

PROPOSAL 15

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

Address customary and traditional use findings for Alaska hares in Unit 18 and modify the season and bag limit as follows.

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Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(2)		
Snowshoe and Alaska hares		
Units 1-5	Sept. 1 – Apr. 30	Sept. 1 – Apr. 30
Units 6 – 26, except 14(A) and 14(C) and Alaska hares in Unit 9 <u>and Unit 18</u> No limit	No closed season	No closed season
Unit 9, Alaska hares only 1 per day, 4 total	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30
<u>Unit 18, Alaska hares only</u> <u>2 per day, 6 total</u>	<u>Aug. 1 – May 31</u>	<u>Aug. 1 – May 31</u>
Unit 14(A) 5 per day	No closed season (General hunt only)	No closed season
Unit 14(C) 5 per day	Day after Labor Day– Apr. 30 (General hunt only)	Day after Labor Day– Apr. 30

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The once-abundant Alaska hare population in Unit 18 is now at very low density. There are small seemingly isolated Alaska hare populations throughout Unit 18 however the majority of Unit 18 residents have raised concern about dramatically lower abundance than historically observed as recent as the 1980s and 1990s. Although there are no estimates of abundance, indices, or surveys for Alaska hares in Unit 18,

regulations should be updated to address the customary and traditional uses, low density, possibly declining status, lack of knowledge on abundance and trend, and biological concern for this species. The proposal may result in a slight decrease in hunting opportunity; however, when climatic and habitat conditions are favorable for Alaska hares, a low hunter harvest could protect localized populations for quicker recovery and recolonization. The Board of Game has not yet addressed customary and traditional uses of Alaska hares in Unit 18.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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