

PROPOSAL 43

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

Address customary and traditional use findings for Alaska hares in Unit 22, and modify the season and bag limit.

5 AAC 85.065. Hunting seasons and bag limits for small game. (a)(2)

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 22</u>	No closed season	No closed season
No limit		
Unit 9, Alaska hares only 1 per day, 4 total	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30	Nov. 1 – Jan. 30
<u>Unit 22, Alaska hares only</u> <u>2 per day</u>	<u>Sept. 1 – Apr. 15</u>	<u>Sept. 1 – Apr. 15</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 populations in Unit 18 and Unit 9 are now at very low density. Residents of these areas have raised concerns about dramatically lower abundance than historically observed as recent as the 1980s and 1990s.

Alaska hares are also present in Unit 22. Local residents consider them to be common in the area and although they are believed to be below historic levels of abundance local residents suggest hares numbers are not as low as those observed in Units 18 and 9.

The board has not yet considered whether there are subsistence uses of Alaska hares in Unit 22.

Although the Department of Fish and Game does not survey Alaska hare ranges and no population or density estimates are available in Unit 22 regulations should be revised to acknowledge the apparent low density of this species found elsewhere within its range. 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.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-156)
