

Hunting and Trapping

Emergency Order

Under the Authority of AS 16.05.060

Alaska Department
of Fish and Game

Emergency Order No. 02-01-14

Issued at: Anchorage, Alaska
January 30, 2014

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m.
February 1, 2014

Expiration Date: June 30, 2014
11:59 p.m. unless superseded
by subsequent emergency order

EXPLANATION:

In spring 1992 the Board of Game adopted a lynx tracking harvest strategy with framework trapping seasons of November 10 - February 28 in Southcentral game management units (GMUs). The board delegated authority to the department to adjust season dates within this framework to track population cycles. In March 2005, the Board of Game determined that lynx hunting seasons, but not bag limits, would be included as part of the lynx tracking harvest strategy.

This emergency order extends the 2013-2014 lynx trapping season in GMUs 7 and 15 by 15 days so that the season will now close at 11:59 p.m. on February 15, 2014. This emergency order applies only to the 2013-2014 lynx trapping season for GMUs 7 and 15 and does not apply to other GMUs in Southcentral Alaska. Also, this extension does not apply to the published lynx hunting season for any Southcentral GMUs.

Therefore, the following regulations in **5 AAC 84.270(5), Furbearer trapping**, are superseded by this emergency order, and the following provisions are effective for lynx trapping:

Unit	Open Season	Bag limit
5AAC 84.270(5), Furbearer trapping		
(5) Lynx		
Units 7 and 15	Jan. 1 – Feb. 15	No limit
....		

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

Cora Campbell
Commissioner

By delegation to: _____

Jeff Selinger
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

GMUs 7 and 15: Kenai Peninsula

Observations and track counts indicate snowshoe hare populations have declined on the Kenai Peninsula. The lynx population was very high during this cycle and is now declining across the Peninsula. Hare and lynx populations in this region probably peaked during the winter of 2011-2012. The 2011 - 2012 harvest was a record high of 466 with approximately 27% kittens. The 2012 - 2013 harvest declined to 400 with only 20% kittens. We expect kitten production and survival to continue declining as the population moves toward the next cyclic low. Given the declining food source, the department's intent was to allow for a shortened 2013-2014 lynx trapping season and therefore a Jan. 1 – Jan. 31 trapping season. However, due to unseasonably warm weather during most of January, trappers had limited access to traditional trapping area due to open water (most creeks and rivers remained open) and lack of snow. Extending the season by 15 days will allow additional opportunity for trappers who were unable to run their lines, will have little impact on the lynx population, and stays within the lynx harvest tracking strategy. When snowshoe hare populations crash after a population peak, there is not food to sustain lynx and many die of starvation.

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