

Trever M. Fulton

From: M C <mccrary907@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 1, 2019 5:03 PM
To: Sen. Chris Birch; Sen. John Coghill
Cc: Sen. Lora Reinbold; Sen. Click Bishop; Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Jesse Kiehl; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Trever M. Fulton
Subject: SB87 Support Comments

Dear Chairman Birch, Vice Chair Coghill and Members of Senate Resources Committee,

Since statehood Alaska's population has increased while Alaska sold and continues to sell on an annual basis; literally, unlimited numbers of hunting licenses to non residents as if there is no end in sight to the opportunity.

Since at least the early 70's Regulators and Game Managers continue finding themselves in the position of necessarily carving out micro management areas within any one of the 26 game management units; for various reasons, and end up shortening a season and/or reducing a bag limit in an attempt to maintain healthy game populations.

We will likely always have areas of concern for one reason or another where shortening a season, reducing a bag limit and/or carving out smaller areas to manage will be part of a solution to maintaining healthy game populations. But make no mistake, the frequency of these events is certainly aggravated by the nature of the unlimited sale of opportunity across the 26 Game Management to non residents.

Please understand that what generally happens now is when the BOG shortens a season and/or a bag limit is reduced and/or a new hunt is carved out of BOG essentially continues the practice of allowing unlimited non resident participation in that hunt and residents; unfortunately, share the change burden.

Therefore, any action by BOG to shorten a season and/or lower a bag limit and/or a new hunt area is carved out related to preservation of threatened healthy game population it should be recognized that any one of these actions is an "SB87 trigger" requiring the BOG to limit non resident participation...in that hunt through a draw.

Unfortunately due to the long standing practice of selling on a Statewide basis across the 26 GMU's unlimited opportunity to non residents remains a concern.

When the BOG does finally get around to limiting non resident participation in a hunt non residents just shift their efforts around the State to an area that has not yet come up against a draw-type limit. We don't have fewer non residents hunting...we just have non residents hunting some other area.

So, overtime seasons and bag limits have been reduced or even closed to hunting all across the 26 Game Management Units and Sub units. And, because it is much easier and more practical for non residents to do, they just pick another unit to hunt somewhere in Alaska where they have no limits and are not required to draw for an opportunity. Of course residents follow this pattern too when they are forced to but it generally is much more of a burden/cost to residents to go somewhere else in the state to hunt.

If Alaska population continues to grow and unlimited opportunity across the State for non residents to "cherry pick" does not change eventually every Game Management Unit and Sub unit will have been pressurized to the point of season and/or bag limit reductions across the board. There just won't be much; if any, 'over the counter' opportunity even for residents. That might be hard to believe but go over to the Library and check out a regulation book from 1960. Compare that to 1970 to 1980 and right up into 2018. You will see much more clearly what direction things are headed if

nothing about the nature of selling unlimited opportunities to non residents and the BOG's non resident allocation policy does not change in ways that actually put resident hunters first and on solid footing.

So at least passing SB87 will require the BOG to limit by draw non resident participation in a hunt going forward any time a season is shortened and/or a bag limit reduced. And that is a step in the right direction.

But again please be aware...as long as Alaska continues to sell unlimited opportunity Statewide to non residents we will be repeating the cycle of shortening seasons and/or reducing bag limits putting an area on a draw to non residents while the remaining non residents head off to an area not yet under a draw.

In conclusion, the current revised BOG non resident allocation policy demonstrates there is likely no will at the BOG level to look back at 1960 and likely no will at the BOG level to look forward to 2050 and put residents on solid footing with respect to allocation.

So, there are probably a few more steps along the way the Legislature is going to have to take to maintain reasonable opportunity for residents first across this State and into the future but SB87 is the right next step.

Thank you.

mike mccrary