

Hunting and Trapping Emergency Order

Under the Authority of AS 16.05.060

Alaska Department
of Fish and Game

Emergency Order No. R3-8-26

Issued at: Fairbanks, Alaska
August 6th, 2026

Effective Date: 12:00 A.M.
August 10, 2026

Expiration Date: 11:59 PM
June 30, 2027 unless by
superseded subsequent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 2026–2027. In addition to this emergency order, adjusted bag limits are printed in the 2026–2027 Hunting Regulation Book No. 67.

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Therefore, the following regulations in **5 AAC 85.065(a)(3), HUNTING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR SMALL GAME**, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for hunting ptarmigan: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	Aug. 10-Feb 28
5 per day, 10 in possession	Mar. 1–Apr. 30	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:

Jason Caikoski
Management Coordinator

JUSTIFICATION:

To ensure adequate protection of Alaska's ptarmigan populations and to provide hunting opportunity, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates population status and trends and attempts to gather information on the amount and timing of harvest. Most ptarmigan populations exhibit large fluctuations in abundance largely in response to weather and predation. The effects of harvest on ptarmigan populations depend on many things including natural mortality rates, harvest rates, timing of harvest, and accessibility.

Hunting seasons that extend into the breeding period increasingly target resident ptarmigan as males begin to actively defend breeding territories and females begin to arrive as early as late March. To ensure that populations of ptarmigan that are easily accessible during the breeding season are not overharvested, season length or late season bag limits are often reduced. The relatively limited access into ptarmigan habitat in Units 12, 20, and 25C is likely to provide large areas of refugia from hunting pressure, allowing for liberal season dates and liberal bag limits early in the season. However, areas within and immediately adjacent to access corridors that receive heavy hunting pressure late into the season often have lower ptarmigan breeding densities than areas less accessible. Some late season hunting appears to be sustainable for ptarmigan in Units 12, 20, and 25C. Therefore, late season bag limits for ptarmigan in Units 12, 20, and 25C will remain as stated in this Emergency Order.