

ACR 1 - Eliminate the nonresident bag limit of one sheep every four years, or apply the bag limit to both resident and nonresident hunters.

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Harper

CITE THE REGULATION THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS ACR IS HEARD.

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

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS? STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM. The nature of recently passed proposal 30 is highly flawed in concept and wording. As it stands, the new law will do little to improve sheep hunting opportunity, while allowing residents to avoid their shared responsibility for improving sheep hunting.

WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU PREFER? I believe the "full curl" regulation has done wonders for sheep conservation and sheep hunting quality in Alaska, in large part because it applies to all hunters. It remains a self-limiting regulation with fairness to all. If further reductions in the total harvest of full curl rams are desired, then all hunters must play by the same regulations for continued long-term viability of sheep hunting, and sheep conservation. My solution would be to eliminate recently passed proposal 30 limiting only nonresidents to one ram in four years bag limit. Either apply this rule to all sheep hunters of Alaska, or none.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW THIS ACR MEETS THE CRITERIA STATED ABOVE.

a) for a conservation purpose or reason: With regards to proposal 30, there is a fundamental flaw in its idea of sheep conservation. The proposal directly states its rationale as "Restricting brown bear bag limits **for both residents and nonresidents** to one every four years has proved very effective over time and eventually resulted in lifting the "one every four" restriction in many units. We are optimistic that this will save some sheep each year, thus this helps to conserve the resource." Yet their proposal was only to limit nonresidents. When considering that the majority of nonresident hunters are guided and typically only hunt sheep in Alaska one time (repeat clients within a four year period are virtually non-existent), the only nonresidents this affects are those of us nonresidents who hunt with Alaska family. This will have no impact on the harvest of guided nonresidents. While often overlooked when comparing resident and nonresident success rates, my guess is that nonresidents who hunt with Alaskan family have a lower success rates than guided hunts, and probably fall in line with the residents with whom they are hunting. These 2nd degree kindred nonresidents are the only ones limited by proposal 30. With their lower success rates and the fact that they usually get about 25% of the nonresident sheep tags, proposal 30 will be highly ineffective in increasing the availability of mature rams.

The real driver of ram numbers is total sheep numbers in general. Bigger populations have more rams, and more mature rams. The vast majority of sheep mortality is due to natural causes, not full curl ram harvest. While predation has a real impact, the primary underlying force determining sheep population trends is winter weather, especially heavy snows and icing events. We have no control over this. Furthermore, full curl legal rams only make up

around 4% of the total sheep population in Alaska. Any argument that legal human hunting on full curl rams has a significant impact on overall sheep numbers and ram availability is misguided. The very reason "full curl" regulations have been so successful is that they accomplish two important goals simultaneously: 1) allow widespread hunting opportunity on a "general" hunt basis and 2) not allowing any significant human impact on sheep populations.

If indeed the true intention of proposal 30 is to increase the approximately 4% of legal rams in most Dall Sheep populations to some higher number, then the only way it will have any chance of doing this is to apply the rule to all hunters, both resident and nonresident. I imagine this will be wildly unpopular with residents, as would be any idea for them to share responsibility for a public resource in decline.

b) to correct an error in regulation: Not applicable.

c) to correct an effect on a hunt that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted: Not all nonresident sheep hunters are affected equally. The only people who are actually limited by this new regulation are the nonresidents who hunt with 2nd degree kindred, and their Alaskan kindred. The most likely unforeseen aspect of this new regulation is the affect it will have on the long-distance relationships of those Alaskans and their nonresident kindred, who now may be less apt to be a part of a mutual sheep hunt.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED PRIOR TO THE REGULAR CYCLE? Until the Board of Game decides to either change this new regulation to apply to all sheep hunters, or rejects this new regulation in whole, the unjust limitations on a select minority of nonresident sheep hunters and their families will be allowed continue. While this small group of nonresidents is patently underrepresented, and therefore an easy target, not having a loud voice should not justify their persecution by the masses.

STATE WHY YOUR ACR IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE: The recently passed proposal 30 cannot achieve a goal of increasing ram numbers if significant amounts of hunters are not affected. As far as producing overall population level growth in Dall sheep, this new regulation will have no effect.

IF THIS REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE. Simply due to my nonresident status, many will believe my request to be allocative in large part. Please review my request for the reasons stated above, which I believe to be both accurate and justified.

STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACR. Nonresident hunter with Alaskan family.

STATE WHETHER THIS ACR HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AS AN ACR, AND IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF GAME MEETING. Not to my knowledge.