

PROPOSAL 49

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Change the season start date for wolf trapping in Unit 2 to December 15 or January 1 as follows:

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

Proposal: The Klawock Advisory Committee proposes to change the wolf harvest start date in Unit 2 to: Dec. 15 or Jan. 1

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

The Sitka Blacktail deer population on Prince of Wales Island (PoW) crashed in 2017, 2018 & 2019 mainly due to the increase in wolf population from 2015-2019.

Between 1985 and 2001 the wolf harvest on PoW ranged from 18-132 wolves and the season length was Dec. 1-March 31 with no closures and no limit.

In 1993, the 1st petition to list the Alexander Archipelago wolves under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was filed and Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game (ADF&G) defeated it.

In 2011, a 2nd petition was filed and ADF&G countered with a wolf management change in 2015 to avoid the listing.

In 2015, wolves on PoW were managed under a quota system resulting in the following harvest:

2015: 7 total wolves harvested
2016: 30 total wolves harvested
2017: 62 total wolves harvested
2018: 46 total wolves harvested

The 2018 deer season was dramatic for many of us. We saw more wolf scat with deer bones/hair in it than we saw deer. Nearly every mountain, road, beach, etc. had wolf scat on it and our deer were very hard to find since so many died from wolves.

In 2019, ADF&G changed wolf management to its current format of a variable season length which resulted in the harvest of 164 wolves. This increase in wolf harvest triggered the 3rd petition to list the Alexander Archipelago wolves under the ESA in July of 2020.

With a lot of effort, ADF&G defeated the petition again and has continued to manage wolves under its current format of a tight season length to control the take.

The current start date for wolf trapping is November 15 but there are multiple issues with this early start date.

Six years ago, the wolf trapping season start date was moved from December 1st to November 15th and there have been many conflicts:

- 1) The deer are still rutting and the deer bycatch in snares is a real problem.
- 2) Many black bear are still out and the black bear bycatch in snares is a real problem as well as bears destroying traps/snares.

- 3) There are lots of hunters in the field in November and many have come across wolves caught in traps/snares and have taken/shot the wolves and not reported them since the current regulation of unmarked traps is still in effect. The hunters dispatch the wolf and don't know who to contact.
- 4) ADF&G is still conducting their wolf hair board studies until December 5 and the extra human presence in the field negatively affects the wolf trappers.
- 5) There are still waterfowl hunters in the field at this time and the tide flats see more human pressure also influencing the wolves and negatively affecting the trappers.
- 6) Many trappers would prefer to start trapping in December after the hides are fully prime; which most agree don't become prime until Dec. 1.
- 7) November weather is generally worse than December and also negatively affects the trappers.
- 8) There is a proposal to change the federal subsistence wolf trapping start date to December 15.

Respectfully,

The Klawock Fish & Game Advisory Committee

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

PROPOSED BY: Klawock Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(OI-F25-020)
