

PROPOSAL 79 – 5 AAC 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep. Modify the hunt structure for Dall sheep in Unit 14A as follows:

In all of Unit 14A, a legal ram will be full-curl, broken on both horns, or at least eight years old. From August 10 to August 25, retain the current draw permit system in hunt DS170, DS270, DS180, DS280, DS190 and DS290. **Increase the nonresident allocation from 10% to 20% in these draws.** That is what it originally should have been set at back in 2008 but the Board of Game (board) didn't follow its own policy back then. **Set the number of permits at one for nonresidents in each hunt and four for residents.** You want to set the permits in these hunts very low at first until you build up the population of full-curl rams and then increase them.

Aircraft are not allowed to be used for sheep hunting in any manner in Unit 14A south and east of the Matanuska River for any sheep hunt that starts on the August 26 or later.

From August 26 to September 20 retain the draw permit hunt for nonresidents and residents in hunts DS275, DS285, DS295, DS175, DS185 and DS195, **with only one permit issued for each hunt for nonresidents hunts and four being issued for resident hunts. After two years there should be enough full-curly in the population to switch resident hunt numbers DS175, DS185 and DS195 to registration hunts with very conservative harvest goals and two years later change the nonresident hunts to registration also along with the residents and manage both residents and nonresidents as one hunt with harvest goals for each of the three areas in this part of Unit 14A.** When both residents and nonresidents go to a registration hunt by 2023, there will be no allocation between them just like in the Tonsina walk-in area.

If the board adopts this proposal, it might consider changing the draw permits that will be issued in 2018 from any ram to full-curl before they are issued.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the Dall sheep hunts in Unit 14A south of the Matanuska River from any ram to full-curl, broken on both horns, or at least eight years old. Also change the second hunt from August 25 to September 20 to a registration hunt for residents but retain the draw portion for nonresidents. Aircraft would not be allowed to be used in any manner for the second hunt.

The current hunts in Unit 14A are being managed for any ram and they were put in place in 2008. The idea was to increase the number of old rams in the population by allowing the harvest of any ram thus taking the pressure off of the full-curly. To do this there were going to be a very limited number of permits issued. That management strategy has not been followed in the last five years or more as the Department of Fish and Game is now issuing 75 any ram permits in this area. Right now there are still very few full-curl rams in this population. When this management strategy was first implemented with the hope of rebuilding the sheep population, especially the number of older rams in it, the hoped for long term goal was to get back to an open general season again. I think we can do that with the changes I'm suggesting.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Montgomery

(EG-F17-070)
