



unapologetically **FOR ALASKAN RESIDENTS**

PO Box 60095, Fairbanks, Alaska 99706 (907) 371-7436
email info@residenthuntersofalaska.org web www.residenthuntersofalaska.org

Resident Hunters of Alaska is seeking a legislative solution that requires the Board of Game to always allocate **our** wildlife with a resident priority. One solution lies in possible changes to AS 16.05.256.

AS 16.05.256

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]

Pros: one-word change makes it relatively simple, hard to argue against because statute is ambiguous in terms of how one defines "reasonably satisfied"

Cons: one-word change doesn't really lead to the changes we need, statute still ambiguous

Rationale: One prime example is the Central Arctic caribou Herd (CAH)

The CAH is an identified big game prey population under our Intensive Management law, in which human consumptive use [by Alaskans] is a preferred use. In 2016, due to a sharp decline in the CAH, the Board of Game placed restrictions on both resident and nonresident hunters in Units 26A and 26B off the haul road, via shorter seasons and lower bag limits. Now, nonresident CAH hunters take the majority of the CAH harvest.

AS 16.05.255 (f) states: "The Board of Game may not significantly reduce the taking of an identified big game prey population by adopting regulations relating to restrictions on harvest or access to the population, or to management of the population by customary adjustments in seasons, bag limits, open and closed areas, methods and means, or by other customary means authorized under (a) of this section, **unless the board has adopted**

regulations, or has scheduled for adoption at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board regulations, that provide for intensive management to increase the take of the population for human harvest consistent with (e) of this section. This subsection does not apply if the board

- (1) *Determines that intensive management would be*
 - (a) *Ineffective, based on scientific information*
 - (b) *Inappropriate due to land ownership patterns; or*
 - (c) *Against the best interests of subsistence uses; or*
- (2) *Declares that a biological emergency exists and takes immediate action to protect or maintain the big game prey population in conjunction with the scheduling for adoption of those regulations that are necessary to implement (e) of this section.*

Nonresident harvests of any identified big game prey species under IM law should never exceed 10% of the total harvest, let alone over 50% of the harvest as is currently happening with the Central Arctic caribou Herd under Board of Game regulations.

Whenever resident and nonresident hunting is allowed for any big game species, if any restrictions are necessary due to biological concerns, nonresidents and nonresident aliens should bear the brunt of those restrictions via draw hunts with limited allocations or elimination of nonresident hunting until the big game population has recovered.

This is the intent of our legislation. But we fear that even changing "may" to "shall" does not go far enough to require the Alaska Board of Game to allocate our wildlife with a clear resident preference as mandated in Article 8 sections 1-4 of our state constitution.