

State of California  
Fish and Game Commission  
Final Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action

Amend Section 362  
Title 14, California Code of Regulations  
Re: Bighorn Sheep Hunting

I. Dates of Statements of Reasons

- (a) Initial Statement of Reasons: December 12, 2024
- (b) Pre-adoption Statement of Reasons: April 4, 2025
- (c) Final Statement of Reasons: April 29, 2025

I. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings

(a) Notice Hearing

Date: December 12, 2024

Location: Sacramento, CA

(b) Discussion Hearing

Date: February 12, 2025

Location: Sacramento, CA

(c) Adoption Hearing

Date: April 16, 2025

Location: Sacramento, CA

II. Update

At its April 16, 2025 meeting, the Fish and Game Commission (Commission) adopted the proposed changes that focus on Nelson bighorn sheep tag quotas under section 362(d), as provided in the Adopted Regulatory Text, attached.

III. Summary of Primary Considerations Raised in Support of or Opposition to the Proposed Actions and Reasons for Rejecting Those Considerations

For comments from April 8, 2025 to present, please see Attachment 1.

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change

No alternatives were identified by or brought to the attention of Commission staff that would have the same desired regulatory effect.

(b) No Change Alternative

Without the proposed changes, the outstanding issues concerning the regulations currently governing bighorn sheep hunting would remain unaddressed. The no change alternative was considered and rejected because it would not be consistent with maintaining bighorn sheep populations within desired population objectives. F&G Code subdivision 4902(b) and management unit plans specify desired harvest levels. Retaining the current tag quota for each zone may not be responsive to environmental and biological changes in the status of various

herds. The no-change alternative would not allow for adjustment of tag quotas in response to changing environmental and biological conditions.

(c) Consideration of Alternatives

In view of information currently possessed, no alternative considered would be more effective in carrying out the purpose for which the regulation is proposed, would be as effective and less burdensome to affected private persons than the adopted regulation, or would be more cost effective to affected private persons and equally effective in implementing the statutory policy or other provision of law.

(d) Description of Reasonable Alternatives that Would Lessen Adverse Impact on Small Business

None identified.

V. Impact of Regulatory Action

The potential for significant statewide adverse economic impacts that might result from the proposed regulatory action has been assessed, and the following determinations relative to the required statutory categories have been made:

(a) Significant Statewide Adverse Economic Impact Directly Affecting Businesses, Including the Ability of California Businesses to Compete with Businesses in Other States

The proposed action will not have a significant statewide adverse economic impact directly affecting business, including the ability of California businesses to compete with businesses in other states. The proposed action adjusts tag quotas for existing hunts. Given the number of tags available and the area over which they are distributed, these proposals are economically neutral to business.

(b) Impact on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State, the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses, or the Expansion of Businesses in California; Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents, Worker Safety, and the State's Environment

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs or businesses within the State; no significant impacts to the creation of new business, the elimination of existing businesses, or the expansion of businesses in California are anticipated because the expected economic impacts of the proposed regulations are unlikely to be substantial enough to significantly stimulate demand for goods or services related to bighorn sheep hunting. As previously mentioned, periodic or annual adjustments of tag quotas in response to dynamic environmental, and biological conditions are necessary to maintain sustainable populations of bighorn sheep and hunt opportunities, as well as keeping with mandates and management recommendations. If greater numbers of hunters visit the areas in the state with increased opportunities, businesses that provide goods and services to Nelson bighorn sheep hunters could benefit from small increases in sales. The Commission does not anticipate direct benefits to the general health and welfare of California residents or to worker safety but anticipates benefits to the environment.

(c) Cost Impacts on a Representative Private Person or Business

The total net number of tags ~~is anticipated to~~ will increase from the previous year by seven tags, so no adverse ~~economic cost~~ impacts to individuals or to businesses that support bighorn sheep hunts are anticipated. The Commission does not anticipate significant impacts on the representative private persons or businesses.

(d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State

No new costs/savings or change to federal funding are anticipated for state agencies. However, the Department is projected to experience higher bighorn sheep tag sales that may result in revenue increases (see STD399 and Addendum).

(e) Nondiscretionary Costs/Savings to Local Agencies

None.

(f) Programs Mandated on Local Agencies or School Districts

None.

(g) Costs Imposed on Any Local Agency or School District that is Required to be Reimbursed Under Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4, Government Code

None.

(h) Effect on Housing Costs

None.