

PROPOSAL 36

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

Shift the ptarmigan season in Unit 1C to start August 15 instead of August 1 as follows:

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

Shift the ptarmigan Unit 1C season back from August 1 to August 15 – May 15 (still 20/day, 40 in possession).

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

Unit 1C offers exceptional access to alpine and backcountry areas via established trail systems, making it a popular destination for ptarmigan hunting. As accessibility and interest have increased, so too has hunting pressure. In recent years, hunters have observed that many ptarmigan broods in Unit 1C experience late spring hatches. During the first week of August, when the season currently opens, chicks are often still small and closely reliant on hens.

To address these observations, I recommend shifting the opening date of the ptarmigan hunting season back by 15 days, to August 15. This modest delay would allow chicks additional time to mature and would result in a more sustainable harvest and slightly larger birds, ensuring better use of the birds taken.

While the Alaska Department of Fish & Game has not identified a conservation concern for ptarmigan in Southeast Alaska, it also does not currently conduct population monitoring in the region. In the absence of hard data, and given these consistent field observations by hunters, a precautionary adjustment to the season start date is a responsible step.

Hunting ptarmigan is an enjoyable and accessible way to introduce new hunters, especially youth, to upland bird hunting. However, our primary responsibility is to ensure the resource is respected and well-utilized. This change supports that goal.

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

Yes, consulted ADF&G for scientific data. Spoke with Juneau-Douglas AC members.

PROPOSED BY: Mary Graves

(OI-F25-227)
