

13 March 2014

Honorable Chairmen Representative Feige and Representative P.Wilson

I see House Resources Committee is hearing HB202 today, and there will be no public testimony. I would like you to review what I have outlined about what the statute in context says.

1. ADF&G only has the ability to make and implement a bison plan "within" the 90,000 acres set aside by the Legislature (16.20.300 1979)
2. The bison working group can only help development a plan for management of the described 90,000 acres. (16.20.310 (a))
3. The current bill ask to remove language "**but is not limited to**". Why would you do that? This would limit the Department to only planting, altering, and tilling. The Department has drilled wells for irrigation and watering ponds for bison. If this was ability was taken away and they needed another well or more water, they would have to go back to the Legislature for a change in statute. Keep "but is not limited to" in the statute. (if this bill moves on)
4. "**with the activities of the Department of Natural Resources relating to the Big Delta agricultural development project**" (16.20.310 (c)). What are the actives of the DNR relating to agricultural development project? And how has the ADF&G worked with the DNR on this project?
5. Why increase sportsmen's fees for applications. What about timber sales? (16.20.315) why can't other users of the Delta Junction Bison Range Area (DJBRA) have a fee? Or the Big Delta Agricultural Development Project (16.20.310 (c)). If there is even a Big Delta Agriculture Project plan anymore?
6. Adding the language: **(4) mitigating bison damage to farm crops and farm and personal property.**
 - A. The department has no jurisdiction outside the DJBRA. AS 16.20.310 (a) Says: "in the area described in AS 16.20.300". There are no privet farms with in this area.
 - B. Mitigate personal property? Really? When people have a motor vehicle accident with a bison, will they be able to go to the Department for mitigation for damages to their personal property?
 - C. Personal property damaged such as my parked car, my traps, and snares that get damaged by bison could be mitigated?

Below are the pertaining Statues.

I don't know how the department will be able to help farmers within the context of this Statue? You should be able to ask some very good questions with this outline and not pass the bill on.

Your thoughts would be greatly appreciated if you have time.

Thanks again

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Sec. 16.20.310. Game management plan for bison.

(a) The commissioner shall develop and may amend a game management plan for bison **in the area described in AS 16.20.300** . After holding public hearings in accordance with AS 44.62.310 - 44.62.319 (Open Meetings Act), the commissioner shall implement the game management plan.

(b) The game management plan must include, **but is not limited to**

(1) planting grains for bison and planting other wildlife forage;

(2) altering existing plant cover to create additional range and year-round habitat for bison and other animal species in the area;

(3) tilling to produce forage.

(c) The commissioner shall develop and amend the game management plan to coordinate, as closely as possible, the game management plan **with the activities of the Department of Natural Resources relating to the Big Delta agricultural development project**

Sec. 16.20.315. Bison range timber sales.

The Department of Natural Resources, division of forestry, shall provide for the sale of timber in the Delta Junction bison range area in a manner that does not delay implementation of the game management plan required under AS 16.20.310 .

Sec. 16.20.320. Activities on bison range area.

Nothing in AS 16.20.300 - 16.20.320 shall be construed as prohibiting activities on land described in AS 16.20.300 that are otherwise permitted in accordance with the laws and regulations of this state, including, but not limited to, hunting, trapping, engaging in recreational activities, using the land for access to adjacent areas, and a 300-foot Alaska Railroad right-of-way.