

PROPOSAL 163

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

Rescind the bag limit restrictions for sea duck hunting in Unit 15C as follows:

In effect, eliminate special sea duck restrictions for Unit 15C, restoring seasons and bag limits applicable to the entire Gulf Coast Zone – Units 5-7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only) and Units 14-16.

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

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(4) Migratory game birds (except by falconry) ¹		
...		
(B) Sea Ducks (except Spectacled and Steller's eiders) ³		
...		
Units 5 - 7, 9, 10 (Unimak Is. only), and Units 14 - 16		
RESIDENT HUNTERS: 10 per day, 20 in possession, of which no more than 6 each per day, 12 in possession may be harlequin ducks and no more than 6 per day, 12 in possession may be long-tailed ducks.	Sept. 1-Dec. 16 (General hunt only)	
NONRESIDENT HUNTERS: 8 per day, 20 in possession; however, no more than 4 each of any sea duck species may be taken per season; and no more than 20 sea ducks of all species may be taken per season		Sept. 1-Dec. 16
[UNIT 15C, THAT PORTION		

IN KACHEMAK BAY EAST OF A
LINE FROM POINT POGIBSHI TO
ANCHOR POINT

RESIDENT HUNTERS: SEPT. 1-DEC. 16]

10 PER DAY, 20 IN (GENERAL HUNT ONLY)
POSSESSION, OF WHICH NO MORE
THAN 2 PER DAY, 4 IN
POSSESSION MAY BE LONG-TAILED
DUCKS AND NO MORE THAN 1 PER
DAY, 2 IN POSSESSION MAY BE
AN EIDER]

[NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

8 PER DAY, 20 IN
POSSESSION; OF WHICH NO
MORE THAN 2 PER DAY, 4 IN
POSSESSION MAY BE
HARLEQUIN DUCKS, NO MORE
THAN 2 PER DAY, 4 IN
POSSESSION MAY BE
LONG-TAILED DUCKS, AND
NO MORE THAN 1 PER DAY,
2 IN POSSESSION MAY BE AN
EIDER; HOWEVER, NO MORE
THAN 4 EACH OF ANY SEA
DUCK SPECIES MAY BE
TAKEN PER SEASON; AND NO
MORE THAN 20 SEA DUCKS OF
ALL SPECIES MAY BE TAKEN
PER SEASON]

Sept. 1-Dec. 16

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Rescind bag limit restrictions for sea duck hunting in Unit 15C adopted by the Board of Game in 2010. The reductions in bag limits for eiders, harlequin ducks and long-tailed ducks were not based on best available scientific data nor were they consistent with management guidelines by ADF&G, Pacific Flyway Council or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address necessary conservation needs.

There is no documented biological problem indicating low population levels or substantial declines for eiders, harlequin ducks or long-tailed ducks (nor for buffleheads or goldeneyes that are the subject of current discussions by local supporters of restrictions). There is no evidence that changes in sea duck abundance are caused by harvest.

There are no documented indications that sea duck harvests in Alaska are excessive in relation to duck population levels or increasing to the point of concern. Harvest assessment needs to be

examined from a flyway-wide or large region perspective that is consistent with defined species populations that can be feasibly monitored—not from anecdotal or biased claims about small-scale effects.

It is critical that sea duck regulation decisions be framed at the appropriate scale and continue the biologically sound regime of population and harvest assessments for populations that seasonally migrate thousands of miles across thousands of square miles of breeding and wintering habitat. The numbers of birds that occupy individual bays and coves at any given time is highly variable in response to many conditions and is not relevant to the status of entire species populations at regional or flyway levels.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Waterfowl Association (EG-F22-101)
