

Fish and Game Boards present rules changes

JUNEAU—Actions taken by the Alaska Board of Game during its recent two-week session in Anchorage included some changes in trapping regulations, Permit hunt, controlled use areas

and game management unit changes and some regulation changes for deer, moose, caribou, wolves, muskoxen and bears in various parts of the state.

Considerable public testimony was taken from advisory committee members and individuals and the following actions were taken.

Of statewide interest was the board's rejection of proposals to change the brown/grizzly bear bag limit from one bear every four years to one bear per year. The board said regulations for those areas with good bear populations could be better liberalized by season extensions rather than adopting a change which would affect all areas of the state.

Trapping regulation changes which provided for a uniform opening date for most species, except beaver and marten, were adopted.

Proposals to abolish several controlled-use areas in the state were rejected by the board on the basis that these areas continue to serve the purpose for which they were established.

The board considered and postponed action on a new section on permit hunts which would have changed the regulations to the quota for non-resident hunters, hunting with next of kin rather than guides, would fall under the resident quota. The board directed the Department of Fish and Game staff to meet with a Board committee and prepare a recommendation for the next meeting of the board in the fall.

In the Fairbanks area, the board established a Controlled Use Area for moose hunting in the upper Kuskokwim drainage near McGrath and adopted a proposal to increase from 5 to 10 percent the number of non-resident permits allowed for Dall sheep in the Tok management area.

In the Glacier Mountain Con-

trolled Use Area, the board approved the use of pack animals for hunting.

Due to guiding area allocation problems and possible over-exploitation of grizzly bears, board members agreed to a permit for GMU 19(A) and (B).

A registration permit hunt was added to GMU 20(A) and portions of 20(C) for caribou. The board increase the harvest for the Delta caribou herd because the herd is continuing to increase. Allowing additional harvest for recreation and potential food supply was found consistent with the Delta Caribou Management Plan.

Game Management Unit boundaries in Units 20 and 25 were changed to add more sub-units and realign the boundaries to better recognize wildlife population and human use patterns. For example, Central and Circle City now fall within GMU 25.

Southcentral Region changes included several changes on caribou regulations. For the Nelchina herd the board adopted changes which would provide for 1,600 caribou permits in a Unit 13 drawing hunt. Of those, 150 permits would be specified for subsistence hunters. To be eligible for the special subsistence drawing a hunter would need the following qualifications.

- a) Be 12 years old or older
- b) Reside in GMU 13
- c) Be a member of a household whose total income equals \$12,000 or less per year
- d) Have customarily and traditionally used fish and game as 50% of the diet.

The board also determined if more than 150 hunters applied for subsistence drawing their names would be placed in the drawing for the remaining permits.

In addition to last year's either-sex-season the board also provided for an additional season of January 1 - February 28 for antlerless animals in Unit 13 for subsistence permittees only.

In other action, the board

provided for a special drawing hunt for five bull caribou from the Kenai lowland herd.

The grizzly bear season in Units 11 and 13 was extended with an earlier opening allowing increased hunting opportunity. Extensions were also made in Units 14(B) and 16.

Antlerless moose seasons were adopted for most areas in Southcentral Alaska. Although the number of permits was reduced in Unit 14(A), the board increase the number in Unit 7 and Unit 14(C). The bull moose season in Unit 9E was shortened to September 10 - September 20.

The board established a permit hunt for moose on a portion of Kalgin Island allowing for a September 1 - September 30 season with 10 antlered and 10 antlerless permits to be issued.

In the Kuskokwim area the board increase the number of muskox which could be taken on Nelson Island from 20 to 30.

Changes were made in Unit 19 Brown Bear seasons and required permits for this unit.

Southeastern actions taken by the Game Board included liberalized deer regulations for much of the region, and allowed for emergency closures for moose in the Berners Bay area.

The board decided against a proposed permit system for brown bear this year in Unit 4, but recognized that increasing human activity and habitat alterations might bring about the need for such a system in the future.