

PROPOSAL 133

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

5 AAC 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts.

Allocate 20% of the resident only early season Delta Controlled Use Area sheep drawing hunt DS203 to archery only or create a new early season archery only hunt as follows:

Allocate 20% of the total DS203 tag allotment each year to a separate tag that is archery only for the same area. If managers see fit, this archery hunt could take place during the same time as the general DS102 hunt or could take place during a separate time period.

Option 1:

20% of the total number of DS203 tags that would currently be allotted will be re-allocated to a new drawing hunt. **1 full-curl ram by bow and arrow only 8/10-8/25**

Option 2:

20% of the total number of DS203 tags that would currently be allotted will be re-allocated to a new drawing hunt. **1 full-curl ram by bow and arrow only 8/1-8/10.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal is one of several written this year with the intention of **maintaining hunting opportunity for all hunters while decreasing harvest on sheep populations.**

The current tag allotment for DS203 is adjusted each year to accommodate the estimated harvestable surplus of sheep in this area. This proposal is intended to maintain that number of tags but to allocate 20% of them each year to archery only. Because of the increased difficulty of archery hunting this will shield an overall decrease in harvest which, over time, may result in more sheep being available for harvest in future year. Similarly, in the event that sheep population does decline, wildlife managers may be able to maintain the number of tags because of the overall decrease harvest rate of tag holders (due to 20% of them being archery hunters who will have lower success rates.) Over time this could demonstrate the effectiveness of using archery as an effective management tool for sheep hunting in Alaska.

Overall, this will maintain opportunity while decreasing harvest and thereby enhancing the overall resource for future generations of hunters.

***Of note, in the past there has been some resistance to transitioning existing rifle hunts into archery hunts because of the perception of some that this somehow decreases opportunity. It is, however, well established throughout the United States and in Alaska that all hunters are capable of taking advantage of archery hunts by the simple means of purchasing and layering to shoot a bow. Currently it's possible to buy an effective hunting bow for less than the cost of most rifles and to learn to shoot accurately in a matter of weeks.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

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