

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: June 19, 2019

Agenda Item: 2019 Sheep Quotas Outside of the Biennial Quota Ranges

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 10 minutes

Background:

The commission previously adopted quota ranges for moose, bighorn sheep and mountain goat for each hunting district within which FWP can make changes that do not need commission approval, but changes outside the adopted ranges do need commission approval. FWP is proposing one such change for sheep and none for moose and goats. Detailed information on the proposal is found in the proposal justification in the commission packet.

- FWP proposes to reduce the number of bighorn either-sex licenses in HD 441 from 3 to 1 and change the biennial quota range from 2 – 7 to 1 – 7. Beginning in the summer of 2010, losses to disease in conjunction with loss due to predation, weather and accidents began to occur in adjacent populations to the south. Information strongly indicates disease related mortality has occurred in the southern half of HD 441. Very few if any sheep have been observed during surveys or incidentally in the southern half of the district in the past two years. Sheep observed during a complete fall 2018 survey found 51% of long-term average. The most recent fall surveys in 2013 and 2015 were 58% of long-term average. This spring, a winter range survey was conducted for the first time, partly in response to low observed numbers in the traditional fall survey, and 60 sheep were observed. Based on observations and hunter reports however, overall numbers of rams appear to be struggling. Only one ram was harvested in each of the last two seasons.

Public Involvement Process & Results

This proposal was discussed with area game wardens who both support it. A limited number of sportsmen have been contacted who have either supported it or remained neutral.

Alternatives and Analysis

No alternatives were considered.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

FWP recommends that the commission adopt the proposed changes to the 441-20 bighorn sheep either-sex licenses.

Proposed Motion

I move that the commission adopt the changes to the 441-20 bighorn sheep either-sex licenses as proposed by FWP, and that all other aspects of the 2018 moose, sheep and goat regulations remain unchanged except for regular calendar rotation.