
Yukon *Wildlife Act*

Proposed Regulation Changes

2007



Substantive regulation change proposals for public consultation

Department of Environment proposals

- Permit hunt for elk (joint proposal with Yukon Fish and Game Association)
- Adaptive management of wood bison harvest
- Remove the 1 in 5 year rule for wood bison permit applicants
- Evidence of sex for grizzly bear and caribou
- Align dates for kill reporting and biological submissions
- Retrieval of meat prior to removal of antlers/horns from kill site
- Rescind permit requirement for Ethel and McQuesten Lakes area (joint proposal with Mayo District RRC)
- Exempt persons from harassment provisions for the purpose of protecting private property
- Authorization to allow for retail sales of game meat and inedible byproducts obtained from licensed game farms

Yukon Fish and Game Association proposals

- Additional deer permits for youth hunters
- Special guided sheep permits for non-residents

Alsek and Teslin RRC proposal

- Enhance wolf hunting opportunities through changes to bag limits and seasons

Alsek RRC proposals

- Eliminate permit hunt system for bison
- Changes to grizzly bear bag limits

Town of Faro proposal

- Restrict special guiding for moose in the Faro area

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Yukon *Wildlife Act* Regulation Changes – The Process

Changes are made to regulations under the Yukon *Wildlife Act* and Yukon Territory Fishery Regulations on an annual basis, in order to manage fish and wildlife resources in an effective manner. Any individual or group can propose changes to the regulations. The proposed changes are presented to the public each fall in order to obtain comments and hear concerns. Once public consultations are complete, all information is reviewed and recommendations are provided to the Minister of Environment by the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board and Renewable Resources Councils. The Minister then determines which regulations will move forward for final consideration by Cabinet. New regulations normally come into force prior to the hunting, fishing or trapping season in the following year. The 2007 proposals that are approved are intended to come into effect in 2008.

Public consultations on regulation proposals have been done jointly by Environment Yukon and the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board since 1989 when the Umbrella Final Agreement pre-implementation Board was established. In earlier years the Department took a lead role in the public consultation process as the regulation proposals were predominately Departmental proposals.

Since the mid-1990's, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board has taken the lead in coordinating the public review process with some assistance from Department staff as more of the proposals originated from Renewable Resource Councils, First Nations and hunting, fishing and trapping organizations. The YFWMB and the Department of Environment are reviewing the current process to see if it can be made more effective and efficient.

Five ways you can comment on the proposals

1. Email comments to:

Graham van Tighem, Exec. Director
Yukon Fish & Wildlife Mgmt Board
gvantighem@yknet.ca

Kathy Kosuta, Policy Analyst
Environment Yukon
kathy.kosuta@gov.yk.ca

2. Drop your comments at:

Yukon Fish & Wildlife Mgmt Board
2nd floor, 106 Main Street
Whitehorse

Environment Yukon
10 Burns Road
Whitehorse

3. Fax your comments to:

- YFWMB at **(867) 393-6213**
- Environment Yukon at **(867) 393-6947**

4. Mail your comments (by December 3rd please) to:

Yukon Fish & Wildlife Mgmt Board
PO Box 31104
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5P7

Environment Yukon
PO Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2C6

5. Attend a public meeting in Whitehorse:

December 11th at 6:00 p.m.
Westmark Whitehorse, Meeting Room #3
2nd Avenue & Wood Street, Whitehorse.

For further information, call the Yukon Fish & Wildlife Management Board at **(867) 667-5835** or Environment Yukon at **(867) 633-7978**.

This document is also available on-line:

- www.yfwmb.yk.ca
- www.environmentyukon.gov.yk.ca

DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS
5:00 p.m, Friday, December 7, 2007

1. Permit hunt for elk

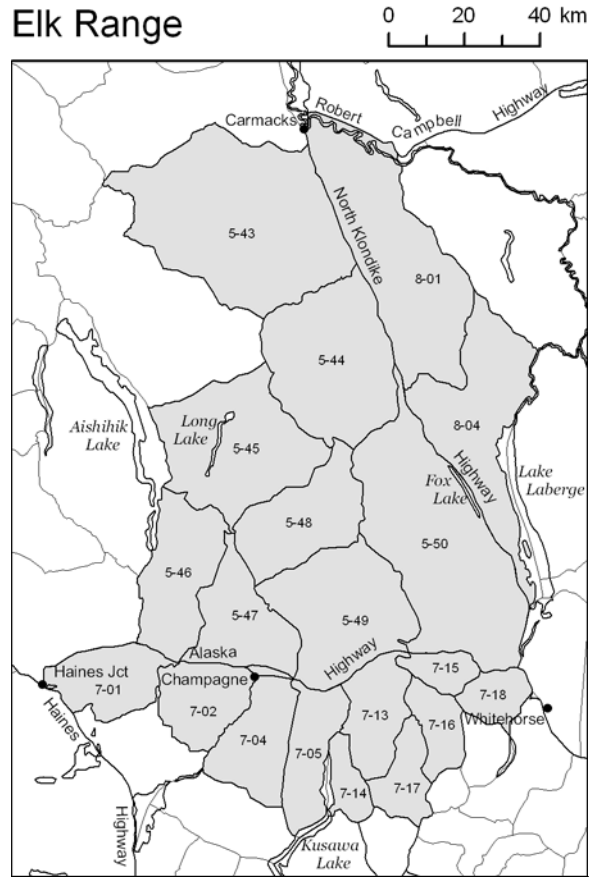
Who proposed this change?

This is a joint proposal from the Department of Environment and the Yukon Fish and Game Association.

Why is the change needed?

Several proposals to establish a limited hunt for elk in the southwest Yukon have been put forward over the past several years by the Yukon Fish and Game Association, Selkirk Renewable Resources Council and others. These proposals went through the regular Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board (YFWMB) public review process, but a hunt has not been recommended by the YFWMB due to uncertainty about the status of the elk herds and the lack of a comprehensive management plan.

A publicly developed and reviewed management plan should be in place soon. A census of the Takhini herd this fall provided a population estimate of 144 animals while the Braeburn herd is estimated at less than 100 animals.



What is the proposal?

In order for a hunt to occur, the following regulation changes must be made:

1. remove elk from the list of Specially Protected Wildlife
2. list elk as a Big Game Animal
3. draft regulations to govern the hunt, e.g. identification of subzones, season dates, number of permits and bag limits. Specifically:
 - Identify in which subzones the Takhini and Braeburn/Hutschi herds could be hunted.
 - Identify season dates (September 1 to October 31 suggested), avoiding a conflict with summer wildlife viewing opportunities, with provisions for a winter hunt under a special permit, and scientific collections if necessary to monitor and collect tick information.

Overview of proposals regarding wood bison

Proposals #2, #3, and #4 all deal with wood bison and should be considered together.

2. Adaptive management of wood bison harvest

The department proposes removing many of the regulations related to the wood bison harvest, enabling the Minister to manage the hunt under an adaptive management framework. In essence, this would mean a general regulation would be written, giving the Minister the authority to make decisions with respect to season dates, permit numbers, open subzones for hunting bison, etc.

3. Remove the 1 in 5 year rule for wood bison permit applicants

The proposal is to remove the 1 in 5 year Rule for wood bison permit applicants altogether and allow bison hunters to apply every year, as with other permit hunts.

4. Eliminate the permit hunt system for bison

The Alsek Renewable Resources Council proposes that the permit hunt system for bison be eliminated and replaced with a mandatory hunt reporting system. This would allow the hunt to be closed when harvest targets are achieved

2. Adaptive management of wood bison harvest

Who proposed this change?

The Department of Environment. The Alsek Renewable Resources Council also proposed a change that is in line with this proposal (#4).

Why is this change needed?

The Yukon wood bison harvest has been unsuccessful as a tool to maintain the bison population at target levels. In most recent years, the harvest has not reached the Annual Allowable Harvest set by managers to limit growth of the herd, despite increases each year in the number of hunting permits issued. In the past three hunting seasons, for example, hunter success has averaged about 35%.

Wildlife managers need to be able to develop a harvesting regime that increases hunter success rates, reduces the impact of hunters on the land during the bison hunt, and results in the harvest reaching the target Annual Allowable Harvest (AAH). At the same time, the Aishihik Herd is a relatively small population and is classified nationally as a species at risk. Managers need to be able to respond rapidly, before and in-season, to swift changes in the number of animals harvested if the AAH is surpassed or a number of animals are removed from the population naturally (e.g., through falling through thin ice). Adaptive management would also allow for earlier season openings or closures, and directed hunting effort by the Department to certain areas or specific subzones to disperse hunters. Conservative regulations established at the onset of the Yukon wood bison harvest have become a hindrance in allowing the hunt to fulfill its function as a population management tool.

What is the proposal?

The department proposes removing many of the regulations related to the wood bison harvest, enabling the Minister to manage the hunt under an adaptive management framework. In essence, this would mean a general regulation would be written, giving the Minister the authority to make decisions with respect to season dates, permit numbers, open subzones for hunting bison, etc. Those decisions would be made in consultation with the Bison Technical Team, the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, and affected Renewable Resources Councils and First Nations.



3. Remove the 1 in 5 year rule for wood bison permit applicants

Who proposed this change?

This is a joint proposal of the Department of Environment and the Yukon Fish and Game Association. The Alsek Renewable Resources Council also proposed this change as an alternative if their mandatory kill report proposal (#4) is not acceptable.

Why is the change needed?

In the early years of the bison hunt, the demand for permits was far greater than the supply. Many hunters continually applied for permits and were unsuccessful in the lottery. In an attempt to give more hunters a chance at winning a permit, the 1 in 5 year rule was passed, under which hunters who had been drawn for a permit in the lottery were not allowed to apply for another permit for the following four years.

We have now been through one full five year cycle of lotteries under the 1 in 5 year rule and it is believed that the rule has largely served its purpose. It is felt that the rule is keeping knowledgeable and keen bison hunters out of the lottery, likely contributing to the low hunter success rate. With larger numbers of bison permits being allocated now in an effort to reach the target Annual Allowable Harvest, some suggest that we may actually run out of permit applicants within a few years if they are prohibited from entering the lottery because of the 1 in 5 rule.

What is the proposal?

The proposal is to remove the 1 in 5 year Rule for wood bison permit applicants altogether and allow bison hunters to apply every year, as with other permit hunts.

Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:



6. Special guided sheep permits for non-residents

Who proposed this change?

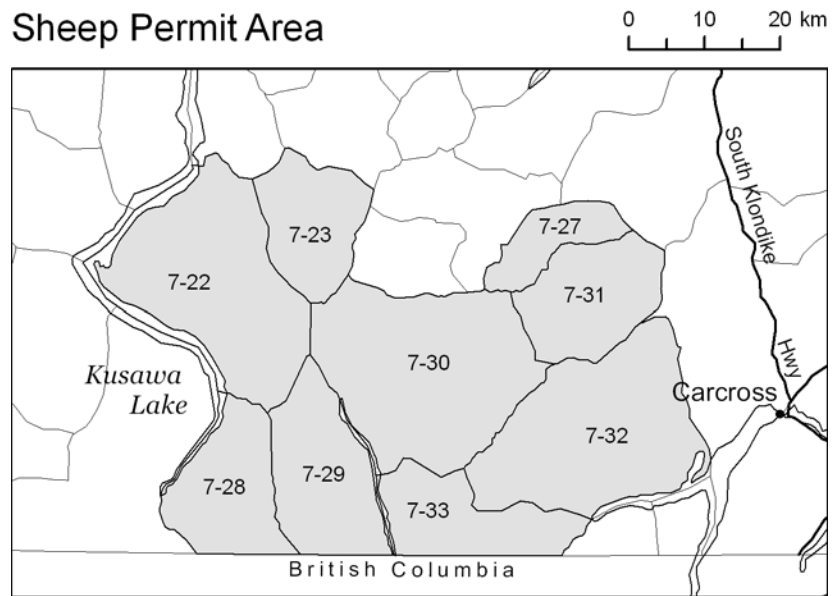
The Yukon Fish and Game Association

Why is the change needed?

The Association wants to provide non-resident Canadians with a limited opportunity for an affordable hunt for sheep in the Yukon and to generate revenue for sheep management in the Yukon.

What is the proposal? Sheep Permit Area

The Yukon Fish and Game Association proposes that two additional permits for sheep be made available for non-resident Canadians in areas that do not fall within an outfitting concession in Game Management Zone 7. The permit holders would be required to



be special guided by a Yukon resident. The Association proposes to administer the allocation of permits through a lottery process with a substantial non-refundable application fee (e.g. \$100). Net revenue would be directed to the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Trust and earmarked for sheep. Hunters would still be required to pay the non-resident licence, tag and trophy fees.

Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:



7. Enhance wolf hunting opportunities through changes to bag limits and seasons

Who proposed this change?

Both the Teslin and the Alsek Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs) made proposals to enhance wolf hunting opportunities by changing hunting bag limits and seasons.

Why is the change needed?

These RRC's would like to see wolf hunting opportunities enhanced. Departmental wolf harvest data from 2001 to 2005 indicate that resident hunters take an average of 24 wolves per year total, while non-residents take an average of 33 wolves per year total. This proposal would increase bag limits and season length for both resident and non-resident hunters.

Over a five year period from 2001 to 2005, 9 of a total of 74 resident hunters took the maximum bag limit of 3 wolves and 24 of a total of 138 non-resident hunters took the maximum bag limit of 2 wolves.

What is the proposal?

The Teslin RRC has proposed that the bag limit be increased from 3 wolves to 7 for Yukon residents; and from 2 wolves to 4 for non-residents. The Alsek RRC has proposed that bag limits be removed, so that both residents and non-residents could take any number of wolves.

The Teslin RRC has also proposed that the wolf hunting season be extended until April 30, rather than ending on March 31.

The Yukon government Wolf Conservation and Management Plan specifies bag limits and hunting seasons for wolves. Approval of this proposal will result in a corresponding amendment to the Wolf Conservation and Management Plan.

Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:

10. Align dates for kill reporting and biological submissions

Who proposed this change?

The Department of Environment

Why is the change needed?

Currently, deadlines for submitting kill reports and/or biological submissions vary by species. For mountain sheep, mountain goats, mule deer, black bear, grizzly bear and wood bison, biological submissions are due not later than 10 days after the end of the open season in which the animal was killed. For wolves and wolverine, kill reports must be submitted and the pelts sealed not later than 15 days of the close of the season. In the case of moose and caribou, the kill report must be made not later than February 10th. These differences create confusion among members of the public and an additional workload for Conservation Officers.

What is the proposal?

The department proposes replacing wording relating to reporting time frames found in subsections 18(1), 18(1.1), 18(1.2), 18(2), 18(3), 19.1(1) and 23(2)(b) of the Wildlife Regulations with the following: “not later than 10 days after the end of the month in which the (sheep, goat, mule deer, black bear, grizzly bear, wood bison, moose, caribou, wolf or wolverine) was killed.” This would require all big game hunters to report within the same time period. An exception would be provided for people in isolated areas in the bush, who may kill moose or caribou, but may not be able to report the kill within the specified period due to their isolation.

Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:

11. Retrieval of game meat prior to removal of antlers/horns

Who proposed this change?

The Department of Environment

Why is the change needed?

After killing and field dressing a big game animal, some hunters transport the antlers/horns of the animal to their camp before returning later to remove all of the meat. The practice can contribute to improper care and waste of meat including increased scavenging by birds and predators and lengthy delays in retrieving meat due to weather or transportation issues. It also creates enforcement difficulties and may require repeated visits to a camp and kill site to determine whether all the meat has been removed. Meat wastage is a serious concern to all Yukoners. Every year Conservation Officers receive reports of and discover waste of meat incidents. Investigations reveal both residents and non-residents have been involved in wasting meat.

What is the proposal?

The department proposes adding a new regulation under section 16 of the Wildlife Regulations requiring the meat to be packed out before or with the horns or antlers, pursuant to subsection 32(4) of the *Wildlife Act*. Hunters who kill a big game animal would have to transport all edible meat to their departure point (camp, vehicle, trail head, etc) before they transport the antlers/horns. (Under this proposal, antlers and horns may be transported simultaneously with the last load of meat.) Any meat left in the field after the horns or antlers have been transported from the kill site would be considered abandoned.

Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:



12. Restrict special guiding for moose in the Faro area

Who proposed this change?

The Town of Faro

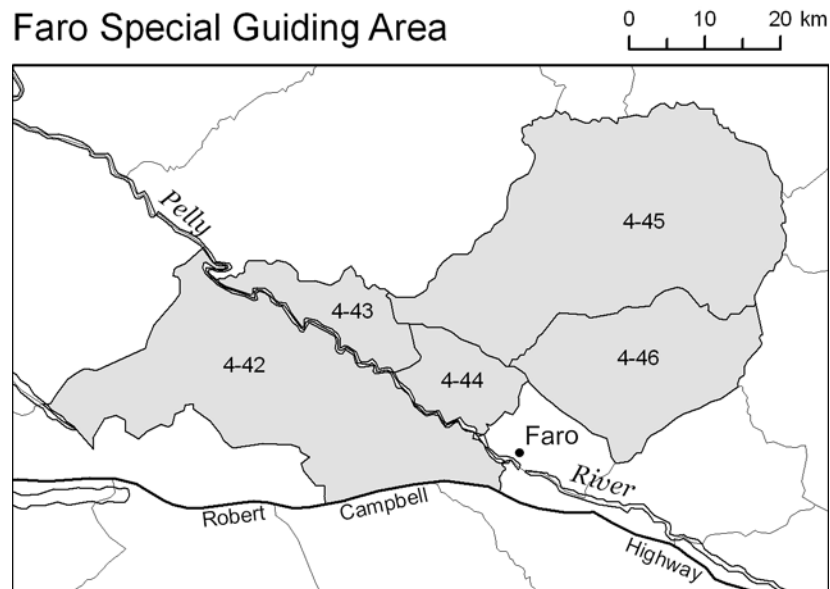
Why is the change needed?

Voluntary restrictions on moose hunting in the Faro area have been in place since 1999. Local residents are concerned about the number of non-resident Canadians being special guided for moose in the area as it reduces hunting opportunities for Yukoners. In 2006, 8 moose were harvested in the area by special guided non-residents. The five Game Management Subzones in the area have a total Annual Allowable Harvest of 38 moose. The average harvest level in the past several years has been near or at the total Annual Allowable Harvest..

What is the proposal?

The Town proposes eliminating special guided moose hunting privileges in GMS 4-42 through 4-46.

Faro Special Guiding Area



Do you support this proposal?

Yes

No

Comments:



13. Rescind permit requirement for Ethel and McQuesten Lakes area

Who proposed this change?

This is a joint proposal from the Mayo District Renewable Resources Council (RRC) and the Department of Environment.

Why is the change needed?

In 2001, a permit requirement was established to hunt moose within 1 km of the shorelines of Ethel and McQuesten Lakes to address community concerns about increasing harvest pressure in these areas. The Mayo District Renewable Resources Council (RRC) and the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation were strong advocates for the permit system and wanted a limited number of permits issued to both licensed and First Nation hunters in the area. After further discussions, however, the permit system implemented set no limit on the number of permits that could be issued. The primary objective was to get better estimates of the harvest on these lakes.

Over time, it became clear that this permit system did not prove to be effective in limiting the harvest in the area or in monitoring harvest. It is the opinion of the Mayo District RRC and the community that the moose harvest in the area continues to be excessive. As a result, an interim voluntary moose hunting closure was implemented in 2006. This voluntary system appears to be working well, making the permit system redundant.

The Mayo District RRC is proceeding with a broader moose management strategy for the traditional territory and intend to submit a regulation proposal to establish a new management system to be implemented for the 2009 hunting season.

What is the proposal?

The Mayo District RRC and the department propose that the permit hunt regulation for Ethel and McQuesten Lakes be rescinded. This would require a repeal of some wording currently in Schedule A, Part 1 of the Wildlife Regulations.

15. Authorization to allow for retail sales of game meat and inedible byproducts obtained from licensed game farms

Who proposed this change?

The Department of Environment

Why is the change needed?

Currently only licensed game farmers can sell meat and inedible byproducts from their game farm animals. Some stores and restaurants currently sell federally-inspected and legally imported game farm meat products, e.g. from Alberta. The intent of this regulation change is to encourage more consumption of local products and encourage local retailers and businesses to consider buying and selling Yukon-grown game farm meat.

What is the proposal?

The department proposes adding a new regulation under section 102 of the *Wildlife Act* to allow individuals, both game farmers and others, to sell territorially-inspected meat and inedible byproducts from game farm animals. Amendments to the Game Farm Regulations would also be required.

This regulation change would continue to provide Conservation Officers with a mechanism to track legal sales of game farm meat under the Game Farm Regulations, but would also require additional enforcement capacity.

Do you support this proposal? **Yes** **No**

Comments:

November 2007