

Juneau, Haines, Skagway & Yakutat Areas – Units 1C, 1D & 5

PROPOSAL 28

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

Change the hunt boundary from Little Sheep Creek to Sheep Creek, for the RG014 goat hunt in Unit 1C as follows:

Unit 1C, that mainland portion draining into the south bank of Sheep Creek, Gastineau Channel south of Sheep Creek, Stephens Passage, and Taku Inlet between the mouth of Sheep Creek and Taku Glacier including the south side of Blackerby Ridge encompassed by a line from Observation Peak west along the ridgeline down to the 1,000-foot contour, east along that contour to the north shore of Salmon Creek Reservoir, north of the main drainage into the head of the reservoir following that drainage south and east up to the ridgeline and east to Olds Mountain.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the boundary line from Little Sheep Creek to Sheep Creek for RG014. Current boundary lines for RG014 (archery only goat hunt) are confusing. The current boundary on the southeast end of the hunt area is Little Sheep Creek. But the upper watershed of Little Sheep Creek is a maze of tributaries and it is impossible to tell if you are in the legal hunt area when in the field. Changing the boundary line to the much larger watershed of Sheep Creek will connect with the existing boundary in a more logical way that matches terrain and will make navigation easier.

Changing the boundary line from Little Sheep Creek to Sheep Creek would marginally increase the size of legal hunt area but would be much less confusing for hunters to stay within the legal boundary. This change is unlikely to substantially increase mountain goat harvest as this change only includes a small amount of additional mountain goat habitat.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Robertson (EG-F22-088)

PROPOSAL 29

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

Expand the hunt area of the RG014 archery goat hunt in Unit 1C as follows:

I recommend that the hunt area be expanded:

The most preferable expansion of RG014 would be to include the north side of Blackerby Ridge and the entirety of Thunder Mountain/Heintzelmann Ridge. This hunt area includes the area of Thunder Mountain/Heintzelmann Ridge and reduces potential conflicts with goat viewing opportunities associated with the Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area by limiting the hunt to over the 2000-ft contour. The hunt area would read:

"that mainland portion draining into the south bank of Little Sheep Creek, Gastineau Channel south of Little Sheep Creek, Stephens Passage, and Taku Inlet between the mouth of Little Sheep Creek and Taku Glacier including Blackerby Ridge, portions of Thunder Mountain, and Heintzelmann Ridge encompassed by a line from Nugget Mountain northwest to the 2000-ft contour, along that contour around Thunder Mountain/Heintzelmann Ridge and Blackerby Ridge to the northern shore

of the Salmon Creek Reservoir, then following the north shore of the Salmon Creek Reservoir to the main drainage at the head of the reservoir following that drainage south and east up the ridgeline and east to Olds Mountain, then following a line back to Nugget Mountain."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? RG014 has been a successful example of small population management for goats in areas of higher population in Southeast Alaska. The current hunt area, which is generally limited to the south face of Blackerby Ridge in Juneau, is unnecessarily restrictive for hunters. The area is generally used by hikers which further limits hunter success. In order to reduce the number of user conflicts, I propose that the hunt area under RG014 be expanded.

PROPOSED BY: Tyler Riberio (EG-F22-122)

PROPOSAL 30

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

Open a fall archery goat hunt in Unit 1C, the southern end of the Chilkat Peninsula as follows:

Unit 1C Chilkat Peninsula south of south end of Sullivan Island.

Bow only

RG--- August 1 - September 1

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The southern end of Chilkat Peninsula in Unit 1C season starts September 1. This is when storms typical start and weather plays a huge role in safety and success of a hunt. Most of the bays in the area have little to no protection from wind and seas.

PROPOSED BY: Jonathan Geary (EG-F22-073)

PROPOSAL 31

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

Lengthen the resident, registration goat hunt in Unit 1C, the Southern end of the Chilkat Range as follows:

Unit 1C Chilkat Peninsula southern portion drainages of the Chilkat Range south of the south bank of the Endicott River:

Residents Only – one goat by registration permit

RG XXX Aug. 1 – Nov. 30

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Later season for goat in the southern Chilkat Range area of Unit 1C.

The resident goat season for the northern area of the Chilkat Range in Unit 1C is by registration permit and starts on August 1st but the resident goat season for the southern area of the Chilkat

Range doesn't start until September 1st, which is when storms frequent the area, making access from the coast and hunting much more difficult.

According to ADF&G information, over the past five years there were three - nine goats harvested off of the entire Chilkat Peninsula, with very few nannies taken. Goats have increased on the Chilkat Peninsula from the lows of the past and the current harvest quota is not being met, so we see no reason to continue the later season opener for the southern part of the Chilkat Range.

Concerns over the taking of nannies are still present, and the goat "points" method of decreasing the quota when nannies are taken is still in place. We also recommend imposing a requirement that all goat hunters in Unit 1C must watch and pass the ADF&G goat gender identification quiz: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=quiz.mountaingoatquiz>

PROPOSED BY: Resident Hunters of Alaska (HQ-F22-021)

PROPOSAL 32

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

Restrict hunters who take nanny goat in Unit 1D from hunting goat the following regulatory year in Unit 1D as follows:

The committee would like this regulation to be changed to read the following: **"If a nanny is taken in subunit 1D, the hunter is prohibited from hunting any goats in subunit 1D the following regulatory year."**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In Unit 1, the regulations currently read, **"the taking of nannies with kids is prohibited. Taking of males is encouraged."**

There are 22 hunt areas in Unit 1D. Of those 22 subunits, nine of them are one to two point units and three units as of 2021 were closed to goat hunting entirely. These are fragile populations of ungulates. While we do have a huntable population amongst some of the subunits, nearly half of the areas with populations are teetering on the huntable/emergency closure line. Nannies not accompanying a kid can be harvested. The committee wants to see this stopped.

Numbers show that in Unit 1D, people are hunting any goat and not targeting billies. For example, preliminary ADF&G data indicates that 40% of females harvested were done so knowingly, and not a result of misidentification. These numbers have all been extracted from Alaska Department of Fish and Game's harvest data (available publicly on their website). They have shown that in Unit 1D from 2010-2020, 30% (86/284) of harvested goats were nannies. To expand on that, in 2016, 13 of the 28 goats harvested were nannies. That's 46%.

For example, if 50 harvest points were allowed in Unit 1D and 46% of the harvest was females only 35 mtn goats (19M: 16F) could be harvested before the quota was met. However, if all harvest was males then a total of 50 mountain goats could be harvested (50M: 0F). Thus, in this real-world scenario, harvest opportunity could be increased by 15 mountain goats (46%) if only males were harvested!

PROPOSED BY: Upper Lynn Canal Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F22-040)

PROPOSAL 33

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

Increase the brown bear bag limit in that portion of Unit 1C of the Chilkat Peninsula mainland north of Point Couverden and south of Sullivan Island for resident hunters, from one bear every four regulatory years to one bear every regulatory year as follows:

Unit 1C Chilkat Range mainland north of point Couverden and south of south end of Sullivan Island.

One brown bear, every year by registration permit. Residents Only

RB --- September 15 - December 31

RB--- March 15 - May 31

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Over the past 25 plus years I've been hunting and fishing in Unit 1C, I've noticed how brown bears are taking over. You can pull into any one bay where you used to see black bear, moose, and deer, now you see 13 brown bear. I see this as a huge issue. We need to manage this area the same as Berners Bay where you can harvest one brown bear every year to help bring back moose, deer, and black bear.

PROPOSED BY: Jonathan Geary (EG-F22-072)

PROPOSAL 34

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

Increase the brown bear bag limit in that portion of Unit 1C of the Chilkat Peninsula mainland north of Point Couverden and south of Sullivan Island for resident hunters, from one bear every four regulatory years to one bear every regulatory year as follows:

Unit 1C Chilkat Peninsula mainland north of Point Couverden and south of Sullivan Island:

Residents Only – one brown bear every year by registration permit.

RB XXX Sept 15 – Dec 31

RB XXX Mar 15 – May 31

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Berner’s Bay area of Unit 1C is one brown bear every regulatory year for residents by registration permit but the remainder of Unit 1C including the Chilkat Peninsula is one bear every four years for residents.

There has been an increase of brown bears on the mainland area of the Chilkat Peninsula in Unit 1C, with increased deer predation that has also led to black bears moving into the more upland areas away from the coast, making black bear harvests more difficult. Brown bears are abundant on the mainland Chilkat Peninsula area of Unit 1C and we see no need to manage this area

differently than the Berner's Bay area of Unit 1C, and no need to manage that area according to Unit 4 brown bear management plans.

The Department of Fish and Game can monitor an increase in brown bear harvests should this proposal pass, and if any conservation concerns come to light there are avenues to decrease harvests via a harvest quota and reporting requirements.

PROPOSED BY: Resident Hunters of Alaska (HQ-F22-020)

PROPOSAL 35

5 AAC 92.044. Permit for hunting bear with the use of bait or scent lures.

Extend the bear baiting season for Unit 1D as follows:

The new season date for baiting black bears in Unit 1D would read:

"Areas Open for Bear Baiting: Unit 1D

Dates: Apr 15 - **June 30** "

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like to see a longer black bear baiting season in Unit 1D. The black bear season currently only runs another 15 days past the end of the current baiting season. So that we may provide more continuity and less confusion within the regulations, I would like to see the baiting season end the same day as the regulatory black bear hunting season (**June 30**). More fluid and consistent dates make abiding by the law not only easier but also creates a two-week longer window of opportunity for hunters.

Currently, the regulations on page 27 in the 2021-2022 regulations book read:

" Areas Open for Bear Baiting: Unit 1D

Dates: Apr 15 - **June 15** "

If for management/enforcement reasons, it would be easier to blanket all of Unit 1 instead of just picking the subunit of Unit 1D specifically, I am not opposed to all of Unit 1 bear baiting dates changing. I am however specifically requesting Unit 1D.

PROPOSED BY: Adam Smith (EG-F22-004)

PROPOSAL 36

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

Reduce the bag limit for grouse for drainages that cross the Juneau-Douglas Road system in Unit 1C as follows:

Reduce the grouse bag limit to three per day for the drainages that cross the Juneau-Douglas Road System.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Increased hunting pressure has led to localized population declines in the sooty grouse. There are multiple reasons for the increased hunting pressure: 1) Advances in outdoor recreation technology has resulted in more capable snow-machines that are able to traverse steeper terrain giving more access to grouse habitat. Similarly, the increased popularity of backcountry skiing has increased the number of users who can access grouse terrain that previously would have remained inaccessible until the snows melted. 2) Hunting shows and social media have highlighting this fun and unique species, and there has been a desire to introduce non-hunters to the sport of hunting with classes and workshops highlighting spring grouse. 3) Declines in the Chinook population has limited the early fishing season opportunities. Chinook fishing frequently doesn't begin until after spring grouse season has closed. Those seeking a spring activity have shifted to grouse hunting. While the population of sooty grouse is stable across southeast Alaska, areas with high hunting pressure are often reduced to only the most inaccessible birds hooting from perilous cliffs.

Sooty grouse is one of the best species to introduce beginners to the sport of hunting. Decreasing the daily bag limit in the most accessible and heavily used areas will help spread out the harvest of grouse between more hunters and will keep more grouse in the areas that beginner hunters are likely to use when introduced to the sport.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Robertson (EG-F22-086)

PROPOSAL 37

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

Reduce the bag limit for ptarmigan for drainages that cross the Juneau Douglas Road system in Unit 1C as follows:

Reduce ptarmigan bag limit to five per day for the drainages that cross the Juneau-Douglas Road System.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Increased hunting pressure and lack of population monitoring has caused population declines in ptarmigan in areas with high use. Advances in outdoor recreation technology has resulted in more capable snow-machines that are able to traverse steeper terrain giving more access to ptarmigan habitat. Similarly, the increased popularity of backcountry skiing has increased the number of users who can access ptarmigan terrain that previously would have remained inaccessible until the snows melted.

Further, the current regulation of 20 birds per day gives the illusion that the species is extremely bountiful. Hunters who come upon a flock of birds are unconcerned, and may attempt to take the entire covey because the daily limit is so high. Finally, ADF&G doesn't monitor local populations of ptarmigan or reduce bag limits when weather conditions means brood survival is low and when hunting pressure would be the most detrimental.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Robertson (EG-F22-087)

PROPOSAL 38

5 AAC 92.520(a). Closures and restrictions in state game refuges.

Amend the youth hunt for Unit 1C Mendenhall Wetland State Game Refuge as follows:

“The first two days of the established waterfowl season is open to youth hunters 17 years old or younger accompanied by a licensed hunter 21 years old or older, and both the child and accompanying adult must register with the department.”

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current regulation states that youth hunters must be between ages 10 and 17. I believe this is not necessary and it needlessly excludes many young people from participating in the hunt with their parents or guardians. If a parent or guardian believes a child under 10 is capable of safely hunting under their supervision, there is no need to impose a minimum age. The permit registration requirements for child and adult would remain. The responsible adult must have their hunter's education and refuge permit, so they have passed two tests that cover responsible behavior statewide and locally on the Mendenhall Refuge and they are capable of supervising a child during the youth hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Erich Schaal

(EG-F22-111)

PROPOSAL 39

5 AAC 92.520(a). Closures and restrictions in state game refuges.

Amend the hunter education requirement for the Unit 1C Mendenhall Wetland State Game Refuge as follows:

“a hunter for waterfowl on the Mendenhall State Game Refuge must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course, except a hunter who is under 13 years of age must be accompanied by an adult, or must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course; before hunting in the refuge,”...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal will address an inadvertent hole in the current rules for youth who want to hunt on the refuge and it will increase a young person’s access to learning about the outdoors and responsible waterfowl hunting. The state provides an exceptional hunters education program through the Juneau School District to all Juneau students in 6th grade. Many young people have parents or other adults in their lives who already hunt on the refuge and they have accompanied these adults since they were very little. Under the current regulations, a 9-year-old can hunt with an adult but when they turn 10, they must be ready to pass the hunters safety course to continue to hunt. This restriction makes no sense, so it’s important to move the hunter education requirements from 10 to 13 because it allows youth to continue to hunt with the responsible adults in their lives and take the hunters education course with their classmates in 6th grade.

As an example, a typical 6th grader will turn 12 during that school year (September 1st through August 30th). By choosing age 13 as the requirement, it means that a youth who turns 12 on September 2nd is not excluded from hunting that coming waterfowl season because they have not taken the hunters education class yet. In speaking with the Juneau School District, the course usually takes place in the spring, therefore 13 is the logical age to correct this issue.

As national organizations like Delta Waterfowl, Ducks Unlimited, and US Fish and Wildlife Service have found, waterfowl hunter numbers in the US have been on a steady decline for the last several decades (see especially <https://deltawaterfowl.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/03/LoomingCrisis.pdf>). Important efforts are in place to recruit underrepresented groups like women (Becoming an Outdoors Woman) and youth (hunter education courses), and there are efforts to engage with lapsed and new adult hunters, too, but these educational opportunities are not always met with adequate youth-friendly hunting opportunities. Equal access to the Mendenhall Refuge for all youth is very important. This slight adjustment to the regulations will fix this issue.

PROPOSED BY: Erich Schaal (EG-F22-113)

PROPOSAL 40

5 AAC 92.520(a). Closures and restrictions in state game refuges.

Allow the take of deleterious exotic wildlife in the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge as follows:

Amend the closures and restrictions section to the following:

*“(a) Unit 1: The Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge, as described in AS 16.20.034, is closed to hunting, except for waterfowl including snipe and crane during established seasons, **and deleterious exotic wildlife, as defined in 5 AAC 92.990, there is no closed season, except by approved methods for taking migratory game birds or air rifles with nontoxic pellets must be used;** a person may not use any off-road or all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle, or other motorized vehicle, except a boat within the refuge; a hunter for waterfowl **or deleterious exotic wildfire** on the Mendenhall State Game Refuge must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course, except a hunter who is under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult, or must have successfully completed a certified hunter education course; before hunting in the refuge, **except for deleterious exotic wildlife,** a person must register for a permit annually with the department and demonstrate an understanding of informational materials provided at the time of registration; the permit is valid for all or specific waterfowl hunting zones **and deleterious exotic wildlife** within the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge, subject to closure at the discretion of the department; a person convicted of a hunting violation within the Mendenhall Wetlands State Game Refuge is not eligible to register for a permit to hunt in the refuge the following year; a hunter on the refuge shall present in the field, upon request, proof of registration; the first two days of the established waterfowl season is open to youth hunters ages 10 to 17 only, and both the child and accompanying adult must register with the department.”*

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Deleterious exotic wildlife are a serious ecological issue across our nation and the world. These species are almost as destructive as man’s effects on the environment. When the Mendenhall Refuge was created in the early 1990s’, it wasn’t contemplated that Juneau would be impacted by deleterious exotic wildlife

(DEW) and specific protections were not written into the founding documents. I believe this was an honest oversight, but it needs to be corrected. Since then, several deleterious species have arrived in Juneau, specifically the European Starling. While waterfowl hunting, I routinely see flocks of these invaders. Under the current refuge regulations, Starlings may not be legally taken, even during waterfowl season. Other Alaskan refuges have properly allowed for the removal of deleterious exotic wildlife, so the Mendenhall Refuge should allow it as well.

Some people may worry that allowing the removal of DEW will negatively impact the refuge, due to increased hunting pressure. I disagree with this concern. The current refuge rules and use policies have been in place for almost 15 years and the negative interactions between hunters and other user groups have drastically subsided. I contend that the requirement that all hunters are permitted under the current rules will provide the same high level of competency and respect for other users. The impacts will only be felt by these most uninvited invaders and not the Juneau residents who love and frequent the refuge.

My proposal has two allowable methods of taking deleterious exotic wildlife. 1. By approved waterfowl hunting methods (shotgun, bow/arrow, and falconry) and 2. Air rifles with non-toxic pellets. I included air rifles as an approved method to provide a quiet, precise, and non-toxic method for surgical removal of DEW. I realize that allowing the use of a rifle in the refuge may sound dangerous to some people, but it is not. Remember, all hunters will have passed hunters safety (or are supervised by an adult who has) and they are responsible to know what directions are safe to shoot. I will remind the Board of Game that each spring, many Juneau residents head into the hills, behind their homes and around the refuge with .22 rifles looking for spruce grouse. This annual activity does not create safety issues. I'll also remind the Board of Game that federal and state laws for waterfowl hunting are well understood by Juneau hunters and the risk to misuse on the refuge are non-existent.

I've researched the City and Borough of Juneau's code (42.20.050 Discharging firearms) in the refuge and the only limitation is that shotguns are exempt from the 1/4 mile from a road rule while in the refuge. By city code, pellet rifles could only be fired if more than 1/4 mile from a road, and I don't think this is a problem. The sand islands on the refuge are the main target locations for DEW, so I don't see a need to change the city code at this time.

I ask the Board of Game to consider several points:

Please keep the reference to all deleterious exotic wildlife, as defined in 5 AAC 92.990, so that any new species added to the statute in the future can be assimilated accordingly. Carving out one or two species, such as saying "only starlings can be hunted on the refuge," is not a useful management tool. Who knows what new invader will arrive in the future and the sooner an invading species can be eradicated, the better.

Secondly, allowing the use of air rifles is a low-risk addition to the regulations to combat this important issue. Starlings (and all deleterious exotic wildlife) must be eradicated and air rifles are a low impact, highly effective tool to be used by permitted Juneau hunters.

Alternative Amendment: If the Board of Game must modify my request, I ask that at the very least, that the regulations be changed to allow the taking of all deleterious exotic wildlife during established waterfowl seasons with approved methods for waterfowl. At the very least, we should be able to remove DEW when we're already out on the refuge hunting waterfowl.

Below are just a few references to the damage caused by the European Starling and why they must be eradicated from the refuge.

In the 2004 document “**HOTSPOTS Bird Survey of the Mendenhall Wetlands,**” the local authors noted the presence of the European Starling and multiple bird species, such as the Mountain Bluebird, who are often directly displaced by the Starling. Starlings are incredibly aggressive, and it has been well documented that they devastate native bird populations as they displace fellow cavity-nesting birds.

<https://www.naturebob.com/sites/default/files/Hotspot%20report.pdf>

USDA Document on Starling Damages:

www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/reports/Wildlife%20Damage%20Management%20Technical%20Series/European-Starlings-WDM-Technical-Series.pdf

European Starlings: A review of an Invasive Species with Far-reaching Impacts:

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nwrcinvasive/24/>

PROPOSED BY: Erich Schaal

(EG-F22-116)

PROPOSAL 41

5 AAC 92.530(23). Management areas.

Eliminate the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C as follows:

Remove the Douglas Island Management Area in Unit 1C from regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal would remove the Unit 1C Douglas Island Management Area from current regulation. There is no science or data suggesting this management area is necessary or effective, particularly as it applies to wolf management. Wolves are transient to and from Douglas by either swimming the Gastineau Channel at high tide or crossing overland at low tide. It is very hard to manage and set a quota for a population of any species, especially one that is very wide-ranging. Wolf predation has reduced the deer population on the island which is estimated using the Department of Fish and Game’s (ADF&G) annual deer pellet survey at two locations on the north end of the island. Douglas Island is used by deer hunters who don’t have boats; it is often where youth and new hunters have relatively easy access. ADF&G data show that the deer populations on Douglas increased when wolves were actively trapped without a quota. Removing this management area from regulation will allow for wolf management using hunters and trappers during the allowed seasons, while removing a burden on ADF&G staff, and potentially increasing deer populations for sport hunting and wildlife viewing.

PROPOSED BY: Juneau Douglas Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F22-082)
