

Proposed Outside the Board of Game's Authority

The following proposals request changes that the Board of Game does not have authority to adopt. They are included in the book for review, comment, and discussion at the applicable board meeting if the board desires.

Note: Alaska Statute 11.61.210 prohibits shooting from, on, or across highways.

PROPOSAL 166

Add an exception to 5 AAC 92.080(1). From "by shooting from, on, or across a highway;" to "by shooting from, on, or across a highway except where a highway is seasonally closed to normal traffic because of discontinued maintenance or on low speed, very low traffic roads/trails with no planned maintenance."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? (1) Shooting from, on, or across a highway There is a problem with the definition of a highway as used in this regulation. Although the term highway is found here in AS 16 it is found in other Titles also. This is a public safety issue and should be always maintained on paved and unpaved roads where regular traffic is operating. An exception is needed for "highways" that are only being used for other vehicles in very low traffic volumes. There is no safety issue for highways that are closed to normal traffic. Examples are highways like the Denali Highway where winter travelers are met with "No maintenance signs" a very short way in from each end. Winter travelers on snow vehicles, skis, snowshoes etc. can often only identify where the highway is because of a snowmachine trail over deep snow. The other situation that warrants an exception are minimally developed roads and trails that are "maintained" only occasionally. Examples are road/trails like the Copper River "Highway" below Chitina (busy in the summer no vehicles after snowfall) and the trail from Murphy Dome to Minto Flats (north and west of Fairbanks, where the state maintenance is not even an annual occurrence). Some wood cutting and timber harvest roads/trails would also be good examples when those activities are closed. Hunter safety training mandatory. There is not a safety problem hunting along these closed to normal traffic or with extremely low volumes from hunters exercising normal hunting awareness and cautions.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Tinker

(EJ-F23-636)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.330 and 16.05.400 stipulate the requirements for Alaska hunting licenses.

PROPOSAL 167

If a resident has a Tribal ID card, they will be exempt from the regulation requiring a hunting license.

92.012 (a) No hunting or trapping license is required of a resident hunter under the age of 18 **or those that hold a tribal ID card issues by a federally recognized tribe.** An appropriate license and big game tag are required of nonresidents, regardless of age, for hunting and trapping. No person may take waterfowl unless that person has a current, validated, federal migratory bird hunting stamp or "duck stamp" in possession as required under federal regulations.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remove the requirement for residents who hold a tribal card to obtain a hunting and/or trapping license. In remote rural areas, economic opportunities may be limited affecting the user's ability to afford a hunting license. License vendors are also not always available in smaller communities. Internet capabilities may also not be available or are too costly to have, thus making it difficult to obtain licenses online which potentially restricts access to a vital food source. Those that have a Tribal ID card will serve as a legal license to allow hunting or trapping.

The state has the authority and jurisdiction to require or not require licenses.

PROPOSED BY: Manokotak Village Council (EG-F24-014)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.330 and 16.05.400 set the hunting license requirements for Alaska.

PROPOSAL 168

If a resident has a Tribal ID card, they will be exempt from the regulation requiring a hunting license for small game.

92.012 (a) No hunting or trapping license is required of a resident hunter under the age of 18. **If hunting small game, a hunting license is not require for those that hold a tribal ID card issues by a federally recognized tribe.** An appropriate license and big game tag are required of nonresidents, regardless of age, for hunting and trapping. No person may take waterfowl unless that person has a current, validated, federal migratory bird hunting stamp or "duck stamp" in possession as required under federal regulations.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remove the requirement for residents who hold a tribal card to obtain a hunting and/or trapping license. In remote rural areas, economic opportunities may be limited affecting the user's ability to afford a hunting license. License vendors are also not always available in smaller communities. Internet capabilities may also not be available or are too costly to have, thus making it difficult to obtain licenses online which potentially restricts access to a vital food source. Those that have a Tribal ID card will serve as a legal license to allow hunting for small game. The state has the authority and jurisdiction to require or not require licenses.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? The proposal was discussed and developed with Manokotak City Council, Manokotak Tribal Council, and Manokotak Native Ltd.

PROPOSED BY: Manokotak Village Council

(EG-F24-015)

Note: Development of the hunting regulations booklet is an exercise of administrative authority by the Department of Fish and Game.

PROPOSAL 169

We would like the Department of Fish and Game to insert in the Hunting Regulations an illustration of how to determine an antlerless bull from a cow in the winter. We (the members of the committee) get a side view and look for the white or brown spots where the antlers have detached. Good optics are recommended and don't pull the trigger if unsure.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? With the BOG creating any bull winter draw hunts in 16B it has probably created a problem with new or inexperienced winter hunters having difficulty determining a bull from a cow since during much of the hunt period bulls have no antlers. This probably causes accidental harvest of cows, and additional harassment of moose from inexperienced winter hunters. As the moose antler sealing study on the Kenai has shown the average hunter seems to have difficulty determining a legal bull.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? This proposal was discussed and recommended by Mt Yenlo AC.

PROPOSED BY: Mt. Yenlo Fish and Game Advisory Committee

EG-F24-018)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.420 prohibits transferability of hunting permits.

PROPOSAL 170

If the board would so allow, I ask they adopt and allow that "a child up to the age of 15 belonging to the mother could be gifted said tag". Thus allowing "their child" the draw tag to be used under the supervision of the spouse/father. This would ONLY be for expectant mothers who have won a permit but are unable to access the field to hunt due to pregnancy.

I ask that if the board adopts this proposal that they may work up the correct language to meet their decision.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I am asking the board to consider and act on changing the successful draw results for resident Alaskan mothers who "after winning a draw permit and during the open season for animal to be harvested" is unable to partake in the hunt due to pregnancy.

PROPOSED BY: Jacques Etcheverry

(EG-F24-027)

Note: The Board of Game does not have authority to regulate domestic animals. Game is defined by statute to exclude domestic animals, Alaska Statute 16.05.940.

PROPOSAL 171

All domestic animals on lands designated Refuge's, Critical Habitat Area's, Range's and Parks must be physically restrained by a tether of no more than six feet. Domestic animals involved in legitimate hunting activities, search & rescue operations and certified service animals are exempt from this regulation but must be under direct supervision and immediate control by their handler.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, unrestrained domestic animals pose a risk to wildlife on Alaska's public lands. Whether through domestic diseases and parasites, attacks or just undue stress, many individuals of Alaska's wildlife populations perish. Every year, many domestic dogs are brought to the vet to have porcupine quills removed from deep in their throats but no one ever questions if the porcupine survived the attack. Every year, domestic dogs chase bears and moose through the woods which can lead to a DLP situation or a motor vehicle collision. Especially in winter, this type of chasing puts undue stress on moose that are already near their breaking point and could be fatal, as we have seen with several high profile DLP incidents this past winter (those animals were not chased, but the added stress of domestic canines pushed them to the brink.). The Kenai wolves are a prime example of domestic parasites (lice) making the jump to wild populations. This proposal should be under the purview of the Board of Game as it addresses a direct biological threat to wildlife.

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

PROPOSED BY: Brad Christensen (EG-F24-031)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.408 restricts nonresident alien hunters from hunting big game with second degree of kindred relatives and requires a guide.

PROPOSAL 172

Remove the prohibition of nonresident aliens to hunt as second degree of kindred. A nonresident alien who hunts for moose, blacktail, elk or caribou must be accompanied in the field by an Alaskan licensed guide or resident relative within the second degree of kindred age 19 or older ** who possess a valid Alaskan hunting license. The guide or resident relative must be within 100 yards of the nonresident alien when they attempt to take game.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? As a legal permanent resident (Canadian Citizen, working on US citizenship) it would be nice to have my father to come up and hunt moose with me as second degree of kindred. There can't possibly be enough Alaskan residents with nonresident alien family members that fall under the second degree of kindred to negatively affect the game populations. There are legal permanent residents in Alaska who call Alaska home,

own businesses and plan on living here the rest of their lives and would like to spend time with their families doing the things they grew up doing together. If this were available for ungulate hunting it would have minimal affect on loss of revenue for outfitters and would be beneficial financially to transporters. I would think someone from Canada who hunts moose would have more knowledge and experience hunting moose in Alaska than someone let's say from New Mexico who can buy an over-the-counter tag.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No

PROPOSED BY: Shane Foord (EG-F24-032)

Note: The Board of Game does not have authority to regulate guides. Additionally, Alaska Statute Chapter 8.54 sets the eligibility and licensing requirements for guides and transporters. The U.S. Constitution prevents states from prohibiting employment to residents of other states.

PROPOSAL 173

Only resident guides can guide nonresident hunters for guide required animals.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Alaska big game hunting guides should be Alaska residents. If a nonresident cannot shoot some species of game without a guide, it should not be legal for a nonresident guide-to take a nonresident client to hunt for restricted animals.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No

PROPOSED BY: Don Coatney (EG-F24-038)

Note: Surveying wildlife populations and utilizing helicopters for intensive management purposes in Unit 17 are administrative authorities of the Department of Fish and Game.

PROPOSAL 174

This program of killing bears from helicopters needs to be put on pause till ADF&G can come up with a population assessment of bear density before they kill an entire population of bears in the designated area. The quote I have heard from both the biologist and the board member I spoke with is that "our plan is to kill ALL the bears in the prescribed areas around caribou calving grounds". There needs to be a more in depth look at the bear population and the public needs to be allowed to have public comment. This program added bears to the intensive management plan after it had already been approved. This allowed the board to approve the addition without public comment, and it was done with out a public notice. The program for killing bears from helicopters

needs to have scientific data to back up claims that killing all these bears with not do more harm than good. ADF&G needs to come up with a cap on the number of bears being killed. In the meetings leading up to this Program last year we were told by the biologist 30 bears was the estimated number they would kill, now they say over 90 were killed the first year and they want to continue killing for two more years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? ADF&G is shooting brown bears from helicopters. ADF&G has not done surveys that can show that the brown bear population is either too high or that killing as many bears as they already have will hurt the bear population long term. After attending many meetings and having phone conversations with the biologist, board members and AC members, no one has any information on bear density or even a basic estimate on the population. The only survey mentioned by the biologist saw 20 bears in the intensive management area. The killing of bears from a publicly funded helicopter is slated to continue for two more years. Last year over 90 brown bears were killed, and there is no quota set for how many more they will kill.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This proposal has been something I developed.

PROPOSED BY: Gabriel Davis (EG-F24-042)

Note: Antlerless moose may not be taken unless authorized under Alaska Statute 16.05.780. Additionally, federal and state court decisions have upheld a constitutional religious right to take fish and game, including antlerless moose, out of season and in excess of bag limits for funeral potlatches unless the state has a compelling reason to restrict such harvest. However, the courts also determined that right does not extend to memorial potlatch ceremonies.

PROPOSAL 175

5 AAC 92.019. Taking of big game for certain religious ceremonies.

(a) The hunting and taking of game species [HAVING A POSITIVE FINDING IN 5 AAC 99.025] outside the seasons or bag limits established in 5 AAC 85, for use in this state as food in customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary or mortuary religious ceremonies within 12 months preceding the ceremony is authorized if consistent with sustained yield principles.

(b) The department shall publicize a list of game populations and areas, if any, for which the taking of game is inconsistent with sustained yield principles. It is the hunter's responsibility to contact the department to find out which game populations and areas are excluded from taking under this regulation.

(1) The taking of big game for certain religious ceremonies is independent of local antlerless moose reauthorizations and is only required to adhere to sustained yield principles.

(c) A written permit from the department is not required for taking game under this section, except that in nonsubsistence areas, described in 5 AAC 99.015, and the Gulkana, Cantwell, Chistochina, Gakona, Mentasta, Tazlina, Chitina, and Kluti Kaah Community Harvest Area defined in 5 AAC 92.074(d), a ceremonial harvest report form, provided by the department, must be obtained and jointly completed by the hunter and the tribal chief, village council president, clan leader, traditional Native head of family, or clan leader's designee for the village associated with the customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary or mortuary religious ceremony.

(d) Before game is taken under this section a tribal chief, village council president, clan leader, traditional Native head of family, or the chief's, president's, traditional Native head of family, or clan leader's designee for the village associated with the religious ceremony, must notify the nearest office of the department that a hunt for game will take place. The notification must include the number of animals expected to be taken and the location where the taking will occur. The tribal chief, village council president, clan leader, traditional Native head of family, or designee must maintain records of the successful hunters and the decedents for the ceremony, and make that information available to an authorized representative of the department upon request. The tribal chief, village council president, clan leader, traditional Native head of family, or designee must notify the department of the location, species, sex, and number of animals taken under this section as soon as practicable, but not more than 15 days after the taking of game.

(e) The taking of big game for a customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremony shall take place outside of the individual designated hunter or hunters' regular hunting seasons and bag limits. A person shall not be withheld from participating in normal hunting seasons and bag limits, because they participated in a successful hunt for a customary and traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremony.

(f) It is an affirmative defense to a prosecution for hunting or taking big game outside the season or bag limit restrictions established in 5 AAC 85 that

(1) the person is a resident of this state;

(2) the hunting or taking was authorized under this section and the meat was used in a customary and traditional Alaska Native funeral or mortuary religious ceremony; and

(3) if the person took big game, the requirements of (d) of this section have been met.

(g) This section does not authorize the taking of game in areas where hunting is prohibited or when prohibited by a federal law that preempts state laws on point.

(h) In this section, "traditional Native head of family" means a person who, according to an Alaska Native tradition, is viewed as a head of a family and is charged with duties similar to those of a tribal chief, village council president, or clan leader regarding traditional Alaska Native funerary or mortuary rites.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The existing language “...having a positive finding in 5 AAC 99.025”, within 5 AAC 92.019 restricts harvest practices for religious ceremonies. These findings have and will continue to become barriers to fulfilling the moral duty of families and communities to continue ancestral traditions to the best of their ability, while recognizing the need to continue to adapt traditions to the sustainability of and changes to the ecosystem. Regulation should consider the evolving nature of Alaska Native religious practices, which may need to incorporate new animal species as part of their traditions due to changing environmental and social landscapes.

Communities throughout the state are facing the drastic effects of climate change, rapid development, and harmful management decisions. With the drastic decline in salmon, Alaska Native people are relying more heavily on other species to fulfill subsistence, educational, cultural, and ceremonial needs. Instability within moose populations additionally makes it challenging for communities to imagine ceremonial reliance on these animals to match historic levels and traditional species/amount of take. Alaska Native people are reliant on the resources made available by and hosted on the landscape- the adaptive nature of Alaska Native values enables the evolution of ceremonial practices. The removal of the requirement for a positive customary and traditional use finding enables Tribes and communities to continue traditions using game already integrated into ceremonies, as well as newly introduced species that Alaska Native peoples have recently or will incorporate into their ongoing ceremonies and practices.

At the recent Board of Game meeting, it was made clear that confusion exists, among hunters, advisory committee members, Board members, and staff, regarding the correlation between the reauthorization of antlerless moose hunts and the ability for cow moose to be taken under the authority of 5 AAC 92.019 for traditional Alaska Native funerary and mortuary religious ceremonies. By clarifying that hunting under this provision must abide by sustained yield principles—and not antlerless reauthorizations—it affirms that if a moose population in a game management unit is within sustainable limits, a designated hunter for a ceremony can pursue either a cow or a bull, regardless of reauthorization status. Explication is crucial to ensure that traditional ceremonies can proceed without legal contention or confusion, supporting cultural continuity and legal clarity- benefiting both hunters and the department.

It is shared belief among Alaska Native peoples and communities that fish and game give or present themselves in time of need. Through 10,000 years of relations with the land, Alaska Native people maintain beliefs and traditions based on ancestral connection with the land. The execution of traditional and cultural ceremonial practices involves hunters abiding by the belief that in times of need, such as a funerary or mortuary religious ceremony, animals present themselves- and it is the responsibility of the hunter to take that animal, something Justice Matthews refers to as “acts which conscience compels [the hunter]”. The Frank decision states, “[4] A law imposing criminal or other penalties on the performance of acts which conscience compels, pressures the underlying beliefs and infringes to that extent the freedom to believe.” (Carlos Frank v. State of Alaska 604 P.2d 1068 1979)

These hunters provide vital community services by ensuring the continuation of cultural practices and the provision of food during ceremonial times. It is a moral duty for these hunters to perform their roles whenever a ceremony is needed, which is essential to supporting the family and

community's fulfillment of tradition. In carrying out this ancestral responsibility the hunter is providing an integral component of the ceremony, not fulfilling their own family's food security needs. These hunters should not have to forego their own family's food security to fulfill this duty. Language ensuring that participation in ceremonial hunts does not exclude hunters from regular season activities addresses both the legal and cultural components of the regulation.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? Development of this proposal was an effort from the Minto-Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee and Tanana Chiefs Conference.

PROPOSED BY: Minto-Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee and Tanana Chiefs Conference (HQ-F24-043)

Note: Antlerless moose may not be taken unless authorized under Alaska Statute 16.05.780. Additionally, federal and state court decisions have upheld a constitutional religious right to take fish and game, including antlerless moose, out of season and in excess of bag limits for funeral potlatches unless the state has a compelling reason to restrict such harvest. However, the courts also determined that right does not extend to memorial potlatch ceremonies.

PROPOSAL 176

5 AAC 92.XXX Traditional Alaska Native Memorial Potlatch Ceremony.

(a) The hunting and taking of game species outside the seasons or bag limits established in 5 AAC 85, for use in this state as food in a traditional Alaska Native Memorial Potlatch Ceremony within 12 months preceding the ceremony is authorized if consistent with sustained yield principles.

(b) The department shall publicize a list of game populations and areas, if any, for which the taking of game is inconsistent with sustained yield principles. It is the hunter's responsibility to contact the department to find out which game populations and areas are excluded from taking under this regulation.

(1) A traditional Alaska Native Memorial Potlatch Ceremony hunt is independent of local antlerless moose reauthorizations and is only required to adhere to sustained yield principles.

(c) A written permit from the department is not required for taking game under this section.

(d) Immediately after big game is taken under this section, a tribal chief, village council president, or the chief's or president's designee, for the village in which the religious ceremony will be held, must maintain a list of the designated hunters who successfully participated in the taking of the big game animals, The list must be made available, after the hunt is completed, to an authorized representative of the department upon request.

(e) The tribal chief, village council president, clan leader, traditional Native head of family, or designee must notify the department of the location, species, sex, and number of animals taken under this section as soon as practicable, but not more than 15 days after the taking of game.

(f) The hunt shall take place outside of the individual designated hunter or hunters' regular hunting seasons and bag limits. A person shall not be withheld from participating in normal hunting seasons and bag limits, because they participated in a successful traditional Alaska Native Memorial Potlatch Ceremony hunt.

(g) It is an affirmative defense to a prosecution for hunting or taking big game outside the season or bag limit restrictions established in 5 AAC 85 that

(1) the person is a resident of this state;

(2) the hunting or taking was authorized under this section and the meat was used in a traditional Alaska Native memorial potlatch ceremony; and

(3) if the person took big game, the requirements of (d) of this section have been met.

(g) This section does not authorize the taking of game in areas where hunting is prohibited or when prohibited by a federal law that preempts state laws on point.

(h) in this section, "traditional Alaska Native Memorial Potlatch Ceremony" means a traditional Alaska Native ceremony held in continuation of the funerary and mortuary religious ceremony to finalize the grieving process of a deceased individual.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In 1979, the Alaska Supreme Court relied on the testimony of Traditional Chief Peter John of Minto and other Alaska Native experts in the Frank decision. The Supreme Court found that "Death is the life crisis receiving the greatest attention in current Athabascan culture." In March 2019, the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) full Board of Directors passed Resolution 2019-30 Protect Ceremonial Moose after ADF&G prohibited the take of cow moose for funeral potlatch religious ceremonies, memorial potlatch ceremonies, Nuchalawoyya potlatches, and Stickdance ceremonies in the Minto Flats Management Area. TCC and its member Tribes and organizations remain concerned that the freedoms associated with Alaska Native religious expression and practice continue to be under attack.

As a result, we propose to create a new regulation to specifically ensure the right to take big game for Alaska Native memorial potlatches as part of Indigenous religious ceremonies to continue the community grieving process initiated during a preceding funerary and mortuary ceremony. In recent years, the Alaska Department of Law repeatedly stated at regulatory meetings of the Alaska Board of Game (BOG) that the Frank Decision (Carlos Frank v. State of Alaska 604 P.2d 1068 1979) only guarantees the religious right for taking certain big game animals out of season and outside normal bag limits for Alaska Native funeral ceremonies. While for many years the BOG

has authorized and ADF&G has allowed the take of certain big game for Alaska Native memorial potlatches that take place months or even years after the funeral ceremony, historical and ongoing threats to Indigenous religious freedoms at BOG meetings prompted this request for further regulatory action.

At recent BOG meetings, it has been stated on the record repeatedly that grieving communities can plan for memorial potlatches such that wild food sacraments necessary for memorial religious ceremonies can be obtain through normal hunting seasons and bag limits. However, designated community hunters for memorial take should not have to sacrifice their individual household's food security by depriving themselves of their individual bag limit to feed the grieving community. Therefore, regulatory clarification would serve to clarify and mitigate these ongoing concerns and issues.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This proposal was developed through extensive discussions at Minto-Nenana Local Fish and Game Advisory Committee meetings and consultations with other local fish and game advisory committees, tribal leaders, and Tanana Chiefs Conference staff.

PROPOSED BY: Minto-Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee, Nenana Native Association, and Tanana Chiefs Conference (HQ-F24-045)

Note: The Board of Game was provided statutory authority to establish big game guide concession areas on state land during the 2024 legislative session. The legislation requires the Board of Game to first establish an initial concession area for a single Game Management Unit or subunit. While the bill provided statutory authority, the legislature did not provide any funding to support implementation of the program. Without funding, implementation will be challenged. The Department is hopeful that the legislature will provide the necessary funding during the next cycle.

PROPOSAL 177

State guide concession program needs to be implemented on all state lands, leave permitted draw areas the same as in current regulations. In each concession area we need to have a fixed number of sheep taken by guided nonresident hunters, a lot like the feds do on the north side of the Brooks Range ANWR. That number should not exceed 10 percent of the total harvest in a given concession, I've spent more than a few hours looking at harvest reports dating back into the 70s and nonresidents consistently harvest around 40% of our sheep. We all know weather events have put us in this bad spot, we need ewes more than rams and we don't have a surplus of them.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? As we all know Alaska is hurting for sheep, the main issue with lack of sheep is over pressure and user conflicts where there might be a few sheep. Unit 19C is the tip of the iceberg.

PROPOSED BY: Pete Imhof (EG-F24-056)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.405 stipulates the requirements for proxy hunting.

PROPOSAL 178

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.

We request that the board consider assigning proxy tags to community safety net organizations.

Proposed Draft Language:

This authorization permits an Alaska resident age 10 and older with a current Alaska hunting license (Proxy Hunter) to take....some moose.... For another Alaska resident (Beneficiary) who is blind, 70% physically disabled (affidavit required), 65 years of age or older, or developmentally disabled (affidavit required) **OR for an eligible food community safety net program. Community safety net organizations are defined as: 1. Food Banks and Food Pantries. 2. Emergency shelters. 3. Programs that distribute meals to elders or individuals who experience disabilities. 4. Programs that distribute food to individuals who are experiencing food insecurity. 5. Tribes or tribal consortiums that provide food assistance. 6. Educational institutions that feed students. 7. Tribal health care organizations.**

Proxy Tags for community safety net programs will be limited to 5% of all tags issued in the Unit OR an established number as determined by the Board of Game.

A Proxy Hunter may not proxy hunt for more than [ONE BENEFICIARY] **two beneficiary tags** at a time, and may possess only [ONE AUTHORIZATION] **two authorizations** at a time.

Please note: This is our preferred solution, which we will term "Preference #1". We will also submit alternative solutions for consideration. and will rank them in order of our preference.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like the Board to address the issue of proxy hunting. Currently, proxy hunting: *permits an Alaska resident age 10 and older with a current Alaska hunting license (Proxy Hunter) to take....some moose.... for another Alaska resident (Beneficiary) who is blind, 70% physically disabled (affidavit required), 65 years of age or older, or developmentally disabled (affidavit required). A Proxy Hunter may not proxy hunt for more than one beneficiary at a time, and may possess only one authorization at a time.*

We request that the definition of proxy hunting be expanded to allow particular organizations to be granted their own proxy tags. Our particular interest is the moose harvest in Unit 18, but there is likely application to other units. This would allow these organizations to distribute the protein to their participants, potentially include the participants in the hunts, and to serve this form of culturally-appropriate food in their meals to their constituents. We would also like the board to

consider allowing the number of proxy tags a hunter can fill on a trip from one tag to two, due to the distance most hunters must travel and expense of filling a tag. Other factors:

1. Availability of existing moose population within the Unit.
2. High levels of food insecurity throughout both the Bethel Census Area and the Kusilvak Census Area.
3. Ability to increase the availability of a culturally-appropriate and highly-desired, healthy source of protein to individuals who are a) relying on the food served by or provided by community safety net programs or b) other agencies, such as educational institutions or health care organizations.
4. To provide more opportunities for individuals receiving these resources to participate in hunts and food processing.
5. To provide easier opportunities for potential hunters who wish to help people, broadly, who are food-insecure/the organizations serving those individuals.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? We have developed this proposal in coordination with two committees composed of experts from throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and elsewhere in Alaska who are examining potential structural interventions to improve food security and food sovereignty in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. One group is called COMPASS: Community Partnerships to Advance Science and Society. The group and these efforts are funded with a 10-year National institute of Health grant to select structural interventions that could benefit food security and sovereignty in the YK Delta. The other committee is called the HERA: Health Equity Research Assembly. The goal of HERA is to guide the work of COMPASS in selecting the structural interventions and the methods with which those interventions are approached.

We forwarded our drafts to the Board of Game member from Bethel.

We met with staff at our local fish and game office.

We plan to discuss our proposals with our local advisory committee but because we are new to this process, we were unfamiliar with their meeting schedule. Those discussions will occur after this submission.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle DeWitt (EG-F24-067)

Note: Alaska Statute 16.05.405 stipulates the requirements for proxy hunting and AS 16.05.420 limits the transferability of hunting tags and permits.

PROPOSAL 179

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of Game by proxy.

We recommend expanding the definition of proxy to allow any individual Alaskan who is

eligible for a moose harvest tag that they do not plan to fill to transfer that tag as a proxy tag to a Community Safety Net Program as defined below.

Proposed Draft Language:

This authorization permits an Alaska resident age 10 and older with a current Alaska hunting license (Proxy Hunter) **to transfer one or more of their available tags to a Community Safety Net Program. Community safety net organizations are defined as: 1. Food Banks and Food Pantries. 2. Emergency shelters. 3. Programs that distribute meals to elders or individuals who experience disabilities. 4. Programs that distribute food to individuals who are experiencing food insecurity. 5. Tribes or tribal consortiums that provide food assistance. 6. Educational institutions that feed students. 7. Tribal health care organizations.**

Eligible programs cannot receive more than the allotted number of donated tags established the Board of Game OR 5% (or a % established by the Board of Game) of all tags issued in the Unit.

Please note: This is our second-preference solution, which we will term “Preference #2”. We will also submit alternative solutions and will rank them in order of our preference.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like the Board to address the issue of Proxy Hunting. Currently, proxy hunting: permits an Alaska resident age 10 and older with a current Alaska hunting license (Proxy Hunter) to take....some moose.... For another Alaska resident (Beneficiary) who is blind, 70% physically disabled (affidavit required), 65 years of age or older, or developmentally disabled (affidavit required). A Proxy Hunter may not proxy hunt for more than one Beneficiary at a time, and may possess only one authorization at a time.

We request that the definition of proxy hunting be expanded – in particular we are considering the moose population in Unit 18, but there may be applicability to other areas of the state. We would also like the board to consider allowing the number of proxy tags a hunter can fill on a trip from one tag to two, due to the distance most hunters must travel and expense of filling a tag for the following reasons:

1. Availability of existing population within the Unit.
2. High levels of food insecurity throughout both the Bethel Census Area and the Kusilvak Census Area.
3. To increase the availability of a culturally-appropriate and highly-desired, healthy source of protein to individuals who are a) relying on the food served by or provided by community safety net programs or b) other agencies, such as educational institutions or health care organizations.
4. To provide more opportunities for individuals receiving these resources to participate in hunts and meat processing.

5. To provide easier opportunities for potential hunters who wish to help people, broadly, who are food-insecure/the organizations serving those individuals.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? We have developed this proposal in coordination with two committees composed of experts from throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and elsewhere in Alaska who are examining potential structural interventions to improve food security and food sovereignty in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. One group is called and COMPASS: Community Partnerships to Advance Science and Society. The group and these efforts are funded with a 10-year National institute of Health grant to select structural interventions that could benefit food security and sovereignty in the YK Delta. The other committee is called the HERA: Health Equity Research Assembly. The goal of HERA is to guide the work of COMPASS in selecting the structural interventions and the methods with which those interventions are approached.

We forwarded our drafts to the Board of Game member from Bethel.

We met with staff at our local Department of Fish and Game office.

We plan to discuss our proposals with our local advisory committee but because we are new to this process, we were unfamiliar with their meeting schedule. Those discussions will occur after this submission.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle DeWitt (EG-F24-069)

Note: Game Management Unit 18 is outside the scope of the Statewide Regulations meeting and Alaska Statute 16.05.405 stipulates the requirements for proxy hunting. Please see Proposal 123 which requests a statewide change to allow remuneration for proxy hunting.

PROPOSAL 180

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.

Allow individuals and specific community organizations to provide remuneration to proxy hunters in the form of reimbursement for hunting expenses as follows:

(d A person may not be a proxy

- (1) for more than one beneficiary at a time; **except**

(1a for more than two beneficiaries at a time in Unit 18

- (2) more than once per season per species in Unit 13;
- (3) for Tier II Caribou in Unit 13, unless the proxy is a Tier II permittee.

(4) for more than one person per regulatory year for moose in Units 20(A) and 20(B).

1. A person may not [give or] receive remuneration in order to obtain, grant, or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.
2. **A person may give compensation in the form of reimbursement for gas and ammunition to their proxy hunter.**
3. **A community safety net organization may not receive remuneration from a potential proxy hunter in order to obtain, grant or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.**
4. **A community safety net organization may provide remuneration to a proxy hunter in the form of the following: reimbursements for gas, oil, ammunition and repairs required to equipment such as a snow machine or ATV due to failures that occurred on the hunt. Community safety net organizations are defined as: 1. Food Banks and Food Pantries. 2. Emergency shelters. 3. Programs that distribute meals to elders or individuals who experience disabilities. 4. Programs that distribute food to individuals who are experiencing food insecurity. 5. Tribes or tribal consortiums that provide food assistance. 6. Educational institutions that feed students. 7. Tribal**

Note: Internally we have labeled this proposal as Proposal 6. We believe Proposal 7 is a stronger option for incentivizing proxy hunters for food-insecure households and impacting the issue of food insecurity.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to make it easier for community safety net organizations- those organizations distributing food to people who are struggling with food security, organizations that are providing meals to vulnerable populations, educational institutions or health care organizations- to find people willing to proxy moose hunt for participants who are utilizing said organizations to increase their food security by offering reimbursements to the proxy hunters for their effort. The cost of gas, oil, use of personal equipment, expense of ammunition, wear and tear on personal equipment, etc. are barriers for many potential hunters' ability to conduct proxy hunts. We would like to identify a way to incentivize this activity which will lead to increased food security for households struggling with this condition. Additionally, we would like to ensure that for those hunters who do make the effort to travel long distances to fill a proxy tag, that they could fill up to two tags while out on their hunt to conserve gas, equipment use and time.

We believe this proposal would work well in tandem with other proposed changes. We have labeled this Proposal internally as Proposal 6. As for incentivizing proxy hunters, we prefer our Proposal #7.

Eliminating this barrier would:

1. Utilize the currently-available moose population within the Unit for the benefit of individuals in need of improved food security or increased access to traditional foods.
2. Combat high levels of food insecurity throughout both the Bethel Census Area and the Kusilvak Census Area.
3. Increase the availability of a culturally-appropriate and highly-desired, healthy source of protein to individuals who are a) relying on the food served by or provided by community safety net programs or b) other agencies, such as educational institutions or health care organizations.
4. Provide more opportunities for individuals receiving these resources to participate in hunts and meat processing.
5. Provide easier opportunities for potential hunters who wish to help people, broadly, who are food-insecure/the organizations serving those individuals.
6. Provide more efficiency in use of gas, wear and tear on equipment and time by allowing for two proxy tags to be filled at a time per hunter instead of one.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? We have developed this proposal in coordination with two committees composed of experts from throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and elsewhere in Alaska who are examining potential structural interventions to improve food security and food sovereignty in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. One group is called COMPASS: Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society. The group and these efforts are funded with a 10-year National Institute of Health grant to select structural interventions that could benefit food security and sovereignty in the YK Delta. The other committee is called HERA: Health Equity Research Assembly. The goal of HERA is to guide the work of COMPASS in selecting structural interventions and the methods with which those interventions are approached.

We forwarded our drafts to the Board of Game commission member from Bethel.

We met with staff at our local Fish and Game office.

We plan to discuss our proposal with our local advisory committee but because we are new to this process, we were unfamiliar with their meeting schedule. Those discussions will occur after this submission.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle DeWitt (EG-F24-072)

Note: Game Management Unit 18 is outside the scope of the Statewide Regulations meeting and Alaska Statute 16.05.405 stipulates the requirements for proxy hunting. Please see Proposal 123 which requests a statewide change to allow remuneration for proxy hunting.

PROPOSAL 181

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.

Allow individuals and specific community organizations to provide remuneration to proxy hunters in the form of cash, gas cards, and reimbursement for hunting expenses as follows:

(d) A person may not be a proxy

(1) for more than one beneficiary at a time; **except**

(1)a for more than two beneficiaries at a time in Unit 18

(2) more than once per season per species in Unit 13;

(3) for Tier II Caribou in Unit 13, unless the proxy is a Tier II permittee.

(4) for more than one person per regulatory year for moose in Units 20(A) and 20(B).

(v) A person may not [give or] receive remuneration in order to obtain, grant, or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.

(vi) A person may give remuneration for gas and ammunition to their proxy hunter.

(vii) A community safety net organization may not receive remuneration from a potential proxy hunter in order to obtain, grant or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.

(viii) A community safety net organization may provide remuneration to a proxy hunter in the form of the following: a stipend not to exceed \$500 per hunt or a total of \$3000 annually as an honorarium for time contributions for filling a proxy tag; a gas card not to exceed \$150 per hunt as an honorarium for filling a proxy tag; reimbursements for gas, oil, ammunition and repairs required to equipment such as a snow machine or ATV due to failures that occurred on the hunt or repair/replacement of other materials damaged or lost on the hunt. Community safety net organizations are defined as: 1. Food Banks and Food Pantries. 2. Emergency shelters. 3. Programs that distribute meals to elders or individuals who experience disabilities. 4. Programs that distribute food to individuals who are experiencing food insecurity. 5. Tribes or tribal consortiums that provide food assistance. 6. Educational institutions that feed students. 7. Tribal health care organizations.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to make it easier for community safety net organizations to find people willing to proxy moose hunt for participants who are utilizing said organizations by offering reimbursements for their effort. The cost of gas, oil, use of personal equipment, expense of bullets, wear and tear on personal equipment, etc. are barriers for many potential hunters' ability to conduct proxy hunts. Additionally, many of those hunters must miss work or time providing for their own household's needs or time with family in order to conduct a proxy hunt. Further incentivizing proxy hunting for the hunter would result in a great benefit to recipient individuals or groups. Additionally, we would like to ensure that for those hunters who do make the effort to travel long distances to fill a proxy tag, that they could fill up to two tags while out on their hunt to conserve gas, equipment use and time.

Eliminating these barriers would:

1. Utilize the currently-available moose population within Unit 18 for the benefit of individuals in need of improved food security or increased access to traditional foods.
2. Combat high levels of food insecurity throughout both the Bethel Census Area and the Kusilvak Census Area.
3. Increase the availability of a culturally-appropriate and highly-desired, healthy source of protein to individuals who are a) relying on the food served by or provided by community safety net programs or b) other agencies, such as educational institutions or health care organizations.
4. Provide more opportunities for individuals receiving these resources to participate in hunts and meat processing.
5. Provide easier opportunities for potential hunters who wish to help people, broadly, who are food-insecure and/or the organizations serving those individuals.
6. Provide more efficiency in use of gas, wear and tear on equipment and time by allowing for two proxy tags to be filled at a time per hunter instead of one.

We believe this proposal would work well in tandem with other proposed changes. Internally, we have labeled this as Proposal 7. As for incentivizing proxy hunters, we prefer this Proposal (#7) over Proposal #6.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? We have developed this proposal in coordination with two committees composed of experts from throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and elsewhere in Alaska who are examining potential structural interventions to improve food security and food sovereignty in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. One group is called COMPASS: Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society. The group and these efforts are funded with a 10-year National Institute of Health grant to select structural interventions that could benefit food security and sovereignty in the YK Delta. The other committee is called HERA: Health Equity Research Assembly. The goal of HERA is to guide the work of COMPASS in selecting structural interventions and the methods with which those interventions are approached.

We forwarded our drafts to the Board of Game commission member from Bethel.

We met with staff at our local Fish and Game office.

We plan to discuss our proposal with our local advisory committee but because we are new to this process, we were unfamiliar with their meeting schedule. Those discussions will occur after this submission.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle DeWitt

(EG-F24-073)

Note: Game Management Unit 18 is outside the scope of the Statewide Regulations meeting and Alaska Statute 16.05.405 stipulates the requirements for proxy hunting. Please see Proposal 123 which requests a statewide change to allow remuneration for proxy hunting.

PROPOSAL 182

5 AAC 92.011. Taking of game by proxy.

Allow individuals and specific community organizations to provide remuneration to proxy hunters in the form of cash, gas cards, and reimbursement for hunting expenses, and allow the organizations to employ specialists to serve as proxy hunters as follows:

(d) A person may not be a proxy

(1) for more than one beneficiary at a time; **except**

(1a for more than two beneficiaries at a time in Unit 18

(2) more than once per season per species in Unit 13;

(3) for Tier II Caribou in Unit 13, unless the proxy is a Tier II permittee.

(4) for more than one person per regulatory year for moose in Units 20(A) and 20(B).

(ix) A person may not [give or] receive remuneration in order to obtain, grant, or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.

(x) A person may give remuneration for gas and ammunition to their proxy hunter.

(xi) An organization may not receive remuneration from a potential proxy hunter in order to obtain, grant or influence the granting of a proxy authorization.

(xii) A community safety net organization may provide remuneration to a proxy hunter in the form of the following: a stipend not to exceed \$500 per hunt or a total of \$3000 annually as an honorarium for time contributions for filling a proxy tag; a gas card not to exceed \$150 per hunt as an honorarium for filling a proxy tag; reimbursements for gas, oil, ammunition and repairs required to equipment such as a snow machine or ATV due to failures that occurred on the hunt or repair/replacement of other materials damaged or lost on the hunt.

(xiii) A community safety net organization may employ a specialist who has expertise in traditional subsistence practices who may a) fill proxy tags not to exceed a number identified by the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game and/or b) apply for cultural educational permits and/or c) develop a community harvest program and/or d) include community safety net organization program participants in the hunts in order to transmit traditional knowledge about hunting practices that will lead to greater future food security for those participants

or e) hunt for the food distributed by the organization or prepared by the organization. A maximum number of moose the organization may harvest will be established by the Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game. Community safety net organizations are defined as: 1. Food Banks and Food Pantries. 2. Emergency shelters. 3. Programs that distribute meals to elders or individuals who experience disabilities. 4. Programs that distribute food to individuals who are experiencing food insecurity. 5. Tribes or tribal consortiums that provide food assistance.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to make it easier for community safety net organizations to fill proxy hunt tags for eligible populations. We would like to accomplish this by clarifying that particular types of organizations may employ an individual who, as part of their job duties, is able to fill proxy hunt tags for eligible tag holders. We request that two proxy tags could be filled per proxy tag holder per hunt to maximize the resources of gas and time that are required for these hunts.

Eliminating these barriers would:

1. Utilize the currently-available moose population within the Unit for the benefit of individuals in need of improved food security or increased access to traditional foods.
2. Combat high levels of food insecurity throughout both the Bethel Census Area and the Kusilvak Census Area.
3. Increase the availability of a culturally-appropriate and highly-desired, healthy source of protein to individuals who are a) relying on the food served by or provided by community safety net programs or b) other agencies, such as educational institutions or health care organizations and/or c) provide more opportunities for individuals receiving these resources to participate in hunts and meat processing with the designated employee.
4. Leverage the knowledge and skills of an individual who possesses those abilities to train and teach others, which will allow the transmission of critical traditional knowledge through culturally-appropriate activities and increase the future food security of food-insecure households by including them in the activities and sharing this knowledge.
5. Provide more efficiency in use of gas, wear and tear on equipment and time by allowing for two proxy tags to be filled at a time per hunter instead of one.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? We have developed this proposal in coordination with two committees composed of experts from throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and elsewhere in Alaska who are examining potential structural interventions to improve food security and food sovereignty in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. One group is called COMPASS: Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society. The group and these efforts are funded with a 10-year National Institute of Health grant to select structural interventions that could benefit food security and sovereignty in the YK Delta. The other committee is called HERA: Health Equity Research Assembly. The goal of HERA is to guide the work of COMPASS in selecting structural interventions and the methods with which those interventions are approached.

We forwarded our drafts to the Board of Game commission member from Bethel. We met with staff at our local Fish and Game office. We plan to discuss our proposal with our local advisory

committee but because we are new to this process, we were unfamiliar with their meeting schedule. Those discussions will occur after this submission.

PROPOSED BY: Michelle DeWitt (EG-F24-074)

Note: Fees for hunting permits and tags are set in Alaska Statute 16.05.340.

PROPOSAL 183

Increase the nonresident Dall sheep tag fee to \$1,700. Increase the Nonresident Alien Dall sheep tag fee to \$2,200. This doubles the states revenue on nonresident sheep tags while still remaining competitive and below the national average of \$2,106. It should be noted that non-resident sheep hunters harvest nearly 50% of the annual sheep harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Non-Resident Dall Sheep tag fees are more than 50% cheaper than the average of the 11 lower 48 western states nonresident wild sheep tag fees. For reference the 2024 nonresident tag fees for the mentioned 11 western states are

- WA-\$1652
- OR-\$1513.50
- CA-\$1986.75
- ID-\$2626.75
- NV-\$1200
- AZ-\$1815
- UT-\$2244
- MT-\$1250
- WY-\$3017
- CO-\$2686.04
- NM-\$3173

The average comes out to \$2,106.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale (EG-F24-082)

Note: Establishing hunting zones is an administrative authority exercised by the Department of Fish and Game.

PROPOSAL 184

I recommend a 4-zone management approach. A coastal zone (south of the Kanektok River in Units 18 and 17A), a western zone (remainder of Unit 18), eastern zone (Unit 17B), and southeast zone (Units 17C and 9B)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Mulchatna caribou herd has declined significantly since the boom of the late 90's. This has "normalized" the herd into a number of smaller herds. By moving to a zoned management approach, smaller herds on the periphery of the MCH range which are stable or increasing may provide some hunting opportunity while protecting other zones from harvest and allowing for growth.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? I have discussed this concept with local federal and state Mulchatna caribou herd manager but am submitting the proposal individually.

PROPOSED BY: Patrick Walsh (EG-F24-089)

Note: Tier II scoring is based on statutory requirements in Alaska Statute 16.05.258.

PROPOSAL 185

5 AAC 92.070. Tier II subsistence hunting permit point system.

The following question should be added and points awarded appropriately: Do you own land or property within this Tier II hunting zone.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? With respect to the Tier II application, currently there are no points awarded to the applicants who own land or property within a tier II hunt area.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? The idea was brought up with our advisory committee and we voted to submit this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Bethel Fish & Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-019)

Note: Federal hunting regulations for migratory birds establish the definition of sea ducks. The proposed change does not comply with federal law.

PROPOSAL 186

5 AAC 92.990. Definitions.

I recommend that the Board change language that “for regulation purposes” defines bufflehead, Barrow’s and Common Goldeneye as dabbling ducks. Bufflehead, Barrow’s and Common Goldeneye are sea ducks with life-history that makes them susceptible to over-harvest and slow recovery, and they should be managed like other sea ducks. I recommend amending definition language on p. 11 of the "Alaska Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations Supplement" as follows:

“All duck species (except sea ducks) count towards the general duck bag and possession limits. **For regulation purposes, bufflehead, Barrow’s and common goldeneyes are included in the general duck bag limit and not considered sea ducks.**” Sea ducks are harlequin duck; long-tailed duck; common and king eider; surf, white-winged, and black scoter; common, hooded and red-breasted merganser; **bufflehead, Barrow’s and common goldeneyes.**”

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? “For regulation purposes” ADF&G currently defines Bufflehead, common and Barrow’s goldeneye as dabbling ducks. But they are not dabbling ducks, they are sea ducks. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica:

“Sea ducks are any of the approximately 20 species of the tribes Mergini and Somateriini... Ducks of the tribe Mergini include the bufflehead (*Bucephala*, or *Glaucionetta, albeola*), closely related to the goldeneye (*B.*, or *G.*, *clangula*); the mergansers; the oldsquaw (*Clangula hyemalis*); and scoters (*Melanitta*, or *Oidemia*, species). The tribe Somateriini includes the eiders.”

It is important that Bufflehead and Barrow’s and common goldeneyes be managed as sea ducks and not as dabbling ducks, because sea ducks are much more prone to over harvest than dabblers. According to the Sea Duck Joint Venture, sea duck populations are slow to recover for the following reasons:

1. Sea ducks are known to have a remarkable degree of site fidelity—around 5 miles or so—which means that if an area’s population is depressed, birds from other areas will not boost recovery.
2. In general, sea ducks do not breed until they are 2 or 3 or so years old, which is late in comparison darling ducks.
3. They lay only one clutch of eggs per year, in contrast with the 2 or 3 for many dabbling ducks.
4. They have significantly lower chick survival rates than other ducks.

Sea duck populations across the United States have fallen 30% since 1970, and they remain in decline, according to the U.S. Committee of the North American Bird Conservation Initiative’s “2022 State of Birds Report”. On the bright side, the report notes that efforts at conservation have been shown to be effective.

This proposal is supported by three consecutive years of Kachemak Bay Community Science Sea Duck Surveys—a local annual effort of 10 boats and over 30 people. This survey effort started in 2020/21, because residents and hunters in Kachemak Bay noticed a significant increase to sea duck hunting pressure, as a result of the arrival of a few more guides. Local birders began monitoring populations to create a population index. Our population index does not aim to estimate total number of birds in Kachemak Bay, but by focusing on a few areas with dense sea duck populations, we are able to see population trends—an approach used by ADF&G managers across many species in Alaska. Our data shows that populations have not bounced back after a significant harvest. Fish and Game has historically monitored sea duck populations in Kachemak Bay, but they have not surveyed in Kachemak Bay since several years before community science surveys began, so our data is the only record of this trend.

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

PROPOSED BY: Penelope Haas

(HQ-F24-031)
