

PROPOSAL 50

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Move the start date of the wolf trapping season in Unit 2 to December 15 as follows:

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

Proposal: Move the start date of wolf trapping season in Unit 2 to Dec. 15.

If adopted the regulation would read: Unit 2 wolf trapping season start date: Dec. 15th.

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

The East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee would like to move the start date for wolf trapping from November 15 to December 15.

Since the wolf trapping season start date was moved from December 1 to November 15 start date six years ago, there has been an overwhelming increase in conflicts with other user groups and black bears. These user groups include deer hunters, waterfowl hunters and biologists conducting the wolf population study on the Unit 2 wolves. Having a later start date would reduce these conflicts.

Unit 2 is made up of Prince of Wales Island (PoW) and many smaller islands. PoW is one of the most accessible areas in the entire state with easy access from a daily ferry and planes from Ketchikan combined with over 2000 miles of roads. The shoreline and surrounding islands are also easily accessed by boat. The current November 15th start date overlaps the deer rut and PoW gets a lot of off island deer hunters as well as many local deer hunters.

Several wolf trappers are setting their traps and having deer hunters come across them while in the process.

Waterfowl hunters are also hunting during this time and conflicts arise with wolf trappers who set their gear at the heads of the bays in the tide flats that are also frequented by waterfowl hunters and their dogs.

Southeast Alaska is a temperate rain forest generally with warmer falls and mild winters. Many trappers prefer to wait and trap later in December because the pelts don't get fully prime until December 1. Currently, the short 30 day wolf trapping season in Unit 2, forces the wolf trappers to start November 15 when many of the pelts are not fully prime.

Another issue the trappers are having is catching black bear in their sets. There are still significant numbers of bears out in November and several have reported accidentally catching black bear; mostly in November. This issue will be resolved by moving the start date to December 15.

The most important reason to change the start date are the conflicts with the wolf population study. It has been voiced at many wolf meetings with ADF&G and USFS that the study is in direct competition with the wolf trappers. Over the years, ADF&G has either agreed or remained neutral that a change in the start date would be beneficial for them. Wolf study staff have had run-ins with wolf trappers and their gear when they are conducting an essential study to manage the wolf

population. Their study concludes in early December so this conflict would also be resolved by moving to December 15.

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

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F25-042)
