

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
STAFF COMMENTS FOR PROPOSALS 145-153, 173-192, 194-197, 249 and 252-253
SOUTHCENTRAL REGION REGULATIONS PROPOSALS

ALASKA BOARD OF GAME MEETING

KODIAK, ALASKA

MARCH 20-25, 2026



The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Game meeting, March 20-25, 2026 in Kodiak, Alaska, and are prepared to assist the public and board. The stated staff comments should be considered preliminary and subject to change, if or when new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral testimony presented to the board.

PROPOSAL 145 – 5 AAC 92.550. **Areas closed to trapping.** Establish trapping and snaring buffers along specific roads and pullouts in and around Cooper Landing in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish trap setbacks of 100-yards on both sides of roads and all sides of pullouts listed in Unit 7 unless the traps are elevated three feet above ground or snow level, enclosed, underwater or under ice.

Quartz Creek Road - Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the powerline crossing at approximately mile 2.5.

Quartz Creek Road - From powerline crossing to Crescent Creek Trailhead at mile 3.5.

East Quartz Creek and Williams Road - Entire East Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with Quartz Creek Road and Williams Road.

Old Sterling Highway (unmaintained portion of Quartz Creek Road) - Old Sterling Highway from the Crescent Creek Trailhead to Tern Lake Rest and Picnic area.

Snug Harbor Road - The first 2.8 miles of Snug Harbor Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the entrance of the Chugach Electric Power Station.

Bean Creek Road - The entire distance from the Sterling Hwy to end.

West Juneau Bench Road/Chunkwood Road – Pullout at mile 53.25 Sterling Highway to its intersection with Resurrection Trail.

All DOT designated vehicle pullouts along 18 miles of the Sterling Highway from Tern Lake to the Russian River Ferry and Boat Launch.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

(9) Unit 7:

(A) all land within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses and the one wildlife overpass on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(B) those portions within 50 yards of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, North Cooper Creek, and South Cooper Creek campgrounds are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 50 yards of the trails if the traps are:

(i) elevated three feet above hard ground;

(ii) enclosed;

(iii) under water; or

(iv) under ice.

...

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict and is unlikely to impact furbearer harvest or reduce opportunity significantly.

BACKGROUND: Trails across the Kenai have been established by many different user groups including Alaska Natives, homesteaders, miners, trappers, mushers, mineral exploration, snowmachiners, skiers, cyclists and other recreationalists. Use of established trails has changed over time as the population on the peninsula has increased and the public's interests have changed (e.g. more snowmachiners and fewer dog mushers). Conflicts between user groups have increased as the human population and outdoor recreation have increased.

Many of the areas where conflicts arise have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

Most users groups have a base organization that encourages ethical and cooperative use of trails such as the Alaska Trappers Association, Snowmads, Cabin Hoppers, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club or the Homer Cycling club. Not all users, however, are members of such organizations nor subscribe to these organizations' codes of ethics. As such, educational efforts do not always reach all users, and suggested guidelines are not followed by all users causing conflicts to arise.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 146 – 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping and snaring buffers along specified trails and trailheads in and around the Cooper Landing Area in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap setback of 100 yards from trails and trail heads listed below in Unit 7 unless traps are elevated three feet above ground or snow level, enclosed, underwater, or under ice.

Crescent Creek Trail, USGS Map Seward, B7, C7 and C8 USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Crescent Creek Trail. Begins at Crescent Creek Trailhead parking area at mile 3.5 of Quartz Creek Road and ascends 6.5 miles to the Crescent Lake Cabin at the west end of the lake.

Lower Russian Lake Trail USGS Map Seward B8, Kenai B1 USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Russian Lakes Trail. Lower Russian Lake Trail from the trailhead parking located in the Russian River Campground about 1.0 miles from the campground entrance to both the Barber Cabin on the shore of Lower Russian Lake and to the Russian River Falls Overlook.

Bean Creek Trail- starting at its trailhead at mile 0.5 of the west end of Slaughter Ridge Road to its intersection of the main Resurrection Pass Trail above Juneau Falls.

Russian Gap Trail/Historic Quartz Creek/ Coyote Notch Trail System- This trail is referred to as the Quartz Creek Trail on the 2004 plat approved by the Kenai Peninsula Borough for the Russian Gap Subdivision. This trail ascends behind the west side of KPB parcel 11912507 and continues through parcel 11912513, connecting with the Russian Gap Trail and heading north easterly along a bench below Russian Gap.

Resurrection Trail, South End USGS Maps Seward B8, C8 and D8- From the southern Resurrection Trail trailhead on the Sterling Highway continuing to the Swan Lake public use cabin

Devil's Pass Ski Loops USGS Map Seward C7 and C8 USFS, Chugach National Forest Map for Devil's Pass Trail - These trails begin at the far end of the parking area for Devil's Pass Trail head at mile 39.5 of the Seward Highway. These trails loop along the cleared area to the northeast of the parking lot between Quartz Creek and the Seward Highway.

Stetson Creek Parking area and trail- Stetson Trail parking area at milepost 50.7 of Sterling Highway. Setback of 100 yards around clearing beyond gate under the power line and first 400 yards up the trail.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

(9) Unit 7:

(A) all land within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses and the one wildlife overpass on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(B) those portions within 50 yards of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, North Cooper Creek, and South Cooper Creek campgrounds are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 50 yards of the trails if the traps are:

(i) elevated three feet above hard ground;

(ii) enclosed;

(iii) under water; or

(iv) under ice.

...

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict and is unlikely to impact furbearer harvest, or reduce opportunity significantly.

BACKGROUND: Trails across the Kenai have been established by many different user groups including Alaska Natives, homesteaders, miners, trappers, mushers, mineral exploration, snowmachiners, skiers, cyclists and other recreationalists. Use of established trails has changed over time as the population on the peninsula has increased and the public's interests have changed (e.g. more snowmachiners and fewer dog mushers). Conflicts between user groups have increased as the human population and outdoor recreation have increased.

Many of the areas where conflicts arise have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

Most user groups have a base organization that encourages ethical and cooperative use of trails such as the Alaska Trappers Association, Snowmads, Cabin Hoppers, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club or the Homer Cycling club. Educational efforts do not always reach all users, and suggested guidelines are not followed by all users causing conflicts to arise.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 147 – 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping setbacks along Kenai Lake beaches in Unit 7 as follows:

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap setback of 100-yards from mean high-water mark of Kenai Lake on the north side from the Kenai River Bridge to 1 mile past the end of Williams Road and on the south side from the Kenai River Bridge to ¼ mile past the powerline crossing (powerline is at mile 2.8 Snug Harbor Road), also, Kenai Lake Beach (Locally known as Waikiki Beach) ¼ mile north to ¼ mile south of the lake access road at mile

5.8 Snug Harbor Road in Unit 7. Except traps that are elevated three feet above ground or snow level, enclosed, underwater, or under ice.

- Kenai Lake Beaches: on the North side from the Kenai River Bridge to 1 mile past the end of Williams Road and on the south side from the Kenai River Bridge to ¼ mile past the powerline crossing (powerline is at mile 2.8 Snug Harbor Road). *Area from the mean high-water mark to 100yds back.*
- Kenai Lake Beach (Waikiki Beach): ¼ mile north to ¼ mile south of the lake access road at mile 5.8 Snug Harbor Road. *Area from the mean high-water mark to 100yds back.*

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

(9) Unit 7:

(A) all land within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses and the one wildlife overpass on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(B) those portions within 50 yards of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, North Cooper Creek, and South Cooper Creek campgrounds are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 50 yards of the trails if the traps are:

- (i) elevated three feet above hard ground;
- (ii) enclosed;
- (iii) under water; or
- (iv) under ice.

...

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict and is unlikely to impact furbearer harvest or significantly impact opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Trails across the Kenai have been established by many different user groups including Alaska Natives, homesteaders, miners, trappers, mushers, mineral exploration, snowmachiners, skiers, cyclists and other recreationalists. Use of established trails has changed over time as the population on the peninsula has increased and the public's interests have changed (e.g. more snowmachiners and fewer dog mushers). Conflicts between user groups have increased as the human population and outdoor recreation have increased.

Many of the areas where conflicts arise have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

Most users groups have a base organization that encourages ethical and cooperative use of trails such as the Alaska Trappers Association, Snowmads, Cabin Hoppers, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club or the Homer Cycling club. Educational efforts do not always reach all users, and suggested guidelines are not followed by all users causing conflicts to arise.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists, and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper’s Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 148 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Require signs be posted at all access points to active trapping in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would require signs to be posted at all active trapping access points in Unit 7. Trapping sign requirements would include 1) be at least 8” x 11”, 2) brightly colored (orange or yellow), 3) waterproof/tear proof, and 4) posted at eye level clearly denoting active trapping in the area. Must include Alaska Public Safety Information network (ASPIN) ID number or contact information for the trapper.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Current methods and means restrictions for trapping can be found in 5AAC92.080 and 5 AAC 92.095. There are no signage requirements in Unit 7.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would have no effect on the take of furbearers or trapping opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Trails across the Kenai have been established by many different user groups including Alaska Natives, homesteaders, miners, trappers, mushers, mineral exploration, snowmachiners, skiers, cyclists and other recreationalists. Use of established trails has changed over time as the population on the peninsula has increased and the public’s interests have changed (e.g. more snowmachiners and fewer dog mushers). Conflicts between user groups have increased as the human population and outdoor recreation have increased.

Many of the areas where conflicts arise have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

Most users groups have a base organization that encourages ethical and cooperative use of trails such as the Alaska Trappers Association, Snowmads, Cabin Hoppers, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club or the Homer Cycling club. Educational efforts do not always reach all users, and suggested guidelines are not followed by all users causing conflicts to arise.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal as there are no biological concerns, and issues related to traps being set out of season are enforcement issues. Marking tools used to take fish and game resources is not without precedent. For example, shellfish traps and pots must be marked with an angler’s first initial and last name, home address, and vessel registration number (AK number).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 149 – 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Establish trapping and snaring buffers along highway pullouts, backcountry access points, and winter trails in the Summit Lake Recreation Area in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Safe Trails Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish trap setbacks of 100-yards on both sides of roads and all sides of pullouts listed in Unit 7. Traps with an inside spread of 5 inches or less which are at least 4 feet above the ground or snow level, and size 3 leghold marten traps in boxes are allowed if more than 50-yards from the road or pullout.

Quartz Creek Road - Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the powerline crossing at approximately mile 2.5.

Quartz Creek Road - From powerline crossing to Crescent Creek Trailhead at mile 3.5.

East Quartz Creek and Williams Road - Entire East Quartz Creek Road from its intersection with Quartz Creek Road and Williams Road.

Old Sterling Highway (unmaintained portion of Quartz Creek Road) - Old Sterling Highway from the Crescent Creek Trailhead to Tern Lake Rest and Picnic area.

Snug Harbor Road - The first 2.8 miles of Snug Harbor Road from its intersection with the Sterling Highway to the entrance of the Chugach Electric Power Station.

Bean Creek Road - The entire distance from the Sterling Hwy to end.

Russian Gap Road – The entire distance from Sterling Hwy to end.

All vehicle pullouts along the Sterling Highway.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Alaska are listed in 5 AAC 92.550.

(9) Unit 7:

(A) all land within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses and the one wildlife overpass on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(B) those portions within 50 yards of the Quartz Creek, Crescent Creek, Russian River, North Cooper Creek, and South Cooper Creek campgrounds are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 50 yards of the trails if the traps are:

- (i) elevated three feet above hard ground;
- (ii) enclosed;
- (iii) under water; or
- (iv) under ice.

...

Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal may reduce user group conflict and is unlikely to impact furbearer harvest or significantly reduce opportunity.

BACKGROUND: Trails across the Kenai have been established by many different user groups including Alaska Natives, homesteaders, miners, trappers, mushers, mineral exploration, snowmachiners, skiers, cyclists and other recreationalists. Use of established trails has changed over time as the population on the peninsula has increased and the public's interests have changed (e.g. more snowmachiners and fewer dog mushers). Conflicts between user groups have increased as the human population and outdoor recreation have increased.

Many of the areas where conflicts arise have regulations under different authorities to restrain pets to minimize user conflicts and for safety. The department does not maintain a record of pets caught in traps and reporting is inconsistent. Some reports on the Kenai indicate that incidents occurred on or near multi-use trails or trailheads, along with some on private land.

Most user groups have a base organization that encourages ethical and cooperative use of trails such as the Alaska Trappers Association, Snowmads, Cabin Hoppers, Kachemak Nordic Ski Club or the Homer Cycling club. Educational efforts do not always reach all users, and suggested guidelines are not followed by all users causing conflicts to arise.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** regarding this proposal because it is allocative. The department is generally opposed to a reduction in opportunity where a harvestable surplus exists and instead encourages trappers to be cognizant of potential conflicts and to follow the trapper's Code of Ethics.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 150 – 5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions. Require identification tags on traps and snares in Unit 7.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap identification regulation for Unit 7.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS?

There is no state requirement for trap identification in Unit 7.

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Unit 7 is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Identification tags providing either the trappers name or Alaska Public Safety Information Network (ASPIN) ID would be required for all traps set in Unit 7. For nonresidents the department would be required to assign a personal Identification number (PIN) when a trapping license was issued.

BACKGROUND: Conflicts between trappers and other users have occurred on the Kenai Peninsula for many years. One of the common suggestions to alleviate conflicts and to identify the trap owner, is to require trappers to mark their gear with an identifier. The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge adopted Refuge specific regulations, requiring trappers to have identification on all traps and snares used.

In 2016 the board repealed trap identification regulations in Region I that read: Trappers are prohibited from using a trap or snare unless the trap or snare has been individually marked with a permanent metal tag upon which is stamped or permanently etched the trapper's name and address, or the trapper's permanent identification number, or is set within 50 yards of a sign that lists the trapper's name and address, or the trapper's permanent identification number; the trapper must use the trapper's Alaska driver's license number or state identification card number as the required permanent identification number; and if a trapper chooses to place a sign at a snaring site rather

than tagging individual snares, the sign must be at least 3 inches by 5 inches in size, be clearly visible, and have numbers and letters that are at least one-half inch high and one-eighth inch wide in a color that contrasts with the color of the sign.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** this proposal as there are no biological concerns, and issues related to traps being set out of season are enforcement issues. Marking tools used to take fish and game resources is not without precedent. For example, shellfish traps and pots must be marked with an angler's first initial and last name, home address, and vessel registration number (AK number).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 151 – 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Close all beaver trapping within the Deep Creek and Anchorage River drainage south to but excluding the Fox River drainage in Unit 15C for 5 years.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Close beaver trapping in the Anchor River and Deep Creek Drainages in Unit 15C for five years with a required review before re-opening.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

(E) all lands within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(F) those portions within 100 yards of the Diamond Creek, Grewing Glacier, and Grewingk Saddle trails are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 100 yards of the trails if the traps are:

- (i) elevated three feet above hard ground;
- (ii) enclosed;
- (iii) under water; or
- (iv) under ice

...

This portion of Unit 15C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for beaver in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Beaver trapping would be closed in the Anchor River and Deep Creek Drainages from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2031 and a review of beaver populations levels would be conducted before harvest was reopened.

BACKGROUND: Historically the Anchor River drainage has supported a significant harvest of beaver. In 1976, almost half (64 of 136) of the beaver taken in Unit 15 came from the Anchor River drainage system. The last documented harvest of beavers in this unit was 1 beaver in 2011. The most recent take prior to 2011 was in 2006 when 4 beavers were taken.

Beaver harvest across Unit 15C has declined significantly in recent years from an average of 22 beaver per year (2012-2016) to 4 in recent years (2020-2024).

The department does not conduct surveys for beaver on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beaver are a keystone species manipulating their environment for their own benefit. Beaver impound water and trap nutrients creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations, however, are also known to cause problems with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. New techniques available today make such actions less necessary. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds, particularly coho salmon, regulate water temperature, and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To deal with problems caused by beaver the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beaver as necessary, and beaver deception devices can be installed at culverts to prevent blockage. No nuisance beaver permits have been requested or issued for the Anchor River drainage in recent history.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal because it will eliminate beaver trapping and unnecessarily restrict harvest opportunity. As noted in the background section, active beavers were observed in drainages near the Anchor River and it is unknown why beavers have not recolonized the river system.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 152 – 5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping. Close all beaver trapping in the Anchor River drainage in Unit 15C for 5 years.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Soil and Water Conservation District

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Close beaver trapping in the Anchor River and Deep Creek Drainages in Unit 15C for five years. During this period the department may review beaver populations in the area.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

(E) all lands within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(F) those portions within 100 yards of the Diamond Creek, Grewing Glacier, and Grewing Saddle trails are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 100 yards of the trails if the traps are:

- (i) elevated three feet above hard ground;
- (ii) enclosed;
- (iii) under water; or
- (iv) under ice

...

This portion of Unit 15C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for beaver in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Beaver trapping would be closed in the Anchor River and Deep Creek Drainages from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2031. During this period the department may review beaver populations levels in the area.

BACKGROUND: Historically the Anchor River drainage has supported a significant harvest of beaver. In 1976, almost half (64 of 136) of the beaver taken in Unit 15 came from the Anchor River drainage system. The last documented harvest of beavers in this unit was 1 beaver in 2011. Prior to 2011 the most recent harvest occurred in 2006 when 4 beavers were taken.

Beaver harvest across Unit 15C has declined significantly in recent years from an average of 22 beaver per year (2012-2016) to 4 in recent years (2020-2024).

The department does not conduct surveys for beaver on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One

active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beaver are a keystone species manipulating their environment for their own benefit. Beavers impound water and trap nutrients creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations, however, are also known to cause problems with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. New techniques available today make such actions less necessary. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds (particularly coho salmon), regulate water temperature, and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To deal with problems caused by beavers, the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beaver as necessary and beaver deception devices can be installed at culverts to prevent blockage. No nuisance beaver permits have been requested or issued for the Anchor River drainage in recent history.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal due to the unnecessary reduction in opportunity. As noted in the background section, active beavers were observed in drainages near the Anchor River and it is unknown why beavers have not recolonized the river system.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 153 – 5 AAC 92.550 Areas closed to trapping. Close the Anchor River drainage in Unit 15C to beaver trapping.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Close beaver trapping in the Anchor River Drainage in Unit 15C for a minimum of three years.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current areas closed to trapping in Unit 15 can be found in 5 AAC 92.550

(4) Unit 15

(D) the Kenai Moose Research Center consists of that area within the outer boundary fences of the Kenai Moose Research Center, located west and south of Coyote and Vixen Lakes is closed to Trapping.

Area-specific state, federal, and municipal trapping restrictions occur throughout Alaska. The department does not maintain a catalogue of federal, municipal, or private land restrictions.

(E) all lands within one-fourth mile of the two wildlife underpasses on the Sterling Highway are closed to trapping;

(F) those portions within 100 yards of the Diamond Creek, Grewing Glacier, and Grewing Saddle trails are closed to trapping; however, trapping is allowed within 100 yards of the trails if the traps are:

- (i) elevated three feet above hard ground;
- (ii) enclosed;
- (iii) under water; or
- (iv) under ice

This portion of Unit 15C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for beaver in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Beaver trapping would be closed in the Anchor River Drainage from 2026 to 2029. During this period the department may review beaver populations in the area.

BACKGROUND: Historically the Anchor River drainage has supported a significant harvest of beaver. In 1976, almost half (64 of 136) of the beaver taken in Unit 15 came from the Anchor River drainage system. The last documented harvest of beavers in this unit was 1 beaver in 2011. Prior to 2001 the most recent harvest occurred in 2006 when 4 beavers were taken.

Beaver harvest across Unit 15C has declined significantly in recent years from an average of 22 beaver per year (2012-2016) to 4 in recent years (2020-2024).

The department does not conduct surveys for beaver on a regular basis on the Kenai Peninsula. In 2018, a beaver survey was flown covering the Anchor River and surrounding drainages. One active site was found within the Anchor River drainage. Surrounding drainages held multiple active sites.

Beaver are a keystone species manipulating their environment for their own benefit. Beavers impound water and trap nutrients creating riparian habitat beneficial to moose, migratory birds, juvenile salmon, and other wildlife species. Their manipulations, however, are also known to cause problems with anadromous fish passage, roadways, and private property. While dams can often be navigated by migratory fish at higher water or via overflow channels, the department has taken measures in the past to actively reduce beaver populations in streams associated with salmon migration. New techniques available today make such actions less necessary. Beaver dams generally improve habitat for rearing salmonids by storing water that can be used by juvenile salmon for overwintering ponds (particularly coho salmon), regulate water temperature, and assist in wetland formation and maintenance upstream of the structure. To deal with problems caused by beavers, the department issues permits for the take of nuisance beaver as necessary and beaver deception devices can be installed at culverts to prevent blockage. No nuisance beaver permits have been requested or issued for the Anchor River drainage in recent history.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **OPPOSED** to this proposal due to the unnecessary reduction in opportunity. As noted in the background section, active beavers were observed in drainages near the Anchor River and it is unknown why beavers have not recolonized the river system.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

Proposals 154-172

PROPOSAL 173 – 5 AAC 85.045 (5). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Shift season dates for DM211 to later in the year to avoid overlap with the bull moose hunt (DM210) in the same area.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would shift the season dates for DM211 from Aug. 20 – Oct 10, to Oct. 1 – Oct. 30.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current moose hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.040 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5AAC 85.040

Units and Bag Limits

(5)

...

Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage

**Resident
Open Season
(Subsistence and
General Hunts)**

**Nonresident
Open Season**

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with nonresident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued

Aug. 20 – Oct. 10
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in combination with resident hunts

Aug. 20 – Oct. 10

...

Unit 14(C) is located entirely within the Anchorage- Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for moose in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, shifting the season to later in the year could result in increased hunter success since the hunt will be happening during the course of the rut. It will be easier for hunters to spot moose as much of the vegetation will have died back or lost its leaves. This would also reduce the season from 52 days to 31 days. By October of most years, late fall cooling temperatures reduce glacial melt off which can lower water levels in the 20 Mile drainages and may limit accessibility for upper portions of the hunt area.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there are two drawing moose hunts in the 20-Mile/Portage/Placer drainages, DM210 (any bull) and DM211 (antlerless) with hunt areas in part of both Units 7 and 14C.

DM210 has season dates of Aug. 20 – Sept. 30 and DM211 has season dates of Aug. 20 – Oct. 10. The average 5-year percent success for permit holders in DM210 was 53% and 46% for DM211.

The moose population in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area has a history of rapid increase following mild winters, and sharp reductions during severe winters. The number of permits issued each year (Table 1) depends on the current population estimate, and bull:cow and calf:cow ratios.

Regulatory Year	# Bull Permits	# Antlerless Permits	# of Bulls Harvested	# of Cows Harvested
2020	30	30	14	10
2021	30	30	14	9
2022	40	35	17	12
2023	40	35	19	8
2024	40	35	16	18

Table 1. Moose harvest and permit numbers in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt areas in Units 7 and 14C for regulatory years 2020 – 2024.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. These hunts have been successful in creating additional moose hunting opportunities with little or no controversy. The department receives few complaints from hunters about overcrowding under the current structure.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 174 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep, 5 AAC 92.050 Required permit hunt conditions and procedures, and 5 AAC 92.057 Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts. Restrict resident sheep harvest and opportunity, and reduce nonresident sheep allocation.

PROPOSED BY: Jerry Herrod

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to prohibit residents from applying for any drawing permit for sheep in Units 7 and 14C for two years, if they were awarded a permit for sheep in Units 7 and 14C, change the resident bag limit in the general season sheep hunt in Unit 7 to one every two years, and reduce the nonresident sheep allocation to 5% in Units 7 and 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and the *2025-2026 Hunting Regulations*. Permit conditions and procedures can be found in 5 AAC 92.050, and the current Dall sheep allocation can be found in 5 AAC 92.057.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
... Unit 7, that portion south of the Sterling Highway, west of the Seward Highway, and north and east of Kenai Lake; up to 50 permits may be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only	Aug. 20—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only		Aug. 20—Sept. 20
Units 7 and 15(A), those portions east of Fuller Lake trail, south of Dike Creek, and a straight line from the sources of Dike Creek, east through the divide south of Trout Lake, to Juneau Creek, west of Juneau Creek, and north of Sterling Highway; up to 10 permits may be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, by drawing permit only	Aug. 20—Sept. 20 (General hunt only)	

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger; every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only
...

Aug. 20—Sept. 30

(7)

Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only

Sept.1 – Oct. 31
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years

Sept.1 – Oct. 31

Reminder of Unit 14(C)
RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or

Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
(General hunt only)

1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 – Oct. 10
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or
Larger, every 4 regulatory
Years, by drawing permit only;
up to 240 permits will be is-
sued total; or

Aug. 10 – Oct. 31

1 ram with full-curl horn or
Every 4 regulatory years, by
Drawing permit only; up to 120
Permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

...

5 AAC 92.050

...

(F) an individual who is a successful applicant for a specific drawing permit hunt is ineligible to apply for a permit for that specific hunt the following year;

...

5 AAC 92.057

...

(4) Unit 14(C): the department shall issue a maximum of five percent of the archery drawing permits to nonresidents and a maximum of 13 percent of the remaining drawing permits to nonresidents;

...

(6) the department shall issue a maximum of 20 percent of the drawing permits allocated to nonresidents in (2), (3), (4), and (5) of this subsection to nonresidents accompanied by a resident over 19 years of age who is the spouse or other relative of the applicant within the second degree of kindred, as described in AS 16.05.407(a).

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage- Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for moose in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted resident hunters that harvested a sheep in Units 7 or 14C under a drawing permit or general season harvest ticket would not be allowed to apply for or receive a sheep drawing permit or hunt general season sheep in Units 7 or 14C the following regulatory year. This proposal would have no impact on the non-resident sheep archery allocation for Unit 14C but would reduce the overall maximum number of non-weapons restricted tags that guided nonresidents could receive from 13% to 5%. Between Unit 7 and 14C the impact on overall harvest would be very minimal if this proposal is adopted.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there is no nonresident allocation for sheep in Unit 7. This would impact two drawing hunts, DS150 and DS156, and the remainder of Unit 7 under general season for sheep.

At the March 2009 Southcentral Region Board of Game meeting, the board passed Proposal 14 which allocated 5% of archery permits and 13% of remaining permits to nonresidents, and required the signed guide-client agreement at the time of application. At the March 2022 Statewide Board of Game meeting, the board passed Proposal 149 which allocated a maximum of 20% of the drawing permits to nonresidents accompanied by resident relatives within the second-degree of kindred.

In summary, in Unit 14C, nonresidents are limited to a maximum of 5% of permits for the archery sheep hunts and a maximum of 13% for the drawing permits in non-weapons restricted sheep hunts. Unit 14C also has an additional percentage breakdown for guided non-residents vs 2nd degree pf kindred guided nonresidents (2DK) across all sheep hunts. 2DK can receive a maximum of 20% of the available 5% of nonresident tags allowed based on the number of total available drawing archery permits.

For Unit 14C non-weapons restricted hunts, nonresidents are restricted to a maximum of 13% of the total available permits. Of that 13%, 2DK hunters may only have a maximum of 20% of those permits. Under the current structure, the department is limited to issuing a single 2DK drawing permit for all the non-weapons restricted hunts combined.

Only 1 hunter harvested multiple times from different sheep drawing hunts in Units 7 or 14C over the last four regulatory years (Table 1).

Regulatory Year	# of sheep harvested by residents	# of resident hunters that harvested the following year
2020	19	0
2021	14	1
2022	9	1
2023	8	0

Table 1. Number of Dall sheep harvested by residents and the number of hunters that harvested again the following year in Units 7 and/or 14C for RY20–23.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. The DS150 hunt area overlaps with Unit 15A but the proposal is only specific to Unit 7. The board would also need to consider how to address harvest tracking for the affected hunts if the proposal is adopted. Current harvest is tightly controlled in the drawing permit hunts, and low in the harvest ticket hunt area, and the proposed changes are not necessary from a management standpoint. Unit 14C permit allocation is extremely complex, and the board will need to consider if the increased level of complexity introduced by the proposal is desirable.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 175– 5 AAC 85.045 (5). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt in Units 7 and 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose season in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
<p>(5)</p> <p>...</p> <p>Unit 7, the Placer River drainages, and that portion of the Placer Creek (Bear Valley) drainage outside the Portage Glacier Closed Area, and that portion of Unit 14(C) within the Twentymile River drainage</p>		

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

<p>1 moose by drawing permit only; up to 60 permits for bulls will be issued in</p>	<p>Aug. 20—Oct. 10 (General hunt only)</p>
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combination with nonresident hunts, and up to 70 permits for antlerless moose will be issued

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 bull by drawing permit only;
up to 60 permits for bulls
will be issued in combination
with resident hunts

Aug. 20—Oct. 10

...

Units 7 and 14C are located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for moose in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Antlerless moose seasons must be reauthorized annually. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area at a population level low enough to reduce over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. The moose population will be healthier and more productive due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages.

BACKGROUND: The moose population in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer area has a history of rapid increase following mild winters, and sharp reductions during severe winters. The number of permits issued (Table 1) depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, while accounting for estimated winter mortality. A November 2024 aerial composition count of moose in the Twentymile, Portage, and Placer River drainages found 203 moose with a bull:cow ratio of 33 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 23 calves per 100 cows. This is the highest overall count in the Twentymile survey area since 2003. Permit numbers were increased in 2022 to reduce the number of moose in these valleys since they are susceptible to sharp declines during severe winters when the population is too high. Since 2016, harvest and roadkill numbers have also remained relatively steady.

Regulatory Year	Bull Permits	Antlerless Permits	Bulls Harvested	Cows Harvested
2021	30	30	14	9
2022	40	35	17	12
2023	40	35	19	8
2024	40	35	16	19*

Table 1. Moose harvest in the Twentymile/Portage/Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14C, RY21–24. *One cow taken as illegal harvest.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to maintain antlerless hunts in Units 7 and 14C. These hunts have been successful in creating additional moose hunting opportunities with little or no controversy. In addition, the harvest of

antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at a level to avoid excessive die-offs during harsh winters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 176 – 5 AAC 85.045 (12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Reauthorize the antlerless moose seasons in Unit 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations are:

<u>Units and Bag Limits</u>	<u>Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)</u>	<u>Nonresident Open Season</u>
(12)		
...		
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 muzzleloader 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
1 bull by registration permit only	Oct. 1 – Nov. 30 (General hunt only)	Oct. 1 – Nov. 30
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
1 bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on one side; or	Sept. 1 – Sept. 30 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – Sept. 30
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
1 bull by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 10 permits may be issued	Oct. 20 – Nov. 15	No open season
...		

Units 7 and 14C are located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for moose in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Adoption of this proposal is necessary for antlerless hunts in Unit 14C to continue. The harvest of antlerless moose provides the department with a management tool to maintain the number of moose in Unit 14C at a population level low enough to reduce conflicts with residents, over-browsing of winter habitat, moose-vehicle collisions, and starvation during severe winters. At this level, the moose population will be healthier due to decreased stress levels associated with winter food shortages.

BACKGROUND: A combined 2024 aerial composition count of the JBER Management Area and the Ship Creek drainage (the area that provides the most hunting opportunity in Unit 14C) found 233 moose. An observed bull:cow ratio of 44 bulls per 100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 14 calves per 100 cows was an increase from 2023. Overall numbers and calf:cow ratios are still slightly down from before the winter of 2022 where the persistent, deep snow likely resulted in additional winter mortality and an increase in the late winter energetic demands on pregnant cows. Harvest numbers continue to remain relatively steady, and at this population level we have received fewer reports of human-moose conflicts and moose-vehicle collisions.

Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually. The number of antlerless permits issued depends on the current population estimate and bull:cow ratios, as well as estimated winter mortality.

Regulatory Year	Either Sex Permits	Antlerless Permits	Cows Harvested
2021	50	26	24
2022	50	26	32
2023	50	26	32
2024**	28	25	9*

Table 1. Cow moose harvest in Unit 14C, RY21–24.

*One illegal harvest

** Permit numbers reduced due to winter mortality

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal to reauthorize antlerless hunts in Unit 14C. These hunts have been successful in providing additional moose hunting opportunities in the state’s largest human population center with little controversy while providing additional food security. In addition, the harvest of antlerless moose has helped achieve the department’s goal of maintaining moose numbers at a level that minimizes conflicts, moose-vehicle collisions, and winter die-offs, while still maintaining hunting opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 177 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Extend DS140 and DS240 sheep hunts in Unit 14C by 5 days.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to extend the season for DS140 and DS240 by 5 days, from Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 to Oct. 1 – Oct. 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
(7)		
...		

Reminder of Unit 14(C)
RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)
--	--

1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 (General hunt only)
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NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
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1 ram with full-curl horn or every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage- Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a season extension may provide for additional harvest opportunity, although that harvest is expected to be minimal.

BACKGROUND: The DS140/240 hunts are archery-only drawing hunts that occur in Unit 14C after the non-restricted weapons drawing sheep hunts, details of which can be found in Table 1. For these hunts, 57 permits have been issued for DS140 and 3 for DS240 annually for that last 10 years.

The 5-year average harvest is 3 rams for DS140 and 1 for DS240. Like any late season hunt, the weather plays a role in overall hunter success and varies from year to year. Hunt conditions were established with this in mind to maintain sustainable harvest levels since this is an “any ram” hunt with a very large hunt area.

DS140/DS240	
Season Dates:	October 1 – October 10
Bag Limit:	1 ram
DS140	Resident Only
DS240	Nonresident Only
Weapons restricted	Yes, bow and arrow only

Table 1. Hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for DS140/240 in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. The Unit 14C sheep population declined substantially in the early 2000s but has since been stable at a lower population level. Under the current hunt structure, the department has been able to provide continued opportunity with little to no reduction in permit numbers, indicating that what is currently in place appears to be striking a sustainable balance for the time being. If harvest increases to an unsustainable level, the department has the ability to decrease the number of permits issued in future years.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 178 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Split the DS141 sheep hunt in Unit 14C into an early and late season.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to split the current DS141 season into an early and late season.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
(7)		
Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued		
RESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only	Sept.1 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:		
1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years		Sept.1 – Oct. 31
...		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this would spread out hunters temporally, helping to reduce hunter overcrowding and conflicts with other user groups.

BACKGROUND: The DS141/241 hunts are archery-only drawing hunts that occur in the Eklutna Lake Management area outside of the Eklutna Lake Closed Area and the East Fork of Eklutna, the details of which can be found in Table 1. The department uses its discretionary authority to restrict the existing hunting seasons for DS141/241 to the month of September.

DS141/241	
Season Dates:	Sept. 1 – Sept. 30
Bag Limit:	1 ram
DS141	Resident Only
DS241	Non-resident Only
Weapons restricted	Yes, bow and arrow only
Hunt area	West Eklutna

Table 1. Hunt conditions, season dates, and bag limit for DS141/DS241 in Unit 14C.

Twenty-four permits are issued annually for resident hunters and 1 permit for nonresidents. Over the last five regulatory years the highest number of animals harvested in a single year was 2 sheep in DS141.

The department has received reports of hunter crowding in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage and this would provide a tool to distribute hunters more broadly during the season.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. The department can use its discretionary authority found in 5 AAC 92.052 to split the current hunt as requested and without regulatory change, however the request is allocative and the department is seeking guidance from the board. Direction will also be needed on the nonresident permit as only 1 permit is currently being issued for DS241.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 179 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Remove the East Fork of Eklutna from DS124-126 and DS224 hunt areas in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to remove the East Fork of Eklutna from DS124, DS125, DS126 and DS224 hunt areas in Unit 14C or add it to DS141/DS241.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

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

(7)

Unit 14(C), the Eklutna Lake Management Area

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only; up to 35 permits will be issued

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only	Sept.1 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)
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NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram by drawing permit only, by bow and arrow only, every 4 regulatory years	Sept.1 – Oct. 31
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Reminder of Unit 14(C)
RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or
Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
(General hunt only)

1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total
Oct. 1 – Oct. 10
(General hunt only)

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or
Aug. 10 – Oct. 31

1 ram with full-curl horn or every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total
Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, harvest would be minimal and would not impact the overall sheep population within the upper Eklutna River drainage, and moving the proposed hunts moved to the DS141/241 hunt area may mitigate some of the reported hunter crowding issues in DS141/DS241.

BACKGROUND: The number of sheep observed in the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage during minimum count sheep surveys (2020 – 2024) can be found in Table 1. Previously, the East Fork of Eklutna had its own sheep permit hunt. After persistent low survey counts, the hunt was closed to sheep harvest in 2011. In 2023, the board passed a proposal adding the East Fork of Eklutna to the DS124, DS125, DS126 and DS224 hunt areas rather than re-establishing the East Fok of Eklutna hunt. In addition to harvest from the DS124-126 and DS224 hunts, sheep may be harvested by bow and arrow only in this drainage under

DS140/DS240 drawing permits. Harvest taking place in the Eklutna River drainage from these hunts can be found in Tables 2 and 3.

Regulatory Year	Full Curl rams	Sublegal rams	Ewes	Lambs	Total sheep
2020*	-	-	-	-	-
2021	3	5	6	4	18
2022	1	11	27	3	42
2023	4	5	9	5	23
2024*	-	-	-	-	-

Table 1. Sheep observed in the East Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage within Unit 14C, RY20–24.

*Surveys not flown

Regulatory Year	DS124 Harvest	DS125 Harvest	DS126 Harvest	DS224 Harvest	DS024 Harvest
2020	1	0	0	1	-
2021	0	1	1	1	-
2022	0	1	1	1	-
2023	0	0	1	-	0
2024	0	0	0	1	-

Table 2. Sheep harvest in DS124/125/126/224 hunts within the Northeast portion of Unit 14C, RY20–24.

Regulatory Year	DS140/DS240 Harvest	DS141/DS241 Harvest
2020	1	0
2021	0	1
2022	0	2
2023	4	1
2024	3	0

Table 3. Sheep harvest within the Eklutna River drainage in DS140/DS240 (both East fork and West fork) and DS141/DS241 (West fork only) archery-only hunts in Unit 14C, RY20–24.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Reports of hunter crowding in the West Fork of the upper Eklutna River drainage have been received in previous years. If the East Fork of Eklutna was added to DS141/DS241 this would provide additional area for archery hunters to disperse.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 180 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep and 5 AAC 92.057 Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts.

Open DS123 in Unit 14C to residents and nonresidents, change the bag limit to any ram, expand the hunt area, and exempt the area from all Unit 14C residency allocations.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to expand the DS123 sheep hunt area, increase season length, modify the bag limit, and allow nonresidents to participate outside of the established nonresident allocation.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

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

Reminder of Unit 14(C)
RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)
--	--

1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 (General hunt only)
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NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
---	-------------------

1 ram with full-curl horn or every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Oct. 1 – Oct. 10

...

5 AAC 92.057

...

(4) Unit 14(C): the department shall issue a maximum of five percent of the archery drawing permits to nonresidents and a maximum of 13 percent of the remaining drawing permits to nonresidents;

...

(6) the department shall issue a maximum of 20 percent of the drawing permits allocated to nonresidents in (2), (3), (4), and (5) of this subsection to nonresidents accompanied by a resident over 19 years of age who is the spouse or other relative of the applicant within the second degree of kindred, as described in AS 16.05.407(a).

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would allow the possibility of three permits (the new DS123 and potentially up to two Chugach Sheep Governor’s permits) to hunt from Aug. 1 – Sept. 30 in all non-weapons restricted hunt areas in Unit 14C (ten days earlier than any other hunters) with a bag limit of one “any ram”. The change to an “any ram” bag limit will likely increase the harvest success rate to near 100%.

If the hunt area of DS123 is expanded, this would overlap with all other non-weapons restricted sheep hunt areas and hunters with differing bag limits. The hunt area would go from the smallest sheep hunt area in Unit 14C (42 sq. miles) to one of the largest (678 sq. miles). The proposal would also remove this permit from the allocation set in 5AAC 92.057; the new DS123 permit would not be considered as part of the total permits when calculating the nonresident permit allocation under 5 AAC 92.057. This would add several layers of regulatory complexity to this hunt, leading to the high possibility of unintended consequences and administrative challenges.

BACKGROUND: The area now known as DS123 was first created in 2006, with a smaller footprint than what is designated as the current DS123 hunt area. In 2013, the DS123 hunt was revisited again and expanded to include Ram Valley and Falls Creek, creating the current DS123 hunt boundaries. The current DS123 hunt area is the smallest sheep hunt currently in Unit 14C and due to that small area only one drawing resident permit is issued, and interest is high..

Currently, DS123 has season dates of Aug. 10 – Sept. 30, a bag limit of one ram with full-curl horns or larger and is not weapons restricted. Over the past six years, three sheep have been harvested under this drawing permit.

There are no hunts in Unit 14C for sheep with a start date before August 10. Currently the only hunts for sheep that start August 1 are youth hunts. As proposed, the permit holder would not be able to utilize aircraft to spot sheep because the hunt would occur within the time period that prohibits the use of aircraft for locating sheep.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal and **OPPOSED** to changing the bag limit to any ram due to conservation concerns, and the additional level of complexity that comes with adopting it. The Unit 14C sheep population declined substantially in the early 2000s but has since been tentatively stable at a lower population level. Under the current hunt structure, the department has been able to provide continued opportunity with little to no reduction in permit numbers, indicating that what is currently in place appears to be maintaining a sustainable balance. Allowing an additional ram to be taken out of the other hunt areas could result in a reduced number of permits in the other areas. Currently Unit 14C sheep nonresident drawing permit allocation are divided between 2nd degree of kindred (2DK) and guided nonresidents. Discussion is needed to determine what the nonresident eligibility (2DK vs guided nonresident vs both) would be for this permit, if adopted.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 181 – 5 AAC 92.050 Required permit hunt conditions and procedures; and 5 AAC 92.130 Restriction to bag limit. Allow 2nd degree of kindred (2DK) hunters to hunt on behalf of a resident drawing permit holder for sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to allow nonresident hunters within 2nd degree of kindred of the resident sheep drawing permit holder to hunt on the permit holders behalf.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current required permit hunt conditions can be found in 5 AAC 92.050 and the restriction to bag limits in 5AAC 92.130.

5 AAC 92.050- Required permit hunt conditions and procedures

Sets how permits are applied for and issued.

5 AAC 92.130- Restrictions to bag limit

States who the bag limit for a harvested animal belongs to.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for Dall sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, resident hunters who win a drawing permit for sheep in Unit 14C could allow a nonresident relative within 2DK to hunt and harvest a sheep on the resident’s drawing permit. The nonresident would have to purchase a nonresident hunting license and locking tag. A harvested sheep would count against the bag limit for both hunters. This would likely have little to no impact on the overall sheep harvest in Unit 14C since there would be no change to the overall number of permits issued.

BACKGROUND: Currently, for general season, youth hunters under the age of 10 make take game under on behalf of a licensed hunter at least 18 years of age, and they must be under the direct, immediate supervision of that hunter. When an animal is harvested, it counts toward the adult’s bag limit, and is recorded on the adult’s permit.

For big game permit hunts, hunters age 10–17 that have successfully completed basic hunter education may hunt on behalf of an adult permit holder, under the direct, immediate supervision of that adult. No additional permits are issued to the youth hunter in this case.

For youth specific hunts, the bag limit counts against both the youth and the accompanying adult, except for deer. No additional permit is issued to the adult.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal due to its allocative nature. Issuing an additional permit to a nonresident within the second degree of kindred could result in double reporting, or worse, could result in two sheep being harvested. The board has previously deliberated similar proposals and has stopped short of allowing adult permit holders to hunt on behalf of other adults, with very few exceptions such as transferring Tier II permits for active duty military members, and allowing some Tier II permits to harvest game on behalf of other household members.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 182 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Require nonresident sheep drawing permits to be issued in certain Unit 14C hunt areas.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel Montgomery

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to require that at least 1 guided nonresident drawing permits be issued for each of the Northeast, Northwest, Upper Eagle River, and Southwest hunt areas, unless there are less than 4 permits available.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.055 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.055

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

Reminder of Unit 14(C)
RESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31 (General hunt only)
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1 ram by bow and arrow only, by drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10 (General hunt only)
---	---

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 ram with full-curl horn or larger, every 4 regulatory years, by drawing permit only; up to 240 permits will be issued total; or	Aug. 10 – Oct. 31
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1 ram with full-curl horn or every 4 regulatory years, by	Oct. 1 – Oct. 10
---	------------------

drawing permit only; up to 120 permits will be issued total

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for sheep in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a guided nonresident permit would be issued in each sheep hunt areas every year, unless there are less than 4 permits available in each hunt area.

BACKGROUND: Prior to 2023, there was no differentiation in the Unit 14C sheep drawing hunts between guided nonresidents and 2nd degree of kindred (2DK) nonresidents; any nonresident drawing hunt was open to all nonresidents. At the 2023 Southcentral Board meeting, the Board adopted a proposal that split guided and 2DK nonresident hunters into separate allocations. The 2DK allocation would be based on a percentage of the already established allocation found in 5 AAC 92.057. As a result, nonresidents are restricted to a maximum of 13% of the total available permits. Of that 13%, 2DK hunters may have a maximum of 20% of those permits. For Unit 14C non-weapons restricted hunts, this translates into only one 2DK permit and six guided nonresident tags based on current permit numbers. To provide nonresidents the opportunity to hunt different portions of Unit 14C and keep permit numbers the same in each of these current hunt areas, the department moves the available nonresident permits annually between these areas (Table 1).

Area	2023			2024			2025			2026		
	# Res Tags	# NR-Guided	# 2DK	# Res Tags	# NR-Guided	# 2DK	# Res Tags	# NR-Guided	# 2DK	# Res Tags	# NR-Guided	# 2DK
Northeast Early	3		1	3	1		3			3		
Northeast Mid	3			3			3			3	1	
Northeast Late	3			3			3			3		
Northwest Early	6	1		6	1		6		1	6	1	
Northwest Mid	6	1		6	1		6	1		6	1	
Northwest Late	6	1		6	1		6	1		6	1	
Upper Eagle River Early	1			1			1			1		
Upper Eagle River Mid								1				1
Upper Eagle River Late	2			2			1			1		
Southwest Early	8	1		8		1	8	1		8	1	
Southwest Mid	8	1		8	1		8	1		8	1	
Southwest Late	8	1		8	1		8	1		8		

Table 1. Drawing sheep permit allocation for RY23–26 in Unit 14C. Early season dates: Aug. 10–22, Mid-season dates: Aug. 23 –Sept. 4, Late season dates: Sept. 5–17.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Current hunt areas and season dates were created using discretionary authority to spread harvest and hunters across Unit 14C. Without these, hunters would likely target only a few specific drainages. The board will need to determine how this should fit with the existing allocations in the area, or if this is being offered as a replacement for the existing regulations. The Unit 14C sheep population declined substantially in the early 2000s but has since been tentatively stable at a lower population level. Under the current hunt structure, the department has been able to provide continued opportunity with little to no reduction in permit numbers, indicating that what is currently in place appears to be striking a sustainable balance.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 183 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear. 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend all hunting seasons for black bear and brown bear in Unit 14C to June 15.

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Extend all black bear and brown bear seasons in Unit 14C to June 15.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 for black bear, 5 AAC 85.020 for brown bear, and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area	Sept. 1 – June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – June 15
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued		
Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area	Sept. 1 – May 31 (General hunt only)	
1 bear by drawing permit only, shotgun, muzzleloader, or bow and arrow only; weekdays only; up to 20 permits may be issued in the McHugh Creek area and up to 20 permits may be issued in the Upper Campbell Creek area		

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

No Closed Season
(General hunt only)

No Closed Season

1 bear

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits

**Resident
Open Season
(Subsistence and
General Hunts)**

**Nonresident
Open Season**

...

(13)

...

Unit 14(C), Chugach State
Park Management Area and
that portion of the Eagle River
drainage above the Icicle
Creek drainage

Sept. 1 – May 31
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1 – May 31

1 bear every regulatory year,
by drawing permit only; up to
15 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), that portion of the
Eklutna Lake Management
Area within Chugach State
Park

Sept. 1 – May 31
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1 – May 31

1 bear every regulatory year,
by drawing permit only; up to
15 permits may be issued

Unit 14(C), all drainages into
McHugh Creek, in that portion
of the Anchorage Management
Area

1 bear every regulatory year,
by drawing permit only;
by shotgun, muzzleloader,
or bow and arrow only; week
days only, up to 5 permits may
be issued

Oct. 1- Oct. 31
(General hunt only)

Oct. 1-Oct.31

Remainder of Unit 14(C)
1 bear every regulatory year

Sept. 1 – June 15

Sept. 1 – June 15

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black bear and brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted the black bear hunts RL450, DL457, Eklutna Lake Management Area, and the Chugach State Park (CSP) Management Area along with three brown bear hunts (DB468, DB470, and DB477) in Unit 14C would be extended to June 15. Several of these hunts are in areas of high non-consumptive use and this proposal would keep hunters in the field longer as the summer hiking season ramps up in Unit 14C. This is an increase in opportunity and will likely result in additional harvest. Extending the season in several of these hunts would likely require the department to use discretionary authority and shorten the season dates to receive special use permits from CSP to allow for the discharge of firearms, like other hunts held in the CSP Management Area.

BACKGROUND: Bear baiting is only allowed in Unit 14C remainder which currently has no closed season for black bear. The bag limit for black bear in Unit 14C is one bear under drawing permit, registration permit, or general season harvest ticket depending on the specific area. During RY24, 11 black bears were harvested between June 1 – 15 in parts of Unit 14C where the season was still open (DL455, Unit 14C remainder). The current 5-year harvest average is 74 black bears and 6 brown bears (Tables 1 and 2).

Unit wide, black bear harvest increased during the covid pandemic resulting in the high harvest numbers (Table 3). This was accompanied by a steady increase in % female harvest, reaching a peak in RY23 with a 55% female harvest. The following regulatory year showed a substantial drop in black bear harvest across the unit. The department does not have information on the number of black bears in the population; harvest and sealing data is the primary source of information for black bears in Unit 14C.

Very little population information exists for Unit 14C brown bears; however, given the size of the unit and forage availability it is likely that it does not hold the same density of brown bears as other parts of Alaska. While there are salmon runs, they are relatively small in comparison and

only a few watersheds allow for the passage of salmon far enough up the river to be accessible to brown bears.

Hunt	2020 Harvest		2021 Harvest		2022 Harvest		2023 Harvest		2024 Harvest	
	Male	Female								
RL450	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RL460	1	1	5	0	4	3	4	9	2	1
DL455	0	1	0	3	1	3	1	2	1	2
DL457	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
General Season	57	30	30	20	46	26	31	33	33	18
Total	58	32	35	23	52	32	36	44	36	21
% of Total	64%	36%	60%	40%	62%	38%	45%	55%	63%	37%
Grand Total	90		58		84		80		57	

Table 1. Black bear harvest by sex in Unit 14C by hunt for RY20–24.

Hunt	2020 Total Harvest	2021 Total Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Total Harvest	2024 Total Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	5 (20%)

Table 2. Brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt for RY20–24 with percent female harvest.

*One bear illegal harvest

June Harvest	2020 Harvest		2021 Harvest		2022 Harvest		2023 Harvest		2024 Harvest	
	Male	Female								
Black Bear	4	3	5	3	7	5	1	1	6	5
Brown Bear	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1

Table 3. Black bear and brown bear harvest by sex from June 1–15 in Unit 14C for RY20–24.

Many of the areas in which these hunts occur are drainages where special use permits are needed from CSP. An example of this is the McHugh Creek drainage, DL457. This hunt was adopted by the board in 2019 and was passed with season dates of Sept. 1 – May 31. However, for the special use permit to be issued for DL457, the department agreed to shorten the season to the current dates of Oct. 1 – 31. When the board created DB477, the proposal was adopted with October dates to match what CSP and the department had agreed upon for the special use permit issued for DL457.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Outside of general season hunts for both species, season dates, hunt areas, and permit conditions were written cooperatively with CSP for the hunts to be held. Specifically, these times frames and hunt areas were agreed upon to help reduce conflicts between user groups. Based on the current structure and lack of complaints, this approach has been successful.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 184 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear. Create a black bear drawing hunt within the Eagle River Management Area in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to create a new black bear drawing hunt with weapons restrictions (archery, muzzleloader, or shotgun only), resident only, in the Highland Mountain area within the Eagle River Management Area from Oct. 1 – 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14(C) can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

...

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence & General Hunts)	Nonresident open Season
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area		
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued	Sept. 1 – June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – June 15

Unit 14(C), that portion known as the Anchorage Management Area

Sept. 1 – May 31
(General hunt only)

1 bear by drawing permit only, shotgun, muzzleloader, or bow and arrow only; weekdays only; up to 20 permits may be issued in the McHugh Creek area and up to 20 permits may be issued in the Upper Campbell Creek area

Remainder of Unit 14(C)

No Closed Season
(General hunt only)

No Closed Season

1 bear

5 AAC 92.530

...

(2) the Eagle River Management Area:

(A) the area consists of the Eagle River drainage upstream from the Glenn Highway in Unit 14(C);

(B) the area is closed to hunting, except

(i) sheep hunting by permit;

(ii) black and brown bear hunting by permit; before hunting a bear, a person wishing to hunt must complete a hunter safety course for which a certification of completion is issued;

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this would open a new area for black bear hunting in the Eagle River drainage. This increase in opportunity would likely result in some additional harvest. Given the relatively small size of the area, it is likely only a small number of permits could be issued to prevent overcrowding and

minimize user conflicts. The addition of hunters into this drainage may result in some user conflict as trail improvement on the backside of the hunt area has allowed for greater access for all user groups.

BACKGROUND: There are two existing black bear hunts in the Eagle River Management Area, RL450 and RL460. Hunt conditions and season dates can be found in Table 1. Harvest in RL460 makes up all of the black bear hunting mortality for the Eagle River Management Area with an average harvest of 5 bears/year (Table 2).

Den entrance for black bears generally occurs in the first week of October in Unit 14C. The only other hunts with October season dates are in the McHugh drainage (DL457 and DB477): one black bear and no brown bears have been harvested in these hunts.

Hunt	RL450	RL460
Bag Limit	One bear	One bear
Season Date	Sept. 1 – May 31	Sept. 1 – June 15
Hunt Type	Registration	Registration
Weapons Restrictions?	Yes, muzzleloader, archery or crossbow	None
Hunt Area	Lower Eagle River, Harp Mountain Area	Upper Eagle River, upstream of Icicle Creek

Table 1. Hunt conditions for RL450 and RL460 in the Eagle River Management Area.

	RL450	RL460
Year	# of Harvested Bears	# of Harvested Bears
2020	0	2
2021	0	5
2022	0	7
2023	0	13
2024	0	2

Table 2. Harvested black bears in RL450 and RL460 for RY20–24.

The department does not have information on the number of black bears in the population; harvest and sealing data is the primary source of information for black bears in Unit 14C.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal because it creates an additional hunting opportunity and harvest would likely be small enough not to present a conservation concern, and can be limited through the number of permits issued, which may also alleviate any conflicts between resource users. All of the land in the Eagle River Management Area outside of private in-holdings is part of Chugach State Park. Park regulation 11 AAC 12.190 prohibits the discharge of weapons within the Eagle River drainage, and this hunt would require a special use permit for the discharge of weapons. Current regulations allow the department to create this hunt without a specific regulatory change, however the department is

seeking input from the board. If adopted, “up to” language for permit numbers should be considered.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 185 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear. Increase the number of drawing permits for the DL455 black bear hunt in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Colette Brandt, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER)

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to increase the number of available permits for DL455 from 25 to 50.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
Unit 14(C), JBER Management Area		
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; by shotgun only; up to 25 permits may be issued	Sept. 1 – June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – June 15

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would increase the maximum amount of available drawing permits for DL455 from 25 to 50, which could result in an increase in the number of bears harvested.

BACKGROUND: Since the hunt began in 2016, 25 permits have been issued for DL455 with a yearly average of 11 hunters participating (44% of permit holders) and an average of one bear harvested (Table 1). Over time, participation in hunts on JBER has been limited by areas closed for training during hunting seasons, expansion and development throughout JBER reducing huntable areas, and a required access fee

for hunters. There is no biological concern for increasing black bear hunting opportunities in this area and it is likely that any increase in harvest will be small due to other limitations in accessing the hunt area.

Regulatory Year	# Draw Permits	# of Males Harvested	# of Females Harvested
2020	25	0	1
2021	25	0	3
2022	25	1	3
2023	26	1	2
2024	25	1	2

Table 1. Black bears harvest in JBER Management Area and permit numbers from RY16–25.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Additional hunting opportunity exists and the department will retain the ability to reduce the number of permits offered if harvest increases to a level that is unsustainable.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 186 – 5 AAC 92.130. Restrictions to Bag Limit. Include wounded black bears toward the bag limit for DL455.

PROPOSED BY: Colette Brandt, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson (JBER)

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would count wounded and unrecovered black bear toward a hunter’s bag limit for DL455 on Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson Management Area in Unit 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current wounding regulations 14C can be found in 5 AAC 92.130 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 92.130

...

(f) In Units 1-5 and Unit 8, a black or brown bear wounded by a person counts against that person’s bag limit for the regulatory year in which the bear is taken. However, in Unit 1 – 5 and Unit 8, a brown bear wounded by a person does not count against that person’s one bear every four regulatory years bag limit established in 5 AAC 92.132.

(g) In Unit 8, an elk wounded by a person counts against that person’s bag limit for the regulatory year in which the elk is taken

(h) In this section, “wounded” means there is a sign of blood or other sign that the animals has been hit by a hunting projectile.

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a wounded black bear would count against a permittee’s bag limit in DL455 and a hunter would not be able to continue hunting in DL455. However, hunters could still participate in black bear hunts in areas with a multiple bear bag limit, including those adjacent to Unit 14C.

BACKGROUND: The DL455 hunt was passed in 2016 with a fall-only season. Shortly after, the season was extended to include both fall and spring dates through board action. Annual harvest remains low even with the extended season dates (Table 1). The reporting of wounded bears is not required for other hunts in Unit 14C and the department does not have a specific record of how often this happens. However, JBER requires reporting of wounding loss specifically for this hunt and has recorded at least 3 bears wounded and unrecovered by hunters since 2016.

Regulatory Year	# Males Harvested	# of Females Harvested	Total Harvest
2020	0	1	1
2021	0	3	3
2022	1	3	4
2023	1	2	3
2024	1	2	3

Table 1. Total harvest of black bear in DL455 in Unit 14C for RY20–24.

As mentioned by the proposer, a bear that is injured and then dies near the urban interface may create a public safety issue with the public or military personnel as an attractant for other animals.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Anecdotal reports of unrecovered bears throughout Unit 14C, including JBER, are received on an annual basis.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 187 – 5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear. Increase the bag limit for black bear to three, in Unit 14C Remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to increase the black bear bag limit from one bear to three bears in Unit 14C Remainder.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current black bear hunt regulations for Game Management Unit (GMU) 14C can be found in 5 AAC 85.015 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.015

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept. 1 – June 15 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – June 15
...		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, hunters would be allowed to harvest up to three bears every regulatory year in Unit 14C Remainder under general season harvest ticket regulations; the bag limit is currently one bear every regulatory year. This increase in opportunity could increase the overall harvest of black bears in Unit 14C.

BACKGROUND: Black bear hunting in Unit 14C Remainder is currently managed under a general season harvest ticket strategy. Beginning in RY20, harvest of both black and brown bears over bait was allowed (excluding the Glacier Creek drainage). Between RY20–24, 56 black bears have been harvested at bait sites.

Salvage of black bear meat is required in all areas of the state during Jan. 1 – May 31 and edible meat must be salvaged and removed from the field. In Unit 14C, the skull must be salvaged and removed from the field year-round for sealing, and during June 1 – Dec. 31, either the hide with claws attached (for sealing) or the meat must also be salvaged and removed from the field. If salvaging the meat, the hide and/or skull may not be transported from the field until the edible meat has been salvaged.

Harvest across the unit has fluctuated over the last several years with an increase during the COVID-19 pandemic. In RY23, female black bear harvest increased resulting in the one of the highest percentages of female harvest in the last decade (Table 1). The subsequent year, overall harvest dropped substantially and ADFG staff reported fewer incidental black bear sightings while conducting aerial surveys for other species.

Hunt	2020 Harvest		2021 Harvest		2022 Harvest		2023 Harvest		2024 Harvest	
	Male	Female								
RL450	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RL460	1	1	5	0	4	3	4	9	2	1
DL455	0	1	0	3	1	3	1	2	1	2
DL457	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
General Season	57	30	30	20	46	26	31	33	33	18
Total	58	32	35	23	52	32	36	44	36	21
% of Total	64%	36%	60%	40%	62%	38%	45%	55%	63%	37%
Total	90		58		84		80		57	

Table 1. Harvest of black bear by sex in Unit 14C Remainder for RY20–24.

The department does not have specific information on the number of black bears in the population; harvest and sealing data is the primary source of information for black bears in Unit 14C.

Areas adjacent to Unit 14C Remainder currently have a bag limit of three black bears every regulatory year; however, it is not common for an individual hunter to harvest three black bears in a year.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 188 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts. Limit the nonresident permit allocation for the Unit 14C brown bear drawing hunt DB468, to “up to” 20% of the available permits as follows:

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to limit nonresident permit allocation for drawing hunt DB468 to up to 20% of the available permits.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 92.061 states how a nonresident may apply for and obtain a drawing brown bear permit but does not set specific allocations in Unit 14C for brown bear.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a small number of nonresident permits may be available based on historical permit issuance for DB468 (20 or less); permit numbers are based on current population levels and are subject to change in the future. If the total number of permits available is insufficient to provide opportunity for at least one nonresident hunter, the hunt would not be offered. There would likely be no change in overall harvest and little to no impact on the brown bear population.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there is no nonresident allocation set for the drawing brown bear hunt DB468. DB468 is in Unit 14C and takes place in the Eklutna Management Area. This area is accessed by Eklutna Lake road. Season dates are Sept. 1 – May 31.

Reg. Year	Total # Apps.	# NR Apps.	% NR Apps.	NR-2DK Apps.	% NR-2DK Apps.	# NR Winners	% NR Winners	# NR-2DK Winners	% NR-2DK Winners	# Tags Awarded
2017	168	4	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	19
2018	266	3	1	3	1	1	5	1	5	20
2019	233	2	1	2	1	1	5	1	5	19
2020	269	3	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	20
2021	255	3	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	20
2022	237	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
2023	401	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
2024	453	6	1	2	0	1	5	1	5	20
2025	467	12	3	12	3	1	6	1	6	18

Table 1. Resident and nonresident permit application and allocation, DB468. NR = nonresident, NR-2DK = nonresidents applying under second degree kindred.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. In the last 9 years, nonresidents have submitted between 0 and 3% of the drawing applications for DB468, and have been awarded between 0 and 1 of the permits available.

If the board adopts this proposal, the hunts will be assigned individual hunt numbers for residents and nonresidents, which will result in nonresidents receiving 20% of the total permits available.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 189 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts. Limit the nonresident permit allocation for the Unit 14C brown bear drawing hunt DB470, to “up to” 20% of the available permits as follows:

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to limit nonresident permit allocation for drawing hunt DB470 to up to 20% of the available permits.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 92.061 states how a nonresident may apply for and obtain a drawing brown bear permit but does not set specific allocations in Unit 14C for brown bear.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, a small number of nonresident permits may be available based on historical permit issuance for DB470 (15 or less); permit numbers are based on current population levels and are subject to change. If the total number of permits available is insufficient to provide opportunity for at least one nonresident hunter, the hunt would not be offered. There would likely be no change in overall harvest and little to no impact on the brown bear population.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there is no nonresident allocation set for the drawing brown bear hunt DB470. DB470 is in Unit 14C and takes place in the Chugach State Park Management Area. Season dates are Sept. 1 – May 31. The number of eligible applications for DB470 can be found in Table 1.

Reg. Year	Total # Apps.	# NR Apps.	% NR Apps.	NR-2DK Apps.	% NR-2DK Apps.	# NR Winners	% NR Winners	# NR-2DK Winners	% NR-2DK Winners	# Tags Awarded
2017	1070	34	3	22	2	0	0	0	0	15
2018	1357	80	6	41	3	2	13	1	7	15
2019	1447	59	4	23	2	0	0	0	0	14
2020	1266	77	6	35	3	0	0	0	0	14
2021	1654	76	5	22	1	0	0	0	0	15
2022	1677	86	5	47	3	0	0	0	0	14
2023	1747	67	4	48	3	1	7	0	0	14
2024	2221	48	2	34	2	0	0	0	0	14
2025	2247	111	5	75	3	0	0	0	0	15

Table 1. Resident and nonresident permit application and allocation, DB470. NR = nonresident, NR-2DK = nonresidents applying under second degree kindred

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. In the last 9 years, nonresidents have submitted between 2 and 6% of the drawing applications for DB470, and have been between 0 and 13% of the permits available.

If the board adopts this proposal, the hunts will be assigned individual hunt numbers for residents and nonresidents, which will result in nonresidents receiving 20% of the total permits available.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 190 – 5 AAC 92.061. Special provisions for brown bear drawing permit hunts. Limit the nonresident permit allocation for the Unit 14C brown bear drawing hunt DB477, to “up to” 20% of the available permits as follows:

PROPOSED BY: Craig Van Arsdale

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to limit nonresident permit allocation for drawing hunt DB477 to up to 20% of the available permits.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? 5 AAC 92.061 states how a nonresident may apply for and obtain a drawing brown bear permit but does not set specific allocations in Unit 14C for brown bear.

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, no nonresident permits would be available based on historical permit issuance for DB477 (3 permits); permit numbers are based on current population levels and are subject to change. If the total number of permits available is insufficient to provide opportunity for at least one nonresident hunter, the hunt would not be offered. There would likely be no change in overall harvest and little to no impact on the brown bear population.

BACKGROUND: Currently, there is no nonresident allocation set for the drawing brown bear hunt DB477. This hunt takes place in the McHugh Creek drainage in Unit 14C. Season dates are Oct. 1 – Oct. 31. The number of eligible applications can be found in Table 1. DB477 was created at the 2023 Southcentral Board meeting and has only been held for the last two regulatory years (RY24–25).

Table 1. Resident and nonresident permit application and allocation, DB477. NR = nonresident, NR-2DK = nonresidents applying under second degree kindred

Reg. Year	Total # Apps.	# NR Apps.	% NR Apps.	NR-2DK Apps.	% NR-2DK Apps.	# NR Winners	% NR Winners	# NR-2DK Winners	% NR-2DK Winners	# Tags Awarded
2024	282	6	2	6	2	0	0	0	0	3
2025	279	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. Since the hunt was created, nonresidents have submitted between 0 and 6% of the applications, and have been awarded zero permits.

If the board adopts this proposal, the hunts will be assigned individual hunt numbers for residents and nonresidents, which will result in nonresidents receiving 20% of the total permits available.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 191 –5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Create an archery-only, drawing permit hunt for brown bear in Unit 14C

PROPOSED BY: Mike Harris

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to create an archery-only drawing permit brown bear hunt in the Chugach State Park Management Area from Sept. 1 – May 31, open to both residents and nonresidents.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 for brown bear and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
...		
(13)		
...		
Unit 14(C), Chugach State Park Management Area and that portion of the Eagle River drainage above the Icicle Creek drainage	Sept. 1 – May 31 (General hunt only)	Sept. 1 – May 31
1 bear every regulatory year, by drawing permit only; up to 15 permits may be issued		
...		

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this would create a new archery-only drawing brown bear hunt in the same area as DB470 with the same bag limit and season dates. This would add more hunters into the field and could result in hunter conflict but also conflict with other user groups. Harvest would likely be minimal given the difficulty of harvesting a brown bear with archery equipment. Additionally, layering two drawing hunts on top of each other would add regulatory complexity.

BACKGROUND: A drawing brown bear hunt, DB470, currently exists in the proposed hunt area within the Chugach State Park Management Area.

The area for DB470 is described as, “Those portions of Chugach State Park in the Peters Creek, Little Peters Creek, Thunderbird Creek, upper Ship Creek (upstream from JBER and excluding Tokle Creek drainage), Indian Creek, Bird Creek (excluding Bird Creek Regional Park), and upper Eagle River (above Icicle Creek drainages).” Chugach State Park prohibits discharge of weapons within 1/2 mile of the Seward Highway, and the discharge of firearms within 1/4 mile of developed facilities, and the discharge of bows within 300 yards of developed facilities.

DB470 is a non-weapons restricted hunt with season dates of Sept. 1 – May 31 and a 1 bear every year bag limit. Permittees may choose to hunt with archery equipment under the current regulations. The department has issued the maximum number of permits allowed under regulation (15 permits) for the last ten years. In addition to the DB470 permits, in many recent years an additional brown bear permit has been issued for this area through the Governor’s permit system (SB470) (Table 1).

Twenty permits are issued for D468, which takes place in the area adjacent to DB470 including those portions of Chugach State Park within the Eklutna Lake Management Area. DB468 is a weapons-restricted hunt, limited to archery only.

Very little population information exists for Unit 14C brown bears, however, given the size of the unit and forage availability it is likely that it does not hold the same density of brown bears as other parts of Alaska. While there are salmon runs, they are relatively small in comparison and only a few watersheds allow for the passage of salmon far enough up the river to be accessible to brown bears. Only three brown bears have been harvested with archery equipment in all of the Unit 14C hunts combined during the last 5 years.

Hunt	2020 Total Harvest	2021 Total Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Total Harvest	2024 Total Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	5 (20%)
Taken by bow and arrow	1	0	1	1	0

Table 1. Brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt type for RY20–24 with percent female in ().

*One illegal take

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. The current DB470 hunt is not weapons-restricted, and hunters may choose to use archery equipment. If the board intends to adopt the proposal it will need to decide what the bag limit should be and how many permits should be available in regulation.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 192 –5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Create an archery only brown bear registration hunt in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Trevor Embry

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to create a archery-only registration brown bear hunt in the Chugach State Park Management Area from Sept. 1 – May 31.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 for brown bear and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

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

...

Unit 14(C), Chugach State
Park Management Area and
that portion of the Eagle River
drainage above the Icicle
Creek drainage
1 bear every regulatory year,
by drawing permit only; up to
15 permits may be issued

Sept. 1 – May 31
(General hunt only)

Sept. 1 – May 31

...

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this would create an archery-only registration brown bear hunt in the same area as DB470 with the same bag limit and season dates. This would add more hunters into the field and could result in hunter conflict but also conflict with other user groups. Harvest would likely be minimal given the difficulty of harvesting a brown bear with archery equipment. Additionally, layering two drawing hunts on top of each other would add regulatory complexity.

BACKGROUND: A drawing brown bear hunt, DB470, currently exists in the proposed hunt area within the Chugach State Park Management Area.

The area for DB470 is described as, “Those portions of Chugach State Park in the Peters Creek, Little Peters Creek, Thunderbird Creek, upper Ship Creek (upstream from JBER and excluding Tokle Creek drainage), Indian Creek, Bird Creek (excluding Bird Creek Regional Park), and upper Eagle River (above Icicle Creek drainages).” Chugach State Park prohibits discharge of weapons within 1/2 mile of the Seward Highway, and the discharge of firearms within 1/4 mile of developed facilities, and the discharge of bows within 300 yards of developed facilities.

DB470 is a non-weapons restricted hunt with season dates of Sept. 1 – May 31 and a 1 bear every year bag limit. Permittees may choose to hunt with archery equipment under the current regulations. The department has issued the maximum number of permits allowed under regulation (15 permits) for the last ten years. In addition to the DB470 permits, in many recent years an additional brown bear permit has been issued for this area through the Governor’s permit system (SB470) (Table 1).

Twenty permits are issued for D468, which takes place in the area adjacent to DB470 including those portions of Chugach State Park within the Eklutna Lake Management Area. DB468 is a weapons-restricted hunt, limited to archery only.

Very little population information exists for Unit 14C brown bears, however, given the size of the unit and forage availability it is likely that it does not hold the same density of brown bears as other parts of Alaska. While there are salmon runs, they are relatively small in comparison and only a few watersheds allow for the passage of salmon far enough up the river to be accessible to brown bears. Only three brown bears have been harvested with archery equipment in all of the Unit 14C hunts combined during the last 5 years.

Hunt	2020 Total Harvest	2021 Total Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Total Harvest	2024 Total Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	5 (20%)
Taken by bow and arrow	1	0	1	1	0

Table 1. Brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt type for RY20–24 with percent female in ().

*One illegal take

.Given the small amount of population information available for Unit 14C brown bears, any quota for this proposed hunt would be very low while participation and success rates are established. Limiting the number of registration permits may also be considered.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal because it is allocative. The current DB470 hunt is not weapons-restricted, and hunters may choose to use archery equipment. An unlimited registration permit could lead to very short seasons and closures by emergency order if hunter success is high.

The Board should also consider if there are limitations to how the new registration permit would be issued, residents vs. non-residents, and where the permit would be issued (in person or online).

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

Proposal 193

PROPOSAL 194 – 5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear. Extend the brown bear season in Unit 14C remainder.

PROPOSED BY: Mike Harris

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to extend the brown bear season in the remainder of Unit 14C for brown bears from June 15 to June 30, adding 15 days.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current hunting seasons and bag limits can be found in 5 AAC 85.020 for brown bear and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 85.020

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(13)		
...		
Remainder of Unit 14(C) 1 bear every regulatory year	Sept. 1 – June 15	Sept. 1 – June 15

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for brown bear in this area.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted this would increase the current season by 15 days. This will increase opportunity and likely result in some additional brown bear harvest.

BACKGROUND: Very little population information exists for Unit 14C brown bears, however, given the size of the unit and forage availability it is likely that it does not hold the same density of brown bears as other parts of Alaska. While there are salmon runs, they are relatively small in comparison and only a few watersheds allow for the passage of salmon far enough up the river to be accessible to brown bears.

Unit 14C remainder brown bear, hunters are allowed 1 bear every regulatory year under general season regulations. In 2019, the remainder for Unit 14C was opened to baiting for both black and

brown bears with dates of April 15 – June 30. Harvest in the remainder is relatively low and stable over the last several years (Table 1). Over the last 5 years, the average brown bear harvest between June 1 – June 15 is less than one bear per year.

Hunt	2020 Total Harvest	2021 Total Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Total Harvest	2024 Total Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	5 (20%)
Taken by bow and arrow	1	0	1	1	0

Table 1. Brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt type for RY20–24 with percent female in ().

*One illegal take

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** this proposal because additional harvest is expected to be low, and additional opportunity is available. The potential for user conflicts in the area is high, as the proposed area includes Girdwood and all trails along the Seward Highway.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 195 –5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting black bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Allow same day airborne in Unit 14C remainder at bait stations.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to allow the take of black and brown bear at bait stations on the same day a hunter has flown as long as the hunter is 300 feet away from the aircraft.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations for the use of bait or scent lures can be found in 5 AAC 92.044 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 92.044

...

(13) in Units 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14(A), 14(B), 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26(B), and 26(C), a hunter who has been airborne may take or assist in taking a black bear at a bait station with the use of bait or scent lures if the hunter possesses a permit issued by the department if the

hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of taking; in Units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14(A), 14(B), 15, 16, 18, 19, 20(A), 20(B), 20(C), that portion of 20(D) north of the Tanana River, 20(E), 20(F), 21, 23, 24(B), 24(C), 24(D), and 25(D), a hunter who has been airborne may take or assist in taking a black bear at a bait station with the use of bait or scent lures if the hunter possesses a permit issued by the department if the hunter is at least 300 feet from the airplane at the time of taking;

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this would make it more efficient for hunters who fly into their bait stations to harvest both brown and black bears in Unit 14C remainder. If adopted, the proposal will likely provide for a small increase in overall black and brown bear harvest numbers.

BACKGROUND:

Beginning in 2019, the Remainder of Unit 14C was opened to baiting for both black and brown bears. In Unit 14C remainder, hunters are allowed 1 bear every regulatory year under general season regulations for both black and brown bears. Harvest in the remainder of Unit 14C is relatively low and stable over the last several years for brown bear which can be found in Table 1. However, the number of females in the harvest has increased over the last two regulatory years for brown bears.

Unit-wide black bear harvest increased during the covid pandemic resulting in the high harvest numbers seen in Table 2. This was accompanied by a steady increase in % female harvest, reaching a peak in RY2023 with a 55% female harvest. The following regulatory year showed a 50% drop in black bear harvest across the Unit.

The 5-year average for total harvest is 72 black bears and 6 brown bears in Unit 14C (Table 1 and Table 2).

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black and brown bear in this area.

Table 1. Total brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt for RY20–24 with percent female harvest in parentheses.

Hunt	2020 Total Harvest	2021 Total Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Total Harvest	2024 Total Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	5 (20%)

*Includes one illegal harvest.

Table 2. Total black bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt for RY20–24.

Hunt	2020 Harvest		2021 Harvest		2022 Harvest		2023 Harvest		2024 Harvest	
	Male	Female								
RL450	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RL460	1	1	5	0	4	3	4	9	1	1
DL455	0	1	0	3	1	3	1	2	1	2
DL457	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
General Season	57	30	30	20	46	26	31	33	32	12
Total	58	32	35	23	52	32	36	44	34	15
% of Total	64%	36%	60%	40%	62%	38%	45%	55%	64%	36%
Grand Total	90		58		84		80		49	

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this methods and means proposal. Black and brown bear populations are not heavily harvested, and additional opportunity likely exists. The remainder of Unit 14C is not easily accessible, and limited places exist to land aircraft.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 196 – 5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting black bear with the use of bait or scent lures. Restrict bear baiting around Knik River road.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal seeks to prohibit the baiting of bears within five miles of Knik River Road.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations for the use of bait or scent lures can be found in 5 AAC 92.044 and in the *2025-2026 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

5 AAC 92.044

(1) a person may establish a black bear bait station, or a black and brown bear bait station in Units 7, 11, 12, 13, 14(A),14(B), that portion of the remainder of 14(C), excluding Glacier Creek drainage outside of the Chugach State Park, 15, 16, 18, 19(A), 19(D), 20(A), 20(B), 20(C), that portion of 20(D) north of the Tanana River, 20(E), 20(F), 21(C), 21(D), 23, 24(C), 24(D), and 25(D), only if that person obtains a permit.

...

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If adopted, this would reduce hunter opportunity to take a bear over bait by limiting some of the road accessible areas where bear baiting is allowed. This closure may reduce some harvest but is expected to have little impact on overall harvest numbers.

BACKGROUND: In Unit 14C remainder for both brown and black bears, hunters are allowed 1 bear every regulatory year under general season. Additionally in 2019, the Unit 14C remainder area was opened to baiting for both black and brown bears. Harvest in the remainder is relatively low and stable over the last several years for brown bear (Table 1). However, the number of females in the harvest has increased over the last 2 regulatory years for brown bears.

Unit-wide black bear harvest increased during the covid pandemic resulting in the high harvest numbers seen in Table 2. This was accompanied by a steady increase in % female harvest, reaching a peak in RY2023 with a 55% female harvest. The following regulatory year showed a 50% drop in black bear harvest across the Unit. The department does not have information on the number of black bears in the population.

The 5-year average harvest is 72 black bears and 6 brown bears in all of Unit 14C (Table 1 and Table 2).

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for black or brown bear in this area.

Table 1. Total brown bear harvest in Unit 14C by hunt for RY20–24 with percent female harvest in ().

Hunt	2020 Harvest	2021 Harvest	2022 Total Harvest	2023 Harvest	2024 Harvest
DB468	1	0	1	1	0
DB470	1	0	5	3	1
SB470	0	0	0	1	0
General Season	3*	3	6*	4	4
Total	5 (20%)	3 (33%)	12 (33%)	9 (44%)	6 (60%)

*Illegal bear taken

Table 2. The total harvest of black bear in Unit 14C for RY20–24.

Hunt	2020 Harvest		2021 Harvest		2022 Harvest		2023 Harvest		2024 Harvest	
	Male	Female								
RL450	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RL460	1	1	5	0	4	3	4	9	2	1
DL455	0	1	0	3	1	3	1	2	1	2
DL457	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
General Season	57	30	30	20	46	26	31	33	33	18
Total	58	32	35	23	52	32	36	44	36	21
% of Total	64%	36%	60%	40%	62%	38%	45%	55%	63%	37%
Grand Total	90		58		84		80		57	

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this methods and means proposal. Few human/bear conflict reports are received each year from the Knik River Road area, but these have all been reported in conjunction with unsecured livestock, birdfeeders, or the improper handling of garbage.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 197 – 5 AAC 92.095 Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Require trap identification in Unit 14C.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal would establish a trap identification regulation for Unit 14C.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? There is no state requirement for trap identification in Unit 14C, except for that portion of Chugach State Park outside of the Eagle River, Anchorage, and Eklutna management areas where a person using traps or snares in the area must register with the Department of Natural Resources Chugach State Park area office, under 5AAC 92.550.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED?

Identification tags providing either the trapper’s name or personal identification number (PIN) would be required for all traps and snares set in Unit 14C, outside of the Chugach State Park Management Area.

BACKGROUND: Unit 14C supports a diverse set of user groups. Conflicts between trappers and other users have been reported previously. There are many consumptive and non-consumptive users utilizing the extensive trail systems throughout the Unit. One of the common suggestions to alleviate some of the conflicts is to require trappers to mark their gear with a unique identifier.

Requiring trap identification tags can be helpful in certain circumstances. Trap identification tags may increase compliance with trapping regulations and discourage setting traps in irresponsible locations. Common concerns expressed by the public about the requirement of trap identification tags include (1) tampering of legal sets, and theft of traps for use in illegal trapping activities, (2) harassment of trappers by people who disagree with trapping, and (3) potentially reduced trapping success as a result of animals detecting trap tags via smell or sight.

In 2016, the Board of Game removed trap identification regulations in Region I that read: “Trappers are prohibited from using a trap or snare unless the trap or snare has been individually marked with a permanent metal tag upon which is stamped or permanently etched the trapper’s name and address, or the trapper’s permanent identification number, or is set within 50 yards of a sign that lists the trapper’s name and address, or the trapper’s permanent identification number; the trapper must use the trapper’s Alaska driver’s license number or state identification card number as the required permanent identification number; and if a trapper chooses to place a sign at a snaring site rather than tagging individual snares, the sign must be at least 3 inches by 5 inches in size, be clearly visible, and have numbers and letters that are at least one-half inch high and one-eighth inch wide in a color that contrasts with the color of the sign.”

Unit 14C is located entirely within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence Area, therefore there are no customary and traditional use findings for furbearers in this area.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal as there is no biological concern, and issues related to traps being set out of season are enforcement issues.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in additional costs for the department.

PROPOSAL 249 – 5 AAC 92.015. Brown bear tag fee exemption. Reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions for the Central/Southwest Region IV.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal will reauthorize the brown bear tag fee exemptions in Units 9, 11, 13, 16, and 17.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The following regulations are currently in effect for Region IV brown bear hunts:

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 16A;

(3) Units 16B and 17;

...

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

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

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

(D) Unit 9E, 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 9B;

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

(3) Unit 17;

....

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in those portions of Units 17A and 17B that drain into the Nuyakuk and Tikchik lakes, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 5. There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bears in the remainder of Unit 17B, Unit 17C, Unit 19A, portions of Unit 19B, and Unit 19D with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–15 bears.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for brown bear in Unit 9B, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–20 bears, and a positive customary and traditional use finding in 9E, with an amount reasonably necessary for subsistence of 10–15 bears. The remainder of Unit 9 has a negative customary and traditional use finding.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Hunters will not be required to purchase a brown bear locking tag before hunting brown bears in Units 11, 13, 16, and 17. In addition, brown bear tag fees will not be required for subsistence hunts in Units 9 and 17 or for permit hunts near communities in Unit 9. If adopted, this proposal will simplify the opportunistic harvest of brown bears by Alaska residents.

BACKGROUND: 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 opportunity to take 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 board also exempted brown bear tag fees for bear hunts near communities in Unit 9 to

address public safety concerns in communities during the March 2011 Board of Game meeting. Brown bears are abundant in Unit 9 and are managed as a trophy species. Brown bears are frequently observed in communities destroying property in search of food or garbage and occasionally killing pets. The liberalized bear seasons and bag limits along with the elimination of the tag fee is 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 DLP bears.

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 for hunters who take brown bears primarily for their meat.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal because it provides greater sustainable harvest opportunity in Units 11, 13, 16, and 17; addresses public safety concerns in Unit 9; and supports subsistence harvest opportunity in portions of Units 9 and 17.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 252 – 5 AAC 85.045 Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B.

PROPOSED BY: ADF&G

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B; these hunts must be re-authorized annually by the Board to comply with statutory requirements.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Units 14A and 14B are within the Anchorage-Matsu-Kenai Nonsubsistence use area. The current moose hunting regulations for Units 14A&B can be found in 5 AAC 85.045 and in the *2024–2025 Alaska Hunting Regulations*.

- The department has the authority to issue up to 2,000 drawing permits to resident hunters in Unit 14A with a bag limit of one antlerless moose. The season is August 25–September 25 for DM400–DM410 and YM412, November 1–November 30 for DM413 and December 1–December 25 for DM414.

- The department may also issue up to 200 permits to resident hunters for the targeted hunt in Unit 14A with a bag limit of one moose during a winter season to be announced by emergency order.

The department may also issue up to 100 additional permits to resident hunters for a targeted hunt in Unit 14B with a bag limit of one moose during a winter season to be announced by emergency order.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B; these hunts are needed to keep the moose population within management objectives and provide additional hunting opportunity for residents. The targeted hunt also provides managers with a tool to reduce moose-vehicle collisions and address nuisance moose issues.

BACKGROUND: Moose surveys conducted in November of 2023 provided an estimate of 6,657 (± 810 ; 80% CI) moose in Unit 14A. This is less than the 2020 population estimate of 7,112 however it is greater than the population objective of 6,000–6,500 moose. Twinning surveys conducted in the spring of 2024 showed a twinning rate of 28%, the highest since 2017: this is indicative of a population that should be managed for stability. The twinning rate has been increasing since 2021 which suggests that the population productivity is increasing as the population is being brought closer to the population objective.

The number of antlerless permits issued was raised in spring of 2011 from 400 to 1,000. Due to the heavy snows that same winter, there were no antlerless permits issued in 2012. Subsequent surveys indicated that the moose population was not adversely affected by the winter of 2011 and was continuing to grow. The department manages moose adaptively and the number of permits issued was raised to the limit of 1,000 permits for the fall of 2017. In spring of 2018 the board increased the permit levels to 2,000 permits and 1,302 permits were issued for RY18 and 1,310 in RY19. As the population has been intentionally reduce to meet objectives, the number of antlerless permits issued has been reduced to accordingly; to 800 in RY21 and RY22, 367 in RY23, and then reduced again to 199 in RY24. The success rate for hunters under the antlerless permits has remained steady at about 49% over the past 3 years.

The targeted moose hunt in Units 14A&14B provides an additional tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collision and nuisance management issues. The targeted hunt (AM415) has been in place since 2012. Under this permit, hunters are either designated a specific nuisance moose to take or are assigned one of four areas where a high number of moose–vehicle collisions are known to occur. In this scenario permits are issued as snow increases and moose become more prevalent along roadways. The winter of 2014 was very mild with almost no snow. As a result, only 20 permits were issued that year. No permits were issued in the winters of 2017–2023. For the years that permits were issued, on average 143 permits were issued, and 110 moose were taken, providing an average success rate of 77%.

Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of approximately 300 moose per year were killed in the Mat-Su Valley area during the last 5 years of average snowfall and reliable reporting. The department also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure.

The Unit 14A moose population has exceeded population objectives for the past 12 years and has the potential for large increases in a relatively short amount of time. These increases in density may increase in the number of moose-human conflicts, and moose may experience nutritional stress, particularly during severe winters. We suspect that the number of antlerless moose harvested in recent years and the severity of the winter of last couple of years has arrested the growth of the herd and led to a population reduction. We anticipate continuing to offer a reduced number of antlerless permits for RY25 and future permit levels will be adjusted as we get more current population information.

Browse surveys completed in the spring of 2016 demonstrated a removal rate of 37.13% ($\pm 6.9\%$; 95% CI). This offtake indicated a relatively high proportion of commonly browsed plants in the unit are being consumed annually, suggesting the moose population in Unit 14A may have approached their carrying capacity. Browse surveys were conducted at the end of a winter which had little snowfall and browsing appeared to be more evenly distributed than in what would be found in a typical year.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Antlerless moose harvests are necessary to achieve and maintain the population within objectives, avoid overutilization of available browse, and reduce moose-human conflicts in the Mat-Su Valley. by providing significant additional moose hunting opportunity.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.

PROPOSAL 253 - 5 AAC 85.045(15). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose. Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 17A.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This proposal reauthorizes the antlerless moose seasons for Unit 17A.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The current regulations for the Unit 17A antlerless moose hunt allow resident hunters a bag limit of two moose per regulatory year under

registration permits, however only 1 moose can be taken during the fall season. Nonresidents are restricted to a bag limit of one bull moose with antler restrictions by drawing permit.

- There are three fall hunts, one of which allows the harvest of an antlerless moose:
 - Registration permit (RM573), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one bull moose, August 25–September 25;
 - Registration permit (RM571), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one antlerless moose, August 25–September 25;
 - Drawing permit (DM570 - up to 20 permits are available), for non-resident hunters only, with a bag limit of one bull moose with 50” antlers or antlers with 4 or more brow tines on at least one side, September 5–15.
- There are two winter hunts, open to resident hunters only, one of which allows for the harvest of antlerless moose.
 - Registration permit (RM575), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one antlered bull moose, January 1– Last day in February;
 - Registration permit (RM576), for resident hunters only with a bag limit of one antlerless moose, January 1– Last day in February.

There is a negative intensive management finding for moose in Unit 17A. The Unit 17 moose population does have a positive customary and traditional use (C&T) finding. The unit wide amount reasonably necessary for subsistence (ANS) is 100–150 moose.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This proposal would reauthorize the antlerless moose hunts in Unit 17A. These antlerless hunts would continue to provide hunters with additional harvest opportunity while helping managers by limiting the growth of the Unit 17A moose population that is already beyond the upper limit of the population objectives.

BACKGROUND: Moose are relative newcomers to much of Unit 17A, with only about 35 animals being present along the eastern border in 1980. Since then, moose have continued to increase in population size and expand throughout Unit 17A and west into Unit 18. Minimum counts of moose in Unit 17A were conducted in 14 different years during the period of 1991–2011, revealing a steady increase in moose numbers over time, with 1,166 moose counted in March 2011. During 2012–2015, surveys were not conducted due to inadequate snow conditions. Beginning in fall 2016, a Geospatial Population Estimator (GSPE) replaced the minimum count for enumerating moose in Unit 17A. In spring 2017, this survey technique produced an estimate corrected for sightability (1.2) of 2,370 moose, (± 563). The uncorrected estimate was 1,990 moose (± 437). In

2022 a snowless GSPE was completed with Togiak National Wildlife Refuge which supported the 2017 estimate at an estimated 1,971 moose.

Moose management in Unit 17A has been guided by the Unit 17A Moose Management Group, consisting of members from the Bristol Bay Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council, the Nushagak and Togiak Fish and Game advisory committees, the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This group produced a Unit 17A Moose Management Plan that went through several iterations during 1996–2013, with the 2013 plan being used as the guiding document today. This plan has goals and objectives for hunter opportunity, harvest allocation, habitat mapping and population monitoring. The population objective for Unit 17A listed in the plan is 800–1,200 moose.

A drawing hunt for nonresident hunters was adopted by the board in 2013, with fall 2014 being the first year of that hunt. The impetus behind the nonresident hunt was abundant harvest opportunity provided by this growing moose population, and objectives within the moose management plan that provide for the nonresident opportunity when the moose population exceeds 1,000 animals and is at a stable or increasing trend.

The winter antlerless hunt was adopted by the board and initiated in RY13 that allows for an antlerless harvest when the moose population is above 600 animals and is stable or increasing. During the last seven years of the RM576 antlerless hunt (RY17–RY23), 314 antlerless moose have been taken (241 cows and 73 bulls), for an average of ~35 cows/winter.

Because of the concerns with the increasing moose numbers in Unit 17A that are already well above population objectives, a proposal was adopted by the board during their spring 2018 meeting in Dillingham to open a fall antlerless hunt in 2018 to increase harvest on the female segment of the population. During the first year of this hunt, fall 2018, 8 antlerless moose were harvested, all were cows. From RY17–R23 a total of 30 cows have been harvested during the fall hunt, for an average of 5 cows/year.

During the RY22 BOG cycle, the board set season dates of January 1– Last day in February for both winter hunts to capitalize on variable winter conditions that exist along the southern coast.

From RY17–RY23 a total of 760 moose have been harvested, for an average of ~109 moose/year. The average fall harvest is 51 moose (46 resident harvest, 5 nonresident harvest) and winter harvest averages 58 (77% antlerless, 23% antlered)

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. The moose population in this unit is above the upper limit of the population objective. Allowing harvest of antlerless moose will help limit population growth while providing additional harvest opportunity for hunters.

COST ANALYSIS: Adoption of this proposal would not result in significant costs to the department.
