

Note: The units to be considered by the Board of Game for the Southeast Region are Units 1–5.

PROPOSAL 17

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

Change the bag limit for grouse in the Southeast Region as follows:

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

Grouse:

Units 1-6: Five per day, ten in possession..... Aug 1-May 15, only males between March 15-May-15.

Given the method for targeting grouse in the spring (locating calling males), and ease of differentiation between males and females during the spring season this regulation will help conserve grouse populations while having minimal impact on the average grouse hunter. Many hunters are already motivated to only harvest males, but not all hunters limit their take to males. Because hens cluster near calling males on the ground or low in nearby trees they are often easy prey along side a hooting male. Killing hens during the spring season, means removing birds who are just about to start laying the next generation and have survived winter.

Protect the future of grouse hunting, save the hens!

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

While there aren't conservation concerns regarding grouse populations at a game unit or regional scale, local populations — especially near urban areas with many trails and roads — suffer from intense hunting pressure. Not all hunters consider the impacts of removing reproducing females. Elders anecdotally report hearing diminished hooting and complain that birds are only located in higher and more difficult to reach locations.

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

I discussed this proposal with other three other current grouse hunters, and four elders who have hunted or bird watched for at least 70 years each. I asked one elder grouse hunter who has since aged out of the sport and one current Audubon member.

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