

Agenda Item 18

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WAC 232-28-273 2009-2011 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDED ADJUSTMENTS

The following adjustments were proposed since the Code Reviser (CR 102) filing and are NOT included in your notebook WAC language.

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Make the following permit level and season date changes to the Selah Butte bighorn sheep hunts:

Selah Butte A	Sept. 15 - Oct. 10 Nov. 3-30	Sheep Unit 4	Any Legal Weapon	5
Selah Butte B	Sept. 1-30	Sheep Unit 4	Adult ewe only Any Legal Weapon	5

The reason for the change is because the Selah Butte and Umtanum herds have suffered a disease outbreak, with several bighorns dying due to the disease and removed by the Department's disease control actions.

Given the decline in adult ewes in the herds, the Department is recommending removing the ewe hunt in Selah Butte to prevent further declines. The herds have numerous rams and rams are more likely to spread disease during long distance movements associated with pre-rut behavior. As such, the Department is recommending not reducing ram permits (status quo ram permits), but opening the season earlier in Selah Butte A to remove a few rams prior to the rut.

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SUMMARY OF WRITTEN PUBLIC INPUT

WAC 232-28- 273 2009-2011 Moose, bighorn sheep, and mountain goat seasons and permit quotas.

COMMENTS	AGENCY RESPONSE
Why are you taking away a goat tag from the bumping unit?	The Department is recommending changing the permit level for the Bumping mountain goat populations from 2 to 1 goat due to recent survey data.
Mr. Rice's study said there is a population of approximately 3,800 goats in this state (which is very inaccurate) and your harvest goals are to harvest 1%. Well, I'm no mathematician, but 1% of 3,800 are 38 tags, not 15!	The threshold for a huntable goat population is at least 100 goats. If a population is greater than 100 animals, the percent of the population that is harvested (1-4%) is based on the vigor of the population, population size, etc. There are many small isolated groups of goats, which are not hunted, but certainly count toward the statewide total.
I know one of your goals is to reduce the number of nannys taken, well your 2008 harvest data says that 5 nannys were taken....so how do you reduce that? Easy. You make the goat tags OUTFITTER tags. That way you have trained professionals determining sex, and you would actually be helping to stimulate the economy.	Our objectives for reducing the harvest of nannies have been successful with the use of educational videos. Therefore, further reductions may not be feasible.
The handling of the sheep issue in the Yakima River canyon was horrible. Why didn't you let the guys with max sheep points harvest those animals? I know some personally who would have used all of their points and paid upwards of \$10,000 to harvest a ram.	This is a diseased bighorn sheep management issue. Allowing hunters to kill older rams would not help address the removal of diseased sheep.
Make bighorn sheep ewe hunts 30 days rather than 10 days.	Bighorn sheep are very wary of disturbance. Given the popularity of a few canyons in most of the open units, the Department tries to reducing crowding issues as much as possible to maintain a quality hunting experience.
Please inform hunters about areas open and closed to goat hunters prior to the permit application process	Maps and/or legal descriptions of open goat units will be published in the 2010-2011 hunting pamphlet.