

Proposal 102 was deferred by the Board of Game from the March 2024 Interior and Eastern Arctic Region meeting. It was previously published as Proposal 76.

PROPOSAL 102

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

Reopen all Unit 19C sheep hunts as follows:

Full curl management is the best option biologically for Dall sheep management supported by our ADF&G biologist. I propose that the Board of Game (BOG) reinstates the subsistence sheep hunt as previously allowed. As well as reinstate a nonresident hunt of one ram every four regulatory years with hunt dates of 8/15-9/10 annually.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The nonresident and subsistence season for Dall sheep in Unit 19C. Dall sheep have been shown to be on cyclical patterns since the beginning of their study and tracking in Alaska in the 1920s. Full curl management has been implemented since 1992 and this is one of the most conservative approaches to sheep management in the United States that have sheep. This ruling was decided on at a time where Dall sheep were at remarkably similar numbers to their current numbers. We have seen an abundance of sheep in 2003 and 2018 since that time. Biologist support this management strategy and do not support closures. The numbers seen in Unit 19C are paralleled in other units of the state including those in national parks where no hunting is permitted. This is a predator and weather issue much more than it is hunter take. Over the past five years numbers of hunters have declined by 62%, this is resident, nonresident & subsistence hunters. The numbers are reflecting the effort in the field and self regulating already. By closing two user groups down this will send more pressure into other areas of the state and create even more problems. ADF&G studies have shown that the mortality rate of Dall sheep greatly increase after eight years. This population which is legal to hunt is going to die of natural causes and go unused. This eight year old population is also at the end of their competitive mating life. Not managing these animals does not add sheep on the mountains.

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