

Regionwide and Multiple Units

PROPOSAL 1

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Prohibit the take of big game animals between civil twilight of sunset until civil twilight of sunrise the following day in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

5AAC 92.085 Unlawful methods of taking big game.

Add the following unlawful method of taking big game: In Units 1-5, its unlawful to take any big game animal from civil twilight of sunset until civil twilight of sunrise the following day.

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

In Southeast Alaska (SE AK), it's currently unlawful to take a big game animal with the use of an artificial light, electronic night vision, or forward-looking infrared device. Furthermore, its unlawful to use artificial light to illuminate deer from a motorized land vehicle in Units 1-5.

The issue is some are interpreting the regulations that they can pursue deer in SE AK with artificial light. When they choose to harvest a deer at nighttime, the artificial light is shut off just before the person takes the animal.

For example, a person will drive a truck down a road on Prince of Wales Island. with a large LED light bar, then after they spot a deer to shoot near the road illuminated in the light, they will turn off the light just prior to shooting the deer.

In the Prince of Wales court system, judges and juries are having an issue with "take with artificial light". If the lights are shut off just prior to the person pulling the trigger, are they actually guilty? Some believe the person is not guilty and the defendant is getting away with it.

Currently, Alaska doesn't have shooting hours like many lower 48 states but this proposal would implement hard shooting hours to prevent these spotlight users.

A new issue in SE AK is the recent passage of the statewide regulation allowing furbearers to be taken with the aid of electronic night vision or forward-looking infrared devices. This complicates things for enforcement and gives an advantage for those who do not follow the principles of ethical hunting. These types of hunters can now immediately pursue big game under complete darkness and use the excuse they are only hunting furbearers.

The best solution is to pass a regulation for shooting hours in Units 1-5 for all big game.

After discussions with SE AK Wildlife Troopers, research, and by experimenting, we recommend using civil twilight shooting hours for SE Alaska since our twilights hours are extended because we are so further north than others states.

Civil Twilight begins in the morning or ends in the evening when the geometric center of the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon. Therefore, morning civil twilight begins when the geometric center of the sun is 6 degrees below the horizon.

Civil twilight starts quite a bit earlier than the standard lower 48 shooting times of 30 minutes prior to sunrise and ends quite a bit later than the standard 30 minutes after sunset.

There are civil twilight shooting tables available online and it would be easy enough to publish the civil twilight shooting hours for SE AK. The characteristics of civil twilight are; the horizon is clearly defined, only the brightest stars and planets can be seen, artificial light is not typically needed for outdoor activities.

It was discussed to use the typical definition of 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunrise but the civil twilight definition best fits Alaska because we are further north and our twilight lasts longer than other states.

A quick internet search revealed over 50 available apps showing civil twilight hours. A person hunting without flashlight, spotlight, electronic night vision or forward-looking infrared device, will not have to worry about looking up civil twilight hours. It's just too dark to be shooting between the sunset civil twilight and sunrise civil twilight times.

Anyone with concerns will understand after they experiment by trial that they don't need to bother looking up shooting hours because it's just too dark to hunt after civil twilight.

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

The East Prince of Wales Advisory Committee is proposing this reg change for both the state and federal subsistence seasons in Units 1-5.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F25-045)

PROPOSAL 2

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Prohibit the take of deer between civil twilight of sunset until civil twilight of sunrise the following day in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

5AAC 92.085 Unlawful methods of taking big game.

Add the following unlawful method of taking deer: In Game Management Units 1-5, its unlawful to take any deer from civil twilight of sunset until civil twilight of sunrise the following day.

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

In Southeast Alaska (SE AK), it's currently unlawful to take a big game animal with the use of an artificial light, electronic night vision, or forward-looking infrared device. Furthermore, it's unlawful to use artificial light to illuminate deer from a motorized land vehicle in Units 1-5.

The issue is some are interpreting the regulations that they can pursue deer in SE AK with artificial light. When they choose to harvest a deer at nighttime, the artificial light is shut off just before the person takes the animal.

For example, a person will drive a truck down a road on Prince of Wales Island. with a large LED light bar, then after they spot a deer to shoot near the road illuminated in the light, they will turn off the light just prior to shooting the deer.

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Currently, Alaska doesn't have shooting hours like many lower 48 states but this proposal would implement hard shooting hours to prevent these spotlight users.

A new issue in SE AK is the recent passage of the statewide regulation allowing furbearers to be taken with the aid of electronic night vision or forward-looking infrared devices. This complicates things for enforcement and gives an advantage for those who do not follow the principles of ethical hunting. These types of hunters can now immediately pursue big game under complete darkness and use the excuse they are only hunting furbearers.

The best solution is to pass a regulation for shooting hours in Units 1-5 for taking deer.

After discussions with SE AK Wildlife Troopers, research, and by experimenting, we recommend using civil twilight shooting hours for SE Alaska since our twilights hours are extended because we are further north than others states

Civil Twilight begins in the morning or ends in the evening when the geometric center of the sun is six degrees below the horizon. Therefore, morning civil twilight begins when the geometric center of the sun is six degrees below the horizon.

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There are civil twilight shooting tables available online and it would be easy enough to publish the civil twilight shooting hours for SE AK. The characteristics of civil twilight are; the horizon is clearly defined, only the brightest stars and planets can be seen, artificial light is not typically needed for outdoor activities.

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will not have to worry about looking up civil twilight hours. It's just too dark to be shooting between the sunset civil twilight and sunrise civil twilight times.

Anyone with concerns will understand after they experiment by trial that they don't need to bother looking up shooting hours because it's just too dark to hunt after civil twilight.

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-F25-047)

PROPOSAL 3

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Allow the same day airborne take of goats in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

The new regulation would state that same-day airborne hunting for mountain goats is allowed in Units 1-5.

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

Currently same day airborne hunting for mountain goats is illegal in Units 1-5. Allowing same day airborne hunting for mountain goats would increase safety and accessibility. Weather in Southeast Alaska ultimately controls mountain goat hunting. Hunts take place in the remote backcountry of these units with weather being very hard to plan around in small high elevation lakes. Hunters and pilots who make trips into remote lakes would be less likely to take chances getting in or out of lakes in marginal weather if allowed to hunt the same day airborne and it would allow people that are able to get to the hunting areas with reasonable time an opportunity to hunt in nice weather. When planning a mountain goat hunt many are based on a schedule of days off. Being that the weather is able to change so rapidly and unannounced allowing for people to hunt on the same day that they fly increases opportunity and brings cost down for the individual as a 5 day hunt is cheaper than a 10 day hunt.

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

Yes, this proposal was discussed with and agreed upon by the Ketchikan Advisory Committee

PROPOSED BY: Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F25-189)

PROPOSAL 4

5 AAC 92.130. Restrictions to bag limits

Amend the definition of a "taken" mountain goat in Units 1-5 to align with the definition of a "taken" brown bear in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

Proposal: I propose amending the Alaska hunting regulations to align the definition of a "taken" mountain goat with that of a bear in Units 1-5. Specifically, a mountain goat struck by a projectile (e.g., bullet or arrow) should be considered "taken," regardless of whether the animal is retrieved, mirroring the existing regulation for bears in these units. This regulation would mirror the existing bear regulation (5 AAC 92.130) and apply to Unit 1-5 where mountain goats are managed under a weighted point harvest system (male = 1 point, female = 2 points).

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

Rationale:

Consistency Across Species: The current regulation for bears in Units 1-5 (5 AAC 92.130) defines a bear as taken when struck by a projectile, promoting ethical hunting practices and accountability. Extending this definition to mountain goats ensures consistency in harvest reporting and enforcement across big game species in these units.

Frequent Mid-Season Closures Due to Point System: Mountain goat populations in Unit 1-5 are managed using a weighted point system to ensure sustainable harvest. Recent years have seen multiple emergency orders issued by the Unit 1 biologist to close hunting seasons mid-season when harvest points are reached. For example, in 2023, closures were enacted in portions of Unit 1C (e.g., Mt. Kluchman, South Tracy Arm) due to reaching point limits (Emergency Orders R1-8-23, R1-23-24). Defining a goat as taken when struck by a projectile would improve harvest tracking accuracy, potentially reducing the need for abrupt closures.

Ethical Hunting Practices: Mountain goats inhabit rugged, remote terrain, making retrieval of a wounded animal challenging. Defining a goat as taken upon being struck encourages hunters to make responsible shot selections, reducing the likelihood of wounding and loss.

Population Management: Accurate harvest data is critical for sustainable management of mountain goat populations. Counting a goat as taken when struck ensures more precise reporting, aiding the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in monitoring populations and setting quotas.

Public Safety and Fairness: Aligning regulations for mountain goats with those for bears reduces confusion among hunters, enhancing compliance and fairness in enforcement.

Implementation: Amend 5 AAC 92.130 to include mountain goats in the definition of "taken" for Units 1 and 4, as follows:

"In Units 1-5 a *mountain goat* or bear is considered taken when it is struck by a projectile, regardless of whether the animal is retrieved." In Units 1-5, *goats* and bears wounded by a hunter count toward the bag limit for the regulatory year but not the every-four-regulatory-year bag limit.

“wounded” means there is a sign of blood or other sign that the animal has been hit by a hunting projectile.

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

Submitted to Juneau -Douglas Advisory Committee via email. Over several years, I have coordinated through discussion, field experience, and networking with outer mountain goat hunters in Southeast Alaska on this much needed change.

PROPOSED BY: David Summers (OI-F25-077)

PROPOSAL 5

5 AAC 85.020. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

Increase the brown bear bag limit in Unit 1 Remainder, to one bear every regulatory year instead of one bear every four regulatory years as follows:

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

Remainder of Unit 1: Sept. 15 - Dec. 31 (General hunt only) Mar. 15 - May 31 (General hunt only) 1 bear EVERY REGULATORY YEAR by registration permit only.

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

Several southeast brown bear areas are overly restricted from hunting opportunity by the one bear every four regulatory years bag limit. Parts of Unit 1 are already set at one bear every regulatory year, the remainder of Unit 1 should follow suit to open up more hunting opportunities for residents and nonresidents alike.

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

No.

PROPOSED BY: Trevor Embry (OI-F25-168)

PROPOSAL 6

5 AAC 85.056. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf.

Align the wolf hunting seasons in Unit 1 by extending the seasons for Units 1B, 1C and 1D to May 31 as follows:

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

Align all of the wolf seasons in Unit 1 to: August 1- May 31.

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

I would like to see more opportunity to harvest wolves in Unit 1 by aligning all of the seasons in the spring to end May 31st. I enjoy bear hunting in the spring and I see good numbers of wolves out during May. It would be nice to be able to hunt wolves during the nice weather in May. I'm not worried about the impacts to the wolf population because there are many portions of Unit 1 that are not accessible to hunters. Because of the large portions of Unit 1 are refugia. I think the limited amount of extra harvest will be insignificant to the wolf population.

The bottom line is this proposal will have the effect of allowing some more opportunity that will have no impact on the greater wolf population. I expect very very low participation and similarly low additional harvest.

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

I did not discuss this proposal with ADF&G or any local fish and game advisory committees.

PROPOSED BY: Jon Geary (OI-F25-136)

PROPOSAL 7

5 AAC 85.056. Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf.

Align the wolf hunting seasons in Unit 1 by extending the seasons in Units 1A, 1B and 1C to May 31 as follows:

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

This proposal seeks to change the wolf hunting season in all of Unit 1A, 1B, and 1C with a season from August 1 to May 31.

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

Unit 1 wolf hunting dates are split up with Unit 1A and B (south of Bradfield Canal and the east fork of the Bradfield River) having a season of August 1 to May 31, and Unit 1A, 1B, and 1C Remainder, having a season of August 1 to April 30.

This proposal seeks to simplify the wolf hunting season in all of Unit 1 with a season from August 1 to May 31 in order to maximize hunting opportunities for hunters.

Hunters, both resident and nonresident will have more opportunity to take a wolf when they are spring bear hunting. The state will benefit with income from nonresident hunters purchasing a tag. By not consolidating this season, hunters who are fortunate enough to see a wolf while spring bear hunting after April 30 will be deprived this opportunity of harvesting a wolf.

It should be noted that wolf population numbers in Southeast Alaska have always been healthy and sustainable.

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

I talked with other Unit 1 hunters and one guide who support this

PROPOSED BY: Jesse Ross

(OI-F25-237)

PROPOSAL 8

5 AAC 85.XXX. Seasons and bag limits for cougars/mountain lion.

Establish an open season for hunting cougar 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?

Season: August 1 thru June 15.

Limit: One cougar every regulatory year.

Salvage Requirements: Skull and hide

Sealing Requirements: Skull and hide will be presented for sealing within 15 days of kill.

(Sealing requirements were added if ADF&G wants to collect data.)

Closed to take of females with kittens and kittens. (kittens defined as young cougars with spots.)

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

Cougars seem to be migrating into Southeast Alaska. Cougars are an ambush predator. This style of predation is unknown to prey species in southeast Alaska. This will be extremely detrimental to prey species populations. There is currently no open hunting season for cougar.

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

Wrangell Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(HQ-F25-012)

PROPOSAL 9

5 AAC 85.XXX. Seasons and bag limits for cougar/mountain lion.

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Establish hunting and trapping regulations for taking mountain lion 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?

I ask the department of create a hunting and trapping regulation for mountain lions with a limit of one mountain lion, and no closed season.

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

Currently there is no regulated harvest of mountain lion despite evidence of thier presence and growing population.

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

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin (OI-F25-164)

PROPOSAL 10

5 AAC 92.170. Sealing of marten, fisher, lynx, beaver, otter, wolf, and wolverine.

Remove the sealing requirement for beaver in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

Remove the sealing requirement for beaver in Units 1-5.

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

Beavers are required to be sealed in Units 1-5. Typically, sealing is done to gather population data to help manage a species that may be at risk due to overharvest because of the species' high dollar value or low population. Beaver in Units 1-5 are not a high dollar value species nor are do they have a low population. The sealing requirement is inconvenient to trappers and is accomplishing nothing from a management standpoint.

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

The Juneau Douglas Advsiory Committee (JDAC) has not met prior to the proposal deadline. The member holding the trapping seat on the JDAC is supportive of this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr (OI-F25-144)

PROPOSAL 11

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Allow the use of cameras or other sensory devices that can send messages through wireless communication for trapping furbearers in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

Remove the section of the trapping regulations that prohibits the taking of furbearers with aid of "any camera or other sensory device that can send messages through wireless communication".

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

The trapping regulations state: "YOU MAY NOT... take furbearers with the aid of....any camera or other sensory device that can send messages through wireless communication"

This portion of the trapping regulations prohibits the use cellular game cameras. This prohibition appears to come from hunting regulations, where it has some applicability. In trapping, having a cellular game camera does not aid in the successful trapping of animals - the animals still have to enter a trap on their own. But it would be useful in helping to collect real time evidence of trap tampering. It would also be helpful in potentially alerting a trapper of an animal in a trap, though it would not reduce the responsibility of a trapper to regularly check their traps. Nor would it replace that responsibility, especially in Southeast Alaska, where weather forces regular re-adjustment, re-setting and re-luring of traps and snares.

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

The Juneau Douglas Advisory Committee (JDAC) has not met prior to the Board of Game proposal submission deadline. The member holding the trapping seat on the JDAC is supportive of this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr

(OI-F25-146)

PROPOSAL 12

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Prohibit the use of night vision devices for taking furbearers in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

Allow the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers statewide **except for Unit 1-5**.

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

The statewide use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers will create problems in Units 1-5. Units 1-5 are predominately densely covered areas with fewer species of predators.

Allowing the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices would possibly increase the take of non furbearer species such as deer, moose and bears. Enforcement would also be an issue.

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

Informal discussions with residents of Prince of Wales and Ketchikan.

PROPOSED BY: Ellen Hannan and Kurt Whitehead (OI-F25-215)

PROPOSAL 13

5 AAC 92.080. Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Prohibit the use of night vision for taking furbearers in Units 1-5, during state and federal deer seasons as follows:

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

Allow the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers statewide except for Unit 1-5 during any open federal or state deer season.

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

The statewide use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices for taking furbearers will create problems in Units 1-5. Units 1-5 are predominately densely covered areas with fewer species of predators.

Allowing the use of electronically enhanced night vision and forward-looking infrared devices would possibly increase the take of non furbearer species such as deer, moose and bears. Enforcement would also be an issue.

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

Informal discussions with residents of Prince of Wales and Ketchikan.

PROPOSED BY: Ellen Hannan and Kurt Whitehead (OI-F25-217)

PROPOSAL 14

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Change the bag limit for taking fisher from one to three per season in Southeast Region units as follows:

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

Change the bag limit for fishers in Southeast Alaska (Unit(s)) from one/season to three/season.

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

Sign and sightings of fisher, particularly on trap lines, have been increasing and winter conditions are trending more favorable for their preferred habitat.

During a recent (March) Juneau Chapter of the Alaska Trappers Association (ATA) meeting local trappers discussed fisher harvest and while no one was specifically targeting fisher, we have caught fisher in other sets. It was a good step in the right direction to allow one fisher per season while ADF&G was doing more research on fisher, however with the additional information showing that fisher populations have expanded and are continuing to expand it would be valuable to trappers to be able to utilize the resource and also valuable information to ADF&G on fisher harvest if the bag limit was expanded.

In a study conducted in 2018 by Kupferman, Crupi, Waits, and Gilbert, fisher prevalence was shown to correlate positively with vegetation height, and detection decreased with increased snow density. Changing environmental condition and years without much snow have resulted in trappers and hunters seeing more sign of fishers in southeast Alaska. While not every trapper targets them, they are often caught in the same type of sets as used for marten and wolverine. Additional information gleaned from trapper harvest can continue to inform where fisher are shifting to and inform on what they are eating through coordinating with trappers to gather harvest information and any specimens/carcasses for study. It is important to further understand the impact of the fisher on marten populations as those have been and will be a mainstay of Alaskan trapping.

This recommendation is to expand the fisher trapping annual harvest to three fisher.

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

Yes, discussed with the local Alaska Trappers Association.

PROPOSED BY: Rueben Graves

(OI-F25-188)

PROPOSAL 15

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Remove the bag limit for trapping fisher in Units 1-5 as follows:

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

Remove the limit on fisher in Units 1-5.

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

Trapping regulations in Units 1-5 have a limit of one fisher per year. Fisher are not an animal that can be reliably targeted in Southeast Alaska; rather, fisher take is incidental to marten trapping. A limit of one fisher means that many trappers will simply have any fisher they catch in excess of the limit sealed in the following year. In order to have accurate reporting, removing the fisher limit is a commonsense approach.

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

The Juneau Douglas Advisory Committee has not met prior to the Board of Game proposal submission date. The member holding the trapping seat is supportive of this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Nicholas Orr (OI-F25-145)

PROPOSAL 16

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

Shift the season dates for hunting migratory birds and waterfowl in Units 1-5 to October 8-January 22 as follows:

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

Migratory birds and waterfowl hunt dates for Units 1-5 Southeast (OCTOBER 8-JANUARY 22).

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

The board should alter the Units 1-5 Southeast waterfowl hunt dates to October 8-January 22.

Switching the dates to these later dates gives waterfowl hunters in the region the best opportunity at harvesting large mature birds in their prime. The change of dates also gives guides and outfitters the ability to hunt waterfowl into January creating a new source of income that is otherwise not available as the current season sits. Having the dates moved back later also gives young hunters who may be off at school a time to hunt while home on Christmas break which often extends into the new year by multiple days. This proposal also gives waterfowl hunters targeting sea ducks and diver ducks the best opportunity at harvesting birds for trophy quality. Along with sea ducks and diver ducks it also gives hunters opportunity at hunting mallards and geese in the later part of the season once they are pushed down from the northern regions.

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

Yes, this proposal was discussed and agreed upon by the Ketchikan Advsiory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee (OI-F25-171)

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.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Robertson

(OI-F25-233)

PROPOSAL 18

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

Shift the hunting season for grouse in Units 1-5 to August 10 through May 31 as follows:

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

Change the start date to August 10, (to align with other units) and extend the close date to May 31.

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

Sooty Grouse (formerly Blue Grouse, locally referred to as “Hooters”), is a favorite pastime of hunters in Southeast. Sooty’s are targeted during their breeding season in April and May, as males are hooting to acquire potential mates. This is a great opportunity to introduce kids to hunting, but often time access to these birds is limited by snow covered roads, hillsides and inclement weather. The window of opportunity is often small, and the season always ends just as the snow has melted and access has been made easier. Conversely, the season opens on August 1, the same as deer season. During this time, broods of immature grouse are still together and are often harvested opportunistically in their entirety alongside the road.

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

This proposal has been discussed and submitted by the Wrangell Advisory Committee with its full support.

PROPOSED BY: Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F25-013)
