

**Proposal 154**

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

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14(C).

<b>Seasons and Bag Limits</b>	<b>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</b>	<b>Nonresident Open Season</b>
(12)		
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Unit 14(C), Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area	Sept. 1—Mar. 31 (General hunt only)	Sept 1.—Mar. 31
1 moose by regulatory year by drawing permit, and by muzzleloading blackpowder rifle or bow and arrow only; up to 185 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Birchwood Management Area	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept 1.— Sept. 30
1 moose by drawing permit, by bow and arrow only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept 1.—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only, and by bow and arrow, shotgun, or muzzleloading black powder rifle only; up to 50 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion of the Ship Creek drainage upstream of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER) Management Area		

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 50 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1—Sept. 30
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1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1—Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1—Nov. 30
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Remainder of Unit 14(C)

1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:

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1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits may be issued; or	Sept. 1—Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	No open season
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**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually, and the Department of Fish and Game recommends reauthorizing the antlerless moose hunts in Unit 14C. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in Unit 14C at the desired population objective (1,500 moose). This population size has been demonstrated to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, moose-human conflicts in urban areas, and significant mortality events during severe winters. These hunts have also been successful in providing additional moose hunting opportunities in the state’s human population center with little or no controversy among resource users.

Moose in Unit 14C are managed intensively for a population objective of 1,500–1,800 moose and an annual harvest objective of 90–270 moose (5AAC 92.108). The number of antlerless permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality. In 2013, the department estimated that the moose population contained approximately 1,533 moose in Unit 14C based on a combination of population censuses, composition surveys and extrapolation to areas not surveyed. A combined 2023 aerial composition count of the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Management Area and the Ship Creek drainage found 222 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 30 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 9 calves per 100 cows. In 2021, a survey of the same area found a total of 301 moose with ratios of 44 bulls per 100 cows and 20 calves per 100 cows, respectively. The persistent, deep snowpack during the winter of 2022 likely resulted in additional winter mortality and an increase in the late winter energetic demands on pregnant cows, potentially reducing both the bull:cow and calf:cow estimates for the population. However, harvest numbers continue to remain relatively steady, and at this population level, there have been fewer reports of human-moose conflicts and moose-vehicle collisions.

Harvesting cow moose is paramount to maintaining the population at the low end of the objective while providing harvest opportunity.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F24-071)

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