

Hunting and Trapping

Emergency Order

Alaska Department
of Fish and Game

Under the Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 03-02-19

Issued at: Fairbanks, Alaska
July 12, 2019

Effective Date: 12:01 AM
July 15, 2019

Expiration Date: 11:59 PM
June 30, 2020 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superseded by subsequent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 2019–2020. In addition to this emergency order, adjusted bag limits are printed in the 2019–2020 Hunting Regulation Book No. 59.

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Therefore, the following regulations in **5 AAC 85.065(a)(3), HUNTING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR SMALL GAME**, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for hunting ptarmigan: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 5 per day, 10 in possession	Aug. 10-Feb 29 Mar. 1–Apr. 30	Aug. 10-Feb 29 Mar. 1–Apr. 30
...		

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

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Doreen Parker McNeill
Management Coordinator

JUSTIFICATION:

To ensure adequate protection of the ptarmigan population and to optimize hunter opportunity, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates population status and trend, and the amount and timing of harvest. In Interior Alaska, ptarmigan populations exhibit large fluctuations in abundance largely in response to weather and predation.

Harvest impacts ptarmigan in different ways depending on their abundance. Studies conducted in Alaska and western Canada indicate harvest has little impact when populations are high. However, harvest can have significant effects when populations are low, especially in late winter after most other sources of mortality have declined or if resident breeding birds are taken. Based on survey data (5-year-average) collected along survey routes adjacent to the Interior road system and hunter observations, ptarmigan populations appear to be slightly decreasing in abundance although data from Denali Park suggest willow ptarmigan may be increasing. Despite the decreasing trend in abundance observed over the past 5 years data from 2019 suggest a slight increase in ptarmigan abundance from 2018. Therefore, late season bag limits and season dates

for ptarmigan in Units 12, 20, and 25C will remain as stated in this Emergency Order. This will ensure that populations of ptarmigan that are easily accessible during the breeding season are not overharvested.

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.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution of this Emergency Order is to the following list. Copies are available from the Department of Fish and Game office in Fairbanks.

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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
18. US Bureau of Land Management
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19. Tanana Chiefs Conference
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