

# Regionwide & Multiple Units

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## **PROPOSAL 1**

### **5 AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption.**

Reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions for the Central and Southwest Region Units as follows:

#### **5AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption**

(a) A resident tag is not required for taking a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 11;
- (2) Units 13 and 16(A);
- (3) Unit 16(B) and 17;

...

(11) Unit 9, within the following areas, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit:

(A) Unit 9(B), within five miles of the communities of Port Alsworth, Nondalton, Iliamna, Newhalen, Pile Bay, Pedro Bay, Pope Vanoy Landing, Kakhonak, Igiugig, and Levelock;

(B) Unit 9(C), within five miles of the communities of King Salmon, Naknek, and South Naknek;

(C) Unit 9(D), within five miles of the communities of Cold Bay, King Cove, Sand Point, and Nelson Lagoon;

(D) Unit 9(E), within five miles of the communities of Egegik, Pilot Point, Ugashik, Port Heiden, Port Moller, Chignik Lake, Chignik Lagoon, Chignik Bay, Perryville, and Ivanof Bay;

(12) Unit 10, within three miles of the community of False Pass, unless a smaller area is defined by the department in an applicable permit.

(b) In addition to the units as specified in (a) of this section, if a hunter obtains a subsistence registration permit before hunting, that hunter is not required to obtain a resident tag to take a brown bear in the following units:

- (1) Unit 9(B);
- (2) Unit 9(E), that portion including all drainages that drain into the Pacific Ocean between Cape Kumliun and the border of Unit 9(D) and Unit 9(E);
- (3) Unit 17;

...

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Brown bear tag fee exemptions must be reauthorized annually, or the fee will be automatically reinstated.

General Season Hunts: The board liberalized brown bear hunting regulations including the tag fee exemption to increase the harvest of brown bears in Units 11, 13, and 16 during the March 2003 Board of Game meeting and in Unit 17 during the March 2011 Board of Game meeting. The tag fee exemption in these units provides greater opportunity to harvest brown bears by allowing opportunistic harvest.

In March 2011 the board also exempted brown bear tag fees for brown bear hunts near communities in Unit 9 to address public safety concerns in communities. Brown bears are abundant in Unit 9 and are managed primarily as a trophy species. Brown bears are frequently observed in communities where they destroy property in search of food or garbage and occasionally kill pets. The bear seasons and bag limits adopted in 2011 along with the elimination of the tag fee were intended to allow people to take bears before they destroy property, to promote a greater acceptance of the unit's bear population, and to resolve some of the compliance issues associated with the take of bears in defense of life or property.

Subsistence Brown Bear Hunts: The board waived the brown bear tag fee requirement for subsistence brown bear hunts in Unit 17 and portions of Unit 9. Subsistence brown bear harvest rates are low and well within sustainable limits. Exempting the resident tag fee has not caused an increase in subsistence harvest in these units. Continuation of the exemption accommodates cultural and traditional uses of brown bears in these units and provides an alternative from the general season hunts for hunters who take brown bears primarily for their meat.

**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-F24-064)  
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*Note: This proposal addresses Game Management Units outside the scope of the Central Southwest Region meeting.*

**PROPOSAL 2**

**5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting black bear with the use of bait or scent lures.**

**5 AAC 95.052. Discretionary permit hunt conditions and procedures.**

Open two bear baiting seasons in Units 9, 11, 13, 14B, 14C, 16, and 17 where bear baiting is legal as follows.

Proposed changes to the following bear baiting seasons are:

Units 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2-3, 5 -----	Apr 15-June 15 / Sept 1-Oct 15
Units 6A, 6B, 6C -----	Apr 15-June 15 / Aug 20-Oct 15
Unit 6D -----	Apr 15-June 10 / Sept 10-Oct 15
Units 7, 9, 11-13, 14A & B, 14C Remainder, 15, 20 -----	Apr 15-June 30 / July 1 - Oct 15
Units 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25-----	Apr 1 - Jun 30 / July 1 - Oct 15

With these changes in season dates and caribou herds dropping throughout the State of Alaska, the Department of Fish and Game can regulate / put in emergency orders if the bear population drops too low. In certain units of Alaska, it is harder for some hunters / subsistence users to gain access to their bear baiting sites and being able to hunt them due to the rivers not being safe to travel on.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Bethel Advisory Committee proposes to have two (2) bear baiting seasons in the State of Alaska in Units where bear baiting is legal. Hunters and subsistence users will have better opportunities to take bears during a two (2) season bear baiting. In certain units throughout the state, hunters & subsistence users may only have two (2) to three (3) weeks to get a legally take a take. There are nineteen (19) out of twenty-six (26) units in Alaska with a NO CLOSED SEASON for black bears.

Current State of Alaska Fish and Game Areas Open for Bear Baiting:

Units 1-(A, B, C), 2-3, 5, 6(A, B, C) -----Apr 15 – Jun 15  
Unit 6D\* -----Apr 15 – Jun 15  
Units 1D, 7,9, 11-13, 14A & B, 14C Remainder, 15, 19(A, B, C, E) ---Apr 15 – Jun 30  
19D remainder, 20, 21(A, B, E), 23, 24 A & B, 25(A, B, C)  
Unit 16-----Jul 1–Oct 15 / Apr 15-Jun30  
Unit 17-----Apr 15-May 31  
Unit 18-----Apr 1 – Jun30  
Unit 19D East Predator Control Area: Those portions of the Kuskokwim River Drainage within Unit 19D Upstream from Selatna River Drainage and the Black River Drainage 21C & D, 24C & D and 25D-----Aug 1-Sept 30 / Apr 15-Jun 30

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

**PROPOSED BY:** Bethel Fish & Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-016)  
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*Note: This proposal addresses Game Management Units outside the scope of the Central and Southwest Region meeting.*

**PROPOSAL 3**

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

Allow the use of cellular cameras for the taking black bear and brown bear over bait in Units 9, 11, 13, 14B, 16, and 17 as follows:

I would like the Board of Game to allow the use of cellular cameras for the taking black bear and brown bear over bait in Units 7, 9, 11-13, 14A, 14B, 15-21, 23-25, 26B, and 26C, during applicable seasons (same units as airborne). This allows an easily enforceable regulation for law enforcement with concise purpose of use and time when these cameras can be used.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Currently hunters are not allowed to use any camera or other sensory device that can send messages through wireless communication. This includes cellular game cameras over bear bait. These were prohibited with the assumption that this would give an unfair advantage to hunters, yet despite when the hunter gets a photo, he would still have to travel to hunt his bait station often requiring hours of travel

that is not feasible in a reasonable amount of time or the day of. In many units, hunters are already allowed to hunt bears same day airborne as long as they are 300 feet from a plane, which gives a higher advantage than a wireless cell camera could for most hunters.

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

**PROPOSED BY:** Caleb Martin (EG-F24-037)  
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**PROPOSAL 4**

**5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.**

Establish general season, archery only sheep hunts in Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, and 14B as follows:

Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, 14B (or limited to a specific combination of areas if managers see fit),

HT sheep areas only: 1 ram with full curl horn or larger by bow and arrow only,

HT, August 6 - August 9. (Or July 21-31 if an earlier date is preferred)

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** For many years hunters in Alaska have requested an opportunity to hunt for sheep with archery equipment but there still remains no season or area (aside from the highly sought after DS140/141 draw tags) during which hunters can pursue sheep with a bow and arrow without the pressure and danger associated with hunting during the general rifle season. The author of this proposal has personally been shot at while stalking by rifle hunters who weren't aware of his presence and other anecdotes exist of hunters finding themselves near sheep that others are shooting from far away. The increased popularity of long-range shooting for mountain animals has increased this hazard. (A recent ADF&G survey study on goat harvest in Southeast Alaska showed that about 23% of shots were over 300 yards and some were out to 600!)

In addition, there is an ever-increasing population of hunters who are interested in pursuing sheep with a bow and arrow but who did not feel that there is adequate opportunity to do so without competing directly with rifle hunters especially in "walk-in" areas but also in areas where most hunter fly.

Currently there is a four-day gap between the youth season and the general season in most areas. In the past some opposition to sheep season proposals raised concerns that it would interfere with the youth season, but this would remove that concern because it takes place after the youth season is over. There have also been concerns about archery hunters displacing sheep but many studies from sheep biologists in Canada and Alaska have shown that rams do not move far from their established areas in the pre-rut period even when disturbed. In the worst case the rams spooked by bow hunters might move a few miles but often they just go into nearby escape terrain where they are safe from bowhunters. I have witnessed this behavior many times when bowhunting sheep in multiple mountain ranges of Alaska and even after spooking them, they almost always remain in sight or are easily relocated in an adjacent area. The displacement of sheep by bowhunters in an

early season is simply not a legitimate concern and any skilled mountain hunter will attest to being able to easily relocate sheep that were recently disturbed by a hunter.

The success rates of archery hunting for sheep are also very low so the effect on harvest will be essentially negligible but the increased opportunity will be greatly appreciated by all sheep hunters who are willing to accept some added challenge.

Further concerns have been raised in the past in regard to an early sheep season because it would allow for aerial scouting during season because of the scouting being allowed up to August 10. Please see the other proposal by this author which hopes to establish the “no aerial scouting” period to start on August 1 instead of August 10.

Also, as a matter of precedent, ADF&G has added early archery moose seasons to some of the areas up for proposals this year, including Units 14A and 14B. This has worked well and I’m not aware of any complaints that early season archery moose hunters have had any adverse effects on rifle hunters using the same areas later in the season.

If interference with other hunters was a significant concern, another option could be to move this hunt to July 20th (or some other date at the pleasure of the board), ending by August 1, so as not to interfere (as concerns were raised in the past) with the youth season and to still allow a small period before the general rifle season.

It is also important to note that archery seasons and areas have become very popular and well accepted throughout north America but currently, aside from draw hunts and a very small area in the Dalton Highway Corridor, there is no archery season or area for those wishing to pursue sheep with bow and arrow. Having bow hunted for many years in Alaska, I can attest that having a season, even just a few days, would provide a great amount of enjoyment and adventure for many hunters with essentially zero negative impact on other hunters or the sheep population.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?** I have discussed this idea with several biologists at ADF&G and all of them felt that this proposal would have no adverse effect on our declining sheep population but would increase hunting opportunity,

**PROPOSED BY:** Paul Forward (EG-F24-097)  
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