



Sponsor Statement

HB 161

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) operates several programs where big game permits for auction or raffle are donated to nonprofit sporting groups to support state wildlife management. Three separate auction programs are authorized in statute: Delta Bison, Etolin Elk and Big Game and the rules governing which organizations are eligible to operate the raffle or auction, the species and number of permits that are available, and disbursement of the proceeds differ for each program. Currently, the statutory framework governing the two most important programs – Delta Bison and Big Game - are so dated - groups have become ambivalent about participating.

HB 161 proposes changes to better align the programs with the objectives of the department and the nonprofit partners. As well, the bill increases the financial incentive for the Big Game program so that the outdoor or conservation groups approved to operate the auctions are able to recoup administrative fees and retain 25% of the net profits.

Nurturing and improving these public/private partnerships is foundational to the department's resource conservation scheme. This resource management model is based on set of principals known as the North American Model of Wildlife Management, which among numerous tools is a user-pay system of licensing fees. Around these principles, resource managers, sportsmen and women support wildlife and habitat conservation. Using science as a management tool, the hunting community work with in partnership with state agencies to set limits in order to protect what they love, foster ethical and competent hunting skills training and assume responsibility for the stewardship of the natural resources..

From this history the department established the donation of big game permits to empower to hunting and fishing groups with some ownership of the cost of stewardship. HB 161 updates the programs to ensure that these public/private partnerships thrive into the future.

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