

Mat Valley Fish & Game Advisory Committee
December 7, 2016
MTA Palmer

- I. **Call to Order:** Herman Griese/Acting Chair: 7:03 PM
- II. **Roll Call:**
Members Present: Steve Bartelli, Tom DeLand, Herman Griese, Mel Grove, Herb Mansavage, Bob Marshall, Terry Nininger, Hans Nordstrom, Darren Spano, Randy Talvi, Birch Yuknis

Members Absent: Andy Couch, (excused), Jehnifer Ehmann, (excused), Chad Lipse, (excused), Chris Watchus, (excused), David Young, (excused), Mike Buirge, (excused)

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 11 members present/quorum met

Department Staff/Guests: Tim Peltier, ADFG Palmer area biologist, Rick Merizon, ADFG small game biologist, Chris Brockman, ADFG wildlife biologist, Neil DeWitt, Mary Lockman, Frontiersman

- III. **Approval of Agenda:** Birch moves to adopt agenda as amended, seconded by Steve: no objections-agenda approved
- IV. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** motion to approve by Birch, seconded by Steve: no objections-minutes approved.
- V. **Persons to be heard:** Herman asked Department staff to comment on proposals 146, 147, 151, 152, (antlerless moose hunts) and 153, (brown bear tag exemption renewal). Tim Peltier, on Unit 14, the Department supports this hunt. Herman asks: have there been any surveys done? Tim-unfortunately no. With the lack of survey data the department has to look at population modeling. (Tim then distributes 4 spreadsheets: % of browse offtake vs. % twinning, Unit 14 twinning surveys, Unit 14A moose population projections, and moose road kill in the Mat-Su Valley-Cumulative Summary). Tim indicates that they believe the Unit 14 population is still growing at 1-3%/yr. The last couple of years there has been a heavy roadkill; last year well over 150 animals. The department will start placing moose collars (60) to go on in February-they are good for a couple of years: the distribution will be 45 cows/15 bulls. Herman asks when the last survey was done? Tim: 2014. Tim talked about the relationship between browsing and twinning rate. They will continue to see twinning go down as the browse utilization rate goes up. Mel: how can you determine the twinning rate without a survey? Tim: we fly the route along the Kink River during calving. Tim continues: regarding 14C, Dave Battle, (not present), looked at the 20 Mile area-there was the same amount of animals as his survey in 2013; the population there has been pretty consistent. Dept. supports antlerless hunts in Units 7 & 14C. In Unit 13, the department supports proposal #119.

Department staff conducted Unit 13 surveys recently but the results are currently unavailable

Alaska Board of Game Interior Region Meeting

Feb. 17-25, 2017, Fairbanks

Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal
64	Hunting season and bag limits for Dall sheep: required permit hunt conditions and procedures		
No action	Birch Yuknis brings the proposal to the floor/seconded by Steve Bartelli Hans Nordstrom: The ADFG has a hard-enough time permitting what is legal, so Hans is opposed. Birch: this is almost identical to proposal #15, which we took no action. Chris Brockman, ADFG: he doesn't know what the Department position is on this proposal; Mel Grove: what is the current trend in punishment for this type of violation? Tim Peltier: if there is an illegal kill then it is turned over to the troopers. AC agrees to take no action		
65	Remove the nonresident bag limit restriction of one sheep every four years for the Interior/Northeast Arctic Region		
Oppose	1	9-1	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Tim: The Dept. has no position-this is an allocation issue. Herb- is this pertaining to just this region? Tim-yes. Steve: any biological concern? Tim: very few people come up to hunt in this area so it won't have a major impact. Steve opposes -he believes the Dept. should take their Pitman-Robinson money. Herman doesn't see it as necessary to begin with but should be a statewide proposal. Birch-they are addressing the next of kin issue. Mel abstains-he would like to see the data before he has a position.
66	Open an archery-only hunting season for Dall sheep in the Interior/Northeast Arctic Region		
Oppose	1	10-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch-he is generally opposed. Tim: this is an allocation issue so no Dept. position. Herb-this could decrease the harvest-it takes away from hunts of the general seasons. Herman: guides could use it to set up camps earlier.

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Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal
69	Lengthen the archery-only hunting seasons for moose in Unit 20 and open an archery-only hunting season for moose in all of Unit 20		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Herman-this puts hunters in the field in the middle of the rut. Birch doesn't feel it is needed unless there is a specific date. Steve-if you want to use a bow you have to use it with everyone else. Birch is opposed. Steve is opposed. Bob-it is frustrating, when stalking while bow hunting and then a gun goes off. Darren; it's a personal choice on how you harvest an animal-all this must be factored in before you step out into the woods. Archery hunting doesn't take the same level of difficulty as it used to: Darren is opposed.
70	Open a resident disabled veteran hunting season for moose in the Interior/ Northeast Arctic region		
Oppose	0	8-3	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch: this is opening up any animal hunt for this group when they could still hunt in the general hunt. Hans-he feels there is not enough (next page) specifics to this proposal-Herman agrees. Herman: there is also another similar hunt currently. Darren: as a Vet he would oppose: this seems to be out of place-typically vet benefits are focused on tax benefits and employment opportunity provisions. Hunting has always been an elective activity. He thinks there are still questions to be asked-he supports vets but this is outside what is needed. Bob is also a Vet-but he feels it is outside the spirit of intent. Bob opposes. Birch concurs with Darren and Bob. Darren will abstain.
71	Allow the use of crossbows in archery hunts in Unit 20 for hunters over 60		

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Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Herman-there are hunts in Unit 20 that are archery only. Steve will oppose-we have opposed these types of proposals the last 2 years and he wants to stay consistent. Birch-concurs with Steve.
72	Allow the harvest of wolf and coyote by land and shoot with a trapping license in the Interior/Northeast Arctic Region		
Support t	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch: isn't it already legal to do coyote? Tim: yes. Steve-is there a conservation concern in any of those GMU's? Tim: not that he is aware of. Steve will support. Darren: why only a trapping license? Chris-it has to do with bag limits. Darren-is it safe to assume that Dept. doesn't want folks landing and shooting in the general season? He supports. Herb: thought a trapping license was to help getting a larger bag limit than just a hunting license. Mel supports.
78	Lengthen the hunting season for brown bear in Unit 19C		
Support as amende d	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Hans: he hunts in this area 19C-it is the only one that opens up in August. He supports for consistency. Birch supports-more opportunity and consistency. Steve proposes to amend to include 19B as well. Seconded by Birch. Darren: without having any data on the population needed for management, lengthen the season will push the bear hunting season into the salmon season. Could this have a direct conflict with the bear population? Could people sit by the stream and pick them off? Chris-Unit 19 has the typical interior grizzly population: there are people who take advantage of this but we have not been able to detect a large decline of the bear population. Chris does not feel it will have much of an impact. Amendment passes 11-0-0
82	Change the nonresident sheep season in Unit 19C to a drawing permit hunt with up to 80 permits		

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Support	7	4-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve (see next page) Steve-this removes the resident harvest potential. Hans-doesn't appear it would actually do anything. Birch: the author is worried about other areas going non-resident. The author just wants to cap this hunt. Steve-we have just voted on other sheep proposals on the 90-10 rule. Darren-the author is trying to halt non-residents taking over 80 sheep. This will keep non-resident hunters where it is currently.
86	Close an area ¼ mile on either side of the Taylor Highway to hunting during caribou season, and limit the number of permits		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Herman-a ¼ mile buffer is very difficult to enforce. Steve is opposed. He says everything they identify in here is already against the law. Birch concurs with Steve-it is an enforcement issue.
90	Expand the Copper Basin community subsistence harvest hunt area by adding a part of Unit 12		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Hans-is opposed to the community hunt so he is opposed. Steve concurs.
91	Modify the hunting season and bag limits for grouse in Unit 12		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Rick: We have been able to document an increase of grouse. Unit 12 is pretty remote. Most of the harvest occurs right in Tok. Rick says there is no current distinction between grouse species in the regs for Unit 12. Rick also notes that the total population are nearing or at the peak this year. We don't have a conservation concern. Herb: what is your formal position? Chris: we are still working that out. Darren: the proposal contains no data to support it. Current regs are unlikely to lead to slaughter of too many grouse: he will oppose.
97	Remove the nonresident guide requirement for moose hunts in the Interior/ Northeast Arctic Region, and change the permit allocation in Unit 21B		

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Support	10	0-1	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch-he will support. Steve concurs. Darren abstains: says there is not enough data to support the proposal.
100	Institute no-fly zones for caribou hunting in Units 21D, 22, 23, 24, & 26A		
Oppose	0	10-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Neil DeWitt, (author): as with proposal #4, he did not consider bear or moose when this proposal was written, so he expects the proposal to fail. Birch: asks if local people think aircraft are part of the problem? Neil notes that he wrote this after the northern arctic caribou meeting, and was voicing the concerns of the local community. Hans doesn't want to support this, although he did vote on this before in other proposal.
101	Create a regulation allowing the harvest of moose under a permit for "celebration of life" events		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Steve-is opposed. Tim-the dept is neutral.
106	Open a resident archery season for brown bear in Unit 26B		
Support	10	1-0	Herman: the last time he was up there 2 years ago he saw more brown bears along the highway than moose. Steve is opposed. If they have an abundance of brown bears maybe they need intensive management. Birch is inclined to support it. Hans: On the Dalton Highway corridor there aren't any guns in the area- he would consider. Mel supports. Steve changes his mind; he will support it, but would amend the proposal to include muzzle loaders, cross bows and shotguns. Herb believes the intent is to protect the pipeline. Darren: the intent of the proposal is merely to extend the season. Proposing an amendment to have other gear is a separate issue. Amendment fails 4-7-0
112	Allow same-day airborne hunting for wolf in Unit 25D		

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Support t	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Hans supports this proposal because of our previous vote. Randy: looking at authors, (Yukon Flats Fish & Game AC), a local group, he will support. Darren wonders about consistency? Birch: this is more of predator management tool.
113	Modify the resident bag limit for Dall sheep in Units 24B, 25A, 26B, and 26C		
Support t	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch: he likes the proposal-he would rather take rams vs. ewe's. Steve would like to amend for 1 sheep. Chris: We're talking about the winter season that restricts access. The only way to hunt is if you live in the area or take a snow machine. Birch has done this hunt a couple times; it's not easy to access. Herb would support. Steve will not amend the proposal.
124	Require proof of qualifying status prior to awarding disabled veterans' drawing permits in Unit 20D within the Delta Junction Management Area, and implement other changes		
No action			Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch will oppose. Darren: if there is a permit then it's a no brainer to require proof of qualification. Hans move to take no action on the proposal. There is no objection so the AC takes no action.
141	Close a portion of Unit 20C to the taking of wolf		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Birch: is there a conservation concern? Tim: in general, wolves are not a conservation concern.
142	Close a portion of Unit 20 near Denali National Park to the taking of wolf		
Oppose	0	11-0	Birch to the floor/seconded by Steve Steve: this is similar to the previous proposal, # 141. You have to admire this group though for their tenacity and optimism.

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Support, Support as Amende d, Oppose, No Action	Numbe r Suppor t	Numb er Oppos e	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal
146	Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting season in the Twenty mile/ Portage/ Placer hunt area in Units 7 and 14C		
Support	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/second by Steve. Herman stated that moose surveys were sometime difficult to interpret here if the snow is heavy, moose get under conifer canopy. Supports the hunt. Tim: The Dept. supports this proposal.
147	Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 13		
Oppose	5	5-1	Birch to the floor/second by Steve. Tim: The Dept. approves of this proposal. Steve opposes: Steve always opposes winter hunts in this GMU. The moose can't afford to move in deep snow-the area is also getting hammered; also, there is a lack of data at this meeting. Herman: was the intent to reduce moose along the Glenn Hwy.? Herman will support it as a tool-not reducing a large portion of the population. Tim: 10 permits to be issued. Steve: these animals are not used to people-when then hear snow machines they get up and run. Herb abstains: he doesn't feel like he has enough info on either side of the issue.
151	Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Units 14A and 14B		
Support	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/second by Steve. Herman: it's hard to make a comment without recent data. Survey conditions are difficult-wind effects aircraft. Birch: how are targeted permits issued? Tim: anyone can come in and signup. They will call people on the list as needed. Tim figures on turning it on in January. Mel-is this reauthorization as a management tool? I trust Fish & Game to make the right decision. Tim: 5 people are selected a week. Last year started late; 145 permits were issued- hunters took 105 moose. Typically, success rate is 70%.
152	Reauthorize the antlerless moose hunting seasons in Unit 14C		

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Support t	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/second by Steve. Herman-this is a high density human area as well as a high density animal area. Herman will support.
153	Reauthorize resident brown bear tag fee exemptions in the Central/Southwest Region		
Support t	11	0-0	Birch to the floor/second by Steve. Randy: this also means you don't need to have a tag in the field. Randy will support the proposal. Chris: The Dept. is not going to do any predator control in Unit 16 next year nor any wolf control. Steve: in light of tag fee increases that are coming up, no tag in this unit is to increase the harvest? Chris: it was to encourage folks to go out to take bears-it was done to create more interest in these areas. Steve will support the proposal.

Discussion of letter to Board of Game regarding the upcoming Glennallen meeting: All members indicated that they had read the final draft. Herman asks who should sign the letter? Birch said Jehn signed the last one so she should probably sign this one. No objection from AC members. Birch makes a motion to adopt the letter, seconded by Steve. No objection from AC members so the motion passes.

Herman notes that the Anchorage AC game working group is meeting at the Pro Bass Shop on 12/13/16. Herman suggests that Valley AC members might want to attend to see how the Anchorage AC approaches things we have acted on.

Member Comments: Mel states that the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council is meeting this week in Anchorage. One item that will be discussed is the possible quota buy-back on sports caught charter halibut. There is discussion for a 2 day weekly closure for halibut charters for this year-up from 1 day last year. Mel indicates that this is just killing the operators in Valdez. The NPMFC will be taking public testimony on Friday morning.

Next Mat Valley AC meeting is scheduled for 12/21/16.

Adjournment: 9:20 PM

Minutes Recorded By: Terry Nininger

Minutes Approved By: _____

Date: _____