

PROPOSAL 141

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

When the lynx trapping season is open in Units 7 and 15, season dates will be December 15 through the last day of February as follows:

What solution do you recommend? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say?

Change the wording/add language in 5 AAC 84.270 (5) as follows: (Bold text is addition)

5 AAC 84.270 (5) Lynx; Units 7 and 15: **Dec 15** [NOV 10] through the last day of February, Season may be closed by Emergency Order, **Season dates shall not change by Emergency Order**

Other possible solutions: Other dates giving a longer season, such as Dec. 1- end Feb., or Jan. 1- March 15.

If the Board of Game is unwilling to add the bolded text, perhaps consider directing the Department to offer a longer season.

Another idea would involve a seasonal limit per trapper in conjunction with longer season.

This change will provide fair opportunity for Unit 7 and 15 trappers, and provide a little breathing room to just pull traps during poor weather weeks and re-set when conditions improve, without having to rush around during the current six week season, shortened by EO annually. We will be better able to closely follow the Trappers Code of Ethics with regard to proper humane methods, loss prevention, fur care, concentrating in abundant areas only (cant see tracks on ice crust or rain wash), all promoting sound management and good ethics.

Thank you for your service and thoughtful consideration of this proposal.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

I'd like to address the limited opportunity for lynx trapping in Units 7 and 15. The regulation booklet states the season runs from January 1 through February 15, which has been done by Emergency Order (EO) annually for 20 plus years. The codified language reads differently: 5 AAC 84.270 states November 10 - end February, unless closed by EO. It seems the Department is using this EO authority to shorten the season every year, even during high abundance. This gives only a six week season for trapping lynx in Units 7 and 15. Most of the state offers a several month season, even in Southeast where lynx are scarce.

Hares and lynx are both plentiful in cycle on the Kenai Peninsula. Lynx trapping involves many miles of travel and much distance between sets as they are solitary animals. The Kenai Peninsula is subject to extended freeze/thaw and heavy snow/rain cycles, making it difficult to maintain viable sets and to keep checking in a timely fashion in these typical weather conditions. Most trappers in this area are, while numerous, are casual in nature or "hobby trappers." Lynx fur primes up here in early December and remains good through early March.

It is noted that the lynx- hare cycle is the most cited and reliable predator- prey cycle in nature. I fully support the season closure during a few years of low abundance at the bottom of the lynx population cycle, but I'd like to see more opportunity when plentiful, like the rest of the state.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

To address these two problems of minimal opportunity and annual management by EO, I offer the the solution which has been vetted extensively with the Homer Advisory Committee, local trappers, and ADF&G, along with some alternative ideas.

PROPOSED BY: Douglas Malone (OI-F25-190)
