



Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, AK 99503-6199



FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE SEASON FOR MOUNTAIN GOAT CLOSED IN A PORTION OF UNIT 5A

TEMPORARY SPECIAL ACTION:

Under Authority of: 36 CFR 242.10 and .19
43 CFR 51.10 and .19

Temporary Special Action No: WSA 12-SA-01-26
Issued at: Yakutat, AK, July 24, 2026

Effective Date: 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 31, 2026
Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Sunday, January 31, 2027, unless superseded by subsequent special action

EXPLANATION: This Temporary Special Action closes the 2026 Federal subsistence mountain goat season in that portion of Unit 5A west of Harlequin Lake, defined as: west shore of Harlequin Lake and the western edge of Yakutat Glacier; then west of Harlequin Lake and Yakutat Glacier to Yakutat Bay and Disenchantment Bay; and south of Russell and Nunatak Fjords. The closure is effective for the remainder of the season, which would otherwise close January 31, 2027. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) will be issuing a closure for the State season.

REGULATION: 36 CFR 242.26(n)(5) and 43 CFR 51.26(n)(5) are amended to read:

Unit 5A – Mountain Goat

<i>Unit 5A—that area between the Hubbard Glacier and the West Nunatak Glacier on the north and east sides of Nunatak Fjord</i>	<i>No open season</i>
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<i>Unit 5A—the area beginning on the west shore of Harlequin Lake and the western edge of Yakutat Glacier, then west of Harlequin Lake and Yakutat Glacier to Yakutat Bay and Disenchantment Bay, and south of Russell and Nunatak Fjords. 1 goat by Federal registration permit. The harvest quota will be announced prior to the season.</i>	<i>Aug. 1 – Jan. 31 Closed</i>
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<i>Unit 5A, remainder—1 goat by Federal registration permit. The harvest quota will be announced prior to the season.</i>	<i>Aug. 1 - Jan. 31</i>
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<i>Unit 5B—1 goat by Federal registration permit only</i>	<i>Aug. 1 - Jan. 31</i>
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JUSTIFICATION:

Aerial surveys conducted between 2006 and 2019 in this area indicate a significant decline in goat numbers. The following are aerial (fixed-wing) survey results by year: 2006, 122 goats (minimum estimate, partial survey only); 2007, 66 goats; 2008, 57 goats; 2009, 48 goats; 2010, 12 goats; 2011, 38 goats; 2016, 19 goats; and 2019, 46 goats. The consistently low number of goats detected suggests the area's goat population remains depressed. The 2019 survey results are higher than the previous few surveys, however numbers remained relatively low.

The area has been closed to mountain goat hunting under state regulations since 2008. The Federal subsistence season remained open to allow continued subsistence harvest opportunities. Harvest effort and rates by subsistence users has been low; however, in October 2018, one female was harvested by a subsistence user. The Federal subsistence season was closed for a portion of the 2018/2019 season and the entirety of the 2019-2025 seasons.

On September 23, 2023, 79 adults and 20 kids were observed within 27 groups in the previously closed area. This survey was conducted by the U.S. Forest Service in an A-Star B3 helicopter, with three observers plus the pilot, under good survey conditions. This is the highest survey result since 2006 and, in line with the results of the 2019 survey, may indicate an increasing/recovering population; however, caution in interpreting the results is warranted due to the difference in survey platform, i.e. a higher detectability rate from a helicopter versus fixed wing aircraft used in previous surveys reported above.

Given the 2023 survey results, in 2024, the federal subsistence season west of Harlequin Lake was open under a conservative approach (limited quota; 3 males or 1 female) to provide opportunity for Federally qualified subsistence users while allowing the population to continue to recover and ensure future subsistence harvest opportunities. The in-season manager closed the season after one female was reported harvested.

Two surveys were conducted by helicopter in 2025. A total of 25 goats were observed by a combined USFS/Yakutat Tlingit Tribe survey crew on September 3. These results were likely a low estimate due to glare and warm temperature conditions during the survey. A total of 75 goats were observed in a partial area survey by a combined Yakutat Tlingit Tribe/Alaska Department of Fish and Game crew on September 23, 2025.

A public hearing (in-person with call-in option) to discuss goat management in Unit 5A was held on July 21, 2026, in Yakutat, Alaska. Representatives from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Yakutat Tlingit Tribe, and 4 members of the public provided input during the meeting.

Considering the harvest of a female in 2024, recent survey data, and potential lag time between reporting and a special action to close the season (public notice, etc.), a closure of this area to harvest is necessary for conservation concerns.



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The east side of Harlequin Lake remains open until that quota is reached or the season ends.

Federal Subsistence Board by delegation to:

Nate Catterson
Yakutat District Ranger
July 24, 2026

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