

February 16th 2017

To: Alaska Board of Game

From:

Michael Litzen, Litzen Guide Service

Master Guide #129 and Transporter #647

Dear Board members,

This letter is to comment on proposition 82. My name is Michael Litzen, Master guide #129, this August will be my 37th consecutive season taking sheep hunters in 19-C. I'm also a transporter and do some sheep drop off hunts for residents. I have been a wildlife survey pilot for the Alaska Department of F&G for over 30 years. In fact I will be unable to attend this meeting to testify in person because I'm helping the F&G with wolf captures in GMU 15-C during the meeting dates.

As a long standing guide and wildlife pilot I believe I have good insight to this issue. I'm opposed to prop 82 for the following reason. I believe it is a bad practice to put an area such as 19-C that has so many sheep and sheep hunters, on drawing for residents or non-residents, because it will simply displace the hunters who did not draw, into other areas and create a management problem there. In other words, piece mealing the state for sheep drawings one area at a time will only make more hot spots. Currently the F&G have no biological concerns about sheep populations in 19-C, so it would be especially bad to make it a draw area and send the pressure to parts of the state that do not have the abundant sheep population that 19-C has.

Recent F&G information about harvest data shows an increase in resident harvest and a stable non-resident harvest.

Resident harvest data state wide:

2012 through 2015, 393 to 449 sheep harvested. 2016 residents harvested 498, 77 more rams than the prior four year average.

Non-resident harvest data:

2012 through 2015, 264 to 279 sheep harvested. 2016 non-residents harvested 274 rams, right on the prior four year average.

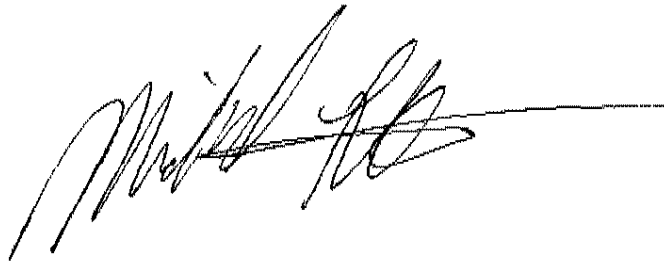
The author of proposition 82 seems to express concern a rising number of non-resident hunters. It is clear from this data that non-resident hunters have remained stable over the last

five years and it is the resident hunting pressure that has increased. Actually there was fewer non-resident hunters' state wide in 2016 than the prior four years.

One can see why the F&G have no biological concerns about sheep populations at this time. When resident success rates go up as sharply as they have in 2016, there must be an abundance of sheep.

Please do not support proposition 82. With the healthy and stable sheep populations as the State of Alaska is enjoying now, there is no reason to make a major change in management.

Thank you for your service to the State, its people and resources.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Michael R. ...", written over a horizontal line.