

Jeff Pralle
P. O. Box 1101
Talkeetna, AK 99676
907-414-7545

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Hello I am Jeff Pralle I am a sheep hunter.

Alaska Resident almost continuously since 1975. I am also Alaska Master Guide #128. My address is Talkeetna. My home is the western Alaska Range unit 19c. I have lived much of the year on the west side of the Alaska Range all the way back into the 90s I first started hunting there in the middle 80s.

Sheep are extremely important to me. Making sure we have sheep on the mountain is the first priority. Whether we can hunt them or not. I have hunted sheep with the intent of taking them and with the intent of taking their photos or videos from the Cabeza Prieta on the Mexican border all the way to Brooks Range. Through Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, British Columbia, the Yukon and of course Alaska. I spend a minimum of 30 days a year hunting sheep with intent to take usually with a nonresident hunter following me. Some years I spend far more time in the mountains watching sheep or photographing sheep. The last thing I want to see is the loss of one of our most treasured resources.

I have never personally harvested a sheep.

I am a Sheep Hunter and sheep guide. There is no greater feeling than helping someone fulfill a lifelong goal and to take a ram after pursuing that same sheep, that one ram, the right ram for days.

I have had doubts about the BOG process in the past I am very pleased with what I have seen here this weekend. My faith in this system and my hope for the future has been renewed witnessing all of you patiently and respectfully considering all of the opinions and concerns we have laid before the Board this weekend. My thanks for your dedication.

I would like to go on the record that I support a resource-based management system. Driven by data and fact. Not driven by emotion and societally perceived issues. If we need to limit harvest due to a lack of resource then we must limit everyone. We Alaskan hunters will receive priority. We already do and always have. I fully support whatever actions are necessary to maintain sheep on the mountain. I believe sheep hunter education is the answer to many of the problems that we have today.

Proposals-

First I do not support proposals for extending the sheep season in any way for any user group in a declining sheep herd. This includes: #119-124

Second I do not support a nonresident only drawing hunt proposals: #110-118. I have hunted in states with a draw only system it will limit ALL hunters and severely restrict opportunity to hunt.

Third I do not support proposal #207 for increased aircraft restrictions in any of the three options in the proposal. 207 is effectively unenforceable. It is already very difficult in some cases for troopers to determine who is flying the aircraft and when they landed etc. if we do this it must be in effect for ALL species available in a given area that are open at that time. We need laws that are easy to enforce not convoluted difficult to interpret witch hunts.

Fourth I support #201 changing the wording of "reasonable" to "lawful" methods for retrieving game. This is already the policy/law/practice in the field if you ask a trooper. This clarifies the regulation preventing individuals and attorneys from circumventing the intent of the regulations.

Additionally I support:

Required sheep hunter education to include judging Rams in the field. The sealing process, stress factors on sheep, and aircraft /ATV/ off-road vehicle use. I would suggest either classes or even an online class with the video similar to the one produced for judging goats, moose and the take a closer look video for bears. With a certification card must be carried by the hunter in the field showing that they have passed this course. Similar to the bear baiting certification process.

Sealing and full curl with better clarification of aging of broken horn rams. We need and deserve defined guidelines. We need hardline what is legal what is not legal. Taking a ram to three different people to have it sealed and all of them giving you different answers is unprofessional. We can learn a lot from the program in place for decades in states like Arizona. Arizona was far ahead of Alaska for aging and judging Sheep in the 80's compared to where Alaska is today in 2015. This is inexcusable.

Increase in resident and nonresident license and tag fees. This is long overdue.

I would support a work group focused on the societal perceptions of overcrowding and actually overcrowding at funnel points where access is limited and in sheep areas with easy access.

Opening the sheep management plans revising them for current conditions by the managers to be reviewed by a work group working in conjunction with the ACs to determine how best to manage our sheep into the future. The sheep management plans need to be utilized. Allowing the sheep management plans to gather dust on the shelf is irresponsible.

Wounding animals and loss of wounded animal is a tragedy. My policy personally and in business has been if you draw blood your tag is filled. This line is drawn hard and fast in my company. I would like to see this adopted in regulation if you wound the animal your bag limit is filled statewide. This is already being done on Kodiak it in Southeast.

I suggest if you draw a tag for sheep in a draw area you are not allowed to hunt general season anywhere else in the state that year.

I also suggest a subunit-based solution to these problems not a state wide blanket solution. One idea is 1 ram every 2 to 4 years in an individual unit, much like our brown bear regulations, may relieve pressure in some high-volume areas that people hunt every year.


Our harvest report data is minimal at present. I feel we need more information delivered to Alaska Department of Fish and Game on Hunter harvest report. Sheep are already going

through a sealing process there is no reason we could not have a one or two page questionnaire that is more detailed to allow the gathering of information that has left many of the holes in the last survey.

I believe requiring timely harvest reporting is easily accomplished. If you do not turn in reports on time you are not eligible for a hunting license the following year, this is done in many states, it is very effective.

I'm very pleased to see we are finally getting interest in studying where we are at with Sheep populations and sheep hunting. The surveys and studies from last year or a huge improvement over what we have seen for the last several decades. Keep up the good work.

Thank you and good hunting,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Pralle', written in a cursive style.

Jeff Pralle

Jeff@sheepguide.com