

Proposal 109

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

Amend management from full curl or larger to 3/4 curl or less for Rams in hunt DS196 as follows:

What solution do you recommend? In other words, if the board adopted your solution, what would the new regulation say?

Residents: One ram with full-curl horn or larger – HT – August 10 – September 20
[DS196]

One ram with $\frac{3}{4}$ curl horn or less, excluding rams with both tips broken, by permit available online at hunt.alaska.gov or in person in McGrath and Nikolai beginning Sept. 29. Check in/out required due to small quota; aircraft prohibited; contact McGrath at (907)-524-3323. – RS380 – Oct. 1 – April 30.

Nonresidents: One ram with full-curl or larger every four regulatory years – HT – August 10 – September 20 [DS197 & DS198]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

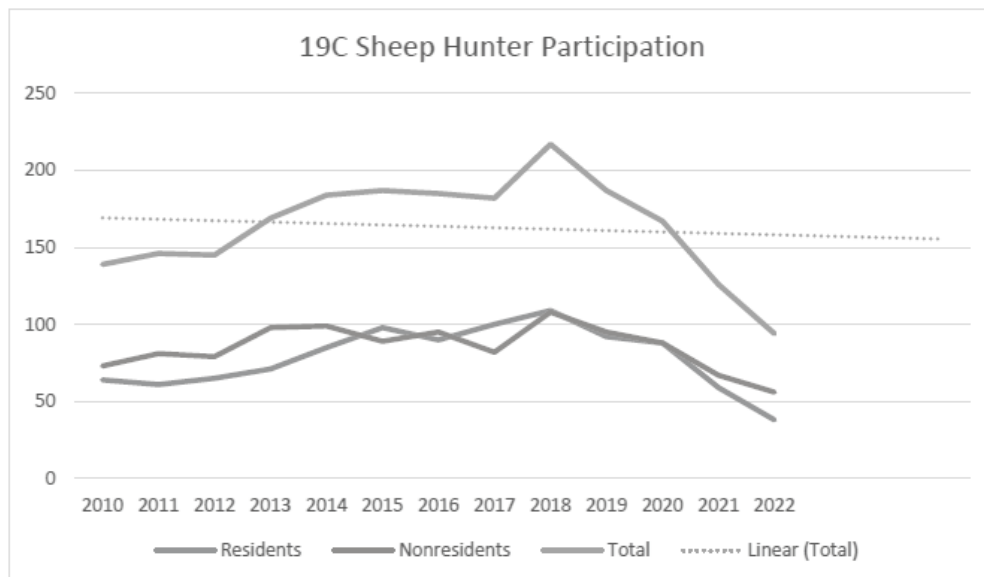
Reestablish a general season for Dall sheep in Unit 19C.

The board adopted the full curl regulation in 1992 and is one of the most conservative approaches to Dall sheep management. Full-curl management is intended to preserve sheep hunting opportunity while conserving sheep. This regulation has allowed the department to have a longer hunting season and provides a chance for all to hunt a full curl ram. Full curl regulation has been the best management tool for over 30 years now. Department studies have shown that once a ram surpasses 8 years old, its chance of survival diminishes within the wild with very few rams surpassing 12 years of age. Full curl, eight plus year old rams' makeup less than 5% of the overall sheep population. The harvest of this age class of rams has no effect on the overall sheep population. Limiting harvest to full-curl rams ensures that the population's productivity is not affected by harvest.

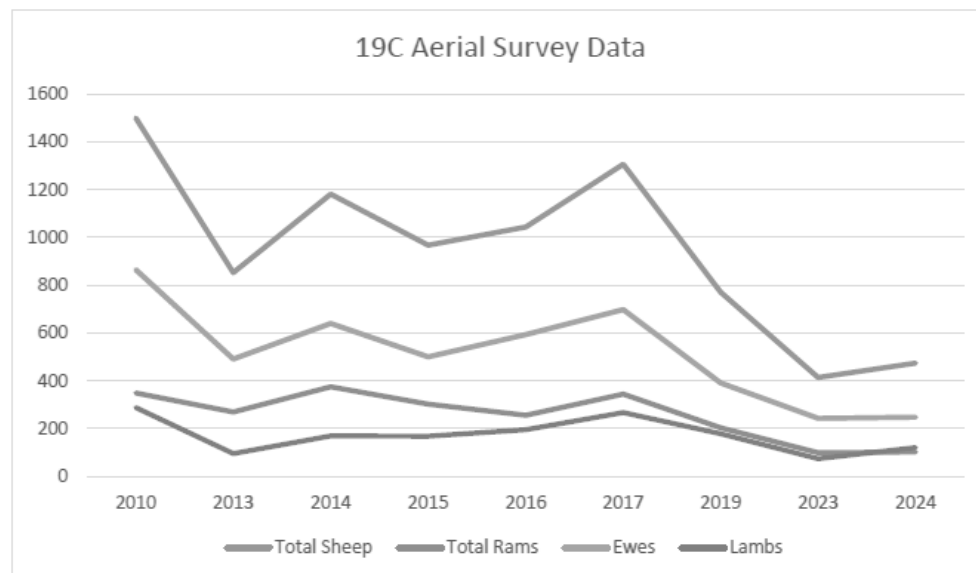
Unit 19C has seen a significant decline in Dall sheep hunter participation. In 2018, Unit 19C saw a record number of participants at 212 hunters. The following five years saw a steady decline with the 2022 season having 81 hunters go to the field. That is a 62% decline in sheep hunters in a five-year period. Why? The short answer is self-regulation. ADF&G hunter participation records show that during low levels of a game population, less hunters go to the field. Unit 19C Dall sheep hunter participation shows this exact trend. As the sheep population declined and overall success rates decreased, sheep hunters turned their attention and focused their efforts on other areas of the state.

**Color Versions of the following tables can be found online at:*

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=gameboard.proposalbook>



Data pulled from ADF&G general harvest reports.



Data pulled from ADF&G Science Support Presentation to the Dall Sheep Working Group

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local fish and game advisory committee?

No

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(OI-F26-202)
