

PROPOSAL 182

5 AAC 85.045(a)(17). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize a winter antlerless moose season during February in a portion of Unit 19D as follows.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

(17)

...

Unit 19(D) East, those portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage within 19(D) upstream from the Selatna River drainage, but excluding the Black River drainage

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 moose, by registration permit only, a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf

Feb 1 – Last day of Feb.

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunting seasons must be reauthorized annually. The goal is to provide additional harvest opportunity and meet harvest objectives.

The moose population in Unit 19D East has approximately doubled since predator removals began in 2003. The Department of Fish and Game is starting to observe decreasing nutritional status as indicated by declining twinning rates. Prior to intensive management, bull-to-cow ratios along the Kuskokwim River drainage were measured at 18 bulls per 100 cows. After predator reductions and a closure of moose hunting in the Bear Control Focus Area (BCFA), ratios improved to 39 bulls per 100 cows by 2007. By 2019 ratios had declined again and the two-year average was 18 bulls per 100 cows.

To maintain a healthy and productive moose population, department research (Boertje et al. 2007) indicates that when the two-year average twinning rate is 11–20% populations should be stabilized. Twinning rates in Unit 19D East remained high until 2015; however, the current 2-year average twinning rate is now 16%, indicating a decreasing nutritional status in this population. The current

Intensive Management plan for Unit 19D East calls for to stabilization of the population through harvest when the -year average twinning rate is between 15 and 20%.

Additional harvest opportunity is available. Winter hunts distribute hunter pressure and allow access to areas inaccessible in the fall.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-036)
