

Sheep Hunting Proposals for Central/Southwest & Interior Regions

PROPOSAL 106 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Change the Dall sheep hunts in Units 13D and 14A to full curl rams with limited permits as follows:

All Unit 13D and Unit 14A sheep drawing permit hunts should be conducted under the current full curl regulations. All sheep hunts in Units 13D and Unit 14A should be managed for a high quality hunting experience with a goal of not harvesting more than 50% of the known full curl rams.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At present draw sheep hunts in part of Unit 13D (DS160 and DS260) and all of Unit 14A are any ram hunts. This regulation has been in place since 2008. To date that is six full seasons. The thinking at the time when these regulations were adopted was there would be fewer permits issued and less hunting pressure on the old mature rams and that would lead to a population with more mature (full curl) rams in it. Neither of these areas has increased the number of mature rams by much, if any. There is a high number of permits being issued in Unit 14A with a corresponding high number of sub-full curl rams harvested. You can't get more mature rams with this large harvest of young rams. Continued harvest of young rams before breeding age will mean their genetics are not reaching the gene pool. These sheep populations have declined significantly in the last ten years and we need to manage them conservatively. These hunts should be changed to the harvest of full curl with a limited number of permits issued so that no more than 50% of the known number of full curl rams are harvested in any given year. Both Unit 13D and Unit 14A should be managed as trophy areas (that is what a full curl is) with a high quality hunting experience as the goal.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Montgomery (EG-C14-306)

PROPOSAL 107- 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Change the bag limit for Dall sheep in Units 13D and 14A to full curl as follows:

Change the current language to read: A legal ram is a full curl or larger, or a ram with the tips of both horns broken, or a ram at least 8 years old.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the current any ram bag limit for Units 13D and 14A, for draw hunts DS160, DS170, DS175, DS180, DS185, DS190, DS195, DS260, DS270, DS275, DS280, DS285, DS290 and DS295. This would align the legal horn size with all the other areas of the state. Our advisory committee is unanimously opposed to the taking of sub-legal rams.

PROPOSED BY: Anchorage Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EG-C14-319)

PROPOSAL 108 - 5AAC 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts, and 92.069. Special provisions for moose drawing permit hunts. Reinstate language regarding proof of guide-client contract for Dall sheep, mountain goat and moose drawing hunts as follows:

For the Central/Southwest Region, reinstate the language in 5AAC 92.057 (regarding sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts) and in 5AAC 92.069 (regarding specific nonresident moose drawing permit hunts) as it exists now prior to changes that will take effect July 1, 2015.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In 2014 the Board of Game passed Proposal 146, to eliminate the requirement for a guide-client contract and proof of guide use area registration at the time of application for drawing permit hunts, and amended it to be effective July 1, 2015. The board stated that its intent was not to eliminate the guide-client contract, and there was some confusion as to what this action would actually do. In reality it eliminated the need for the contract as these sections were the only ones mentioned in the regulations of the guide-client contract. I think this issue needs to be reconsidered and there is work currently being done by the ADF&G, the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development and the Big Game Commercial Services Board to maintain the requirement for the guide-client contract for these draw areas and place the responsibility on the guides and the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development to be sure the guides are compliant.

PROPOSED BY: Daniel Montgomery (EG-C14-212)

PROPOSAL 109 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Allow a maximum of 10% of sheep hunt participation for nonresidents in the Central/Southwest Region as follows:

Sheep proposal for all of the Central/Southwest Region:

A maximum of 10% (10% is not guaranteed) nonresident participation in all sheep hunts for all of the Central/Southwest Region. This includes guided general and permit hunts and next of kin hunts.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal addresses overcrowding, lack of opportunity, a stressed legal ram population and a diminished hunting experience for Alaska residents. All of these issues can be addressed by reducing the number of hunters in the field and that must start by reducing nonresident participation.

Alaska residents have an approximately 23% success rate. Nonresidents harvest over 40% of the sheep taken in Alaska, which is an allocation that no other state would tolerate. Most states allocate a maximum of 10% of the tags to nonresidents, which is less than 10% of the harvested resource.

Much of the sheep hunting in the Central/Southwest Region is regulated by permit hunts and nonresident participation should be reduced to a maximum of 10% (10% is not guaranteed,

whether guided or next of kin). The 10% number for nonresident permits should be calculated from the entire region and not micromanaged with each subunit. General hunts should have a maximum of 10% nonresident participation, which would be taken from a five- year average of nonresident license applications.

The only other solution considered should be the elimination of nonresident sheep tags until the Board of Game addresses this issue on a statewide basis and creates a better experience for Alaskans.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Lamal (EG-C14-260)

PROPOSAL 110 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Limit sheep harvest by nonresidents to 10% of total harvest in Units 11, 13, 14, and 16 as follows:

Nonresident harvest of legal sheep, whether by draw or general harvest tag, will only be 10% of the total harvest. (Empirical data exists to determine the limitation of both draw hunts and general harvest hunts to determine the actual number of tags that should be allowed to ensure that total harvest by nonresidents does not exceed 10%.)

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board of Game needs to address the lack of full curl legal rams available to Alaska residents and the disparity of success between resident and nonresident hunters. While sheep populations have been stable to slightly declining, the availability of legal rams, much less trophy rams, has been significantly reduced and is in serious decline. 40% of legal rams harvested are by nonresidents. While residents may harvest the other 60%, less than one in four resident hunters are actually successful. Understand that fact--over 75% of resident hunters are unsuccessful every year. Nonresident hunters are significantly more successful than resident hunters because of their guides who can spend tens of thousands of dollars locating rams in the offseason by fixed wing aircraft. Most residents can't afford a plane to locate rams, much less the fuel. The current structure has successful sheep hunting becoming a rich man's sport. That's not right and by not limiting nonresident tags (draw and general), the board has created a very sad state of affairs with our sheep population, and especially our population of legal rams.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprinkle (EG-C14-295)

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 44.)

PROPOSAL 111 - 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. Change the nonresident general sheep hunts to draw hunts for the Interior Region, and cap the number of permits based on sheep density as follows:

All nonresident sheep hunts in Region III (Interior Region), where we have general open season hunts for nonresidents (excluding subunits within U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Park Service (NPS) lands) become draw only, and the total number of permits is capped based on sheep density and population estimates and/or recent historical sheep harvest data for each subunit, to try to achieve a balance whereby nonresident guided sheep hunter harvest rates are lowered, more full curl rams are left on the mountain, and the conflicts afield greatly reduced.

(If the Board of Game (board) prefers, this regulation if passed could have a sunset clause added should the proposed Department of Natural Resources (DNR) guide concession program ever be implemented.)

We recognize that not all areas in Region III are experiencing the problems outlined in this proposal. However, if the board only works to “fix” the problem areas, that presents the real possibility that some guides will shift to areas still open to general season nonresident sheep hunting where the same type of problems will occur.

There are various ways the board could decide permit allocation levels. One way would be to look at the sheep harvest statistics for federal lands where the federal guide concession program is in place. It has been widely promoted that the proposed DNR guide concession program the board favors as a solution to these issues was supposed to mirror or be similar to the federal concession program. Just using the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as an example, nonresident sheep harvest rates have tended to average between 25-30%. Below are the statistics from 2011 for subunits 26B and 26C within the Refuge:

**Interim Reports GS000 Sheep - Year 2011 Unit 26B, 26C
Current File Statistics (110)**

	Successful		Unsuccessful		Did Hunt	Not	Total Hunters	
	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct
Residents	95	36.8% 36.8% of all overlays	163	63.2% 63.2% of all overlays	0	0%	258	100%
Non Res	37	72.5% 72.5% of all overlays	14	27.5% 27.5% of all overlays	0	0%	51	100%
Unspecified	7	41.2%	10	58.8%	0	0%	17	100%

		41.2% of all overlays		58.8% of all overlays				
No Overlay	0	0% of all tickets	1	100% of all tickets	0	0%	1	100%
Total	139	42.5%	188	57.5%	0	0%	327	100%

Nonresident guided hunters took 37 of 139 total sheep for a 27% harvest rate. Nonresident guided hunters comprised 15% of the total hunters.

ISSUE: Unlimited nonresident sheep hunting opportunities and unlimited guide numbers in parts of Region III.

In many parts of Region III (excluding USFWS and NPS lands) where we have open general season sheep hunts, there are no limits on the number of nonresident hunters or the guides they are required to hire to hunt sheep. Because nonresident guided hunters have such a higher success rate than resident hunters, this has led to concerns of localized diminished populations and future restrictions on resident general open season sheep hunting opportunities. Some areas are also experiencing crowding, conflicts between guides and resident hunters and conflicts between guides licensed for the same area.

Our primary concerns are sheep conservation and continued resident general season sheep hunting opportunities. We firmly believe that we can't allow any areas to have nearly every full-curl ram harvested each season, which is what we fear may happen in some areas if we continue to allow unlimited guiding and nonresident sheep hunting opportunities. We also believe, just on a matter of fairness to Alaskan resident sheep hunters, that nonresident sheep harvest rates of 40% across much of Region III, and 50-80% in some subunits, is unacceptable.

For example, below are the 2011 statistics for two subunits (2012 data not yet available):

**Interim Reports Sheep - Year 2011 Unit 19C
Current File Statistics (110)**

	Successful		Unsuccessful		Did Hunt		Not		Total Hunters	
	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct
Residents	10	16.7% of all overlays	50	83.3% of all overlays	0	0%	60	100%		
Non Res	66	82.5% of all overlays	14	17.5% of all overlays	0	0%	80	100%		
Unspecified	2	100% of all	0	0% of all	0	0%	2	100%		

		<i>overlays</i>		<i>overlays</i>				
No Overlay	3	100% <i>100% of all tickets</i>	0	0% <i>0% of all tickets</i>	0	0%	3	100%
Total	81	55.9%	64	44.1%	0	0%	145	100%

For subunit 19C, there were 80 confirmed nonresident guided hunters and 60 resident hunters who hunted Dall sheep in 2011. Guided nonresident hunters took 66 of 81 total sheep, resulting in 81% of the total overall harvest.

**Interim Reports GS000 Sheep - Year 2011 Unit 20A
Current File Statistics (110)**

	Successful		Unsuccessful		Did Hunt	Not	Total Hunters	
	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct	Number	Pct
Residents	40	25.2% <i>25.2% of all overlays</i>	119	74.8% <i>74.8% of all overlays</i>	0	0%	159	100%
Non Res	62	72.1% <i>72.1% of all overlays</i>	24	27.9% <i>27.9% of all overlays</i>	0	0%	86	100%
Unspecified	1	16.7% <i>16.7% of all overlays</i>	5	83.3% <i>83.3% of all overlays</i>	0	0%	6	100%
No Overlay	1	100% <i>100% of all tickets</i>	0	0% <i>0% of all tickets</i>	0	0%	1	100%
Total	104	41.3%	148	58.7%	0	0%	252	100%

For Unit 20A, a subunit known to have the type of crowding and conflicts described in this proposal, in 2011 there were 86 confirmed nonresident guided sheep hunters and 159 resident hunters. Guided nonresident sheep hunters took 62 of 104 total sheep, resulting in 60% of the total harvest. (Note that even though resident sheep hunters were nearly double the nonresidents, guided nonresident hunters still took 60% of the sheep)

While we certainly support and respect the guiding profession and encourage nonresident hunting and want to share our wildlife resources with our nonresident hunting brethren, we believe there needs to be new limits applied to nonresident sheep hunting opportunity.

This proposal is similar to the one we put before the board in 2012, and at that time the board expressed great displeasure when the Department of Fish and Game presented data on the high nonresident sheep harvest rates in some subunits, like those above. The board is well aware of

these ongoing problems, but has put off acting on them using the rationale that the proposed DNR Guide Concession Program that would limit guides (and thus their nonresident clients) would be implemented on state and Bureau of Land Management lands. But as of this writing, the proposed DNR guide concession program has not been funded and has been declared “dead” by DNR sources. Even if it were to be revived and be implemented, the earliest implementation keeps getting pushed farther and farther ahead on the calendar.

With all due respect to the board, we feel strongly it is well past time to act now in ways that will better conserve our sheep populations, prevent the loss of resident general open season sheep hunting opportunities, and curb the ongoing conflicts that surround nonresident guided sheep hunting in much of Region III.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued localized diminished populations of full-curl rams that threaten population sustainability and resident general open season sheep hunting opportunities, continued user conflicts and crowding, and continued inequitable nonresident sheep harvest rates of 40% annually in much of Region III, and 50-80% in some subunits.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. By limiting nonresident sheep hunting opportunities in much of Region III we thus limit the number of guides they must hire, thereby reducing total sheep harvests, better conserving sheep populations, as well as improving the quality of sheep hunts for both guided and unguided hunters by reducing crowding and conflicts afield.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All those who put the resource first and wish to see our Region III sheep populations conserved and sustained. All resident hunters who want to see their general open season sheep hunting opportunities retained, and their success rates go up. All guided nonresident hunters who don't want to compete with so many other guided hunters and who favor a more quality sheep hunt.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some guides would suffer monetarily because of the lower number of nonresident clients. Division of Wildlife Conservation funding would decrease because of a decrease in nonresident sheep tags being sold, and some local economies could see a decrease in nonresident hunting-related tourism, but it's important to emphasize that these same things would happen if the DNR proposed guide concession program, which the board supports, was implemented.

Nonresident sheep hunters would lose the guarantee to be able to hunt Dall sheep in parts of Region III, and would have to take their chances with a draw-only hunt.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? 1) Waiting for the DNR proposed guide concession program to be implemented. Rejected because we have already waited too long for this proposed concession program to be implemented, and it now appears it will never come about. 2) Only trying to “fix” the known problem areas in Region III, not making all of Region III draw-only for nonresident sheep hunters. Rejected because it has the potential to spread the problems to the areas still open to general season nonresident sheep hunting. 3) Including Region III registration

sheep hunts for residents in all general (non-draw) open season areas, mandatory harvest reporting period, Alaska Department of Fish and Games discretionary authority to close some sheep hunts based on harvest reports, in conjunction with our proposed solution. Rejected because we don't believe we need that at this time, but our concern is to conserve sheep so that sheep hunting by all can continue, and we do believe it is important that resident sheep hunters are fully cognizant this may be necessary down the line and preferable to a draw-only hunt.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Chapter Backcountry Hunters & Anglers EG050113878

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 46.)

PROPOSAL 112 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Change nonresident sheep hunts to drawing permit hunts and limit the permit distribution to 10% of the annual ten year average for the Interior Region as follows:

Nonresidents wanting to participate in sheep hunting in Alaska will have to enter by drawing permit. The drawing permit will be limited to a maximum of 10% of the annual ten year historical average sheep harvest.

ISSUE: Because of our decreasing resident hunter success and falling sheep populations, I would like the Board of Game to limit, by drawing permit, all nonresident hunters of Alaska's Dall sheep to a maximum of 10% of the preceding ten year average historical harvest.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Alaskans limited natural resources will continue to be taken by increasing number of nonresidents. Ignoring this fact, and the fact of our shrinking sheep population, will soon force drawing permits on Alaska residents.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, this proposal not only protects our natural resources from the ever increasing pressure of the guide industry, but also places Alaska on EQUAL footing with ALL western states who have long ago, limited the nonresident hunters to a maximum of 10% of the sheep permits.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Alaska residents, and the natural resources we are entrusted with.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some nonresident hunters and some in the guide industry.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Trying, yet again, to express to the Board of Game that we have a statewide problem with our Dall sheep populations. I am not blaming the guide industry for the decreasing sheep populations, I am saying that the increased percentage nonresident harvest, shows an increased pressure on our sheep.

The first step in restricting access of our limited game resources, should be to place our nonresident hunters on EQUAL footing with the nonresident hunters in other states.

PROPOSED BY: Vern Fiehler

EG042813810

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 47.)

PROPOSAL 113 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Open a bowhunting only season for Dall sheep in Interior Region as follows:

Add a new bowhunting only sheep season in all northern and north-central units where there is a current general sheep season. Dates would be August 1-9; the bag limit would be one full curl ram. Open only to International Bowhunter Education Program (IBEP) certified bowhunters.

ISSUE: Overcrowding of hunters seeking Dall sheep is reducing the quality of the sheep hunting experience.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The problem will continue to increase and eventually all sheep hunting will need to be by drawing permit.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It would improve the quality of the outdoor experience which qualifies as a resource. It would not improve the quality of the products produced.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Bowhunters by being given a chance to hunt sheep with less direct competition from rifle hunters. Firearm sheep hunters by not seeing quite as many hunters in the field when they were actually hunting because the bowhunters who wanted to hunt sheep would probably utilize the bow season.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one really. Bowhunters for Dall sheep have a very low success rate even when they are allowed to take any sheep. This hunt would be much more difficult because it would be for full curl rams only. This proposal would serve to spread out utilization with very little effect on the sheep population. Multiple parties on the mountain at the same time significantly reduces the quality and enjoyment of the hunting experience for all involved.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Have the new archery season be after the regular sheep season, September 21-30. This is the model which has been in effect for over 30 years in Unit 14C. However the northern units (especially the Brooks Range) have very short cold days in late September and weather could be a safety issue. Long warm days are important to bowhunters who must be patient waiting for an opportunity to get close to sheep.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association

EG050113876

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 48.)

PROPOSAL 114 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep and 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep drawing permit hunts. Change all nonresident sheep hunts to drawing permit hunts in Unit 20 with a 75% distribution of nonresident permits as follows:

Turn all nonresident Dall sheep tags in Unit 20 to drawing only and limit the number to 75% of the number of nonresident tags based on historic average.

ISSUE: The overcrowding/overlapping of guides in Unit 20, conflicts between guides, their clients and residents and also an overharvest of rams that have not yet reached their full potential trophy value.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If this issue is not addressed, a conflict will continue to exist and potentially increase between guides who are currently overcrowding one another during the current Dall sheep season. This overcrowding during Dall sheep season has also lead to reports to the Big Game Commercial Services Board of registered guides violating Alaska Statute 08.54.720 as well as more disturbing conflicts between guides and resident hunters.

The overcrowding of guides in Unit 20 has also led to an overharvest of rams in a means that does not allow them to reach their full potential trophy value. This is a major issue especially in Unit 20 where recent genetics have shown many rams take over eight years to reach the full curl requirement. If this issue is not addressed, we as a committee fear resident and nonresident hunters will never again have the opportunity to harvest a true trophy ram, which Unit 20 has been historically known to hold. As of 2011, over 70% of the Dall sheep harvested in Unit 20 have been by nonresidents, who are all required to have a registered guide accompany them. By simply reducing this number by a small fraction, harvest will in turn drop and many more rams will have the opportunity to reach older age. Nonresident hunters will still have the opportunity to hunt in other less pressured portions of Alaska, which is the only state in the United States to not require all nonresidents to apply for a drawing tag for wild sheep.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. By reducing the number of hunters in the field, the overall harvest numbers would decrease while at the same time give hunters the opportunity to disperse. This would in turn lessen the impact of harvest on individual herds and allow for rams to reach greater trophy value. The smaller harvest would also allow these higher trophy value rams to breed more ewes, spreading their genes while also increasing the overall Dall sheep population in Unit 20.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Both resident and nonresident hunters alike as well as law-abiding guides.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? A small percentage of nonresident hunters as well as a portion of the guiding industry.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Turn all nonresident sheep tags in Unit 20 to drawing only tags and reduce the number of tags to 80% of average. We believe as an Advisory Committee that this is not a sufficient enough percentage to reduce the overall harvest and guide conflicts in the unit.

PROPOSED BY: Middle Nenana Fish and Game Advisory Committee EG050113877

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 113.)

PROPOSAL 115 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Create a youth Dall sheep hunt in Unit 20 remainder as follows:

Sheep, remainder of Unit 20

One sheep, drawing: July 20-August 5

Qualified youth hunters, one drawing permit per lifetime of hunter.

Youth hunters must have successfully completed a Alaska Department of Fish and Game approved Hunter Education Course and must be accompanied by a licensed resident adult that is at least 21 years of age or older. Proxy hunting is not allowed during this hunt. Biologists to determine the appropriate amount of permits to be offered.

ISSUE: Create an interior of Alaska youth sheep hunt. Currently youths can participate in regular season sheep hunts, but often are unable to compete in the field with older more seasoned adults.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Our hunting tradition will decline over time as our youths interest moves to other activities.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No, only provides a quality hunting experience without heavy competition from adults for our resident youth.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Youths ages 10 to 17, who draw a permit and are given this opportunity to hunt with an adult, often a parent, for several days above tree line.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Youths turning 18 or older would not eligible for drawing or the hunt.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Considered asking for a ram only hunt, but creation of a ram or ewe only hunt has the potential to make their ultimate youth hunt into a horrible experience should they accidentally take ram on a ewe hunt or if ram is one inch short. We can avoid the possibility of that happening with an any sheep hunt. Also considered starting the season later, but Yukon Territory starts their sheep hunt July 15, why not in Alaska?

PROPOSED BY: Dave Machacek

EG032913741

PROPOSAL 116 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Limit nonresident sheep hunting in the Central/Southwest Region by having shorter seasons, drawing permits, or other methods as follows:

Nonresident hunting should be reduced with either shorter season, draw permit only, or some other method which limits their numbers.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Resident hunters do not have adequate access to sheep hunting opportunities. With the increased pressure from guides and nonresident hunters, chances for a successful hunt for a resident are slim to none. Nonresident hunting should be reduced with either shorter season, draw permit only or some other method which limits their numbers. The guide industry shouldn't suffer, because economic forces will prevail and they will charge more per hunt to ensure an enjoyable Alaskan quality experience.

PROPOSED BY: Keenan Zerkel

(EG-C14-307)

PROPOSAL 117 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Limit allocation of nonresident sheep permits to 10% for the Central/Southwest Region Units as follows:

Sheep proposal for Central/Southwest Region Units:

Limit nonresident permit sheep hunts to 10%.

Once drawn, one cannot apply again for that specific draw permit (both residents and nonresidents).

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? My proposal addresses the lack of preference and opportunity given to residents for sheep hunting draw permits. Residents on average are only 20-25% successful in harvesting a legal ram whereas nonresidents, who harvest > 40% of all the rams annually in the state, are much more successful. A nonresident has an equal chance of being drawn for a permit sheep hunt as does a resident in our state. In most every Western State, nonresidents are limited to 5-15% of permits awarded for big game hunting opportunities. Also, many big game permits out of state are "once in a lifetime" hunts, not to be applied for again by either resident or nonresident. This allows for greater opportunity in subsequent years for those not initially drawn.

PROPOSED BY: Paul Ferucci

(EG-C14-254)

PROPOSAL 118 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Begin resident sheep hunting seven days earlier than nonresidents in Units 9, 11, 13, 14, and 16 as follows:

Resident hunting season for Dall sheep shall be August 3 to September 20. Nonresident hunting season shall be from August 10 to September 20. Drawing permit areas will start seven days earlier for Alaska residents and if there is a split season, the second half will be shortened by seven days for nonresidents such that residents can start the second half seven days prior to nonresidents.

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Board needs to address the lack of full curl legal rams available to Alaska residents. While sheep populations have been stable to slightly declining, the availability of legal rams, much less trophy rams, has been significantly reduced and is in serious decline. Success rates for resident sheep hunters will never be on par with nonresidents if not allowed an earlier jump from the efficiency of their guides. If this problem is not addressed, Alaskan resident hunters will continue to suffer from the mismanagement of this species by the Board of Game. Alaskan youth will never have the opportunity afforded to their parents and grandparents to successfully hunt healthy populations of Dall sheep with ample populations of large rams. Alaska wildlife belongs to all Alaskans and these resources should be managed as such.

An earlier start for residents would have several benefits: Resident hunters will have an improved quality of hunt and avoid conflicts with guides and their clients. Nonresident hunters will have an improved quality of hunt by avoiding conflicts with resident hunters. Transport services associated with sheep hunting will improve as this will lessen the bottleneck on transporters seen at the beginning of each season, especially during poor weather. This may also increase the safety of hunters and transporters by spreading out the season and users more. Current Alaska residents and future Alaskans may be more interested in hunting Dall sheep, its management, and the future of Dall sheep hunting if they had greater opportunity to locate and harvest a legal ram, much less, quality rams.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprinkle

(EG-C14-292)

PROPOSAL 119 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Establish earlier season date openings for resident sheep hunting in the Central/Southwest Region as follows:

Sheep hunting dates for all of the Central/Southwest Region:

Residents: August 3 – September 20

Nonresidents: August 10 – September 20

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal addresses overcrowding, lack of opportunity, a stressed legal ram population, and a diminished hunting experience for Alaska residents. All of these issues can be addressed by reducing the number of hunters in the field at the same time.

Alaska residents have an approximately 23% success rate. Nonresidents harvest over 40% of the sheep taken in Alaska, which is an allocation that no other state would tolerate. Most states allocate a maximum of 10% of the tags to nonresidents, which is less than 10% of the harvested resource.

If sheep season started seven days earlier for residents, much of the overcrowding in the field would be eliminated. Air traffic would be spread out over a longer period and many of the residents would be returning from their hunt when the nonresidents were heading out. This will not reduce stress on the sheep population but it will create opportunity for residents and give them a better hunting experience. The Board of Game needs to limit nonresident participation but this will help in the Central/Southwest Region until we have a statewide meeting in 2016.

The only other solution considered would be to limit nonresident sheep season to 14 days (August 10-August 24) and resident sheep season would be August 10- September 20.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Lamal (EG-C14-264)

PROPOSAL 120 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Open a nine day, resident archery season in August for Dall sheep in the Central/Southwest Region as follows:

Create a new hunting season for bow and arrow only for Dall sheep from August 1-9, in Units 9, 11, 13, 14A, 14B, and 16 that currently have general sheep hunts by harvest ticket only.

These seasons would be for full curl, broomed both tips or 8+ year old rams only. Twenty years of bowhunting harvest statistics from Unit 14C indicate that only 1.7% of bowhunters are successful at taking full curl rams. IBEP certification would be required (it will be required for all bowhunting after July 2016 anyway).

(Note: This proposal was also submitted for the Southcentral meeting scheduled for March 2015.)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Overcrowding and limitation of opportunity for hunting Dall sheep. We suggest a method to increase hunting opportunity, spread out participation and reduce crowding with minimal impact on the species.

By creating a new hunt by bow and arrow only before the regular sheep season it would reduce crowding that occurs August 10 at the opening of the general sheep season. Hunters choosing to use bow and arrow would gain an advantage of being first into the mountains. They would be

enjoying a higher quality sheep hunting experience because of less crowding. At the same time they would be markedly limiting their chances of actually killing a ram because of the need to get so much closer to their quarry than if using a rifle. There is no biologic reason to wait until August 10 to open sheep season as sheep seasons in Canada open as early as July 15.

PROPOSED BY: Alaskan Bowhunters Association (EG-C14-243)

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 41.)

PROPOSAL 121 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Modify season dates for Dall sheep in the Interior Region as follows:

Resident hunting season for Dall sheep shall be August 3rd to September 20th. Nonresident hunting season shall be from August 10th to September 20th. Drawing permit areas will start seven days earlier for Alaska residents and if there is a split season, the second half will be shortened by seven days for nonresidents such that residents can start the second half seven days prior to nonresidents.

ISSUE: The Board of Game (board) needs to address the lack of full curl legal rams available to Alaska residents. While sheep populations have been stable to slightly declining, the availability of legal rams, much less trophy rams, has been significantly reduced and is in serious decline. Success rates for resident sheep hunters will never be on par with nonresidents if not allowed an earlier jump from the efficiency of their guides.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Alaskan resident hunters will continue to suffer from the mismanagement of this species by the Board of Game. Alaskan youth will never have the opportunity afforded to their parents and grandparents to successfully hunt healthy populations of Dall sheep with ample populations of large rams. Alaska wildlife belongs to all Alaskans and these resources should be managed as such.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Resident hunters will have an improved quality of hunt and avoid conflicts with guides and their clients. Nonresident hunters will have an improved quality of hunt by avoiding conflicts with resident hunters. Transport services associated with sheep hunting will improve as this will lessen the bottleneck on transporters seen at the beginning of each season, especially during poor weather. This may also increase the safety of hunters and transporters by spreading out the season and users more. Current Alaska residents and future Alaskans may be more interested in hunting Dall sheep, its management, and the future of Dall sheep hunting if they had greater opportunity to locate and harvest a legal ram, much less quality rams.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaska residents, Alaska youth, and future Alaskans. Dall sheep populations may also improve as more people may feel like they have a chance at successfully harvesting a quality ram and will be more interested in the management of the

resource. This benefits Alaska, all of Alaska 's game resources, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one, though some will say nonresident hunters, nonresident guides, and resident guides may suffer. Harvest records, however, show that resident sheep hunters are much less successful than nonresidents because of their guides. This is largely due to time guides can give to pre-season scouting, which is done mostly by fixed wing aircraft. While success rates for resident hunters will hopefully increase, there is little reason to think that nonresident success rates will decline significantly. Pre-season scouting will still be available to guides. Sheep populations will not suffer directly, again because resident hunter success rates are consistently low. Future sheep populations, however, may suffer and receive little support or interest, if today's youth and future generations cannot hunt healthy populations of sheep, as is currently the case. You will be hard pressed to find any Alaska resident who is not a guide or associated with a guiding business who does not favor this proposal. If not sure whether to favor Alaska residents over nonresidents, please look at any other state and how they manage their resources for the benefit of their residents and not for the financial benefit of a few.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Close nonresident hunting of Dall sheep for five years or until healthy populations of sheep with sufficient populations of legal rams is re-established. Charge resident hunters nonresident harvest fees during this interim to offset any loss of funding from loss of nonresident tags. This would be the best management practice the board could do, as it would best serve current and future Alaska residents, and most of all best serve the Dall sheep population as a whole. I rejected this solution based on past performance of the board where political and financial interests of a few, trumped the best interests of Alaska residents, Alaska game resources, and Alaska itself.

PROPOSED BY: Jake Sprankle EG042913813

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 42.)

PROPOSAL 122 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Open resident sheep hunting seasons seven days before nonresident seasons in the Interior Region as follows:

Sheep season dates in Region III:

Alaska residents:	August 5 – September 20
Nonresidents:	August 12 – September 20

Alaska residents may only hunt sheep in regions with similar start dates. This will keep hunters from trying to get an early start in one region (which would cause overcrowding) and then shift to another area. If a resident hunter picks Region III or V those are the only regions they may hunt sheep for that season. If the Board of Game would have passed the early start dates at the last statewide meeting we wouldn't have to make more rules. We need to start this region by region so Alaskans will have this statewide preference by 2016. A different colored sheep tag for

Region III & V would make it easy to see if the resident hunter is in the appropriate area and legal.

ISSUE: Overcrowding, lack of quality experiences, and low allocations of sheep for Alaska residents. Nonresidents harvest over 40% of Alaska’s sheep and that number keeps increasing.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The quality of the hunt has been diminished by overcrowding and this is the best way to separate the number of hunters in the field. This is not a new idea and resident sheep hunters have supported this concept in the past. The resident has had to compete against the infrastructure of the guiding industry and everyone is trying to enter the mountains at the same time. Air services could spread out their charters and many residents would be returning when the nonresident hunters would be heading out to hunt with their chosen guide. Getting a legal ram is a difficult task and this would give our young Alaska resident hunters a much better opportunity to be successful. This should be a statewide proposal but the Board of Game failed to pass any of the 23 proposals presented to them requesting some preferences for Alaska residents. This statewide issue won’t come up again until 2016 so now we need to adjust the dates in different regions.

The only other solution is to put all nonresidents on permits. The number of permits given to nonresidents would be 15% of the total sheep harvest of the previous year. Example: 1000 sheep harvested = 150 permits for nonresidents.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This will make it much easier to get hunters in and out of the field – both resident and nonresident. Both groups will have a better experience due to less crowded conditions. Guides want people to think that nonresidents will quit coming to Alaska to hunt if any preference is given to Alaska residents and this is not the case. Nonresidents can come to Alaska and buy over the counter tags for most species cheaper than a deer tag can be purchased in many of the western states. The nonresident tag fees are a big boost to ADF&G but the Board of Game and the Alaska Legislature needs to keep resident Alaskans as their number one priority.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaska resident sheep hunters and nonresident sheep hunters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Commercial operators (guides) will complain but they are making money off a public resource we (all Alaskans) own and many of these guides are nonresidents who can’t legally harvest sheep, goats, or brown bears but they can guide other nonresidents. The price of the tag is cheap but the cost of a guided hunt is expensive.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Lamal

EG042913829

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 43.)

PROPOSAL 123 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Open resident sheep seasons ten days before nonresident seasons in the Interior Region as follows:

In Region III (Interior Region), change the dates for sheep hunting to:

Alaska residents:	August 1 to September 20
Nonresidents:	August 10 to September 20

ISSUE: The quality, safety and crowded conditions of sheep hunting at the start of the season.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The overall quality and safety of sheep hunting in Alaska will continue to deteriorate due to the large number of people trying to get into the field at the start of the season. This will put a big strain on all of the resources and parties involved.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This proposal would increase the overall quality and safety of sheep hunting for both the residents and nonresidents by eliminating overcrowding and the competition for available resources.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Both the residents and nonresidents would benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one, although the guides and some nonresidents may disagree.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? There is no other solution to this problem. I think that the guiding industry is doing a good job for their customers using a public resource to make a very good living. I welcome nonresident to come to Alaska and hunt but a quality hunt is very important for everyone and unless something is done this will not be the case.

PROPOSED BY: Leonard Jewkes EG043013842

(The Board of Game deferred this proposal from the 2014 Interior Region meeting. It was previously listed as proposal 49.)

PROPOSAL 124 - 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Open resident sheep seasons one week prior to nonresidents in Units 25 and 26 as follows:

Residents have the first week of sheep season without the presence of guides and their hunters.

ISSUE: Open sheep season one week for residents only in Units 25 and 26.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Guides think that they own the areas I know of one in particular in Unit 25 that comes over with his whole crew to try to scare off a resident hunter.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This helps separate the competition that guides have with hunters. The guides charge such a high price these days that it puts a lot of pressure on them to give there hunters a quality hunt. It would be better for all hunters because a lot of resident sheep hunters would be done hunting by the time the guides arrive.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? I think everybody would.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one would because the experience is what counts less competition is a better experience.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Gossen

EG042813811
