



Nick Jacobson of Gakona, board member; Brenda Johnson of Nome, chairman; and Sarah Scanlon of Anchorage, vice chairman, listen to a staff report.

Photo by Norris Klesman

Game Board action:

Aircraft allowed for hunting

by A.J. McClanahan

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Alaska Board of Game members decided last week to continue to allow private aircraft to land at public airports in Alaska for hunting purposes in controlled use areas.

In past years, the board had limited landings in controlled use areas to non-hunting aircraft — only regularly

scheduled planes.

The issue, one of three key decisions made by the board, arose over a request that aircraft used to transport hunters not be allowed to land at some airports.

Sarah Scanlan, vice chairman of the board, said members decided against the request because approval could have affected federal funding of airports in Alaska.

But she said she is confident the decision will not hurt rural Alaskans.

"This won't affect hunting that much because if they want to hunt in a controlled use area they have to go to an airport," she said. "That in itself limits it. If they land on a spit or in a floatplane, they are illegally hunting."

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Areas affected include Kenai, Huslia, Nicolie, Hughes, Grayling, Shageluk, Holy Cross, Russian Mission and Allakaket.

Scanlon said another major issue decided by the board concerned whether state ownership of some muskoxen and bison could be transferred to private individuals.

The board decided that a recommendation should be made to Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Don Collinsworth that ownership not be transferred since there was not currently a surplus of the animals.

Also, two requests for emergency extensions of winter moose hunting failed to get board approval.



The Board of Game will next meet in joint session with the Board of Fisheries to discuss rural and non-rural designations for subsistence purposes in Southeast Alaska. The meeting will be Jan. 5 and 6 in Sitka.

The boards will take up the subsistence designations for Interior Alaska Jan. 17 and 18 in Anchorage.