

During the 2015 Work Session, the Board of Game requested this proposal be scheduled for the Central/Southwest region meeting scheduled for February 2015.

PROPOSAL 208 - 5 AAC 85.055 Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep, and 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts. Review and potentially modify sheep hunting opportunities statewide.

Status quo:

1. Current hunt types, seasons, and method and means will remain unchanged.

Existing draw hunts:

1. All existing drawing and registration hunts will stay in place and remain unchanged.

Options for nonresident hunters:

1. Nonresident hunters on private, state, and BLM managed lands will be entered into a limited draw for the entire season, permit allocation by Subunit.
2. Nonresident hunters on private, state, and BLM managed lands will be entered into a limited draw from Aug. 10 to 31, (permit allocation by Subunit) followed by a general season harvest ticket hunt.
3. NOTE: Nonresidents hunting on National Park Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service managed lands are already limited due to guide concession programs, so this proposal does not address those hunters and hunt areas.

Options for resident hunters:

1. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 31, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Drawing hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
2. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 25, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Draw hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
3. Resident hunting season will change from a general season harvest ticket to a limited draw for August 10 – August 19, and will remain a general season harvest ticket for the remainder of the season. Draw hunt areas will be defined on a Game Management Subunit level.
4. Hunters must chose to apply for current drawing hunts or one of the registration hunts by the December Drawing deadline. Hunters may not choose a registration hunt if they apply for any drawing hunt. All hunters may hunt the late open season.
 - a. 1st season registration: August 10-13 (length of season is very short to discourage choosing the “opener”, length of season could be up to 5 days if desired)
 - b. 2nd season registration: August 14-21 (short season but not too short to

- encourage choosing this option over 1st season)
- c. 3rd season registration: August 22-31 (longer season for those that want a traditional ten day hunt)
 - d. 4th season general harvest: September 1-20 (Open season for all applicants that didn't get drawn in drawing hunts, forgot to apply for either drawings or registrations or were not successful in earlier hunts.
5. Hunters must register according to his/her last name. The season will be divided into three hunt periods. Hunters with a last name starting with letters A through I can only hunt during the first period (August 10 – August 23); hunters with a last name starting with letters J through Q can only hunt during the second period (August 24 – September 6); hunters with a last name starting with letters R through Z can only hunt during the last period (September 7 – 20). The following year, hunters from the first period hunt second, hunters from the second period hunt last and the last group hunts during the first period. This rotate allows hunters to hunt the first period once every three years.

WHAT IS THE ISSUE YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS AND WHY?

During the last few Board meetings, the Board of Game (board) has received several proposals requesting changes to sheep seasons statewide. Hunters are expressing dissatisfaction with Dall sheep harvest opportunities. Many of the concerns expressed have noted increasing conflict among Alaska resident sheep hunters, hunting guides, transporters, and non-resident sheep hunters. Proposals were deferred until the February 2015 board meeting in Wasilla. At that time, the board will consider changes to all aspects of sheep hunting seasons across the state.

The Department of Fish and Game has contracted with the University of Alaska to survey the public that may be impacted by these changes, including sheep hunters, guides, transporters and air taxi operators. The survey attempted to learn more about sheep hunter characteristics and behaviors, to quantify the extent of hunter satisfaction or dissatisfaction with current sheep hunting opportunities, and to quantify the extent of hunter approval or disapproval of potential changes to sheep hunting regulations and management. The results are available on the Board of Game website at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.main>

The public is encouraged to review the results of the survey and provide comments to the Board by January 30, 2015 for the February 2015 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: The Alaska Board of Game [WS-2015-02]
