



Working hard to ensure our wildlife is managed sustainably with an emphasis on protecting and enhancing resident hunting opportunities!

www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

Resident Hunters of Alaska (RHAK) Presentation to the Senate Resources Committee

Wildlife Management & Resource Issues

**Needed Reforms to Benefit our Wildlife &
Sustain Resident Hunting Opportunities**

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Our State Constitution Mandates a Resident Hunting Priority

“The state of Alaska constitution is unique, in that it contains an article that exclusively addresses the management of natural resources within state lands and waters. Article VIII of the Alaska Constitution is the result of historic achievement in which the state of Alaska established the chief principle that **all resources should be managed under a public trust doctrine for the citizens of Alaska**. Under section two of Article VIII, the Alaska “legislature shall provide for the utilization, development, and conservation of all natural resources belonging to the state, including land and waters, **for the maximum benefit of the people.**”

- Reference: [History of Alaska's Fish and Game Board Process](#)



Alaska Board of Game (BOG)

7-member panel appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the legislature. Broad authority from legislature over all hunting seasons, bag limits, allocations among user groups. Regulates the number of hunters in the field. Directs ADFG how to manage our wildlife

ADF&G Division of Wildlife Conservation (DWC)

Research and Survey & Inventory of game populations. Advises BOG. Manages our wildlife according to BOG directives. Neutral on all allocation proposals. Conducts predator reduction programs authorized by the BOG.

Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB)

Licenses guides & regulates the number of guides in the field, also regulates transporters

Federal Subsistence Board (FSB)

Regulates hunting seasons and hunters on federal lands, ability to lock out non-federally qualified hunters on federal lands

• WHAT ARE THE ISSUES?

There is no statutory requirement that the Board of Game shall allocate our wildlife resources to prioritize resident hunting opportunities. So, we end up with:

- No clear resident hunting priority for Intensive Management game populations
- A moose draw permit that allocates 50 percent of the permits to nonresidents
- A caribou draw permit that allocates 25 percent of the permits to nonresidents.
- Unlimited nonresident Dall sheep hunting in some areas that leads to sheep conservation concerns, hunting restrictions and closures
- A coveted Kodiak brown bear draw hunt for residents with odds so low that one may never draw in their lifetime, but nonresident guided hunters are awarded up to 40 percent of all the permits and are guaranteed an opportunity to hunt





- **Central Arctic Caribou Herd (CAH) Crash 2016**
- **CAH is Intensive Management population important for providing food for Alaskans**
- **Population objective: 28,000 – 32,000 animals**
- **Herd declined to 22,000 animals in 2016, hunting restrictions necessary for all**
- **Board of Game restricted resident and nonresident hunting seasons and bag limits and the next 2 years nonresidents took majority of the harvest**

Kodiak brown bear draw permit system

Resident hunters: must apply for a draw permit, pay application fee, with a 1-3% chance of drawing most permits

Nonresident guided hunters: do not have to submit a draw permit application, or pay a fee, have 100% opportunity to hunt Kodiak brown bear

I made my fifth trip to Kodiak island this spring [OBJ][OBJ], first trip 2006 killing a 9 foot nice hided bear, 2nd trip in 2011 harvesting 9'6" bear. Then I had two trips looking for a bigger legit 10 foot bear I came home empty.... but had plenty of opportunity to fill my tag. Finally spring of 2021 the Lord blessed me and I found my bear! 10foot and a skull over 28". [OBJ][OBJ][OBJ] It has been quite a journey with lots of memories, big bear hunting gets in your blood. Thanks for reading my post.

How does a person draw Kodiak 5 times? It took me 10 years to draw it once? Man these outfitter concessions have got to come to an end this isn't right. I congratulate you, it's just doesn't sit well knowing I may never draw again unless I pay for an guide.



2024-2025 Alaska **Drawing** Permit Hunt Supplement

"Drawing hunts require an application fee and are awarded by lottery"



"EXCLUSIVE! NO DRAWING KODIAK BROWN BEAR HUNT – GIANTS OF KODIAK ISLAND, ALASKA. SKIP THE PERMIT DRAWING PROCESS AND HUNT THE WORLD’S LARGEST BROWN BEARS!"

*We have a few openings for the ultimate bear hunt – Kodiak Island brown bears – and if you book with this outfitter, **you can bypass the permit drawing process and start planning your trip now.**"*

Cassell v State of Alaska, Board of Game

brought by Dr. Robert Cassell from Wasilla

- **What the lawsuit is about:** Up to 40% of all Kodiak Brown Bear draw permits are allocated to guided out-of-state hunters. This type of exclusive allocation of permits to nonresident hunters is a special privilege not allowed according to Article 8 of our state constitution:

- *Section 3. Common Use*
- *Wherever occurring in their natural state, fish, wildlife, and waters are **reserved to the people for common use.***



Unlimited Nonresident Sheep Hunting on State Lands

If you had the only state in the country with thinhorn Dall sheep, what would happen if you:

- Allowed unlimited nonresident sheep hunting opportunity
- Required all nonresidents to hire a guide to hunt sheep
- Didn't place any limits on guides
- A guided sheep hunt costs upwards of \$25,000

Unit 19C Sheep Harvest (ADF&G data)

| Year | Nonresident | Resident | Total | %Nonresident |
|------|-------------|----------|-------|--------------|
| 2018 | 79 | 39 | 118 | 67% |
| 2019 | 75 | 39 | 114 | 66% |
| 2020 | 54 | 14 | 68 | 79% |
| 2021 | 34 | 6 | 40 | 85% |
| 2022 | 26 | 3 | 29 | 90% |

The problem is “too many guides!”



They claim the only solution is a Guide Concession Program on state lands to limit guides

The problem is not too many guides, it is too many nonresident hunters who are required to hire a guide being given unlimited hunting opportunity by the Board of Game!

DNR Alternatives to the Proposed Guide Concession Program (GCP)

“The first BOG [Board of Game] alternative to the GCP is for the board to further restrict non-resident hunting opportunity. This could be accomplished by expanding the drawing and/or registration permit systems for non-residents, while simultaneously reducing or eliminating non-resident general harvest seasons and bag limits. This alternative would help to address the issues of quality of experience and conflicts between users by decreasing the number of non-resident hunters in the field. It may also address wildlife conservation concerns in cases where overharvest is an issue.”

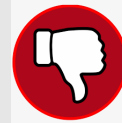
“The first BGCSB alternative to the GCP is for the board to reduce the number of GUAs [guide use areas] a guide could register for. Currently a guide in the state of Alaska can register in three GUAs per year (not including Predator Control Areas). Reducing the number of GUAs a guide can register for could reduce the number of guides in a GUA, which would address the issues of quality of experience and user conflicts.”

Inconsistent Wildlife Management Practices and Policies

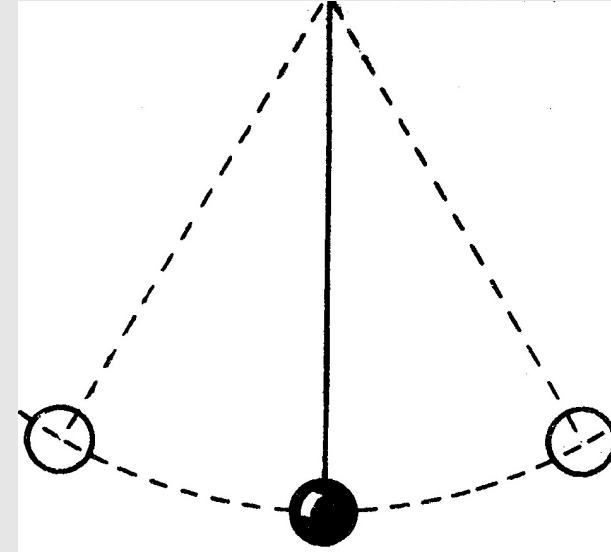
Depending on who is
Governor, who he or she
appoints as Commissioner
and to the Board of Game

Managing our Game on a Pendulum

Knowles



Pred-Control



Palin



Pred-Control



Board of Game Appointment Process and other Reforms (AS 16.05.221)

Members are appointed based on their “interest in public affairs, good judgment, knowledge, and ability in the field of action of the board, and with a view to providing diversity of interest and points of view in the membership.”

We are not adhering to the “diversity of interests” on the board

Amendment to AS 16.05.256

Nonresident and Nonresident Alien Permits

(SB 77 during the 31st legislature)

Whenever it is necessary to restrict the taking of big game so that the opportunity for state residents to take big game can be reasonably satisfied in accordance with sustained yield principles, the Board of Game **shall** [MAY], through a permit system, limit the taking of big game by nonresident and nonresident aliens to accomplish that purpose.

New Text Underlined [DELETED TEXT BRACKETED]



16.05.255 (d) Regulations of the Board of Game

Regulations adopted under (a) of this section must provide that, consistent with the provisions of AS 16.05.258, the taking of moose, deer, elk, and caribou by residents for personal or family consumption has preference over taking by nonresidents

What exactly is a “preference”? Is allowing nonresidents to take the majority of the Central Arctic Caribou herd harvest a resident preference? Is allocating 25% of a caribou draw permit to nonresidents a resident preference?

Intensive Management AS 16.05.255 (e) - (g) & (k)

(e) The Board of Game shall adopt regulations to provide for intensive management programs to restore the abundance or productivity of identified big game prey populations as necessary to achieve human consumptive use goals of the board in an area where the board has determined that (1) consumptive use of the big game prey population is a preferred use

Are these human consumptive use goals to benefit Alaskans? Why do we allow nonresident hunting of IM game populations that are under the population and/or harvest objectives?



Amending Intensive Management Definitions

AS 16.05.255(k) defines various aspects of Intensive Management Law. It is often argued that IM Law does not specifically mention a benefit to Alaskan residents.

Possible amendments:

AS 16.05.255(k)(2): *“high level of human harvest” means the allocation of a sufficient portion of the harvestable surplus of a game population **to Alaska residents** to achieve a high probability of success for human harvest of the game population and considering hunter demand;*

AS 16.05.255(k)(3): *“identified big game prey population” means a population of ungulates that is identified by the Board of Game and that is important for providing high levels of harvest **for Alaska residents** for human consumptive use;*

AS 16.05.255(k)(4): *“intensive management” means ...to enhance, extend, and develop the population to maintain high levels or provide for higher levels of human harvest **for Alaska residents**....*



Amending Intensive Management language to add Sheep

- 16.05.255(a)(13)(d): Regulations adopted under (a) of this section must provide that, consistent with the provisions of AS 16.05.258, the taking of moose, deer, elk, [AND] caribou **and sheep** by residents for personal or family consumption has preference over taking by nonresidents.

Drawing Permit Hunts

- There is nothing in statute that directs the allocation of drawing permit hunts for moose and caribou
- Many drawing permit hunts are open to both residents and nonresidents equally
- Hunt bookers who work with guides can flood the application pool to where nonresidents win a high volume of permits



2024-2025 Alaska Drawing Permit Hunt Supplement

ATTENTION ALL HUNTERS!

Application period begins November 1 and ends December 15, 2023 at 5 p.m.

will be announced by the third Friday of February.

is supplement take place in 2024, unless designated as 2025.

place in two calendar years, permit winners will need to purchase a locking- and hunting license for each calendar year they plan to hunt. Hunters who in the fall 2024 season must purchase a new locking-tag (if applicable) and continue hunting their permit in the spring 2025 season.

must be authorized by advisory committees in order to be held. not be refunded if the antlerless moose hunts are not authorized.

mitted are final and application fees will not be refunded.

Section BEFORE Applying

ave applied for an Alaska big game hunting license prior to applying (17 years of age and younger). However, if you are a nonresident for goose **only**, you may alternatively obtain or have applied for an hunting license prior to applying.

10 years of age or older by the starting date of the hunt to obtain

ed a unique hunt number. Use only hunt numbers listed in this

mit up to six applications (individual or party) per species, regardless ate orders are placed. Applicants may apply for the same hunt more le hunts, as long as they do not exceed six applications per species; if applications for that species will be rejected. Exceptions listed below:

Controlled Use Area (KCUA):

ded nonresident moose hunters may not submit more than one application for a KCUA moose hunt.

h hunters that were issued any KCUA moose Drawing permit last year are eligible to receive a Drawing permit for any KCUA moose hunt this year. cants for 21E moose draw hunts may only apply for DM837 OR DM839, not both. However, they may apply up to 6 times for either hunt.

K Brown Bear:

nonresidents hunting with a registered guide may not submit more than one application for one Kodiak brown bear hunt for the spring of 2024, and may not submit more than one application for one hunt for the fall of 2024.

esidents who will become residents by the starting date of the hunt may apply for dent hunts; however, they must purchase a nonresident big game hunting license order to apply for those hunts.

The number of permits actually issued may be adjusted up or down depending on the outcome of the most recent population surveys. Many of these surveys are not completed until after the publication of this supplement. The number of

Apply Online by 5 p.m. (AKST) December 15!

For application information visit <http://hunt.alaska.gov> or contact your local ADF&G office.

If you need an alternative to applying online, contact your local ADF&G office by **5 p.m. (AKST) November 21** and we will provide accommodation.

Apply early! Due to the high volume of traffic on the website during the last few days, those who attempt to apply at that time can expect delays.

Guide Information

Guide Requirements for Nonresidents

- Nonresidents who are citizens of the United States are required to be personally accompanied in the field by an Alaska-licensed guide OR an Alaska resident relative 19 years of age or older within the second-degree of kindred* when hunting brown grizzly bear, Dall sheep, or mountain goat.
- Nonresidents who are not citizens of the United States (nonresident aliens) are required to be personally accompanied in the field by an Alaska-licensed guide when hunting any big game species.
- Those intending to hunt with an Alaska-licensed guide should make certain there is an available guide registered to guide in the area they plan to hunt. Having successfully obtained a permit does not guarantee the availability of a guide.
- All hunters, guided and unguided, are responsible for their own actions and should be knowledgeable of all requirements under the Alaska Hunting Regulations.

Guide-Client Contracts required for nonresident hunts

All nonresidents hunting big game species that require an Alaska-licensed guide must have a signed guide-client contract before or at the time of application. These hunts are identified with the "handshake" symbol shown here.

To get started, select an Alaska-licensed registered or master guide who is currently registered for all or a portion of the Guide Use Area (GUA) where you wish to hunt and for the year the permit is valid. You can find this information by contacting:

Big Game Commercial Services Board:
PO Box 110806
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806
Phone (907) 465-2543
Email: biggamecommercialservicesboard@alaska.gov
Website: <https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbp/main>

Once you decide on a guide, finalize the guide-client contract. This guide-client contract should allow the guide to submit your draw application and provide hunting services.

Thank You Senate Resources Committee!



- We want to share our state with nonresident hunters, but there needs to be limits
- We have nothing against guides, but the commercial hunting industry can't be allowed to continue to dominate decisions
- Nonresident hunter dollars are important, but we can't base allocation decisions on who brings in the most money.