



## Department of Fish and Game

DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION  
Headquarters

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An Agenda Change Request (ACR 1) has been submitted to the Alaska Board of Game (BOG) requesting to change 5 AAC 85.030(a)(2) Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer. The proponent is asking the board to change the deer season on Lindenberg Peninsula and Mitkof Island outside of the Petersburg Management Area back to August 1 to November 7 with a resident bag limit of 2 bucks and a nonresident bag limit of 1 buck.

With respect to the board's Agenda Change Request (ACR) acceptance criteria (5 AAC 92.005):

- A. The department is unaware of any error in regulation.
- B. The department is unaware of any effects of regulations that were unforeseen when the regulation was adopted.
- C. The department does not believe that there is a biological concern that is caused by existing regulations.
- D. The department is unaware of any unforeseen or unexpected events that would otherwise restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional wildlife uses as defined in AS 16.05.258(f).
- E. The department is unaware of any unexpected resource situations that would cause a biologically allowable resource harvest to be precluded by delayed regulatory action.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for deer in Unit 3, with an amount reasonably necessary of 150-175 deer. The current resident deer season on Mitkof Island and that portion of Kupreanof Island on the Lindenberg Peninsula is October 1 – November 7. The nonresident deer season on Mitkof Island is October 15 – October 31. There is no current nonresident deer season on the Lindenberg Peninsula. The bag limit for both areas is one buck.

The Alaska Board of Game adopted two proposals in 2019 that extended the resident deer seasons on Mitkof Island and the Lindenberg Peninsula by three weeks (from October 15 – October 31 to October 1 – November 7). These changes became effective during the following season (regulatory year 2019). The Mitkof Island deer harvest increased from an average of 64 bucks during the three years prior to the season extension (2016 – 2018) to 141 in 2019, or an increase in harvest of 120%. The Lindenberg Peninsula harvest also increased by 120% from an average of 44 bucks between 2016 – 2018 to 97 in 2019.

An aerial alpine survey was conducted during the summer of 2019 on the Lindenberg Peninsula. This survey method only includes observations from limited alpine habitat. The department is currently assessing how this method reflects changes across the entire deer population.

Results from the ongoing pilot research project, designed to develop a deer population estimate for Mitkof Island by using a combination of game cameras and DNA, are only preliminary and not peer reviewed. Findings exist for only a single winter. Additional data from subsequent years are required before using the method to assess the current deer population trend.

Information collected from both the aerial alpine survey and the Mitkof Island pilot project are currently inadequate to inform management decisions on increasing harvest opportunity.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting for Unit 3 deer regulations is during winter/spring of 2022/2023. If the board accepts this ACR, the department recommends the proposal come before the board at its March 2021 meeting in Fairbanks to allow for more public input.

Sincerely,



Eddie Grasser  
Director  
Division of Wildlife Conservation