



November 7, 2019

An Agenda Change Request (ACR 7) has been submitted to the Alaska Board of Game requesting to change 5 AAC 85.065(a)(4)(G) Hunting seasons and bag limits for Emperor geese in Units 8, 9, and 10 for nonresidents. The proponent is asking the board to close the nonresident drawing hunt for Emperor geese.

With respect to the board's Agenda Change Request (ACR) acceptance criteria (5 AAC 92.005):

- A) The department is unaware of any error in regulation.
- B) The department is unaware of any effects of regulations that were unforeseen when the regulation was adopted.
- C) The department recognizes that the emperor goose population index is below the objective of 36,000 birds, and a recent decline in the population index triggered implementation of conservation measures. Managing harvest levels is currently the primary tool available for adjusting the population trajectory of emperor geese.
- D) The department is unaware of unforeseen or unexpected events that would restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional use of emperor geese.
- E) The ACR does not identify an unexpected or unforeseen resource situation where a biologically allowable resource harvest would be precluded by delayed regulatory action.

In 2017, the Emperor goose population was determined to be at a level that would allow state harvest, and the board included a nonresident drawing hunt for further hunting opportunity. Prior to that, Emperor goose hunting had been closed during the state season for over 30 years. Both the Pacific Flyway Council's and Alaska Migratory Bird Co-Management Council's Emperor goose management plans call for conservation measures depending on the population index. In 2019, the population index fell below the level that triggers conservative actions (28,000 birds), and changes to the state quota, which includes the nonresident harvest, are warranted. The need to implement conservation measures occurred after the proposal submission deadline for the current board cycle.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting for Unit 8 is during winter/spring of 2021/2022, and the next regularly scheduled board meeting for Units 9 and 10 is during winter/spring of 2020/2021. If the board accepts this ACR, the department recommends the proposal come before the board at its January 2020 meeting in Nome to allow for testimony within the Arctic/Western Region, which is where the majority of Emperor goose hunting occurs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eddie Grasser".

Eddie Grasser  
Director  
Division of Wildlife Conservation