

PROPOSAL 37

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

Reduce the bag limit for ptarmigan for drainages that cross the Juneau Douglas Road system in Unit 1C as follows:

Reduce ptarmigan bag limit to five per day for the drainages that cross the Juneau-Douglas Road System.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Increased hunting pressure and lack of population monitoring has caused population declines in ptarmigan in areas with high use. Advances in outdoor recreation technology has resulted in more capable snow-machines that are able to traverse steeper terrain giving more access to ptarmigan habitat. Similarly, the increased popularity of backcountry skiing has increased the number of users who can access ptarmigan terrain that previously would have remained inaccessible until the snows melted.

Further, the current regulation of 20 birds per day gives the illusion that the species is extremely bountiful. Hunters who come upon a flock of birds are unconcerned, and may attempt to take the entire covey because the daily limit is so high. Finally, ADF&G doesn't monitor local populations of ptarmigan or reduce bag limits when weather conditions means brood survival is low and when hunting pressure would be the most detrimental.

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