

STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
 FISH AND GAME COMMISSION  
 FINAL STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR REGULATORY ACTION  
 (Pre-Publication of Notice Statement)

Amend Subsection 362,  
 Title 14, California Code of Regulations (CCR)  
 Re: Nelson Bighorn Sheep

- I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: September 24, 2013
- II. Date of Final Statement of Reasons: April 16, 2014
- III. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings:
  - (a) Notice Hearing: Date: December 11, 2013  
Location: San Diego, CA
  - (b) Discussion Hearing: Date: February 5, 2014  
Location: Sacramento, CA
  - (c) Adoption Hearing: Date: April 16, 2014  
Location: Ventura, CA

IV. Update:

No modifications were made to the originally proposed language of the Initial Statement of Reasons. Based on the current estimate of populations in each management unit, the Department has recommended the following tag allocations for the 2014–2015 hunt year:

HUNT ZONE	Proposed Tag Allocation	2014-15 Final Tag Allocation
Zone 1 – Marble/Clipper Mountains	1–4	4
Zone 2 - Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains	1–4	0
Zone 3 - Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	1–2	1
Zone 4 - Orocopia Mountains	1–2	2
Zone 5 - San Gorgonio Wilderness	1–3	2
Zone 6 - Sheep Hole Mountains	1–2	0
Zone 7 - White Mountains	1–5	1
Zone 8 - South Bristol Mountains	1–3	1
Zone 9 – Cady Mountains	1–4	2
Open Zone Fund-Raising Tag	0–1	1
Marble/Clipper/South Bristol Mountains Fund-raising Tag	0–1	0
Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains Fund-Raising Tag	0–1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9–32</b>	<b>14</b>

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

The Department did not receive any comments regarding bighorn sheep.

VI. Location and Index of Rulemaking File:

A rulemaking file with attached file index is maintained at:  
California Fish and Game Commission  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

VII. Location of Department files:

Department of Fish and Wildlife  
1416 Ninth Street  
Sacramento, California 95814

VIII. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action:

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change:

1. Number of Tags

No alternatives were identified. Bighorn sheep license tag quotas must be changed periodically in response to a variety of biological and environmental conditions.

(b) No Change Alternative:

1. Number of Tags

The no-change alternative was considered and rejected because it would not attain project objectives of providing for hunting opportunities while maintaining bighorn sheep populations within desired population objectives. Retaining the current tag quota for each zone may not be responsive to biologically-based changes in the status of various herds. Management plans specify desired percentage harvest levels on an annual basis. The no-change alternative would not allow for adjustment of tag quotas in response to changing environmental/biological conditions.

IX. 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 initial 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:

The Commission anticipates benefits to the health and welfare of California residents. Hunting provides opportunities for multi-generational family activities and promotes respect for California's environment by the future stewards of the State's resources. The Commission anticipates benefits to the State's environment in the sustainable management of natural resources.

It is unlikely that the proposed regulation will result in the creation or elimination of jobs within the state, cause the creation of new businesses or the elimination of existing businesses or result in the expansion of businesses in California because the overall number of tags issued is small and the resulting hunting effort is spread over a large geographic area.

- (c) Cost Impacts on Private Persons:

The Commission is not aware of any cost impacts that a representative private person or business would necessarily incur in reasonable compliance with the proposed action.

- (d) Costs or Savings to State Agencies or Costs/Savings in Federal Funding to the State: None

- (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:

None

- (h) Effect on Housing Costs: None

## Updated Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Existing regulation provides for limited hunting of mature Nelson bighorn rams in specified hunt zones of the State. The original proposal changed the number of license tags for each hunt to a series of ranges. The proposal is further modified to provide the final tag allocation based on the Department's annual estimate of the population within each management unit.

No other modifications to the original proposal were made. Pursuant to its April 16, 2014 meeting, the Fish and Game Commission adopted the above referenced changes and final tag quotas as proposed.

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