

Ketchikan Area & Prince of Wales Island – Units 1A & 2

PROPOSAL 33

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

Open a drawing hunt for mountain goat on the Cleveland Peninsula in Units 1A and 1B as follows:

Open to both residents and nonresidents. Unit 1A, 1B Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. Bag limit: one male goat by permit only. Create new drawing permit area offering two permits, bag limit: one billy, August 1 – December 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? No open season for mountain goat in Unit 1A, 1B on the Cleveland Peninsula, south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. This proposal is intended to provide trophy class hunt for mature billies; harvest of billies only. This will allow hunters to utilize a harvestable population of mature trophy class billies that would otherwise be missed. Those who are likely to benefit if the proposal is adopted will be hunters interested in harvesting a trophy class mountain goat and nobody is likely to suffer.

PROPOSED BY: Ed Toribio

(HQ-F18-033)

PROPOSAL 34

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

Open a registration hunt for mountain goat on the Cleveland Peninsula in Units 1A and 1B as follows:

Open to both residents and nonresidents. Unit 1A, 1B Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. Bag limit: one male goat by permit only. Create new registration hunt requiring hunters to register for ten-day period subject to emergency closure by the Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) after two goats have been harvested. Season: August 1 – December 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? No open season for mountain goat in Unit 1A, 1B on the Cleveland Peninsula, south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet. If area is not opened, an opportunity for hunters to utilize a harvestable population of mature trophy class billies is missed. This proposal will improve the quality of the resource by allowing the harvest of billies only. Those who are likely to benefit if the proposal is adopted will be hunters interested in harvesting a trophy class mountain goat and nobody is likely to suffer.

PROPOSED BY: Ed Toribio

(HQ-F18-034)

PROPOSAL 35

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goat.

Change the hunt structure for Revillagigedo Island mountain goat in Unit 1A as follows:

For Unit 1A, eliminate the mountain goat drawing hunt DG007 and add that hunt area to the RG001 hunt area, Remainder of Revillagigedo Island, and increase the allowable number of drawing permits that may be issued on Revillagigedo Island from 25 to 50 permits.

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(1) Unit 1(A), Revillagigedo Island, except that portion [WEST OF CARROLL INLET AND CREEK, WEST OF THE DIVIDE BETWEEN CARROLL CREEK AND THE SOUTH FORK OF ORCHARD CREEK, SOUTH OF ORCHARD CREEK, ORCHARD LAKE, SHRIMP BAY, AND GEDNEY PASS] <u>south and west from Donnelly Point to Naha Bay, Roosevelt Lagoon, Naha River, and Heckman Lake, the divide between Heckman Lake and the head of Salt Lagoon and the western shores of Salt Lagoon and George Inlet to Mountain Point</u>	Aug. 1—Dec. 31 (General hunt only)	Aug. 1—Dec. 31
1 goat by registration permit only; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited		
Unit 1(A), remainder of Revillagigedo Island	Aug. 1—Dec. 31	Aug. 1—Dec. 31
1 goat by draw permit only; up to [25] 50 permits will be issued; the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited		

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Despite the Department of Fish and Game (department) steadily increasing the number of drawing permits available, the mountain goat population on northern Revillagigedo Island continues to increase. Mild winters, limited predation, and good habitat conditions likely account for this growth. However, additional growth of this population could risk damage to fragile alpine habitat. The department believes this portion of Revillagigedo Island can support more goat hunting and harvest than allowed under the current maximum number of draw permits (25) that may be issued. To better manage this population and provide additional hunting opportunity, we propose eliminating draw hunt DG007, adding the DG007 hunt area to the RG001 hunt area, and increasing the maximum number of drawing permits that may be issued from 25 to 50 permits. These changes will enable the department to conserve goat habitat and provide additional hunting opportunity when goat numbers are high, while still controlling goat hunting effort in more easily accessed areas near Ketchikan through drawing permits.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-068)

PROPOSAL 36

5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.

Increase the bag limit for deer in Unit 1A as follows:

Deer

Unit 1A: Cleveland Peninsula south of the divide between Yes Bay and Santa Anna Inlet

Four bucks, August 1 – November 30

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Deer – Return the southern part of the Cleveland Peninsula to four bucks, August 1 – November 30 in Unit 1A.

PROPOSED BY: Robert Jahnke (EG-F18-025)

PROPOSAL 37

5 AAC 92.108. Identified big game prey populations and objectives.

Reduce the harvest objective for deer in Unit 1A from 700 to 350–400 as follows:

Population	Finding	Population Objective	Harvest Objective
Deer			
GMU 1 (A)	Positive	15,000	<u>350–400</u> [700]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? For the purposes of implementing AS 16.05.255(e) – (g), in 2000 the Alaska Board of Game (board) established intensive management (IM) population and harvest objectives for deer in Unit 1A at 15,000 deer and 700 deer, respectively (5 AAC 92.108). The IM population objective was developed by

assessing the deer habitat carrying capacity within the unit and the local Area Biologist's subjective assessment of where the unit's deer population stood relative to carrying capacity at that time. The IM deer harvest objective was developed using the unit's average estimated annual deer harvest from 1994-1998 plus an additional 10%.

Since the 1994–1998 period, significant declines in carrying capacity for deer, primarily resulting from transition of productive young clearcuts to closed canopy second-growth forest, have occurred. In years with deep snow loss of old-growth forest, wintering habitat can also result in high overwinter mortality. Wolves and black bears are present throughout the unit. Harvest of both species has remained fairly constant over the last two decades and we believe changes in habitat play a far greater role than predation in regulating deer abundance.

Although the Department of Fish and Game (department) does not have a reliable way to estimate deer abundance in the entire unit, trends in deer pellet-group counts suggest deer numbers have declined. Mean annual harvest for the last 20 years (regulatory year (RY) 1997 – RY2016) is only 294 deer with a peak of 508 deer in RY1998; well below the current 700-deer harvest objective. A decline in the number of hunters may also influence harvest. In 1993, there were an estimated 2,335 deer hunters in Ketchikan. That number dropped to 1,575 in 2001 and by 2003 it was only 1,167. This decline was influenced by the closing of the pulp mill in 1997 and changes in demographics for the Ketchikan area. Hunter effort in Unit 1A has also declined because more Ketchikan hunters are focusing their effort on nearby Prince of Wales Island. That island has more deer, greater road access, and daily ferry service from Ketchikan.

Currently, there is no viable way to significantly improve the value of second-growth forest as habitat for deer, particularly as winter habitat. Without higher deer numbers it is unlikely that hunters will make greater effort in Unit 1A. Consequently, it is also unlikely that the current harvest objective will be met in the foreseeable future. The department suggests that in such cases harvest objectives should be reasonably attainable and recommends reducing the annual harvest objective for deer in Unit 1A to 350–400 deer. Harvest exceeded 350 deer twice during RY2007 – RY2016.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-038)

PROPOSAL 38

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the trapping season for beaver in Unit 1A as follows:

The beaver season in Unit 1A continues two weeks into May.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like for the trapping season for beaver to be extended two additional weeks going into May. There are many remote locations made inaccessible by winter snow and ice but would be opened up by the end of April and into May. We are missing out on a lot of good beaver trapping. There are many areas overpopulated with beaver that can be hazardous to their population and hazardous to the ecosystem. All trappers in Unit 1A will benefit if this solution is adopted. As for those who

would suffer – my wife, because then I can trap two more weeks. Other solutions considered: We could add two more weeks in November, however, at that time the beaver kits are big enough to trigger a trap. In May, all the beaver are at least one year old or still in the den.

PROPOSED BY: Chad Crittenden (HQ-F18-007)

PROPOSAL 39

5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.

Shorten the hunting season for deer in Unit 2 as follows:

The deer season will be August 1 to **November 30.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The deer population in Unit 2 is low at the present time and we feel that reducing the season length will help. Record deer hunter numbers, a very high wolf population and extensive old growth logging are all contributing factors to our low deer numbers.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F18-028)

PROPOSAL 40

5 AAC 85.030. Hunting seasons and bag limits for deer.

Decrease the nonresident bag limit for deer in Unit 2 as follows:

The limit for nonresident deer will be restricted to two buck deer annually.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lower nonresident deer harvest to two antlered deer annually in Unit 2. The deer population is declining, so limiting the nonresident harvest will help some.

The advisory committee considered lowering the resident bag limit, but because of federal subsistence bag limits, it would result in inconsistent limits between state, private, and federal lands.

In consideration of other states’ nonresident deer bag limits, we felt that a four-deer bag limit for nonresidents is excessive. Looking to the future, having such a high bag limit for nonresidents burdens resident harvesters of the resource in the end. We believe that current guiding operations would not suffer due to lowering the nonresident bag limit from four to two bucks.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F18-029)

PROPOSAL 41

5 AAC 92.010. Harvest tickets and reports.

In Unit 2, require harvest tickets for deer be attached at the time of harvest as follows:

Deer tags (harvest tickets) must be attached to the animal (either on the antlers or hocks) at the time of harvest and stay there until the point of processing.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We feel that too many deer are being taken and the tag (harvest ticket) not filled out. We would like to see the tags have to be attached to the deer (either on the antlers or hock) when the deer is harvested and stay attached until it is at the location of processing. Harvest tickets are difficult to enforce and requiring them to be attached to the animal upon harvest would assist in enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F18-030)

PROPOSAL 42

5 AAC 92.008(1). Harvest guideline levels.

Increase the annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 as follows:

5 AAC 92.008(1) would be modified to read:

"(1) wolves: the annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should not exceed **30** [20] percent of the **most recent** unit-wide, preseason population estimated by the department;"

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) seeks to increase the allowable take of wolves in Unit 2. The Council is concerned that previous quotas implemented have been too conservative and that the reductions in those harvest quotas during the 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 hunting and trapping seasons were not reflective of the actual wolf population for Unit 2.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EG-F18-016)

PROPOSAL 43

5 AAC 84.270(13). Furbearer trapping.

5 AAC 85.056(1). Hunting seasons and bag limits for wolf.

5 AAC 92.008. Harvest guideline levels.

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

Change the harvest management strategy for wolf in Unit 2 as follows:

5 AAC 84.270(13) is amended to read:

Species and Units	Open Season	Bag Limit
(1) Wolf		

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Unit 2	Dec. 1—Mar. 31	No limit; <u>season may be closed by emergency order.</u>
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5 AAC 85.056(1) is amended to read:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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(1)

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Unit 2	Dec. 1—Mar. 31	Dec. 1—Mar. 31
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5 wolves

5 AAC 92.008 is amended to read:

(1) Wolves: The annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should **be managed to maintain the unit-wide population within a range of XXX to XXX wolves** [NOT EXCEED 20 PERCENT OF THE UNITWIDE, PRESEASON POPULATION ESTIMATE AS ESTIMATED BY THE DEPARTMENT];

5 AAC 92.170 is amended to read:

(b) The sealing of marten, fisher, lynx, beaver, land otter, wolf, or wolverine must be accomplished as follows:

(1) [IN UNIT 2, WOLF TAKEN BY TRAPPING MUST BE SEALED ON OR BEFORE THE 14TH DAY AFTER THE DATE OF TAKING] **Repealed;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Following a fall 2014 unit-wide population estimate of 89 wolves and concurrent Endangered Species Act Species Status Assessment, in January 2015 the Board of Game (board) adopted a 20 percent Harvest Guideline Level (HGL) for Unit 2 wolves as a conservation measure that would continue to provide some harvest opportunity while allowing the population to recover. By fall 2016, the population had grown to an estimated 231 wolves, rendering this harvest restriction unnecessary. The 20 percent HGL now inhibits the Department of Fish and Game’s (department) ability to manage growth of the Unit 2 wolf population and is unpopular with trappers and deer hunters. Further, even with the current 14-day sealing requirement, the department has been unsuccessful at limiting harvest to within the HGL. A new approach is needed.

The department proposes to no longer manage this population using a percentage-based HGL. Instead we propose managing the population within a desired range (i.e. population objective) with population thresholds that trigger changes in season length. Wolf abundance will be monitored relative to the desired range using periodic (every 2–4 years) population estimates. During years between population estimates, indicators of population trend including harvest, documented reproduction, and anecdotal information on wolf abundance and distribution will inform harvest management.

The department is reaching out to stakeholders to determine appropriate population objectives and other details for a new harvest strategy. Those details will be presented in the department’s analysis and recommendation prior to the board meeting.

Implementing this new strategy requires amending the current HGL, and because it does not depend on in-season harvest management, the 14-day sealing requirement in Unit 2 is no longer needed.

There is a positive customary and traditional use finding for wolves in Unit 2 and the board will need to determine if the proposed management plan will continue to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F18-056)

PROPOSAL 44

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the trapping season for wolf in Unit 2 as follows:

We would like to change the starting date for wolf trapping season on state and private lands in Unit 2 to align with the starting date for wolf trapping season on federal land.

Wolf season shall be [DECEMBER1] (same date as wolf trapping on Unit 2 federal lands) – March 31.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Unit 2 includes federal, state and private lands with different starting dates for wolf trapping season. The federal season currently starts two weeks earlier than state and private lands, which results in the harvest of more wolves on federal land than state and private lands. With the wolf season being so short, few wolves are taken on state or private lands before the season closes. It is also unfair to trappers who trap on state lands only. With very little harvest on state and private lands, the wolf population is proportionally increasing in these areas.

If the starting date of trapping season on state and private lands do not match the federal opener, harvests on state and private lands will continue to be lower than federal land. With trapping seasons being the same on all lands in Unit 2, enforcement will also be easier.

PROPOSED BY: Craig Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F18-031)
