers an improper and unfair advantage in the taking of free ranging wolves and wolverines, counter to basic hunter and trapper ethics and contrary to fair chase.

A key reason this trapping methods and means exception was allowed for wolves and wolverines was for subsistence users. As written, the methods and means exception also granted nonresidents in all game management units the legal authority to run wolves and wolverines to exhaustion, which is accepted as an unethical method of taking game. Nonresident hunters and trappers should not be afforded this exception and should be held to basic fair chase principles including taking any free ranging wild game animal in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper or unfair advantage over the game animals. Subsistence methods and means for the take of fish and game often allow an unfair advantage, but such advantages should not be afforded to nonresident users.

What will happen if nothing is done? Nonresidents will continue to be allowed to use a snowmachine to chase wolves and wolverines to exhaustion, counter to basic hunter and trapper ethics.

Who is likely to benefit? Resident trappers

Who is likely to suffer? Nonresident trappers

Other solutions considered? Rescind exception to methods and means to approach and pursue wolves and wolverine by snowmachine to all trappers. I don't believe removing this exception for all trappers is likely to gain much support by subsistence users in rural areas of the state.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This has been a topic of conversation in the area since the positioning regulation was adopted. I have received input from other residents and trappers who feel the pursuit of wolverines and wolves by snowmachine is an unethical method of taking game.

PROPOSED BY: Rick Grant (EG-F24-051)

PROPOSAL 133

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game, exceptions.

Prohibit the use of snowmachines to approach and pursue wolverine as follows:

Section 5 AAC 92.080 - Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

The following methods of taking game are prohibited:

(4)(B)(ix) A snowmachine may be used to approach and pursue wolves [AND WOLVERINE]; an approach and pursuit under this sub-subparagraph is not harassment under (5) of this section, but may not come in contact with a live animal;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Rescind trapping exception in methods and means allowing the approach and pursuit of wolverines by snowmachine. This exception for use of a snowmachine affords trappers an improper and unfair advantage in the taking of wolverines, counter to basic hunter and trapper ethics and contrary to fair chase.

What will happen if nothing is done? Trappers will continue to be allowed to use a snowmachine to chase wolverines to exhaustion, counter to basic hunter and trapper ethics.

Who is likely to benefit? n/a

Who is likely to suffer? Trappers

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This has been a topic of conversation in the area since the positioning regulation was adopted. I have received input from other residents and trappers who feel the pursuit of wolverines by snowmachine is an unethical method of taking game.

PROPOSED BY: Rick Grant (EG-F24-053)
