

ACR #5 – Modify the resident and nonresident hunt structure for sheep in Unit 19C.

SUBMITTED BY: Unit 19C Sheep Working Group

CITE THE REGULATION THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS ACR IS HEARD.

Alaska Administrative Code Number 5 AAC: 85.055. Hunting seasons and bag limits for Dall sheep.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM YOU WOULD LIKE THE BOARD TO ADDRESS? STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM.

Declining sheep populations in Unit 19C

WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU PREFER?

We request a closure for 2025 to all general season hunts except the RS380 subsistence hunt.

In 2026/27 there will be a temporary draw hunt with a sunset clause after two years where 80% permits are allocated to residents and 20% to nonresidents, with a 5% cap for second degree kindred (2DK) nonresident hunters, coming out of the nonresident allocation. The 2DK hunt sponsor shall also notch harvest ticket for bag limit.

We request Unit 19C be used as the pilot program for the guide concession program, implemented by 2028.

In 2028, if the guide concession program for Unit 19C is in place, then residents and nonresidents will go to harvest ticket hunts.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW THIS ACR MEETS THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1) To correct an error in regulation.

N/A

2) To correct an effect of a regulation that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.

N/A

3) Does the request identify a biological concern for the population or a threat to meeting objectives for the population?

Yes

4) Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected event or effect that would otherwise restrict or reduce a reasonable opportunity for customary and traditional wildlife uses, as defined in AS 16.05.258(f)?

No

5) Does the request identify an unforeseen, unexpected resource situation where a biologically allowable resource harvest would be precluded by delayed regulatory action and such delay would be significantly burdensome because the resource would be unavailable in the future?

No

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THIS PROBLEM IS NOT SOLVED PRIOR TO THE REGULAR CYCLE?

The Unit 19C sheep working group will not achieve our mandate. The board deferred all proposals for sheep hunting in Unit 19C out of cycle to allow the sheep working group to submit a proposal which is timely with the other proposals.

The closure was a temporary measure put in place, and we are now in a position to create future hunting opportunities for multiple users. The Unit 19C sheep working group will not achieve our mandate. In this time of uncertainty, we are trying to ensure the healthy sheep populations in Unit 19C.

STATE WHY YOUR ACR IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.

We remain concerned primarily about the health of the sheep population in Unit 19C. Please refer to the charge statement of the working group, the results of the working group meeting in October 2024, and the attached letter.

This approach prioritizes the well-being of the species over the distribution of hunting opportunities. The primary goal is to balance the interests of conservation, local communities, and economic factors.

These adjustments are about managing the resource sustainably rather than just allocating hunting rights.

IF THIS REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE.

N/A

STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS ACR.

Unit 19C sheep working group established by the Board of Game.

STATE WHETHER THIS ACR HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AS AN ACR, AND IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF GAME MEETING.

No

October 21, 2024

To: Board of Game

To: Ryan Scott, Director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation, Alaska Fish and Game

From: Unit 19C Sheep Working Group

The Unit 19C Sheep Working Group members want to thank the Board of Game for creating the working group and giving it the opportunity to focus on understanding and addressing the key issues facing sheep in Game Management Unit 19C. Our group was comprised of nine individuals who collectively represented subsistence users, nonconsumptive users, guides, transporters, private landowners, and general Dall sheep hunters (see enclosed roster). During discussions regarding recommendations to be made to the Board of Game, including discussions regarding pending proposals and development of an Agenda Change Request, Board members Stosh Hoffman and Jake Fletcher did not participate. They reserved taking any action at the working group level in favor of fully participating as Board of Game members.

The group has worked hard through two facilitated two-day workshops (in June and most recently in October 2024) to be in a position to make recommendations. These recommendations are based on conservative management to ensure long-term sustainability of the Unit 19C Dall sheep population, sharing impacts among user groups, and exploring novel approaches to address declining sheep populations and increasing challenges between interest groups. Our recommendations are based on the best science (western and traditional knowledge) available, and we encourage the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to continue to learn about sheep populations, specifically adding radio collars to better understand mortality issues. Regarding any form of predator control, the sheep working group wants to assure positive results without causing unintended consequences, clear biological objectives that are measurable, humane control methods if used, clear efforts to gain public support, and most importantly to let science guide any steps regarding predator control. At this time, the sheep working group wishes to see the guidelines above followed and the research documenting mortality prior to any predator control for sheep.

The Unit 19C sheep working group made a specific proposal recommendation based upon a guide concessionaire program being in place. If this program isn't in place in time, the sheep working group would like to meet again in April 2026 to explore alternative possibilities. The sheep working group will do its best to be present with all members for the Board of Game discussions to be held in Anchorage in March 2025. To further assist the Board and implement the working group's mandate, the team went through the existing proposals submitted to the Board and wish to make the following recommendations. The sheep working group supports proposal 92 recommending hunter education. The group neither supports nor opposes proposals 93-101, 110, and 115-117. The sheep working group opposes proposals 102-109, 111-114 and 118 because these proposals are inconsistent with our proposal to the Board.

Once again, the Unit 19C Sheep Working Group expresses its gratitude to the Board for putting their faith into the working group to propose recommendations and better understand and address

the key issues facing Dall sheep in Unit 19C. Most members of the working group support these recommendations.

Sincerely,

Unit 19C Dall Sheep Working Group

Enclosure: Unit 19C Working Group Membership Roster



Alaska Board of Game

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Unit 19C Sheep Working Group Members

Jerry Burnett, Board of Game, Chair

Stosh Hoffman, Board of Game Member

Jake Fletcher, Board of Game Member

Scott Crowther, Anchorage Advisory Committee

Brett Gibbens, McGrath Advisory Committee

Mike Litzen, Guide with Dall sheep hunting experience in Unit 19C

Michelle Quillin, Fall season Dall sheep resident hunter

Chait Borade of CIRI, Unit 19C private landowner

Patricia Owen, Denali National Park & Preserve, non-hunting use of Unit 19C

Working Group members may be reached by contacting:
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