

Regionwide & Multiple Units

PROPOSAL 1

5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements.

Require certified hunter safety education to hunt in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Amend Section 5 AAC 92.003 to include:

Beginning January 2025, a person born after January 1, 2010 that is required to have a hunting license must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course in order to hunt in Units 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Additionally, if you are under 18 years of age, you must have either successfully completed a certified hunter education course or be under the direct immediate supervision of a licensed hunter who is: (a) 18 years of age or older and has successfully completed a certified hunter education course OR (b) born on or before January 1, 2010.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Requiring a certified hunter education course to hunt in Units 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 will lead to safer more informed hunters. ADF&G reports that “hunter education courses have dramatically reduced hunting related firearms accidents — up to 75% in some states — and have brought about positive change in hunter skills, attitudes, and behavior.” Over the last twenty years, barriers to accessing hunter education course have come down, especially with the advent of hybrid and online versions of the curriculum. We would like to follow other Units and require hunter safety for Units 1 - 5. Adopting this proposal will make hunting safer for everyone in our region.

PROPOSED BY: Juneau-Douglas Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F22-118)

PROPOSAL 2

5 AAC 92.003. Hunter education and orientation requirements.

Require hunter orientation for hunting goat in Southeast Region units as follows:

All hunters must complete the goat hunter orientation prior to hunting. Orientation and quiz are available online at XXXXXXXXXX.

-Rocky Mountain Goat alliance has a YouTube video and are currently making another revision to assist goat hunters. I have asked the board if they would work with ADF&G biologists on a video and quiz and they are in support.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I believe that there will be a “trickle down effect” from the dwindling sheep numbers, where many sheep hunters will now look to other species. I believe that goat hunting will become more prevalent over the next few years. My concern is that with the increase in goat hunting, there will be an increase in novice goat hunters. This is of grave concern for the harvest of nannie and sub-adult goats. I believe an educational video, such as was done for bear and moose, should be mandatory for all goat hunts.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Watkins (EG-F22-008)

PROPOSAL 3

5 AAC 92.165. Sealing of bear skins and skulls.

Remove the requirement for residents to seal black bear skulls harvested in Units 1 - 4 as follows:

Eliminate the need for resident black bear hunters in Units 1 - 4 to have black bear skulls sealed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The regulation to require resident black bear hunters to have black bear skulls sealed should be eliminated. This is unnecessary burden on resident hunters such as myself that live far away from a sealing officer. I live on a boat and cruise to remote southeast Alaska locations.

Sealing nonresident black bear skulls should provide enough information for ADF&G. It would be reasonable to have resident hunters report their kill as to where, when, and what sex was taken.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Freshwaters (EG-F22-117)

PROPOSAL 4

5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

Change the resident bag limit for brown bear in Unit 1 to one bear every two years as follows:

Change the harvest limit for resident brown bear in Unit 1, from one brown bear every four years to one brown bear every two years.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently Southeast Alaska residents can only harvest one brown bear every four regulatory years and this needs to change in order to align with the ADF&G mission to manage wildlife. There is no data or science showing that brown bears in Unit 1 have any population concerns, but rather have high densities and actually show evidence of population increase in areas on the Chilkat Peninsula, Tracy Arm, Endicott Arm, and south to Port Houghton (Scott 2009). As a year-round sportsman, I have seen the increase in older brown bears on trail cams which supports the trend of an increasing population. The Southeast Brown Bear Management Plan has not been changed in over 20 years and the one every four years was initiated in 1968 with no update to this timeframe in over 50 years. To further support this change, it has been shown that when RB063 and RB073 (Berners Bay area) went from one bear every four regulatory years to one bear every regulatory year in 2013, the harvest did not increase in an area that is close to, and easy to access by Juneau residents. Registration permits provide accurate in season management data to help managers monitor harvest closely. In the event that managers felt that too many bears were being harvested, they can always issue an emergency order. In other areas of the state, Unit 13 for example, liberalizing the brown bear harvest actually helped the overall numbers of brown bears (the land only has so much carrying capacity for large apex predators) as well as bolstered ungulate populations. Another need for this change is that British Columbia has not allowed any hunting of brown bears since December 2017.

This change will benefit the wildlife as well as resident hunters.

PROPOSED BY: Jesse Ross (EG-F22-103)

PROPOSAL 5

5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game.

Change the waterfowl season in Units 1 - 4 by creating a split season as follows:

5 AAC 85.065. (a)(4)(A) Duck (B) Sea Ducks (C) Geese, Canada and cackling combined (D) Geese, White-fronted (E) Geese, Light (Snow and Ross’) (F) Brant (H) Cranes (I) Snipe

Season split recommendations will be determined through advisory committees and presented to the Board of Game at the January 2023 meeting.

An example configuration of a two-segment ‘split’ open season for Units 1 - 4: Sept. 1 – Nov. 23; Dec. 9 – Dec. 31

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At the Southeast Region meeting in 2019, the Board of Game (board) adopted an amended proposal to set the season dates in Units 1 - 4 (Southeast Migratory Bird Hunt Zone) for hunting migratory game birds to September 16 – December 31 in even numbered years and September 1 – December 16 in odd numbered years. This action by the board was intended to accommodate a public desire to better align hunting opportunity with species-specific abundance corresponding to the general fall movement and winter settling patterns of migratory game birds (e.g., hunting early season migrants vs. late season wintering birds). Federal regulations prohibited the board from considering a two-segment or ‘split’ season configuration (open – closed – open) to address the issue – Alaska is allowed a single split season, which at the time was assigned to the Kodiak Zone (Unit 8). A split season is structured with a mid-season closure to extend the early and/or late hunting dates, within the federal framework season length of 107 days.

The current regulation of odd-even numbered year season dates creates a regulatory burden in the Southeast Zone via inconsistent interannual season dates that adds complexity for hunters, enforcement, and the regulations publication process. In addition, the current regulation reduces early or late season hunting opportunity in alternating years by shifting between early and late open/closed season dates. In even numbered years, hunting opportunity for early migrant game birds is reduced and likewise in odd numbered years, opportunity is reduced for late migrant species that winter in the Southeast Region, such as sea ducks.

Since the 2019 Southeast Region meeting, federal regulations were modified to reassign Alaska’s single split season option from the Kodiak Zone to the Southeast Zone (Units 1 - 4), allowing this option to be considered in state regulation. Accordingly, the department recommends implementing a split season in Units 1 - 4 to hunt migratory game birds. The benefit of this regulation change is establishing a consistent set of interannual season dates, thereby reducing regulatory complexity, while allowing in-season early and late hunting opportunity to satisfy better hunting season alignment with species-specific abundance.

The department proposes a regulation change that includes replacing the current regulation of odd-even numbered year season dates in Units 1 - 4 with a two-segment ‘split’ season structure; open on September 1 – closed for up to 2 + weeks – reopen until the end of 107 days for:

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F22-057)

PROPOSAL 6

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Lengthen river otter trapping seasons in Units 1 - 4 to align with Unit 5 as follows:

Extend and unify river otter seasons across Units 1 - 5 to November 10 - March 31

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend and unify river otter seasons across Units 1-5 to November 10 - March 31. This would be the same as Unit 9, which is at a similar latitude. Fur primeness is related to the amount of daylight, so having similar seasons for similar latitudes makes sense. River otters are not widely harvested in Units 1-5, so while an expansion of the season has the potential to deplete localized populations, the overall population will likely see no impact

There is some concern that river otters might be having kits during this proposed season extension, though in my experience with otter bycatch while targeting beavers, only otters in May exhibited signs of recent birth.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr (EG-F22-102)

PROPOSAL 7

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend marten trapping seasons to align with wolverine seasons in portions of Units 1 - 4 and 5 as follows:

Marten season would become November 10 – February 28 for the following areas: Units 1 - 3 (except Kuiu Island); Remainder of Unit 4, and Unit 5.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend the marten season to line up with the wolverine season. This would allow marten bycatch in wolverine traps to be retained. It would also allow people who are out deer hunting to participate in marten trapping, as the early part of the season extension overlaps with the deer rut.

Fur primeness is related to daylight hours and is likely to be prime in the proposed extended season. British Columbia Regions 6 and 7 (which roughly line up latitude-wise with all of Southeast Alaska) have a season of November 1 – February 28, not unlike the proposed season in this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr (EG-F22-104)

PROPOSAL 8

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the marten trapping season in Units 1 and 2 as follows:

Marten trapping season:

Units	Open Season	Bag Limit
Units 1-2	Dec. 1 – Feb. 28	No Limit

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee would like the board to address the marten trapping season for Units 1 and 2. The current season dates are December 1 – February 15. The Ketchikan AC would like the board to consider changing the end date to February 28.

We would like to see this change made for the following reasons. First of all, the fur is still prime, and the majority of marten trapping occurs along roads and beaches, therefore there is still plenty of un-trapped habitat for marten to breed in and remain undisturbed. Also, with fur prices down, trapping effort has gone down, which means less pressure and stress on the population. Lastly, wolf and wolverine trapping is still open, so it would be beneficial to trappers to be able to take advantage of as much opportunity as possible while out checking their trapline.

PROPOSED BY: Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F22-110)

PROPOSAL 9

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the wolverine trapping season to March 15 in Units 1 - 5 as follows:

Area Units 1 - 5

Open wolverine trapping season November 10th – March 15th

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like to extend the wolverine season in Units 1-5 to gain back some trapping days lost during previous Board of Game meetings.

The 2007-08 meeting cycle changed the start date for hunting wolverine in Southeast AK from November 10th to September 1st (41 more days). The meeting cycle of 2009 – 2010, the mostly resident trapper lost 75-76 days at the end of the wolverine season in Southeast AK from April 30th to February 15th. The 2015-2016 meeting cycle the state gave back 13-14 days (February 28/29th) . This return of days still has trappers short 60 days.

We have not heard of a female wolverine being caught in the month of April with milk or a bad pelt.

PROPOSED BY: Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F22-019)
