

Alaska State Legislature

Senator Cathy Giessel
Senate Majority Leader
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120 4th Street
Alaska State Capitol,
Room 121
Juneau, AK 99801

Senate Resources Committee

Sectional Analysis SB 97

"An Act establishing a big game guide concession area permit program on land in the state; relating to the duties of the Big Game Commercial Services Board, the Board of Game, the Department of Fish and Game, and the Department of Natural Resources; requiring the Board of Game to establish an initial big game guide concession area; and providing for an effective date"

Section 1: Amends the duties of the Big Game Commercial Services Board (BGCSB) in AS 08.54.600(a) to authorize their role in the establishment of big game guide concession areas.

Section 2: Creates new section AS 16.05.263 empowering the Board of Game (BOG) to oversee the process of determining which game management units or subunits will adopt a big game guide concession area permit program.

Requires a proposal be first submitted to the BOG nominating a game management unit or subunit for the guide concession program. After a public comment period, the BOG in consultation with the BGCSB, Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Department of Fish and Game (DF&G), may approve that proposal. Their approval process must take into consideration that establishing the area supports the conservation and management of the state's land and big game resources, aides the enforcement of big game hunting laws, and is in the public interest. If the BOG approves an application, they will determine the number of full and limited concession area permits that will be granted in a given big game guide concession area.

Further, section 2 prohibits the combination of more than three existing guide use areas into a single big game guide concession area and includes definition references.

Section 3: Creates new section AS 38.05.021 empowering the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to administer the implementation of the big game guide concession area permit program on land approved by the BOG.

Outlines that the overarching goals of the guide concession program are to encourage long-term minded conservation, enhance customer experience, reduce user conflicts, and ensure responsible, professional, economically guiding industry.

Establishes the features of the guide concession program permits:

1. All permits are awarded an open, public, and competitive process.
2. A guide may not hold more than three concession permits at a time.
3. Permits are valid for 10 years.
4. Permits may not be extended or renewed without the same open, public, and competitive process.
5. Permits may be transferred to another individual based on conditions set in regulation that are consistent with the overarching goals of the guide concession program.
6. If the terms of statute or regulation are violated, permit may be suspended or revoked after the permit holder has been given written notice and opportunity to be heard.

Section 3 further empowers the DNR, in consultation with the BOG, DF&G, and BGCSB, to adopt the necessary regulations including the qualifications for full and limited concession permits, process for issuing

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the permits, and the collection of fees; grants DNR or their designee the authority to enforce the terms of this program; allows DNR to keep confidential any proprietary, commercial, and financial information provided by concession permit applicants; and includes definitions.

Section 4: Repeals AS 08.54.600(a)(9); AS 16.05.262; and AS 38.05.022.

Repeals sections of the Big Game Guide Concession area permit program that are reimplemented by this bill.

Section 5: Repeals Sections 46 and 48, ch. 15, SLA 2024, are repealed.

Repeals sections of the Big Game Guide Concession area permit program that are reimplemented by this bill.

Section 6: Uncodified Law: In order to establish the first big game guide concession area and permit program, the BOG will select one game management unit or subunit that would most benefit from the implementation of the guide concession program.

Section 7, Uncodified Law: Transitional language allowing the guide concession program to extend to new game management units and subunits after the first one has been implemented for at least three (3) years.

Section 8: Sets a retroactive date of July 23, 2024

Section 9: Sets an immediate effective date.