HUNTING-TRAPPING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. R1-19-23

Issued at Juneau, Alaska

Effective Date: 1 November, 2023

Expiration Date: 30 June 2024
(unless superseded by a subsequent emergency order)

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes the state resident and nonresident wolf trapping and hunting seasons in Game Management Unit 2. This order is effective at 11:59 PM, 15 December 2023.

REGULATORY TEXT:

Therefore, the provisions of 5 AAC 84.270 (13), TRAPPING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR WOLF and of 5 AAC 85.045, HUNTING SEASONS AND BAG LIMITS FOR WOLF, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for trapping and hunting wolves in Unit 2:

Unit and Bag Limit	Resident Open Season	Nonresident Open Season
Unit 2		
No limit wolves per regulatory year by trapping only:	Nov. 15-Dec. 15	Nov. 15-Dec. 15
5 wolves per regulatory year by hunting only; ……	Sept. 1-Dec. 15	Sept. 1-Dec. 15

All other hunting and trapping regulations in Unit 2 remain unchanged and are not affected by this emergency order.

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to: Thomas V. Schumacher

Tom Schumacher
Regional Supervisor

JUSTIFICATION:

2022 Unit 2 Wolf Estimate

For fall 2022, ADF&G estimated the preharvest GMU 2 population to be 259 wolves with high confidence the true population size was within the range of 203 to 330 wolves (95% confidence interval). Within that range of plausible values, managers base harvest management on the point estimate because that is the value most likely to be correct given the data collected that year. Fieldwork, lab work, and calculating each year's population estimate takes about 10 months, so each year's estimate is used to inform harvest management in the following year. For example, the fall 2022 estimate is the most recent and informs GMU 2 wolf harvest management for this season. The true number of wolves is likely to be somewhat higher or lower than each year's point estimate, so ADF&G encourages the public to focus on trends over several years, rather than on year-to-year changes in point estimates. Recent estimates indicate the population is stable and that harvest is sustainably managed.

Fall 2023 Harvest Management

In GMU 2 most wolves are harvested by trapping, so harvest management focuses on annually varying trapping opportunity. Determining an amount of trapping opportunity that will result in sustainable harvest involves considering recent population estimates, trends in trapper participation, documented harvest rates, public observations, and regulatory guidance. The harvest rate, or the number of wolves harvested per day of trapping season, is related to trapping effort, trapping conditions, and wolf abundance. Since initiating the current harvest management strategy in 2019, harvest rate for GMU 2 wolves has ranged from 2.0 to 3.2 wolves/day and averaged 2.5 wolves/day. Assuming an average harvest rate, managers project that in 2023 one month (31 days) of trapping opportunity is likely to result in harvest of about 78 wolves (31 days × 2.5 wolves/day = 78). However, managers recognize that the range of harvest rates documented in GMU 2 could also produce a harvest ranging from 62 to 99 wolves. Sustainability of the population is unlikely to be affected by harvest in a single year, so for 2023 managers consider harvest within that range sustainable.