

Palmer Area – Units 14A, 14B & 16

PROPOSAL 64

5 AAC 84.045(a)(12). Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Reauthorize the antlerless moose draw permits in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
(12)		
Unit 14(A)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to 2,000 antlerless moose permits may be issued; or	Aug. 20–Sept. 25 (General hunt only) Nov. 1–Dec. 25 (General hunt only)	No open season
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun or bow and arrow only; up to 200 permits may be issued	Winter season to be announced (General hunt only)	No open season
Unit 14(B)		
1 moose per regulatory year, only as follows:		
...		
1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 100 permits may be issued.	Winter season to be announced (General hunt only)	No open season

....

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose hunts must be reauthorized annually by the Board of Game (board). There are two types of antlerless moose hunts in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley – a drawing permit hunt used to regulate growth of the moose population in Unit 14A, and targeted hunts used to mitigate public safety concerns in Units 14A and 14B.

Antlerless moose hunts have been authorized in Unit 14A since 2001 in order to regulate the growth of the population. The permit level was increased from 450 to 1,000 in 2013, to account for the continued increase in the population, and again in spring 2018 from 1,000 to 2,000. Increased harvest based on the increased permit levels has brought the population closer to the objective of 6,000–6,500 for the nit. Permit levels have been reduced significantly as the population approached the objective and will be adjusted as necessary.

Moose surveys conducted in November 2023 yielded an estimate of 6,657 moose in Unit 14A. This estimate was greater than the post-hunt objective of 6,000–6,500 moose and less than the 2020 survey estimate of 7,112 moose indicating that antlerless harvests are having the desired effect of reducing the population to near objectives. The sex and age composition demonstrated a bull:cow ratio of 30 bulls:100 cows and a calf:cow ratio of 28 calves:100 cows.

Moose-human conflicts have declined along with the moose population as it has approached the population objective. The targeted moose hunts in Units 14A and 14B, which are authorized to include an antlerless component, have been a tool to address public safety concerns related to moose-vehicle collisions and nuisance management issues. Moose-vehicle collisions result in property damage and may result in human injury or death. An average of 316 moose per year were killed in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley area during the last five years of average snowfall and substantially more are killed during higher snowfall years. The department also receives periodic complaints from the public about crop depredation and aggressive behavior that can be mitigated by this hunt structure. Antlerless hunts are an important tool to control the moose population’s trajectory and recommend additional moose hunting opportunity in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley when appropriate.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-062)

PROPOSAL 65

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Decrease the number of antlerless moose permits for Unit 14A as follows:

Aug. 25 - Sept. 25 1 antlerless moose by drawing permit only; up to **1,000** [2,000] antlerless moose permits may be issued;

1 moose by targeted permit only; by crossbow, shotgun, or bow and arrow only; up to 200 permits may be issued. Winter season to be announced by emergency order.

Total annual permits that may be issued to harvest antlerless moose in Unit 14A shall not exceed 1,000.

In order to better control moose reductions in specific habitat areas, all November and December Unit 14A moose permits may only be issued in the same specific hunt areas as the fall permit hunts — Not Unit-wide.

Note: this proposal only seeks to address the portions of 5 AAC 85.045 allowing harvest of antlerless moose by permit(s) in Unit 14A.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Antlerless moose permit hunting regulations in Game Management Unit 14A are too liberal with amounts of permits allowed far in excess of what has ever been granted. Issuing hundreds of November and / or December permits adds stress to the moose population at times when they may already be struggling through winter conditions, and can result in over harvest of moose in easily accessible areas with prime winter habitat.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? YES. This proposal was considered and approved without objection for submission at the April 17, 2024, Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee meeting, which included considerable discussion with ADF&G game division staff about this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish & Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-020)

PROPOSAL 66

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Open a fall, archery only moose hunt in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

Units 14A, 14B (Harvest Tag areas only) One bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with three or more brow tines on at least one side by bow and arrow only from August 10-19 and **September 26-30.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Years ago, the general moose season in Units 14A and 14B was augmented with an early archery season. While this was a positive move for increasing hunter opportunity but the early season, especially in recent years, is fraught with challenge, most notably the warm temperatures which make responsible meat handling (and aging) difficult. Archery hunting has a low success rate even during the rut and extending the archery season for the last five days of September would increase opportunity during a colder, more meat friendly time of year, without significant impact on moose populations. This would also give hunters who wish to hunt with bow and arrow a few days of time later in the season to hunt without fear of being shot at/over trying to get close to a bull.

It's also worth noting that, based on the popularity of the Eklutna Lake archery moose hunt, there are a lot of hunters very interested in finding archery moose hunting opportunities. This would be a step in the right direction toward increasing opportunity for them.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward (EG-F24-095)

PROPOSAL 67

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Open a fall, archery only moose hunt in Unit 16A as follows:

Unit 16A (Harvest Tag areas only): One bull with spike-fork antlers or 50-inch antlers or antlers with 3 or more brow tines on at least one side by bow and arrow only from August 10-19 and **September 26-30.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Years ago, the general moose season in Units 14A, 14B and 16A was augmented with an early archery season. While this was a positive move for increasing hunter opportunity but the early season, especially in recent years, is fraught with challenge, most notably the warm temperatures which make responsible meat handling (and aging) difficult. Archery hunting has a low success rate even during the rut and extending the archery season for the last five days of September would increase opportunity during a colder, more meat friendly time of year, without significant impact on moose populations. This would also give hunters who wish to hunt with bow and arrow a few days of time later in the season to hunt without fear of being shot at/over trying to get close to a bull.

It's also worth noting that, based on the popularity of the Eklutna Lake archery moose hunt, there are a lot of hunters very interested in finding archery moose hunting opportunities. This would be a step in the right direction toward increasing opportunity for them.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

(EG-F24-098)

PROPOSAL 68

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Change the bag limit of the fall, Tier II moose hunt in Unit 16B as follows:

If the harvestable portion of moose in Unit 16B is 199 moose or less then there will be a Tier II season in the fall, August 20 to September 25th with a **limit of 1 bull** and the winter season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations state that when the harvestable surplus of moose in Unit 16B numbers 199 or less, the Unit goes to a Tier II season with a fall season that requires spike-fork, three brow tines, or 50-inch antler requirement and a winter season that is any bull. The committee sees no reason to limit the fall portion of this season if it occurs, to bulls with these antler configurations when the winter portion of the hunt has no restriction. We fail to see the logic. This hunt is already limited by the number of participants which will limit harvest.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? Mt. Yenlo discussed and recommended this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Mt. Yenlo Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(EG-F24-022)

PROPOSAL 69

5 AAC 85.045. Hunting seasons and bag limits for moose.

Shorten the season for the Tier II moose hunt in Unit 16B as follows:

TM565, TM567, and TM569 season: December 15th to February 28th

We would like to eliminate March from the Tier II season in Unit 16B.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Harassment of winter stressed moose in March. The Tier II moose hunt was extended into March when the season start date was pushed back to December 15th to curtail trophy hunting of winter moose under the guise of subsistence. The season prior to this change ended February 28th. We feel that two and half months is plenty of time for a diligent subsistence hunter to harvest a better quality animal and the later period just leads to more harassment determining legality as antler shed spots grow darker and unnecessary stressing of already winter stressed moose.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This was discussed and recommended by the Mt. Yenlo Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Mt. Yenlo Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F24-019)

PROPOSAL 70

5 AAC 85.050. Hunting seasons and bag limits for brown bear.

Extend the hunting season for brown bear in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

I suggest extending the brown bear hunting season in Unit 14A and 14B to June 15.

Unit 14A: One bear every regulatory year Sept 1-June 15

Unit 14B: One bear every regulatory year Aug 10-June 15

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? With Heavy snow fall becoming a norm in Southcentral, in these Units brown bear hunters often do not get an opportunity to harvest when bears are in accessible areas. Brown bears will often show up on bait stations and accessible areas one-two weeks after the season closes May 31st.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

PROPOSED BY: Caleb Martin (EG-F24-034)

PROPOSAL 71

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

Extend the brown bear hunting season in Unit 14B as follows:

I recommend extending brown bear season through June 30 allowing these bears to be taken through the baiting season. To align with some of the other areas opened to baiting brown bears.

The new regulation change would read “One bear every regulatory year **August 10-June 30** in Unit 14B.”

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The population of brown bears in Unit 14B is growing rapidly. In the span of eight years my trail cameras in Unit 14B over bait have shown five-six brown bears and five-six black bears in 2015 and in 2023, 10-15 brown bears and only one black bear.

Brown bear season closes on May 31, depending on the spring the brown bears are not showing up until around the first week of June. If the population of brown bears is not controlled I believe we will continue to see increasing brown bear populations and decreased black bear populations until eventually the area will be depleted of black bears completely.

Also in Unit 14B, the moose population is on the lower end of the acceptable objective. Why not try to get ahead of it with extending the brown bear season and giving hunters more hunting opportunity to harvest brown bears.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

PROPOSED BY: Dominic Nickles (EG-F24-010)

PROPOSAL 72

5 AAC 85.015. Hunting seasons and bag limits for black bear.

Eliminate the harvest ticket requirement for hunting black bear in Unit 16 as follows:

Black Bear GMU 16 No harvest ticket. Must be sealed within 30 days of harvest.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Unnecessary requirement for harvest ticket for black bears in Unit 16. This has never been necessary. Bears are required to be sealed just like brown bears, however no harvest ticket is required for brown bears. This requirement just leads to fraud, waste and abuse and possibly less bears harvested due to not having a harvest ticket when defending property, fishing, or hunting other species.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? The Mt. Yenlo Advisory Committee discussed and recommended this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Mt. Yenlo Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F24-020)

PROPOSAL 73

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Change the bag limit for sheep in Unit 14A draw hunts to any ram as follows:

This proposal would change the bag limit for Dall sheep in Unit 14A south and east of Matanuska River from one ram with full-curl horns or larger, both horns broken, or at least eight-years-old, to one ram.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue is reduced sheep hunter satisfaction and harvest opportunity. Many new and inexperienced sheep hunters are less likely to participate because of challenges with judging legal full-curl rams, Previously, many of the any-ram sheep hunters reported high satisfaction and less stress when not having to "be 100% sure" of shooting what they believe to be a legal ram. In addition, ADF&G staff have reported recent increased take of sub-legal rams (statewide) under full-curl bag limits concurrent with

reduced overall sheep populations. The any-ram bag-limit is a positive alternative to full-curl and is entirely manageable and appropriate under a regulated drawing hunt by setting permit levels based on population survey data and observed mature ram numbers. Sheep hunters participating in any-ram hunts still prefer older-aged rams and generally take more older rams (>4 yrs) which may be more closely simulating natural mortality in the ram component of the population. Having a few limited sheep drawing hunts with this type of bag limit benefits both sheep hunters and ADF&G by providing unique draw hunt opportunity, increased hunter satisfaction, and reduced sub-legal harvest.

According to ADF&G, more people applied for the Unit 14A any-ram drawing hunts than any other sheep draw hunts available in Alaska except for the Tok Management Area (TMA) draw hunts (currently significantly reduced due to population issues). Even for a limited number of sheep draw hunts - in this case Unit 14A - the any-ram bag limit would provide a popular alternative for sheep hunters and address current concerns regarding sub-legal harvest, both of which increase hunter satisfaction and meet department goals (reduce sub-legal harvest and increase hunter satisfaction).

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? As of this date I have not coordinated with others regarding the proposal. Earlier, I consulted with ADF&G staff regarding current trends. I plan to discuss the proposal with the Mat Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee and possibly other advisory committees when they resume meeting in the fall.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Kavalok (EG-F24-055)

PROPOSAL 74

5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

Establish a resident, archery only, sheep drawing hunt in Unit 14A as follows:

Create an archery only resident dall sheep drawing hunt for Unit 14A that includes all units within 14A into one hunt area. Season dates would be October 1-15th and the bag limit would be a full curl ram. It is understood that sheep numbers are down in these areas so the department may only want to issue 1-5 tags until populations begin to recover. Archery hunting for full curl rams is very low success < 5% but provides archery hunters the opportunity to hunt without the competition of rifle hunters who can shoot rams at ever increasing distances. As an item of note an additional proposal was submitted in the statewide regulations that would NOT allow the use of arial scouting during these season dates.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Limited archery only sheep hunting opportunities.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No.

PROPOSAL 75

5 AAC 92.122. Intensive Management Plan VI.

Add Department removal of wolves, brown bears, and black bears to Unit 16 Intensive Management Plan as follows:

5 AAC 92.122

...

(b)

(4)

...

(B) notwithstanding any other provisions in this title, the commissioner may issue public aerial shooting permits or public land-and-shoot permits as a method of wolf removal **and may allow department employees to conduct aerial, land and shoot, or ground-based lethal removal of wolves and black bears and brown bears using state-owned, privately-owned, or chartered equipment, including helicopters, under AS 16.05.783.**

....

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The wolf control objective in the Intensive Management Plan for Moose in Unit 16 is to reduce the population to 35–55 wolves in Unit 16B. In March of 2023 the minimum count of wolves in Unit 16 indicated at least 120 wolves with several packs being reported in the unit that were not included in the minimum count. Six of the packs were located again in the fall of 2023, and all had increased in number by 2–6 per pack, indicating that the population was over 120 with the addition of the 2023 recruitment. A take of at least 70% annually is needed to achieve the population reduction objective. Given the high recruitment rate of wolves, population reduction is unlikely unless there is substantial harvest over a short period of time.

100 wolves need to be taken annually to reach the wolf population objective of 35-55 wolves. Based on participation the last time the program was active, it is unlikely this level of harvest will be achieved in this first year of the reactivated program due to potentially low participation in the program. There are two primary reasons that participation is low. First, a high proportion of wolves sealed from Unit 16 have lice (~60% in RY23) resulting in poor pelt quality; and second, control pilots have many options to participate in same day airborne programs such as in Units 9, 17, 19, and all of Unit 13 except 13C. If pelt quality remains an issue and pilots and public participation remains low in the future it may be necessary for the department to actively remove wolves from this area to achieve the wolf reduction objectives.

When the Unit 16 Predation Control Area was created the regulations did not allow for the department to do the removal. Adding the ability for the department to conduct control efforts of wolves and bears ensures the department has the ability to actively manage predators in the area to aid in achieving the population and harvest objectives set by the board. The department has no plans to activate bear control at this time.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-073)

PROPOSAL 76

5 AAC 92.085. Unlawful methods of taking big game; exceptions.

Allow the take of brown bear in Unit 16, the same day airborne as follows:

Existing regulation

- You may hunt black bear in Unit 16 from Oct. 1-Aug. 9 the same day you have flown, provided you are at least 300 feet from the airplane

Proposed regulation

- You may hunt black bear **and brown bears** in Unit 16 from Oct. 1-Aug. 9 the same day you have flown, provided you are at least 300 feet from the airplane

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Increase harvest opportunity for brown bears in Unit 16B.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

PROPOSED BY: Jon Kruger (HQ-F24-008)

PROPOSAL 77

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

Extend the brown bear season in Unit 14B as Follows:

Unit 14B One bear every regulatory year Aug. 10- June 15th

Extending the season by 15 days would ensure that brown bears hides would still be of good trophy quality. If this regulation is passed it would align with the Unit 14C remainder of June 15th for brown bear.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Brown bear population currently in Unit 14B has increased substantially. Due to the late springs/ break ups over the past few years, brown bears are showing up after season is closed. Taking over bait stations, making it very difficult to harvest a black bear. With the surplus of brown bears, extending the brown bear season in Unit 14B would allow hunters to harvest brown bears into June. It also has the potential to have positive effects on the moose population. There is no threat of over harvest in this very heavily forested unit by extending the season.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? This was developed in coordination with the Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-049)

PROPOSAL 78

5 AAC 92.122. Intensive Management Plan VI.

Allow the same day airborne take of wolves in the active, Unit 16 Intensive Management Plan as follows:

Change the regulation so if the intensive management is active, hunters or trappers holding a current license can hunt same day airborne as long as 300' from airplane. If the intensive management area is inactive, we go back to the past 3 a.m. regulation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change same day airborne for wolf in active intensive management areas to allow hunting same day airborne as long as 300' from the airplane. I believe it should be allowed in the predator control areas for hunters and trappers to have the opportunity to shoot the same day airborne when the state is allowing aerial shooting but only to a few approved pilots and gunners.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Nelson (EG-F24-009)

PROPOSAL 79

5 AAC 84.270. Furbearer trapping.

Extend the wolf trapping season in Unit 14A as follows:

Unit 14A wolf trapping season extended by one month to April 30th.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? To lengthen wolf trapping season in Unit 14A by one month to April 30th like all of the other units in Alaska. I think by having one extra month it'll give more time as the weather is changing to be able to harvest more wolves.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? No. I trap all over in Alaska and having that one extra month like over in Unit 16 helps tremendously in reducing predator numbers.

PROPOSED BY: Michael Gozdor II (EG-F24-007)

PROPOSAL 80

5 AAC 92.170. Sealing of marten, fisher, lynx, beaver, otter, wolf, and wolverine.

Require sealing of beaver taken in Unit 16 as follows:

Beaver GMU 16 Must be sealed within 30 days of close of season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A severe decline in beaver in much of Unit 16 has occurred. At the same time, the Board of Game has liberalized seasons, methods and means. It has been at least a couple of decades since beaver were sealed in Unit16. The committee has some theories as to why the beaver have declined. We would like the Department of Fish and Game to collect some sealing information, so as to compare current harvests, take, and size composition with past data when populations were far more robust. This information would be valuable in assessing current problem and cost very little. We would like this to continue for three years.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? The Mt. Yenlo AC discussed and recommended this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Mt Yenlo Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-F24-021)

PROPOSAL 81

5 AAC 92.095. Unlawful methods of taking furbearers; exceptions.

Require traps and snares set within two miles of publicly maintained roads in Unit 14A be checked at least every 36 hours as follows:

Persons setting traps and snares for furbearers and fur animals must check their traps and snares not less frequently than every 36 hours in those parts of Unit 14A that are within two miles of a publicly maintained road (i.e. a road that is open to the public and plowed to be accessible by automobile).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Many Alaskans, including myself, think it is inhumane to leave an animal caught in a trap or snare to die of starvation or exposure because a trapper fails to check his traps frequently. Criminal penalties are imposed under Alaska law against the owners of domestic animals who fail to feed or shelter their domestic animals because it is inhumane. Ethical trappers of furbearers and fur animals return frequently to their traps to prevent waste and also to lessen the suffering of trapped animals. This proposal is intended to apply only to a small part of a heavily populated part of Alaska in the hope that trappers and persons opposed to trapping on ethical grounds can work together in lessening the suffering of animals.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? I am a member of the Anchorage Advisory Committee and serve on the Game subcommittee. The Anchorage AC does not usually submit proposals and does not meet until October 2024. The Anchorage AC will review and comment on this proposal when it reviews all the proposals to be considered by the Board of Game.

PROPOSED BY: Kneeland Taylor (EG-F24-083)

PROPOSAL 82

5 AAC 92.550. Areas closed to trapping.

Establish 50-yard trapping setbacks along specific trails in Unit 14 as follows:

In 2022, Alaska Wildlife Alliance submitted a proposal for 50-yard trap setbacks from multiple trails in Units 13, 14 and 16. At the 2022 Central & Southwest meeting, the Board of Game deferred the proposal until a stakeholder meeting between trappers and non-trappers was convened under the facilitation of a board member. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the setback proposal and “attempt to come up with solutions that would reduce potential conflicts between trapping and loose dogs, along highly developed trails in the Matsu Borough.”[1]

Stakeholders included representatives from Alaska Wildlife Alliance, non-trapper trail users, and trappers representing Alaska Frontier Trappers Association and Alaska Trappers Association. ADF&G staff were also present. The one-day meeting adjourned with consensus on the following setback location and conditions. We seek for these agreed-upon trails and restrictions to be codified in this proposal:

No trapping or snaring within 50-yards of the below-listed trails unless the traps are elevated three feet above hard ground, enclosed, underwater, or under ice. Trapping would still be permitted on the below-listed trails if they are elevated three feet above hard ground, enclosed, underwater, or under ice. All other forms of lawful trapping would also still be allowed near the below-listed trails, provided they are placed farther than 50-yards from the trail.

Unit	Trail name	Description
14B	Talkeetna Lakes Park trail system (XYZ lakes trails)	A trail system for skiing, hiking and mountain biking located within the Talkeetna Lakes Park. Construction of a trailhead facility at the park entrance was completed in 2007 and trails are maintained by Denali Nordic Ski Club. See map here
14B	Dorothy Jones Trail System (Susitna Valley High School)	Trail system consists of a series of loops built on rolling hills between the Su Valley High School and Montana Lake. There are varying levels of difficulty from novice to expert.
14A	Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area developed trails	Includes a pedestrian year round trail system and maintained ski trails. Map available here .
14A	Scout Ridge Loop	Well-established trail located off Hayfield Road in the Knik-Fairview area. This year-round trail is used in the winter by hikers, skiers and snowshoers. See map here .
14A	Reflections Lake Trail	Located south of Palmer just off the west side of the Glenn Highway on the north side of the Knik River. This year-round trail is used in the winter by hikers, skiers and snowshoers, and in the summer/fall by hikers, hunters and fishermen. See map here .
14A	Nelson Road	Palmer Hay Flats area. See map here .
14A	Rabbit Slough Boat Launch Access Road	Palmer Hay Flats. See map here .
14A	Wasilla Creek Boardwalk (Nelson Road)	Palmer Hay Flats. See map here .
14A	Government Peak Recreation Area developed Trails system within the southern development area	There are 4 miles (6.5 km) of Nordic skiing/hiking trails built for all skill levels. There is an additional 4 miles of bike trails intertwining with the skiing/hiking trails. Below the Chalet there is a sledding hill for all ages. The ski trails area maintained by the Mat-Su Ski Club for both summer and winter use. Mountain bike trails are maintained by the Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers. See map here .

14B	Independence Mine ski trails	Year round trail within the Hatcher Pass Management area. See map here .
14B	Gold Mint trail to Mint Glacier	Year round trail within the Hatcher Pass Management area. See map here .
14B	Reed Lakes trails to lower Reed Lake	Year round trail within the Hatcher Pass Management area. See map here .
14B	Archangel Road to the gate	Year round trail within the Hatcher Pass Management area. See map here .

Fifty yards is the minimum precedented distance for trap setbacks in Alaska. In Unit 1C, for example, Juneau-area designated trails have a regulated ¼ mile trap setback and 15C has 100-yard trap setbacks from specific trails. For trails outside the Juneau area in Unit 1C, the ¼ mile setback is also applied except for traps with an inside jaw spread of five inches or less, which can only be set if they are at least five feet above the ground and snow and are more than 50 yards from the trail. Additionally, in 2019 the Anchorage municipality passed an ordinance for 50 yard no-trap setbacks from designated trails in the Anchorage Municipality. In sum, the 50-yard distance is precedented as a reasonable compromise between various users, and has been implemented in other areas of the state. Trappers at the stakeholder meeting agreed that the setback distance would be appropriate on the above-listed trails.

The setback distance is small enough to not significantly reduce the Board of Game’s ability to manage wildlife. Should trapping of a species within this setback be proven biologically necessary, the board may utilize a temporary permit system that identifies active traps in specific cases or modify the list of trails in the setback system. In areas that permit off-leash dog use, dogs must still be under voice and sight control to be protected by this setback. For the protection of users and wildlife, dogs must be in voice and sight control in all multi-use settings.

Finally, defining the trail would not pose a regulatory burden, as the trails are mapped and the same process for identifying the trail boundaries and regulating trap setbacks in Units 1C and 15C could be applied to Unit 14.

[1] 2022 RC014

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? While the majority of trappers set traps a responsible distance from multi-use trails, some traps on/near Mat Su area trails and trailheads have incurred serious consequences for skiers, bikers, and walkers with pets. This issue was brought to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough (MSB) Assembly in 2017, when over 3,500 MSB residents petitioned assembly members to protect multi-use trails after 11 dogs had been caught in traps on local trails. The MSB approved trapping restrictions on six borough-managed trails and on school grounds, but did not issue regulations for state-managed trails in deference to the regulatory powers of the Board of Game. While the borough regulations limited trapping on a few

trails in 2017, each year since there have been reports of pets in off-leash areas being caught and even killed in legally set traps on/near multiuse trails.

Land managers and law enforcement do not track trap-safety incidents, so reports are collected ad hoc and considered incomplete. Since 2019, Alaska Wildlife Alliance started tracking the incidents reported to our organization, and transitioned the reporting platform online so the public could see when a trap encounter was reported on an interactive map (www.akwildlife.org/safetrails).

Many people live in Alaska for the year-round recreational activities, and tens of thousands of people in the MSB and surrounding areas enjoy multi-use trails during the trapping season. We respect the rights of trappers to utilize multi-use trails, and seek reasonable, regulated boundaries that ensure safe multi-use on some trails for the benefit of thousands of other trail users. The goal of this proposal is not to unduly restrict trapping, but to protect and reduce the uncertainty for users of multi-use trails by providing defined boundaries on trap placement.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? The setback conditions and trail recommendations in this proposal were negotiated by representatives present at the 2022 stakeholder meeting. Alaska Trappers Association (ATA) was presented with a draft of this proposal before submission, but ATA has not decided whether to support or oppose or amend this proposal before it was submitted.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Wildlife Alliance (EG-F24-087)

PROPOSAL 83

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

Extend the spring hunting season for ptarmigan in Unit 16 as follows:

Option 1

Unit	Season	Bag Limit
16	August 10 – April 30	10 ptarmigan per day, 20 in possession

Option 2

Unit	Season	Bag Limit
16	August 10 – March 31	10 ptarmigan per day, 20 in possession
16	April 1 – April 30	5 ptarmigan per day, 10 in possession

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like to increase the opportunity for hunters in Unit 16 to pursue spring ptarmigan during the month of April. Currently, the season for ptarmigan in Unit 16 ends on March 31. Hunters who wish to pursue ptarmigan during April currently have to travel to Units 1-5, 6A/B/C, 8, 10, 12, and 17- 26 to do so. This would also allow individuals living in the region to take advantage of the longer daylight and improved weather in April to enjoy going out on hunts before or after typical business hours during the week. The extension of the ptarmigan season in Unit 16 by one month would be unlikely to cause a negative impact on the population. In the alternative, any potential negative impact could be mitigated by a reduced bag limit, similar to Units 12, 20, and 25C, for a portion of the season.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? I developed this proposal myself.

PROPOSED BY: Jonathon Green (HQ-F24-025)

PROPOSAL 84

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

Extend the spring hunting season for ptarmigan in Units 14A and 14B as follows:

Option 1

Unit	Season	Bag Limit
14A, 14B	August 10 – April 30	10 ptarmigan per day, 20 in possession

Option 2

Unit	Season	Bag Limit
14A, 14B	August 10 – March 31	10 ptarmigan per day, 20 in possession
14A, 14B	April 1 – April 30	5 ptarmigan per day, 10 in possession

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like to increase the opportunity for hunters in Units 14A and 14B to pursue spring ptarmigan during the month of April. Currently, the season for ptarmigan in Units 14A and 14B ends on March 31. Hunters who wish to pursue ptarmigan during April currently have to travel to Units 1-5, 6A/B/C, 8, 10, 12, and 17- 26 to do so. This would also allow individuals living in the region to take advantage of the longer daylight and improved weather in April to enjoy going out on hunts before or after typical business hours during the week. The extension of the ptarmigan season in Units 14A and 14B by one month would be unlikely to cause a negative impact on the population. In the alternative, any

potential negative impact could be mitigated by a reduced bag limit, similar to Units 12, 20, and 25C, for a portion of the season.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee? I developed this proposal myself.

PROPOSED BY: Jonathon Green

(HQ-F24-026)
