

Proposal 110

5 AAC 85.055; 92.085. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep; Unlawful methods of taking game; exceptions.

Amend regulations for sheep hunting in Unit 19C to sheep may be taken by residents and nonresidents by bow and arrow only as follows:

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

Amend regulations for sheep hunting in Unit 19C as follows:

In Unit 19C, sheep may be taken by residents and nonresidents by bow and arrow only.

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

Sheep populations in Unit 19C have declined in recent years, and the Board of Game has already taken restrictive management actions, including closure of the general season. These actions reflect concern about the sustainability of the population and the impact of harvest.

While closures and drawing permit hunts reduce harvest, they do so by substantially limiting or eliminating hunter opportunity. If the Board determines that reduced harvest is necessary, there is an opportunity to achieve this objective through reduced harvest efficiency rather than reduced participation.

Archery hunting in alpine sheep habitat has a substantially lower success rate than rifle hunting. Restricting methods and means to archery equipment would be expected to significantly reduce overall harvest by reducing harvest efficiency, rather than by limiting participation.

An archery-only season would be expected to result in minimal harvest, similar to or lower than a closure, while restoring opportunity for hunters.

Compared to a full closure, an archery-only season would maintain opportunity for all hunters. Compared to a drawing permit hunt, it would provide substantially greater opportunity while likely resulting in equal or lower harvest levels due to reduced success rates.

Archery equipment is widely available and does not limit participation to a small or specialized group. Any hunter capable of participating in a sheep hunt can choose to hunt with bow and arrow equipment.

If no changes are made, management options may continue to rely on closures or drawing permits, both of which substantially reduce opportunity. This proposal offers an alternative approach that reduces harvest pressure while maintaining access for both resident and nonresident hunters.

This approach functions as a conservation tool that preserves opportunity while reducing harvest.

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

This proposal was developed independently. Input from local advisory committees and Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff would be valuable during the review process.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Forward

(OI-F26-215)
