

Hunting and Trapping Emergency Order

Under the Authority of AS 16.05.060

Alaska Department
of Fish and Game

Emergency Order No. 02-02-15

Issued at: Anchorage, Alaska
June 23, 2015

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m.
July 1, 2015

Expiration Date: June 30, 2016
at 11:59 p.m. unless superseded
by subsequent emergency order

EXPLANATION:

In spring 1992, the Board of Game adopted a lynx tracking harvest strategy with framework trapping seasons of November 10 through the last day of February in Southcentral game management units. The board delegated authority to the department to adjust season dates within this framework to track population cycles. In March 2005, the board determined lynx hunting seasons, but not bag limits, would be included as part of the lynx tracking harvest strategy. In March 2009, the board eliminated the tracking strategy in Unit 6 and established a permanent hunting and trapping season of November 10 through the last day of February.

This emergency order meets the lynx management needs for 2015–2016 by adjusting lynx hunting and trapping seasons for the Region II units managed under the lynx tracking harvest strategy.

Based on information collected during the past season, the lynx trapping season will remain closed on the Kenai Peninsula (GMUs 7 and 15) and in the Anchorage Area (GMU 14C). The lynx hunting season will be open from January 1 through February 15, but remains closed in Unit 14C.

Therefore, the following regulations in **5 AAC 85.060(4), Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals** and **5 AAC 84.270(5), Furbearer trapping**, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for lynx hunting and trapping:

Unit	Open Season	Bag limit
5 AAC 85.060(4), Hunting seasons and bag limits for fur animals		
(4) Lynx		
Units 7 and 15	Jan. 1 - Feb. 15	2 Lynx

Unit 14C No open season

5AAC 84.270(5), Furbearer trapping

(5) Lynx

Units 7 and 15 No open season

Unit 14C No open season

All other lynx hunting and trapping regulations remain unchanged and are not affected by this emergency order.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to: _____
Gino Del Frate
Management Coordinator

JUSTIFICATION:

Units 7 and 15: Kenai Peninsula

Observations and track counts indicate snowshoe hare populations have now declined on the Kenai. Hare and lynx populations in these areas were very high and probably peaked during the winter of 2011–2012. The 2011–2012 harvest was a record high take of 456 with approximately 27 percent kittens. The 2012–2013 harvest was almost as high with 433 lynx taken. As expected the 2013–2014 harvest was low with only 118 reported and 20 percent kittens. We expect kitten production and survival to continue declining and remain low as the population moves through the next cyclic low. Therefore, the lynx trapping seasons will remain closed and likely not reopen until we see a cyclic upturn. As a measure of evaluation, a limited hunting season will be allowed on the Kenai.

Units 14C Anchorage and Chugach State Park

Observations by department staff and trappers indicated snowshoe hare and lynx populations are patchy. Snowshoe hare populations peaked around 2000 – 2001 and again in 2011–2012 throughout most of Unit 14C. Lynx populations have followed similar patterns. Only six lynx were harvested in 2013–2014 and all were adults. Therefore, the lynx hunting and trapping seasons will remain closed and likely not reopen until we see a cyclic upturn

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8. Department of Public Safety, Alaska Wildlife Troopers
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9. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Regional Director, Anchorage
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