

Hunting and Trapping

Emergency Order

Alaska Department
of Fish and Game

Under the Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 03-04-14

Issued at: Fairbanks, Alaska
June 27, 2014

Effective Date: 12:01 AM
July 1, 2014

Expiration Date: 11:59 PM
June 30, 2015 unless
superseded by subsequent
emergency order

EXPLANATION:

The Board of Game adopted framework bag limits for ptarmigan in Game Management Units 12, 20, and 25C and delegated authority to the department to adjust bag limits within this framework based on population trends. This emergency order adjusts bag limits for regulatory year 2014–2015. In addition to this emergency order, adjusted bag limits are printed in the 2014–2015 Hunting Regulation Book No. 55.

REGULATION:

Therefore, the following regulations in **5 AAC 85.065(a)(3), HUNTING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR SMALL GAME**, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for hunting ptarmigan:

Units and Bag Limits

**Resident
Open Season
(Subsistence and
General Hunts)**

**Nonresident
Open Season**

...

(3)
Ptarmigan (rock, willow, and white-tailed)

...

Units 12, 20, and 25(C)

20 per day, 40 in possession

Aug. 10-Feb 28
(General hunt only)

Aug. 10-Feb 28

5 per day, 10 in possession

Mar. 1-Apr. 30
(General hunt only)

Mar. 1-Apr. 30

...

All other ptarmigan hunting regulations remain unchanged and are not affected by this emergency order.

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Doreen Parker McNeill
Management Coordinator

JUSTIFICATION:

In Interior Alaska, ptarmigan populations exhibit large fluctuations in abundance. Adverse weather or high predator numbers during a few years can reduce chick production and overwinter survival, resulting in rapid and substantial declines. However, if environmental conditions are favorable, ptarmigan can respond quickly and become plentiful.

Harvest impacts ptarmigan in various ways. To ensure adequate protection to the population and to optimize hunter opportunity, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game must take into account population status and trend, harvest amount and timing, and trend of other mortality factors. Studies conducted in Alaska and western Canada indicate harvest has little impact when populations are high. However, when populations are low, harvest can have significant effects especially in late winter after most other sources of mortality have declined or if resident breeding birds are taken. Managing ptarmigan seasons and bag limits based on population trends

allows both the greatest hunting opportunity during population highs and adequate protection when there are few birds.

Based on survey data and hunter observations from the Interior road system, ptarmigan populations peaked in the mid to late 1990s, subsequently declined, and still have not fully recovered. Therefore, the bag limit during the spring portion of the hunting season has been restricted as indicated above.

DISTRIBUTION:

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14. Federal Office of Subsistence Management
15. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park
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17. Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge
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