

PROPOSAL 76

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

Extend the ptarmigan season and the lower bag limit in Unit 13B and 13E as follows:

I understand the criticality of holding a stable population in an area and support that, but the changes last year were too dramatic in cutting the season so short. While I don't see any decrease in birds, I would suggest an alternative: decreasing the bag limit to five per day, per person, and increasing the time back to March 31, in both Unit 13B and 13E, areas that are susceptible to more traffic along the Denali and Richardson Highways.

Decreasing hunting opportunities is always bad for the sport, when populations are healthy. There are many new hunters coming into the sport that birds offer an opportunity to get those new hunters interested and active, and many of those used to hunt in the March season, when the temperatures and weather are a little more comfortable. I have rarely ever bagged ten birds in a day, and I don't know many people that do that consistently. This option gives us more time in the field with at least a chance at getting a few birds for dinner.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Ptarmigan hunting. The season was recently cut back in Unit 13E to February 15 (was March 31). The season was increased in 13B to February 15, (was November 30). Numbers of birds have been stable and doing well in both units by my personal view, living in the middle of those units and being in the field more than 250 days a year for the last 11 years. Hunting pressure in the area has increased due to the increased caribou tags that have been put out in recent years, pushing the birds away from the roads, but they are still there.

PROPOSED BY: Claude Bondy

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