

PROPOSAL 160

5 AAC 85.045(18). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 20B as follows:

| Units and Bag Limits (18) | Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts | Nonresident Open Season |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| ... | | |
| Unit 20(B), that portion within Creamer’s refuge | | |
| ... | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Management Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 (General hunt only) | Sept. 1–Nov. 27 (DM786 only) |
| 1 antlerless moose by muzzle-loader by drawing permit only; up to 10 permits may be issued; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area | Dec. 1–Jan. 31 | No Open Season |
| Unit 20(B), remainder of the Fairbanks Management Area | | |
| ... | | |

Units and Bag Limits

1 antlerless moose by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 150 bow and arrow permits may be issued in the Fairbanks Management Area; a recipient of a drawing permit is prohibited from taking an antlered bull moose in the Fairbanks Management Area; or

**Resident
Open Season
Subsistence and
General Hunts**
Sept. 1–Nov. 27
(General hunt only)

**Nonresident
Open Season**
Sept. 1–Nov. 27
(DM786 only)

1 moose by targeted permit only; up to 100 permits may be issued

Season to be announced
by emergency order

No open season.

Unit 20(B), that portion within the
Minto Flats Management Area

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

...

1 antlerless moose by registration
permit only

Oct. 15–Feb. 28
(Subsistence hunt only)

No open season.

...

Unit 20(B), the drainage of the Middle
Fork of the Chena River

1 antlerless moose by drawing permit
only; up to 300 permits may be issued;
a person may not take a cow
accompanied by a calf; or

Aug. 15–Nov. 15
(General hunt only)

1 antlerless moose by registration
permit only; a person may not take a
cow accompanied by a calf; or

Oct. 1–Last day of Feb.
(General hunt only)

No open season.

...

Unit 20(B), that portion southeast of the
Moose Creek dike within one-half mile
of each side of the Richardson highway

| Units and Bag Limits | Resident Open Season Subsistence and General Hunts | Nonresident Open Season |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| ... | | |
| 1 moose by drawing permit only; by crossbow, bow and arrow, or muzzleloader only; up to 100 permits may be issued; or | Sept. 16–Last day of Feb. (General hunt only) | No open season. |
| 1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued | Season to be announced by emergency order | No open season. |
| Remainder of Unit 20(B) | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; by youth hunt only; up to 200 permits may be issued; or | Aug. 5–Aug. 14 (General hunt only) | No open season |
| ... | | |
| 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 1,500 permits may be issued in the remainder of Unit 20(B); a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or | Aug. 15–Nov. 15 (General hunt only) | No open season. |
| 1 antlerless moose by registration permit only; a person may not take a cow accompanied by a calf; or | Oct. 1– Last day of Feb. | |
| 1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued | Season to be announced by emergency order | No open season. |
| ... | | |

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 for a wide range of public uses and benefits, and to protect the health and habitat of moose populations. Antlerless hunts are important for improving or maintaining the ability of moose habitat to support current populations. They also help regulate moose population growth, help to meet Intensive

Management (IM) objectives for high levels of harvest, and provide subsistence hunters with a reasonable opportunity to pursue moose for subsistence uses without reducing bull-to-cow ratios.

If antlerless moose hunts are not reauthorized, the moose population may exceed population objectives causing habitat degradation and a loss of opportunity to hunt a surplus of antlerless moose. The reauthorization of antlerless moose hunts in Unit 20B will allow Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to manage the moose population within the population objectives of 12,000 to 15,000 moose. Hunting opportunity and harvest will increase and allow ADF&G to manage this moose population at optimum levels. The additional harvest is necessary to meet intensive management harvest objectives while maintaining bull-to-cow ratios within objectives. Moose populations will benefit by maintaining moose densities at levels compatible with their habitat. Motorists and residents may benefit from reduced moose–vehicle collisions and moose–human conflicts.

The moose population level in Unit 20B is currently below the population objective of 12,000–15,000 moose. The population declined from an estimated 20,173 moose in 2009 to 11,064 in 2015, due in large part to antlerless moose hunts designed to lower the population to those objectives. The population increased slightly to 12,871 moose in 2017 and was estimated at 12,479 in 2020. A population estimate was conducted in the fall of 2023. It was the first survey completed since the winter of 2021/2022 which was a difficult winter for moose due to weather events. The 2023 Unit 20B moose population estimate was 7,848 moose. The department feels that at this time antlerless hunts should be limited until the population recovers and is within IM objectives. The department recommends limited antlerless hunts in the Fairbanks Management Area (FMA) and the Richardson Highway corridor hunt. The department will continue to monitor the moose population and may implement additional antlerless hunts in the future if the population can sustain the harvest.

Fairbanks Management Area (FMA)—The purpose of this antlerless hunt is to regulate population growth in the FMA and reduce potential moose–vehicle collisions and nuisance moose problems.

The number of moose–vehicle collisions in the FMA is high and poses significant safety risks to motorists. In addition, moose nuisance issues continue to place significant demands on property owners. To increase hunting opportunity and harvest, and reduce moose–vehicle collisions, the department incrementally increased the number of drawing permits for antlerless moose in the FMA during RY99–RY10. Moose–vehicle collisions and moose nuisance problems have remained lower since this time, presumably, in part due to consistent antlerless moose harvests.

Richardson Highway Corridor Hunt- This hunt is an “any” moose drawing permit that allows hunters to hunt within ½ mile of each side of the Richardson Highway. The purpose of this hunt is to allow hunters to harvest moose along the Richardson Highway to help reduce moose-vehicle collisions.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

(HQ-F24-052)
