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Advisory Announcement

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Federally Managed Public Lands Closed to Sheep Hunting in Portions of Units 24A and 26B

(Fairbanks) – On Tuesday, July 26th the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) closed certain federal public lands in the Brooks Range to all sheep hunting, over the objection of the State and the vast majority of public testimony. The state opposed the action and provided scientific information that the closure was biologically unnecessary, and unlikely to aid an increase in sheep population numbers. The population experienced an apparent decline between 2012 and 2017, primarily due to a series of difficult winters, but since 2018 sheep numbers appear low but stable. The FSB closure will be in effect from July 26, 2022 to June 30, 2024. The FSB closed sheep hunting on federal public lands in Units 24A and 26B west of the Sagavanirktok River to all users.

State and private lands are not affected by the closures. Hunters should familiarize themselves with landownership and attain permission before entering private lands. Land status maps are available online by visiting the Department of Natural Resources website at: <https://mapper.dnr.alaska.gov/>. Additional sheep hunting opportunities do exist and information is available on the Alaska Department of Fish & Game website at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/> or by visiting a Regional or Area Wildlife Conservation office.

The State has not modified its regulations in response to this federal action. We commented on the record that the action was not necessary or justified and violated provisions of the Alaska National Interest Lands Claim Act. This is the most recent example of the FSB dismissing the state's comments on wildlife management in Alaska and continuing to erode the state's ability to manage wildlife.

For additional information about the closure and the federal subsistence regulations go to <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/wildlife>, or contact the Office of Subsistence Management at (907) 786-3888 or (800) 478-1456.

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