

Proposal 207 was received by the proposal deadline but inadvertently excluded from the Board of Game proposal book for consideration at the March 2024 regulatory meeting.

PROPOSAL 207

5 AAC 92.990(30). Definitions

Repeal the age criteria for full-curl horn rams for Dall sheep hunts in Interior and Eastern Arctic Region Units as follows:

The proposed regulatory change would repeal the age criteria for a full-curl horn of a male (ram) Dall sheep as follows:

- (A) the tip of at least one horn has grown through 360 degrees of a circle described by the outer surface of the horn, as viewed from the side, or
- (B) both horn tips are broken; broken means the lamb tip is completely absent; horn tips that are chipped or cracked are not broken if any portion of the lamb tip is present; characteristics of the lamb tip include:
 - (i) a length of less than four inches,
 - (ii) the inside surface of the lamb tip is distinctly concave when compared to the remainder of the horn, and
 - (iii) the lamb tip is the section of a horn that is grown during the first six months of a sheep's life and is the section of horn distal of the first annulus, which is the swelling of the horn that forms during the first winter of life.
- (C) [THE SHEEP IS AT LEAST EIGHT YEARS OF AGE AS DETERMINED BY HORN GROWTH ANNULI.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Statewide Dall sheep populations are far below historical carrying capacities. Rain on snow events, teamed with a late spring in 2012/13, as well as similar conditions in subsequent winters, have decimated multiple cohorts of Dall sheep statewide.

Many ram groups do not have full-curl, or both horns broken. Dall sheep hunters that do not see these rams then rely on aging a sheep in the field at a distance. This method can easily lead to miscounting the annuli and result in the take of sublegal, young rams. This loss of the very few young recruiting breeding rams is of critical concern to the sustainability of the Dall sheep population's recovery.

Most hunters and even professional biologists can mistakenly miscount annuli rings on 3/4 and 7/8 curl rams on the mountainside. Many hunters cannot age the sheep when in hand, which can be documented with the high numbers of young rams being seized by the department at sealing.

Very few rams will not eventually become legal under the full curl definition by either achieving a full curl, or by breaking off both horn tips if left to mature, so having the aging option is

unnecessary and detrimental. At this time few rams are even becoming legal under the full curl definition due to hunting or environmental related mortality prior to maturity being reached.

This issue needs to be addressed Statewide, and an Agenda Change Request was submitted for the Board to do so. This proposal is being submitted if the Board decides to not take up that request during this cycle.

PROPOSED BY: Western Interior Regional Advisory Council (HQ-F23-027)

Note: Proposal 208 was accepted by the Board of Game as an Agenda Change Request for consideration at the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting scheduled for March 2024.

Proposal 208

5 AAC 85.045. Seasons and bag limits for moose.

Lengthen the moose hunting season in Unit 19E by five days; allow proxy hunting, and eliminate the restriction of one permit per household as follows:

In the Unit 19E RM682 moose hunt –

- Allow proxy hunting,
- delete the “1 permit per household” condition (preferably with the ability to re-apply this condition if needed, e.g., due to drastic decline in moose or unforeseen regulation abuse),
- and add 5 days to the hunt to become Sept. 1-10.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Stony Holitna AC submitted an agenda change request with the following information:

The Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation did a GSPE moose survey in March, 2022, showing a positive increase in the Unit 19E moose herd since 2020, especially in the Bear Control Focus Area (BCFA), where moose density went from 2.0 to 2.9 moose/sq. mile, and harvestable surplus went from 42 to 62. The Stony Holitna AC (SHAC) was unable to meet to get a proposal for condition changes in RM682 in time for the May 1 deadline. The Interior cycle doesn't come up until 2027, and these conditions offer increased hunting opportunity, which would be lost those three years.

The recent 2022 regulation change that allows proxy hunting won't go into effect in Unit 19E. There would be the loss of hunting opportunity for all hunters, as well as meat availability for the elderly and handicapped.

There was no regulation error – but there was a regulation change that allows proxy hunting for this type of hunt.

The increase in moose population was unknown. The regulation change in proxy hunting was unforeseen. Proxy hunting, more than one permit per household, along with a 5-day hunt extension, will offer increased hunting opportunity.

There is no threat to IM objectives with the modest permit numbers being issued. This hunt was created as an Experimental Hunt, and it continues to be.

The positive survey results and change in proxy hunt regulations were unforeseen and unexpected. To delay these changes in hunt conditions until the next Board of Game cycle would restrict harvest opportunity needlessly for three years.

This unforeseen increase in animals will allow more animals to be taken when the opportunity is offered.

Hunters will have to wait until the next meeting in 2027 to take advantage of the additional opportunity.

These hunt condition changes are not predominately allocative. They simply add additional opportunity to an existing hunt.

The SHAC represents the people and villages within Unit 19E and this ACR has not been considered before.

PROPOSED BY: Stony Holitna Fish & Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F23-ACR3)

Note: Proposal 210 was accepted by the Board of Game as an Agenda Change Request for consideration at the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting scheduled for March 2024.

PROPOSAL 210

5 AAC 92.450. Description of game management units.

Change the subunit boundary of Units 20A and 20C to the current river channel as follows:

5 AAC 92.450(20)

(A) Unit 20(A) consists of that portion of Unit 20 bounded on the south by the Unit 13 boundary, bounded on the east by the west bank of the Delta River, bounded on the north by the north bank of the Tanana River from its confluence with the Delta River downstream to its confluence with the Nenana River, and bounded on the west by the east bank of the Nenana River **including Seventeen Mile Slough and Lost Slough;**

...

(C) Unit 20(C) consists of that portion of Unit 20 bounded on the east by the east bank of the Nenana River **including Seventeen Mile Slough and Lost Slough** and on the north by the north bank of the Tanana River downstream from the Nenana River;

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

This proposal addresses a change that has occurred in the location of the main channel of the Nenana River that effects the border of Units 20A and 20C. The proposed language clarifies that Seventeen Mile Slough and Lost Slough are channels of the Nenana River and therefore define the western boundary of 20A and the eastern boundary of 20C. Almost all of the water flowing downstream in the Nenana River enters Seventeen Mile and Lost Sloughs to their confluence with the Tanana River. This has created confusion by hunters interpreting the boundary in regulation because the Nenana River has changed its main channel course from what is shown on the map provided in the Alaska Hunting Regulations as well as USGS topographical maps. This boundary clarification will allow hunters to easily determine the subunit boundaries as the main channel of the Nenana River will match correctly with what is printed in the Alaska Hunting Regulations as well as label names on USGS maps. The existing discrepancy has created confusion for hunters and made it difficult for enforcement.

The intent of the regulation is that the Nenana River is the border between Game Management Units 20A and 20C. The main channel of the river has moved since the existing boundary was adopted by the board and since the maps were labeled. As a result, the USGS map and the map in the Alaska Hunting Regulations the boundary where the Nenana River no longer exists. Correcting this issue would increase opportunity for both moose and grizzly bear hunters, as well as making the hunt regulations more clear for the public and enforcement.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F23-ACR7)

Note: Proposal 211 was accepted by the Board of Game as an Agenda Change Request for consideration at the Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting scheduled for March 2024.

PROPOSAL 211

5 AAC 85.040. Hunting seasons and bag limits for goats.

5 AAC 92.050. Required permit hunt conditions and procedures.

Change the hunt area boundary for Unit 1A goat hunt RG002 and accompanying permit issuance requirements – as follows:

5 AAC 85.040(a)(1)

Units and Bag Limits	Resident Open Season (Subsistence and General Hunts)	Nonresident Open Season
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Remainder of Unit 1(A) and Remainder of Unit 1(B)

RESIDENT HUNTERS:

2 goats by registration permit
only; the taking of nannies
with kids is prohibited

Aug. 1 – Dec. 31

NONRESIDENT HUNTERS:

1 goat by registration permit
only; the taking of nannies with
kids is prohibited

Aug. 1 – Dec. 31

5 AAC 92.050(a)(4)

(K) a second mountain goat registration permit for the Remainder of Unit 1(A) **and Remainder of Unit 1(B)** may only be issued if the goat harvested with the first registration permit was a billy harvested in the Remainder of Units 1(A) **or Remainder of Unit 1(B)**; for those hunters who harvested their first goat in the Remainder of Unit 1(A) **or Remainder of Unit 1(B)** with a registration permit, the pursuit of a second goat cannot occur in the trend count area of the original harvest; resident hunters looking to pursue a second goat in the Remainder of Unit 1(A) **or Remainder of Unit 1(B)** with a registration permit may receive a second registration permit after presenting the harvest record or sealing documents from their first harvest to the ADF&G office in Ketchikan.

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

During the 2023 Southeast Region Board of Game meeting in Ketchikan, the Board adopted Proposal 43. The proposal allowed for a second goat to be harvested by resident hunters in a portion of Unit 1A. The proposer intended for the proposal to apply to the entire RG001 hunt area, however as written the proposal only applied to Unit 1A. The board did not amend the proposal,

and the new hunt opportunity was implemented in a way that has caused confusion. Changing the boundary of the new two-goat bag limit hunt, RG002, to align with the existing RG001 hunt area will reduce confusion for hunters.

If the board does not address the boundary issue, prospective resident goat hunters will continue struggling to understand which permit is necessary for the area they desire to hunt. Resident hunters who may be hunting near the border of the existing hunts must carry two permits and ensure they are complying with the correct permit conditions depending on which side of the mountain they harvest a goat from. Resident hunters hunting their second goat with an RG002 permit must be extremely careful to harvest their second goat from the RG002 side of the ridge.

The level of confusion caused by the regulations as adopted in 2023 was unexpected and the department has no conservation concerns with expanding the two-goat bag limit hunt area to include the small portion of Unit 1B directly north of the existing RG002 hunt area.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F23-ACR8)
