

PROPOSAL 36 – 5 AAC 92.057. Special provisions for Dall sheep and mountain goat drawing permit hunts. Change nonresident general sheep hunts to drawing permit hunts with a ten percent permit allocation cap as follows:

In areas where general season sheep hunting opportunity is allowed for both residents and nonresidents, limit all nonresident sheep hunters to draw-only hunts.

Set allocations so that participation rates of nonresidents do not exceed ten percent of the total participation rates of residents in any individual subunit, based on the last three years of historical data.

This solution will benefit the sheep resource and all resident sheep hunters if adopted.

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

Unlimited nonresident sheep hunting opportunity and high nonresident sheep harvest rates.

This proposal follows a decade of proposals from resident hunters asking the Alaska Board of Game (board) to limit nonresident sheep hunters. The nonresident harvest rates of 60-80 percent of our Dall sheep in some areas of the state and the problems associated with that level of nonresident mostly-guided competition are well known to the board. The board has continually stalled taking any action on resident hunter proposals to address these problems while publicly testifying in complete agreement that these problems exist and are harming resident hunters.

These problems don't occur in all areas of the state but the board has made it clear that any solutions must be statewide in nature and not through regional proposals that seek to deal with the problems on a subunit by subunit basis.

All along the board has said that the problem is not one of too many nonresident sheep hunters, most of whom must hire a guide, rather it was a problem of "too many guides," and thus the board only supports the guide-industry preferred solution to limit guides. This "Guide Concession Program" that would be under the auspices of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has already cost the state a half-million dollars in planning and meetings, and finally as it made its way through the legislature with yet still a million-dollar fiscal note, it did not pass out of committee. It has not been revived and with our current budget situation it is a non-starter. The guide industry has been lobbying the legislature for one million dollars in federal funds to start up the Guide Concession Program, and we simply cannot believe that yet again guides are asking for a subsidy from not only Alaskan taxpayers, but now from every American citizen.

The Board of Game has claimed for nearly ten years that the Guide Concession Program is their preferred solution. And the board still alludes they will wait for the concession program to be implemented before putting nonresident sheep hunters on draw hunts with a limited allocation. In the face of known problems we ask again for the board to act to protect the resource and give resident sheep hunters the hunting priority our constitution demands.

This proposal is exactly what the Department of Natural Resources Recommended as an alternative to the Guide Concession Program (GCP).

From DNR Alternatives:

“The first BOG alternative to the GCP is for the board to further restrict non-resident hunting opportunity. This could be accomplished by expanding the drawing and/or registration permit systems for non-residents, while simultaneously reducing or eliminating non-resident general harvest seasons and bag limits. This alternative would help to address the issues of quality of experience and conflicts between users by decreasing the number of non-resident hunters in the field. It may also address wildlife conservation concerns in cases where overharvest is an issue.”

PROPOSED BY: Resident Hunters of Alaska

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