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**Fairbanks
Fish & Game Advisory Committee**

**Interior Region
Fish & Game Advisory Committees**

John Siegfried
Chairman
3081 Monteverde Road
Fairbanks, Alaska 99709

Central
Delta Junction
Eagle
Fairbanks
GASH
Koyukuk River
Lake Minchumina
McGrath

Middle Nenana River
Middle Yukon River
Minto-Nenana
Ruby
Stony Holitna
Tanana-Rampart-Manley
Upper Tanana Fortymile
Yukon Flats

November 9, 2023

To: Alaska Board of Game
Re: ACR 7

Dear Chairman Burnett and members of the board,

Last night at our regularly scheduled Advisory Committee meeting, we voted unanimously in support of ACR 7 to change the boundary line between Unit 20A and 20C to reflect where the current channel of the Nenana River (that is the current boundary line) flows. We support acceptance of this ACR for consideration at the 2024 Region III meeting in Fairbanks next March.

Sincerely,
John Siegfried - Chair



PC01

Submitted by: Rod Arno

Organization Name: Alaska Outdoor Council

Community of Residence: Palmer, Alaska

Comment:

The Alaska Outdoor Council strongly supports ACR #1 to eliminate criteria (C) from the definition of a legal Dall Sheep ram under General Hunting regulations. If ever there was a justification for adopting an agenda chance ACR #1 is it. Clearly there is a conservation threat to the majority of Dall sheep herds in the state. ACR #1 fulfills criteria C. Does the requested identity a biological concern for the population or a threat to meeting objectives for the population? Yes it does.

The Western Interior RAC did an excellent job articulating their concerns with folks being able to accurately determine the age of a Dall sheep ram in the field. Their justification for the timing of a board agenda is sound.

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

ACR 1: Support



PC02

Submitted by: Frank Archer

Community of Residence: Sioux Falls SD

Comment:

This is absurd. Absolutely unacceptable.

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ACR 1: Oppose ACR 2: Oppose ACR 3: Oppose ACR 4: Oppose
ACR 5: Oppose ACR 6: Oppose ACR 7: Oppose



Submitted by: Mathew Brunton

Community of Residence: Valdez, AK

Comment:

I support ACR 1. The change makes sense to protect Dall Sheep populations and associated hunting opportunities. Hunting Dall Sheep likely requires more patience and restraint than any other species, while their trophy is likely more coveted than any other. The temptation to harvest an illegal or marginal ram is powerful. All measures should be taken to reduce and eliminate the chances a hunter takes an illegal ram.

I strongly oppose ACR 2. I do not believe air guns can reliably provide ethical and humane kills of big game. Additionally, air gun sales do not seem to contribute to conservation through the Pittman-Robertson Act. It's in the state and ADFG's interest to encourage firearm hunting due to funds received from the P-R Act. It's in the big game species' interest to be harvested by a reliably ethical and humane means. Air gun technology is far behind, and far insufficient, compared to modern firearm and ammo technology. Furthermore, this change is proposed by an individual with a personal and financial interest in airgun hunting and his proposal lacks an objective, scientific basis.

I strongly support ACR 5. Rich, non-resident hunters and profiteering guides should not be able to circumvent application processes and fees at the expense of residents and our public resource.

I strongly support ACR 6. The Macomb Plateau is a very special place to me. Despite being a motorized user (ATV and snowmobile), I make an annual pilgrimage to the Macomb Plateau to hunt the extremely challenging RC835 during the non-motorized, controlled use timeframe. Not only is this hunt a walk-in test piece for Alaskan mountain hunters, it provides an incredibly quiet and sublime wilderness experience. I would like to see the Macomb Plateau protected to provide these sublimely quiet wilderness experiences year round. The Macomb Plateau is an untapped resource for Alaska's developing adventure tourism economy as it has immeasurable potential for providing hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing, and hunting opportunities that rival the majesty of Alaska's most protected National Parks. Motorized vehicles, the associated noise, and the destruction they'd do to the sensitive and fragile tundra ecosystem would ruin the Macomb experience. ORVs would permanently scar the landscape and deteriorate the ecosystem as they have in the southern Talkeetnas. Please protect the Macomb wilderness experience for future generations! Plenty of other areas of Alaska are open to motorized use, and have already been scarred by ORVs. In 2023, considering climate change and biospheric degradation, it doesn't make sense to add another "sacrifice zone" to ORV users.

I support ACR 7. ADFG's logic makes sense. Hunting regulations and associated mapping are already difficult enough. All means and measures should be taken to make hunting, regulations, and boundaries as straightforward and sensible as possible.

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ACR 1: Support

ACR 2: Oppose

ACR 5: Support

ACR 6: Support

ACR 7: Support



Submitted by: Melissa Castle

Community of Residence: Anchorage

Comment:

I am a new sheep hunter in the last 5 years. Finding a legal sheep is extremely difficult. I have hunted the Wrangells, The Alaska Range, Kenai, Talkeetna using foot, four wheeler, and plane access. After speaking with experienced biologist and seeing rams in all the ranges, it's clear that "full curl" does not always translate over to age. Some mature rams will never become full curl before they die and some will be full curl at 6 years old. Instead of focusing on changing the regulation, I would love to see focus on improving education of sheep hunters. More education and stronger penalty for sub legal rams shot, could be a step in the right direction to continue managing our sheep populations.

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ACR 1: Oppose	ACR 2: Support with Amendment	ACR 3: Support with Amendment
ACR 4: Support	ACR 5: Support with Amendment	ACR 6: Support with Amendment
ACR 7: Support with Amendment		



Submitted by: Colter Day

Community of Residence: Saratoga Springs, Utah

Comment:

Problem: While I appreciate the desire and the undisputed need to help ensure only mature rams are taken, this "full curl only" rule will greatly reduce the number rams actually being taken in general— (even 8+ year old rams) and rob many of the opportunity to harvest rams.

Why?: The intent of both the annuli rule, or the 360 degree curl is to both help ensure a ram is mature, and thus legal. With the curl-only rule, There will be sheep harvested and checked that will be under 8 yrs. that will be actually legal (being that a 360 degree curl can occur before 8 years) On the flip side, there will be rams that will double broom before getting past 3/4 curl and therefore never fully curl. Such rams would likely never become legal although living into double digit years and beyond— having contributed to the herd, and eventually no longer contributing sexually, but taking resources from it.

Solution:

- 1) Continue both rules BUT make the penalty much harsher for not taking a ram that has 8 annuli or full curl. Make it hurt for the outfitters also when they mis judge.
- 2) (This is likely being done) Monitor the number of sheep checked for the next few years that come in full curl but under 8 years old, monitor the number of sheep that get checked that are over 8 but not full curl. Gain a sound understanding of what these changes would mean before making them; vs making them, then gathering data.

These numbers can help model the amount of sheep that may be taken that are sub-mature, but legal in curl... as well as the number of sheep that are brought in legal in annuli, but would fall short of full curl.

Before implementing a new rule, have the data and an understanding of what it would mean by your people who are a lot smarter than me. I believe data should drive the decisions. But also where there is a more difficult method of judging annuli than curl, make the punishment harder, and cause the hunter and outfitters to be extremely confident or suffer the harsher price. THAT will set in motion what is being sought after.

1) Stiffer penalty

2) Gather data

Thank you for asking for comment and listening.

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ACR 1: Support

ACR 2: Support with Amendment

ACR 3: Support

ACR 4: Oppose

ACR 5: Support

ACR 6: Oppose

ACR 7: Oppose



PC06

Submitted by: Michael Dow

Community of Residence: Fairbanks, Alaska

Comment:

Dear Alaska Board of Game,

I strongly oppose ACR #1. There is a number of rams that do not have the genetics or horn structure to ever reach 360 degrees of curl and reach legal status by the proposed full curl definition. 8, 9, and 10 year old rams that would not reach legal status would be therefore unavailable for take by hunters that properly identify annuli before harvesting said sheep. Having age in the full curl definition allows for the take of mature rams and rams that are past their prime to be harvested even though they have inferior genetics or horn structure that doesn't match the 360 degree definition. One fantastic public example of this is the [REDACTED] ram taken in 2020 that scored 184-1/8 and placed number 6 in the all time Boone and Crockett record book. The ram had very heavy horns and dropped extremely low like a lot of rams from the Chugach mountain range. Since it dropped so low, it caused the ram to not reach full curl until 11 years of age which is when it was harvested. By all accounts this ram should be considered a very mature ram with exceptional genetics and yet it still never reached full curl until age 11. Very few sheep make it to age 11 because they die of natural causes and with the proposed full curl definition change, a ram as exceptional as this one would become illegal to harvest during that sheep's 8, 9, and 10 year old season.

Additionally, it is every hunter's personal responsibility to follow the rules and do their due diligence to ensure that they are harvesting a legal animal. Illegal ram harvest of sub-full curl rams is an issue that occurs in minimal numbers and I do not see how leaving these few rams on the mountain would change anything in the overall sheep population depression that is currently occurring. Removing age from the full curl definition would probably save some of these rams from premature harvest, but it would also remove the opportunity for legal harvest by hunters putting in the effort and time to ensure that the sheep they are harvesting is legal by current age regulations. Perhaps stricter penalties for illegal ram harvest would make people be more conservative when trying to age rams.

Michael Dow

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ACR 1: Oppose



PC07

Submitted by: Melinda Eggleston

Community of Residence: Delta Junction, AK 99737

Comment:

Melinda & Gene Eggleston [REDACTED] Delta Junction AK 99737

[REDACTED] (Friends of Macomb Plateau and area land owners)

Our desire is to protect this Caribou habitat from being degraded by the summer time use of ORV's. With the increase of the capabilities of ORV's to conquer terrain, this request addresses the long-term threat to meeting objectives for the Caribou population of the Macomb Plateau.

Please consider this reasonable solution.



PC08

Submitted by: Tyler Freel

Community of Residence: Fairbanks, Alaska

Comment:

I wish to voice a strong opposition to ACR 1. As someone who has hunted sheep each of the past 20 seasons, I find the surge of quick-fix regulation proposals like this one to be unnecessarily restrictive, and based on recently presented data from [REDACTED], indications are that the overall age structure of rams harvested isn't out of the ordinary, just at much lower numbers. There are fewer sheep hunters in the mountains, and I highly doubt that biologically significant numbers of sub-legal rams are now being taken because hunters are trying to count rings. I would wager that more sub-legal rams are taken by hunters who talk themselves into believing a ram is full curl.

This proposal would only remove a viable options for hunters to take mature rams, and it shouldn't be the board's responsibility to decide whether too many hunters are incapable of determining an objective characteristic such as age. Many rams I have seen over the years will never reach full curl during their lifetime, and my party has taken 9, 10, and 12-year-old rams based on age that never would have been legal under full-curl criteria—and have taken zero sub-legal rams. Conversely, I've also seen many 7-year-old rams that are over full curl. If a management or regulatory objective is to harvest rams 8 years old and older, it makes no sense to penalize hunters who might choose to shoot an older ram based on age, even if the ram is not full curl. The interpretation of "full curl" is often different between ADF&G personnel, so we would also be penalizing hunters who may have an 8 or 9-year-old ram that may or may not be "full curl."

This is one of many band-aid proposals that I expect the board to receive in the coming years. I've seen over the past 20 years that many hunters want or expect immediate fixes to population problems like this that will take a decade or more to recover. The current regulations do a great job of protecting sheep from over-harvest, and this regulation change would do nothing to speed up their recovery.

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ACR 1: Oppose



PC09

Submitted by: Gabriel Geddes-mcsharry

Community of Residence: Anchorage

Comment:

All Hunter should have to take a quiz, determining if Rams, our age, legal or full curl before acquiring the harvest or draw tags

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ACR 1: Oppose

ACR 2: Oppose

ACR 3: Oppose

ACR 4: Oppose

ACR 5: Oppose

ACR 6: Oppose

ACR 7: Oppose



PC09

Submitted by: Gabriel Geddes-mcsharry

Community of Residence: Anchorage

Comment:

I believe all hunters should have to take and pass a quiz on aging and determining if a ram is full curl in all units before they are allowed to pick up there harvest tags kind like they did with mountain goats

Note: Respondents were allowed to participate in an optional survey to indicate support or opposition for proposals using the online comment submission form. This information allows Board Support staff to develop an index for the meeting and is included below as a courtesy:

ACR 1: Oppose



PC11

Submitted by: Adam Grenda

Community of Residence: King Salmon, AK

Comment:

I strongly disagree with ACR 1. Sheep hunters are having a hard enough time finding and confirming a ram is legal. This proposal is projecting the notion that all hunters will mistakenly misjudge rams based on age. I believe this is subjective at best. We as sheep hunters pride ourselves on being law-abiding sportsmen. Most avid hunters I know will not pull the trigger if the ram isn't 100% absolutely legal. The law should remain as is. If anything should be changed, it should be the penalty for shooting a sub-legal ram. Far too long has the penalty been too light and the perpetrators have been able to continually shoot sub-legal rams.

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ACR 1: Oppose



PC12

Submitted by: Jerry Herrod

Community of Residence: Anchorage, AK

Comment:

Response to ACR#1,

If ACR 1 goes through this will not totally prevent rams of very young age to be killed off. The regulations are there for a reason and were not willy-nilly put in place.

Harvest by way of counting annuli allows for the harvest of very old rams that may never reach full curl. There are many instances of rams like this from most any mountain range in Alaska where sheep live and can be found with simple research of the harvest reports. Counting annuli is a proven method that is backed by science and facts.

WIARAC's concern is that too many sub-legal rams are harvested under the annuli counting method. Here lies one issue that is not mentioned; there are rams every year that are 5, 6, and 7 years old that are full curl or larger that get harvested.

Regardless of what the regulations are, the fact is you are going to have sub-legal harvest no matter what by way of mistaken age, mistaken size, or outright poaching. This happens with sheep and happens with any game species statewide.

Based on ADFG research and harvest records from general, registration and draw sheep hunts and the current studies by ADFG and observations I have seen myself in the field as well as others I know, removal of the annuli harvest method would not be beneficial for sheep in Alaska. I cannot cite each and every study or attach them as PDF because there are far too many; however, the science-based facts are all there in the ADFG website harvest reports and biological research for anyone to educate themselves.

I do not support ACR#1.

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ACR 1: Oppose



Alaska Board of Game

Nov 5, 2023

Ref: Friends of Macomb Plateau ACR

Hello,

My name is Mark Jaynes and I am a property owner at the base of Macomb Plateau. My cabin is on Dry Creek, next to the Hadjukovich-Macomb trail. Hunters and hikers going up to the Plateau walk past my cabin. If I see them, I go out and greet them and then look to see when they return. I am a hunter and like to share info with other hunters.

I've seen a lot of changes to the hunt parameters over the past decades. There have been hunt closures, hunt date changes, a back-and-forth with registration and drawing hunts. One constant has been the up and down volatility of the Macomb Herd's population numbers. Two major changes on the scene that were not in 1974 are climate change and ORV's.

The Plateau is difficult to access. The first trails were made and used by hunting guides. Small light planes with tundra tires exploited the gently rolling swales to land and hunt the same day. Eventually, probably in the late sixties, hunters began hiking up the horse trails. In the early seventies snowmachines made it up.

In the late 70's one could still see those airplane tire tracks in certain areas. Otherwise, there are no human caused trails obvious on the Plateau. That cannot be said for other access points to the Macomb herd's semi-alpine range. The Granites, accessible from Miles 1402 & 1408 host a network of 4-wheeler trails.

To date, as far as we know, no ORVs have made it to the Plateau other than snowmachines. But there have been attempts, mainly on the Hajdukovich-Macomb trail and on the eastern side of the MACUA at Bear Creek. I myself have a huge respect for humanity's ability to get something done, so eventually someone could if allowed to make it by cutting enough brush or by designing an articulating-crawling vehicle that can crest the rim of the Plateau.



But the real concern is climate change. We can now see how a warming more humid earth is bringing a different set of weather to Alaska and the Boreal Forest. It's happening faster than expected. Caribou and Sheep are experiencing environmental stress population declines. Some Alaska Hunts for these animals are being curtailed.

So, given climate change is bringing more wildfires and rain on snow events I see the uncertainty for the Caribou in the long term. Most Caribou herds have huge ranges. The Macomb Herd may disperse over a wide area in the winter to feed on lichens in the rolling Boreal Forest hills, but their calving/rutting grounds is a very small area in comparison. This may prove to be crucial in their long term survival because it is small and so easier to protect.

Therefore, I am suggesting that the Macomb Plateau be designated as a Refuge or given Critical Status in order to protect the food resource habitat of the Caribou from the summertime use of wheeled or tracked vehicles on the Plateau.

We've collected enough reports and research materials to present a sound argument to support our proposal. Some through ADF&G, some through the Arctic Ungulate Society. These reports cover climate change, lichen decrease, shrub expansion as well as the damages cause by ORVs in certain areas.

We hope to present our proposal to the Board of Game in March in Fairbanks.

Thank you, Mark Jaynes



Submitted by: Justin Jensen

Community of Residence: Lewiston, Idaho

Comment:

I would like to oppose ACR1

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ACR 1: Oppose



Submitted by: Zach Kenner

Community of Residence: North Pole ak

Comment:

I am commenting in regards to ACR 1. This proposal was obviously made by someone unaware of how biology and genetics work. By saying a ram is not mature because he is not full curl is like saying a human man isn't mature unless he's 6 feet tall. Clearly some men never grow to be 6 feet tall just like some rams never grow to full curl. It's strictly genetics! If this awful idea is voted into effect I fear it will allow the rams that are genetically 3/4 curl to spread their genetics excessively. Over time we will see an influx in these sheep and the mountains will be covered in 3/4 curl 10-12 year old rams.

The idea of managing animals based on horn or antler genetics has already been implemented in other states such as Washington. In Washington they implemented a 3 point minimum requirement to harvest mule deer on the eastern side of the state. The three point minimum rule meant a mule deer had to have at Least 3 points on one side. So, a 2x3 was a legal animal to harvest. The goal was to Allow the young deer to "become mature" and achieve the classic 4x4 antler look. This allowed the deer with a 2 point genetic to grow old and breed with less desired genetics. This caused an influx in bucks with only 2 points and the department of fish and game had to create tags and seasons for 2 point bucks in the following years. The results of the management plan did not turn out as they expected and created a deer herd with antlers less desired by the hunters.

I believe a similar thing will happen in Alaska if ACR 1 passes. I would expect to see an influx in old 3/4 curl rams in years to come using that management practice. I oppose ACR 1 and think the 8 annuli rule should stay as a harvesting tool. Thanks

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ACR 1: Oppose
ACR 5: Support

ACR 2: Support
ACR 6: Oppose

ACR 3: Oppose
ACR 7: Oppose

ACR 4: Support



Submitted by: Carson Keys

Community of Residence: Fairbanks, Alaska

Comment:

ACR-1 is a disaster waiting to happen. Many mature rams will never be full curl. This will hurt opportunity for residents, and will disincentivize nonresidents from ever hunting sheep in Alaska. Ultimately disrupting the economy.

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ACR 1: Oppose



Submitted by: Jon Kruger

Community of Residence: Kenai

Comment:

Acr 1- I oppose changing this regulation and limiting hunters ability to harvest dall sheep rams by age. In some areas dall sheep do not get to full curl or Broomed before they reach the end of their life.

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ACR 1: Oppose

ACR 2: Support

ACR 3: Support

ACR 4: Oppose

ACR 5: Support

ACR 6: Oppose

ACR 7: Support



Submitted by: Joe Mirasole

Community of Residence: Healy, AK

Comment:

ARC 1 Change of definition "Full Curl Ram"

I don't feel that this proposal will benefit sheep populations. The sheep hunting community standard is 8 years of age or older and many sheep hunters will pass on a ram that meets full curl but they can't age it at 8 years or better. Removing this metric would result in a lot more sub legal rams being taken. There are also some genetics in the sheep population where rams will never meet full curl no matter there age. If these are never taken how do we know that this doesn't become the predominate horn growth in our population?

There is a lot of assumptions on the sheep populations in Alaska. It's obvious there has been a significant population swing in the last couple of years. The management of this wildlife resource should use sound science IAW The North American Wildlife Conservation Model and not perceived population trends, harvest data, and woods lore.

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ACR 1: Oppose



Submitted by: Kyle Moore

Community of Residence: Anchorage, Alaska

Comment:

ACR1

The age requirement is also another way hunters can ensure a ram is mature. People not willing to get educated, and that would shoot a ram on age alone when it's questionable, will certainly misjudge a full curl.

Dropping the age requirement will only hurt opportunity for responsible hunters. Not to mention this will have to no affect on helping the sheep population recover of older rams aren't breeding anyway.

If people misjudging sheep age then maybe more more education could be available to new sheep hunter. Such as in person classes, or experienced people could be at events throughout the year where the audience could talk with them, look at horns, look through optics to know how to count rings and how to judge a mature ram that might be well over 8 but not full curl.

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ACR 1: Oppose



Submitted by: Tyler O'Brien

Community of Residence: Wasilla, AK

Comment:

I oppose changing the rules regarding shooting dall sheep on age. Rams that are over 8 are not the main portion of the breeding rams anyways. Stop making decisions in feelings. Keep the ruling the same and keep hunting rams. Make the punishment harsher if need to for residents, and guides that harvest sublegal rams to stop illegal harvest. Also kill more wolves coyotes wolverines and bears. God forbid someone's says an eagle kills sheep..... they do and something needs to be done about.....

I also oppose the proposal by RHAK pertaining to brown bear drawing on Kodiak. A lot of resident tags never get filled due to hunters not hunting because cost is too great to get there and back and if they do hunt they shoot immature small bears for the most part. There's plenty of great bear hunting in the state that's all OTC.

Also oppose chnaging the maxima platue status. More loads re getting taken from hunters everyday it seems in ak. We need to put a stop to it before it's all gone. People complain about there being no sheep there half the sheep country to hunt now as there was 30 years ago. Take that into consideration. Get your backpack on and get walking. Don't close down anymore areas to public hunting!!!!

ACR 1: Oppose

ACR 5: Oppose

ACR 6: Oppose



Submitted by: Chad Schierman

Community of Residence: Wasilla, AK

Comment:

ACR 1 - OPPOSE - Current legality regulation which includes "sheep at least 8 years old" is a proven conservation method. There is no reason to take away age legality as some mature sheep will never meet full-curl or double broken legality. The use of aging to determine legality is typically done after the other two criteria cannot be met and primarily by experienced hunters taking sheep much older than 8-years old.

ACR 1: Oppose

ACR 5: Support

ACR 7: Support



PC23

Submitted by: Tyler Stortz

Community of Residence: Anchorage, AK

Comment:

This is in regard to the Full curl proposal. I do not support taking away the ability to harvest a ram based on age. The penalty should be stiffer for those that shoot sub legal rams and moose for that matter. I know of multiple people and guides that have done both and they just get a slap on the wrist. A guide should have their license revoked and the outfitter should face a huge fine! Then any hunter that shoots a sub legal should be fined and unable to hunt sheep for multiple years.

ACR 1: Oppose



PC24

Submitted by: Marc Uscola

Community of Residence: Wasilla, AK

Comment:

Excellent idea!

ACR 1: Support



PC25

Submitted by: Craig Van Arsdale

Community of Residence: Soldotna, AK

Comment:

I am writing to strongly OPPOSE ACR 1

The definition of "Full Curl" has been working for many years and is not broken! The definition is clear and has worked for quite sometime. Changing the definition will only further confuse hunters. We should focus on education of the current full curl definition if there is a concern with sub legal harvest or the penalty for shooting these rams should be re evaluated. We have required courses for hunters in certain moose and goat units, maybe its time a sheep hunter must do the same...

I OPPOSE ACR 2

I SUPPORT ACR 5. There should be no work around to pay your way into a Kodiak draw permit besides the process of purchasing a Governors Permit.

I SUPPORT ACR 8. The boundary change eliminates confusion by hunters.



PC26

Submitted by: John Whipple

Community of Residence: Palmer, AK

Comment:

I am opposed to ACR1, the proposal to remove aging a ram as a means of determining a legal animal.

I believe in the long term this could encourage the propagation of undesirable genetics, causing there to be more and more rams that never reach full curl, even at age 10 or 12.

I think a better approach is to offer significantly more training in the form of video tutorials that show experts aging a wide variety of rams both in hand and in the field and educating hunters on what to look for. Additionally holding in-person education sessions around the state would be helpful.

ACR 1: Oppose
