

## Staff Summary for December 10-11, 2025

**10. Bighorn Sheep Hunting****Today's Item**Information ☐Action ☒

Consider authorizing publication of notice of intent to amend regulations regarding bighorn sheep hunting.

**Summary of Previous/Future Actions**

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| • Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) vetting | May 15, 2025; WRC           |
| • WRC discussion and recommendation          | September 11, 2025; WRC     |
| • <b>Today's notice hearing</b>              | <b>December 10-11, 2025</b> |
| • Discussion hearing                         | February 11-12, 2026        |
| • Adoption hearing                           | April 15-16, 2026           |

**Background**

Current regulations establish Nelson bighorn sheep hunt zones, specify tag quotas for each hunt zone and specify season opening and closing dates in accordance with management goals and objectives described in the management unit plans. Current regulations specify that the two single zone bighorn sheep fundraising tags are allocated to zones 2 and 10.

The recommended regulation changes for the 2026-27 season add three new hunt areas to San Bernadino County: Granite and North Bristol Mountains (Zone 11), Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains (Zone 12), and Castle Mountains and Piute Range (Zone 13); identify new zones 11, 12 and 13 for the single zone fundraising tags; modify hunt tag quotas for existing zones; and assign tag quotas to the recommended new zones.

Tag quotas are established based on a variety of factors, including sheep population density and abundance, age and sex composition, and distribution. Population estimates from recent surveys support an increase in tag quotas in several existing hunt zones. However, final tag quotas cannot be determined until surveys are completed and all data are analyzed. Surveys and analyses are scheduled for completion by spring 2026. At the adoption hearing, the Department will recommend final tag quotas for each zone and the zone for single zone fundraising tag 2 based upon findings from 2025-26 surveys.

Further details of the recommended changes are available in the draft initial statement of reasons (ISOR; Exhibit 2) and draft proposed regulatory language (Exhibit 3).

Today the Department will give a presentation summarizing the recommended regulation changes (Exhibit 5).

**Significant Public Comments (N/A)****Recommendation**

**Commission staff:** Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations related to bighorn sheep hunting as recommended by WRC and the Department.

## Staff Summary for December 10-11, 2025

**Committee:** Support the recommended regulation changes related to bighorn sheep hunting.

**Department:** Authorize publication of a notice of intent to amend regulations as detailed in the draft ISOR and draft recommended regulatory language (exhibits 2 and 3).

### Exhibits

1. [Memo transmitting ISOR, received November 7, 2025](#)
2. [Draft ISOR dated November 1, 2025](#)
3. [Draft proposed regulatory language](#)
4. [Draft economic and fiscal impact statement](#)
5. [Department presentation](#)

### Motion

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ that the Commission authorizes publication of a notice of its intent to amend Section 362, related to bighorn sheep hunting.

# Memorandum

Received November 7, 2025  
Original signed copy on file

**Date:** November 10, 2025

**To:** Melissa Miller-Henson  
Executive Director  
Fish and Game Commission

**From:** Charlton H. Bonham  
Director

**Subject:** **Item for December 10-11, 2025 Fish and Game Commission Meeting: Regulatory Action to Amend Section 362, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, re: Nelson bighorn sheep hunting.**

Please find attached the Initial Statement of Reasons to amend Section 362, Title 14, California Code of Regulations, regarding Nelson bighorn sheep hunting. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) requests consideration of publication of notice at the December 10-11, 2025 Fish and Game Commission meeting.

The proposed amendments would add three new hunt areas to San Bernadino County, Granite and North Bristol Mountains (Zone 11), Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains (Zone 12), and Castle Mountains and Piute Range (Zone 13); identify new zones for the single zone fundraising tags; and modify hunt tag quotas. The proposal is necessary to expand hunt opportunities for Nelson bighorn sheep, maximize revenue in fundraising tags, and manage for sustainable bighorn sheep hunts and populations.

If you have any questions on this item, please contact Scott Gardner, Wildlife Branch Chief, at (916) 801-6257. The Department point of contact for this rulemaking is the Statewide Bighorn Sheep Coordinator, Paige Prentice, who can be contacted at [BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:BigGame@wildlife.ca.gov).

ec: **California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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November 10, 2025  
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Initial Statement of Reasons for Regulatory Action

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

I. Date of Initial Statement of Reasons: November 1, 2025

II. Dates and Locations of Scheduled Hearings

(a) Notice Hearing:

Date: December 10, 2025

Location: Sacramento

(b) Discussion Hearing:

Date: February 12, 2026

Location: Sacramento

(c) Adoption Hearing:

Date: April 16, 2026

Location: Sacramento

III. Description of Regulatory Action

(a) Statement of Specific Purpose of Regulatory Change and Factual Basis for Determining that Regulation Change is Reasonably Necessary

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in amending Nelson bighorn sheep regulations. Considerations include recommendations for adding new hunt zones, adjusting tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), setting hunt periods, modifying zone boundaries, authorizing methods of take, among others, to help achieve management goals and objectives for Nelson bighorn sheep. To maintain appropriate harvest levels and hunting quality, tag quotas must be adjusted periodically in response to dynamic environmental and biological conditions.

The proposed changes focus on adding three new hunt zones for Nelson bighorn sheep in subsection 362(a), reallocating fundraising tags in subsection 362(b), and adjusting tag quotas in subsection 362(d). The last time these regulations were subject to an amendment was 2025-2026. The proposed amendments here represent the cumulation of the Department's internal discussions/data analysis. The proposed changes are necessary to maintain sustainable hunt opportunities, and for consistency with management unit plan recommendations and the California Fish and Game Code (FGC). Subdivision (b)(2) of FGC Section 4902 states the Commission may not adopt regulations authorizing the sport hunting in a single year of more than 15 percent of the mature Nelson bighorn rams in a single management unit. The following management recommendations are consistent with this mandate.

## **Background**

Current regulations in Section 362 establish Nelson bighorn sheep hunt zones, specify tag quotas for each hunt zone and specify season opening and closing dates in accordance with management goals and objectives described in the management unit plans. Current regulations specify the two single zone fundraising tags are allocated to zones 2 and 10. Tag quotas are established based on a variety of factors, including population density and abundance, age and sex composition, and distribution. Individuals are awarded a bighorn sheep hunting tag through the Department's Big Game Drawing. A limited number of fundraising tags are also available for purchase, usually by auction, via non-governmental organizations that assist the Department with fundraising. Harvest of a bighorn sheep is authorized for an individual with a tag for a respective hunt zone and season.

The Department's goal is to increase bighorn sheep hunting opportunities where feasible and compatible with population objectives, in which case recommendations will be offered to the Commission. The Department has identified three potential hunt zones that have stable populations that can support sustainable harvest levels while meeting management goals and objectives.

Per subdivision (d) of FGC 4902, the number of tags authorized for the purpose of raising funds shall not exceed 15 percent of the total number of tags authorized and the Commission shall direct not more than three of the tags available for issuance for the purpose of raising funds. All revenue from the sale of fundraising tags shall be deposited in the Big Game Management Account. Since the first Nelson bighorn sheep fundraising tag was sold in 1987, the Department has raised over \$6 million for the management of big game species and habitats. Over the last ten years, Nelson bighorn sheep fundraising tags have raised an average of \$253,832 per year for big game management. The current regulations allow for one open zone fundraising tag and two single zone fundraising tags. The single zone fundraising tags may be moved to different zones based on survey data and Department needs. This flexibility will allow the Department to continue to manage hunting opportunities compatible with population objectives, while also maximizing fundraising opportunities and revenue.

### ***Existing Authorities***

FGC Section 200 provides the Commission with the power to regulate the take or possession of birds, mammals, fish, amphibians, and reptiles.

FGC Section 203 specifies that the Commission has authority to promulgate regulations concerning open and closed seasons, bag and possession limits, hunt zones, methods of take, and restrictions based on physical distinctions.

FGC Section 203.1 requires the Commission to consider populations, habitat, food supplies, animal welfare, and other pertinent facts.

FGC Section 1050 describes the process and procedure for assigning fees to hunting entitlements.

FGC Section 3950 defines game mammals and specifies that Nelson bighorn sheep are game mammals only for the purposes of sport hunting as described in FGC Section 4902.

FGC Section 4902 authorizes the Commission to adopt regulations for the biologically sound management of Nelson bighorn sheep, including sport hunting of mature bighorn rams; specifies the bighorn resident hunting tag fee, authorizes the Commission to adopt the bighorn nonresident hunting tag fee; specifies conditions regarding the sale of bighorn fundraising tags; and requires a mandatory hunter orientation training.

## **Proposed Regulations**

### ***Section 362 Nelson Bighorn Sheep***

- **Amend subsections 362(a) and (b)** to add three new hunt zones in San Bernardino County: Granite and North Bristol Mountains (Zone 11), Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains (Zone 12), and Castle Mountains and Piute Range (Zone 13). The season for all three zones would match the other zones in the area starting the first Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February. Table 1 and Figure 1 reflect the proposed tag ranges and locations of these zones.
  - Problem Statement: There are relatively few Nelson bighorn sheep hunting opportunities in California but there are many healthy bighorn populations on public land that can biologically support sustainable harvest but are not currently in designated hunt zones.
  - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this proposal is to increase hunter opportunity through the creation of three new hunt zones in Nelson bighorn populations. These populations have been monitored by the Department for more than five years and can sustainably support harvest.
  - Statement of Benefits: The proposal is consistent with the Statewide Bighorn Sheep Conservation and Management Plan and the North Central Deserts Bighorn Conservation Unit Plan, and hunters' requests for new hunting opportunities.
  - Statement of Necessity: This proposal is necessary to increase hunter opportunity while maintaining biologically sound harvest levels and meeting management goals.

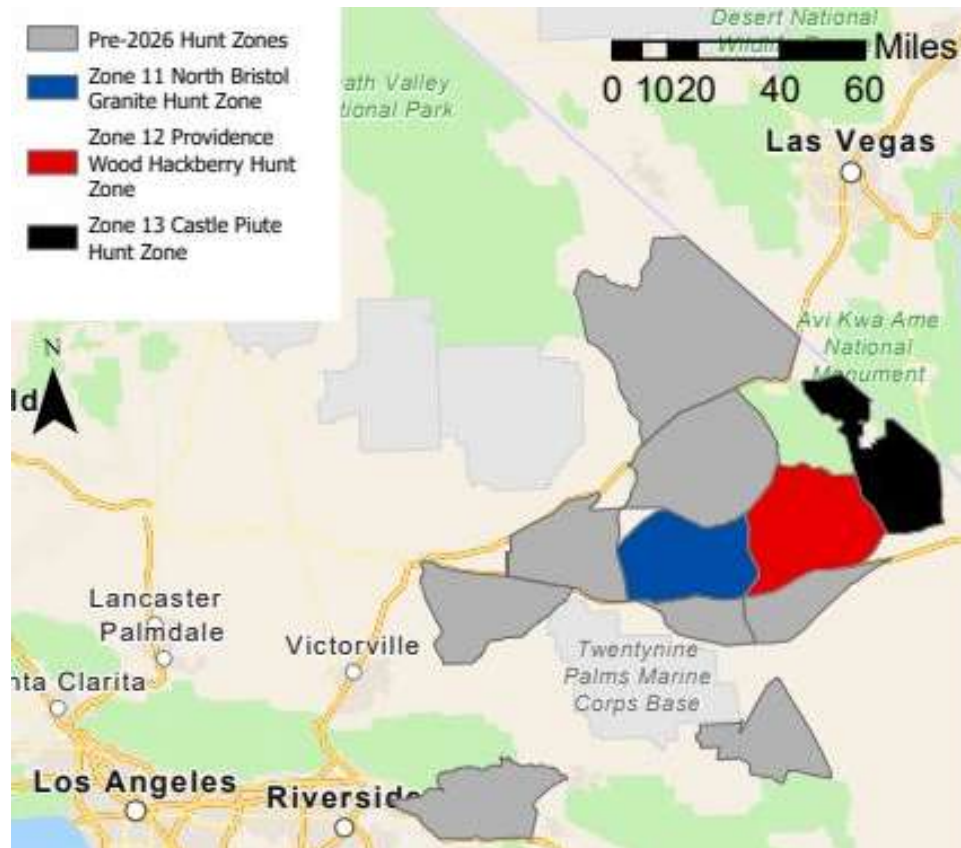


Figure 1. The three proposed hunt zones in San Bernardino County in relation to the existing hunt zones in the area. The three proposed zones from west to east are the Granite and North Bristol Mountains (Zone 11, in blue), the Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains (Zone 12, in red), and the Castle Mountains and Piute Range (Zone 13, in black).

- **Amend subsections 362 (b)(2) and (3)** to identify new zones 11, 12 and 13 for the Single Zone Fundraising tags. Existing regulations provide for allocation of two Single Zone fundraising tags, and specify the season for each zone.
  - Problem Statement: Nelson bighorn sheep populations are subject to annual population fluctuations, and it is important to have flexibility to re-assign the fundraising tags to different zones to ensure sustainable harvest levels and to maximize fundraising potential.
  - Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this proposal is to allow flexibility to ensure sustainable harvest levels and maximize fundraising potential.
  - Statement of Benefits: The proposal is consistent with the Statewide Bighorn Sheep Conservation and Management Plan and the North Central Deserts Bighorn Conservation Unit Plan.
  - Statement of Necessity: This proposal is necessary to maintain flexibility to ensure biologically sound harvest levels and meet management goals.
- **Amend subsection 362(d)** to adjust tag quotas across existing zones and assign tag quotas to the proposed new zones to ensure data-driven sustainable harvest numbers.



Population estimates from recent surveys support an increase in tag quotas in several existing hunt zones. Final tag quotas for bighorn sheep cannot be determined until surveys are completed and all data are analyzed. Surveys and analyses are scheduled for completion by Spring 2026. The Department's final tag quota recommendation will be based upon a biologically appropriate harvest of bighorn sheep. Due to the timing of administrative procedures and requirements of the FGC, the Department submits proposed regulatory changes to the Commission prior to completion of all surveys, necessitating a proposed range of tags. The Department will recommend final tag quotas for each zone and the zone for single zone fundraising tag 2 in the Preadoption Statement of Reasons based upon findings from 2025-2026 surveys.

- Problem Statement: Nelson bighorn sheep populations are subject to annual population fluctuations, and it is important to have flexibility to adjust tag numbers ensure biologically sustainable harvest.
- Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this proposal is to provide the Department with flexibility to adjust the number of tags, as needed, based on recent data and the best available science.
- Statement of Benefits: The proposal is consistent with the Statewide Bighorn Sheep Conservation and Management Plan and the North Central Deserts Bighorn Conservation Unit Plan.
- Statement of Necessity: This proposal is necessary to allow flexibility to adjust tag numbers based on the best available science and to ensure biologically sound harvest levels while meeting management goals.

Table 1. Nelson bighorn sheep hunt zone tag allocations

<b><i>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</i></b>	<b><i>Tag Allocation 2025</i></b>	<b><i>Proposed Tag Allocation 2026</i></b>
Zone 1 -- Marble/Clipper Mountains	1	[0-3]
Zone 2 -- Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains	3	[0-4]
Zone 3 -- Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	4	[0-4]
Zone 4 -- Orocopia Mountains	1	[0-2]
Zone 5 -- San Geronio Wilderness	1	[0-3]
Zone 6 -- Sheep Hole Mountains	1	[0-2]
Zone 7 (Period 1) -- White Mountains	3	[0-4]
Zone 7 (Period 2) -- White Mountains	2	[0-4]
Zone 8 -- South Bristol Mountains	1	[0-3]
Zone 9 -- Cady Mountains	2	[0-4]
Zone 10 (Period 1) -- Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	[0-6]
Zone 10 (Period 2) -- Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	[0-6]
Zone 11 -- Granite and North Bristol Mountains	--	[0-3]
Zone 12 -- Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains	--	[0-3]
Zone 13 -- Castle Mountains and Piute Range	--	[0-4]
Open Zone Fundraising Tag	1	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 1: Zone 10	1	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 2: Zone [1-13]	1	1
Total:	30	[3-58]

## (b) Goals and Benefits of the Regulation

It is the policy of the state to encourage the preservation, conservation, and maintenance of wildlife resources under the jurisdiction and influence of the state. This policy shall include, but is not limited to, the following objectives:

The maintenance of sufficient populations of all species of wildlife and the habitat necessary to provide for the beneficial use and enjoyment of wildlife by all citizens of the state, to perpetuate all species of wildlife for their intrinsic and ecological values, as well as for their direct benefits to all persons, to provide for aesthetic, educational, and non-appropriative uses of the various

wildlife species, to maintain diversified recreational uses of wildlife, including the sport of hunting, as proper uses of certain designated species of wildlife, consistent with the maintenance of healthy, viable wildlife resources, the public safety, and a quality outdoor experience, to alleviate economic losses or public health or safety problems caused by wildlife to the people of the state either individually or collectively in a manner designed to bring the problem within tolerable limits consistent with economic and public health considerations and the objectives.

The proposed regulations will provide Nelson bighorn sheep hunting opportunities while maintaining sustainable population sizes in accordance with management recommendations in existing unit plans, and so as not to exceed the 15 percent threshold identified in subdivision (b)(2) of FGC section 4902.

(c) Authority and Reference Sections from Fish and Game Code for Regulation

Authority: 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 1050, and 4902 Fish and Game Code

Reference: 1050, 3950, and 4902 Fish and Game Code

(d) Specific Technology or Equipment Required by Regulatory Change:

None

(e) Identification of Reports or Documents Supporting Regulation Change

- [2019 Environmental Document Regarding Bighorn Sheep Hunting](#)
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2025. [The Conservation and Management Plan for Bighorn Sheep in California](#). California Department of Fish and Wildlife, West Sacramento, CA, USA.
- North Central Deserts Bighorn Conservation Unit Plan—final draft will be shared upon completion

(f) Public Discussions of Proposed Regulations Prior to Notice Publication

- Wildlife Resources Committee, May 2025
- Wildlife Resources Committee, September 2025

IV. Description of Reasonable Alternatives to Regulatory Action

(a) Alternatives to Regulation Change

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

(b) No Change Alternative

Without the proposed changes, no new hunting zones would be added and the outstanding issues concerning the regulations currently governing bighorn sheep hunting would remain unaddressed. The no change alternative would not be consistent with maintaining bighorn sheep populations within desired population objectives. Subdivision (b) of FGC Section 4902

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.

#### V. Mitigation Measures Required by Regulatory Action

The proposed regulatory action will have no negative impact on the environment; therefore, no mitigation measures are needed.

#### VI. 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 will potentially add up to 10 tags in three new hunting zones across a large geographic region and will adjust tag quotas for existing hunts with a potential of 28 more tags for new and existing zones combined. 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 within the state, the creation of new business, the elimination of existing businesses, or the expansion of businesses in California because the expected economic impact of the proposed regulations are unlikely to be substantial enough to significantly stimulate demand for goods or services related to Nelson bighorn sheep hunting. 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. Conversely, if fewer tags are awarded and fewer hunters visit the areas in the state with decreased opportunities, businesses that provide goods and services to Nelson bighorn sheep hunters could be negatively affected from small decreases in sales. Anticipated benefits to the environment include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of populations of Nelson bighorn sheep to ensure their continued existence and supporting recreational opportunity, and funding wildlife conservation through the fees that hunters pay for licenses and tags. While there are no anticipated benefits to worker safety, hunting is an outdoor activity that can provide several health and welfare benefits to California residents, including the benefits of fresh game to eat and exercise from outdoor recreation.

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

The total potential range of tags across all zones is anticipated increase by up to 28 tags across a large geographic area, so no net economic impacts to individuals or to businesses that support Nelson bighorn sheep hunts are anticipated. As such, 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:

The Commission does not anticipate any new costs or savings to state agencies or costs/savings in federal funding to the state. However, the Department is projected to experience an increase in bighorn sheep tag sales given that three new hunt zones are proposed 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

## VII. Economic Impact Assessment

## (a) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation or Elimination of Jobs Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation or elimination of jobs within the State.

## (b) Effects of the Regulation on the Creation of New Businesses or the Elimination of Existing Businesses Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the creation of new businesses, the elimination of existing businesses within the state 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 Nelson bighorn sheep hunting.

## (c) Effects of the Regulation on the Expansion of Businesses Currently Doing Business Within the State

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on the expansion of businesses currently doing business within the state 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 Nelson bighorn sheep hunting.

## (d) Benefits of the Regulation to the Health and Welfare of California Residents

Hunting is an outdoor activity that can provide several health and welfare benefits to California residents. Hunters and their families benefit from fresh game to eat, and from the benefits of outdoor recreation, including exercise. People who hunt have a special connection with the

outdoors and an awareness of the relationships between wildlife, habitat, and humans, and can be a family tradition and a bonding activity.

(e) Benefits of the Regulation to Worker Safety

The Commission does not anticipate impacts on worker safety.

(f) Benefits of the Regulation to the State's Environment

The Commission anticipates benefits to the state's environment in the sustainable management of Nelson bighorn sheep populations. Adoption of three new hunt zones and science-based tag quotas provides for the management of Nelson bighorn sheep population to ensure their continued existence and supports recreational opportunities. The fees that hunters pay for licenses and tags help fund wildlife conservation.

## Informative Digest/Policy Statement Overview

Unless otherwise specified, all section references in this document are Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

### Background

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) periodically considers the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) in amending bighorn sheep hunting regulations. Considerations include recommendations for adjusting tag quotas, setting hunt periods, modifying area boundaries, authorizing methods of take, among others, to help achieve management goals and objectives for bighorn sheep.

Current regulations in Section 362 provide definitions, hunting zone descriptions, season opening and closing dates, tag quotas (total number of hunting tags to be made available), and bag and possession limits for bighorn sheep hunting. Individuals are awarded a bighorn sheep hunting tag through the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department's) Big Game Drawing. A limited number of fundraising tags are also available for purchase, usually by auction, via non-governmental organizations that assist the Department with fundraising.

Harvest of a bighorn sheep is authorized for an individual with a tag for a specific hunt zone and season. Tag quotas are established based on a variety of factors including population density and abundance, age and sex composition, and distribution.

### Proposed Changes

**Amend subsections 362(a) and (b)** to add three new hunt areas in San Bernardino County: Granite and North Bristol Mountains (Zone 11), Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains (Zone 12), and Castle Mountains and Piute Range (Zone 13). The season for all three zones would match the other zones in the area starting the first Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February.

Bighorn sheep are widespread in San Bernardino County, and these populations have been monitored for over 5 years. The proposed changes would increase the number of tags available and the geographic areas, or hunt zones, available for hunting.

**Amend subsections 362 (b)(2) and (3)** to identify new zones 11, 12 and 13 for the Single Zone Fundraising tags.

Existing regulations provide for allocation of two Single Zone fundraising tags, and specify the season for each zone. This proposal allows for the possible reallocation of these tags to the new zones based on population survey results to maintain biologically sound hunting opportunities and continue to generate revenue.

**Amend Subsection 362(d)** to modify hunt tag quotas for each hunt zone (Table 1 in the Initial Statement of Reasons).

Periodic 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. Due to the timing of administrative procedures and requirements of the California Fish and Game Code, the Department submits

proposed regulatory changes to the Commission prior to completion of all surveys. The Department will recommend final tag quotas for each zone and the zone for single zone fundraising tag 2 based upon analyses and findings from 2025-2026 surveys, scheduled for completion by March 2026.

#### Benefit of the Regulations:

The proposed regulations will provide Nelson bighorn sheep hunting opportunities while maintaining sustainable population sizes in accordance with management recommendations in existing unit plans, and so as not to exceed the 15 percent threshold identified in subdivision (b)(2) of Fish and Game Code Section 4902.

#### Consistency and Compatibility with Existing Regulations:

The proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations. Section 20, Article IV, of the state Constitution specifies that the Legislature may delegate to the Commission such powers relating to the protection and propagation of fish and game as the Legislature sees fit. The Legislature has delegated to the Commission the power to adopt regulations governing Nelson bighorn sheep. No other state agency has the authority to adopt regulations governing hunting of Nelson bighorn sheep. The Commission has reviewed its own regulations and finds that the proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations. The Commission has searched the CCR for any regulations regarding hunting of Nelson bighorn sheep; therefore, the Commission has concluded that the proposed regulations are neither inconsistent nor incompatible with existing state regulations.



## Proposed Regulatory Language

Section 362, Title 14, CCR, is amended as follows:

### § 362. Nelson Bighorn Sheep.

(a) Areas:

*[... No changes to subsections (a)(1) through (a)(10)...]*

#### (11) Zone 11 (Granite and North Bristol Mountains)

(A) Area: In that portion of San Bernardino County beginning at the junction of Interstate Highway 40 and Crucero Road; east on Interstate Highway 40 to the junction with Kelbaker Road; north on Kelbaker Road to Kelso Depot; west on the Union Pacific Cima Subdivision Railroad track to the intersection with the South Powerline Road; southwest on the South Powerline Road to the intersection with Crucero Road; south on Crucero Road to the point of the beginning.

#### (12) Zone 12 (Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains)

(A) Area: In the portion of San Bernardino County beginning at the junction of Interstate Highway 40 and Kelbaker Road; east on Interstate Highway 40 to the junction with County Route 66; northeast on County Route 66 to the junction with Lanfair Road; north on Lanfair Road to the junction with Cedar Canyon Road; west on Cedar Canyon Road to the junction with Kelso Cima Road; southwest on Kelso Cima Road to the junction with Kelbaker Road; south on Kelbaker Road to the point at the beginning.

#### (13) Zone 13 (Castle Mountains and Piute Range)

(A) Area: In the portion of San Bernardino County beginning at the junction of Nipton Road and Ivanpah Road; south on Ivanpah Road and continuing when it becomes Lanfair Road to the junction of Lanfair Road and County Route 66; east on County Route 66 to the junction with U.S. Route 95; north on U.S. Route 95 to the California-Nevada border; northwest on the California-Nevada border to the junction with Castle Mountains National Monument boundary; following the Castle Mountains National Monument boundary south then west then north back to the California-Nevada border; northwest on the California-Nevada border to the junction with Nipton Road; west on Nipton Road to the point at the beginning.

(b) Seasons:

(1) Open Zone Fundraising Tag: The holder of the fundraising license tag issued pursuant to subdivision 4902(d) of the Fish and Game Code may hunt in Zones with at least one general public tag:

(A) Zones 1 through 4, 6, ~~and 8, 9, and 10,~~ through 13: Beginning the first Saturday in November and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(B) Zone 5: Beginning the third Saturday in November and extending through the third Sunday in February.

(C) Zone 7: Beginning the first Saturday in August and extending through the last Sunday in September. Beginning again, the third Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(2) Single Zone Fundraising Tag 1: Based on the zone issued, the holder of the fundraising license tag issued pursuant to subdivision 4902(d) of the Fish and Game Code may hunt:

(A) Zones 1 through 4, 6, and 8, 9, and 10, through 13: Beginning the first Saturday in November and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(B) Zone 5: Beginning the third Saturday in November and extending through the third Sunday in February

(C) Zone 7: Beginning the first Saturday in August and extending through the last Sunday in September. Beginning, again, the third Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(3) Single Zone Fundraising Tag 2: Based on the Zone issued, the holder of the fundraising license tag issued pursuant to subdivision 4902(d) of the Fish and Game Code may hunt:

(A) Zones 1 through 4, 6, and 8, 9, and 10, through 13: Beginning the first Saturday in November and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(B) Zone 5: Beginning the third Saturday in November and extending through the third Sunday in February.

(C) Zone 7: Beginning the first Saturday in August and extending through the last Sunday in September. Beginning, again, the third Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(4) Except as provided in subsection 362(b)(1), (2), and (3), the Nelson bighorn sheep season in the areas described in subsection 362(a) shall be defined as follows:

(A) Zones 1, 2, 3, through 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 13: Beginning the first Saturday in December and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(B) Zone 5: Beginning the third Saturday in December and extending through the third Sunday in February.

(C) Zone 7:

1. Zone 7 (Period 1): Beginning the third Saturday in August and extending through the last Sunday in September.

2. Zone 7 (Period 2): Beginning the first Saturday in January and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(D) Zone 10:

1. Zone 10 (Period 1): Beginning the first Saturday in December and extending through the first Saturday in January.
2. Zone 10 (Period 2): Beginning the first Sunday in January and extending through the first Sunday in February.

(5) Except as specifically provided in section 362, the take of bighorn sheep is prohibited.

(c) Bag and possession Limit: One mature ram defined as follows: a male Nelson bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) having at least one horn, the tip of which extends beyond a point in a straight line beginning at the front (anterior) edge of the horn base, and extending downward through the rear (posterior) edge of the visible portion of the eye and continuing downward through the horn. All reference points are based on viewing the ram directly from a 90 degree angle from which the head is facing. A diagram showing the correct viewing procedure shall be distributed by the department to each successful applicant.

(d) Number of License Tags:

<i>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</i>	<i>Tag Allocation</i>
Zone 1 – Marble/Clipper Mountains	4 [0-3]
Zone 2 – Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains	3 [0-4]
Zone 3 – Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	4 [0-4]
Zone 4 – Orocopia Mountains	4 [0-2]
Zone 5 – San Geronio Wilderness	4 [0-3]
Zone 6 – Sheep Hole Mountains	4 [0-2]
Zone 7 (Period 1) – White Mountains	3 [0-4]
Zone 7 (Period 2) – White Mountains	2 [0-4]
Zone 8 – South Bristol Mountains	4 [0-3]
Zone 9 – Cady Mountains	2 [0-4]
Zone 10 (Period 1) – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4 [0-6]
Zone 10 (Period 2) – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4 [0-6]
<u>Zone 11- Granite and North Bristol Mountains</u>	[0-3]
<u>Zone 12 -Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains</u>	[0-3]
<u>Zone 13- Castle Mountains and Piute Range</u>	[0-4]

<i>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</i>	<i>Tag Allocation</i>
Open Zone Fundraising Tag	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 1: <del>Zone 10</del> <u>Zone 10</u>	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 2: <del>Zone 2</del> <u>Zone [1-13]</u>	1
Total:	<del>30</del> <u>[3-58]</u>

(e) Conditions:

(1) Nelson bighorn rams shall only be taken between one-half hour before sunrise and one-half hour after sunset.

(2) Only methods specified in sections 353 and 354, Title 14, CCR, for taking bighorn sheep may be used.

(3) Each tagholder shall possess a spotting telescope capable of magnification of 15 power (15X), which is not affixed to a rifle, while hunting.

(4) Successful general tagholders shall present the head and edible portion of the carcass of a bighorn ram to the department's checking station within 48 hours after killing the animal. All successful tagholders shall notify the department's Bishop office by telephone at (760) 872-1171 within 24 hours of killing the animal and arrange for the head and carcass to be examined.

(5) All successful bighorn sheep tagholders shall make the horns of each ram available to the department to be permanently marked in the manner prescribed by the department for identification purposes within 48 hours of killing the animal. The purpose of the permanent marking shall be to identify Nelson bighorn rams which were legally taken and which may be transported and possessed outside the areas described in subsection 362(a).

(6) The department reserves the right to take and use any part of the tagholder's bighorn ram, except the horns, for biological analysis as long as no more than one pound of edible meat is removed.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 200, 203, 203.1, 265, 1050 and 4902, Fish and Game Code.

Reference: Sections 1050, 3950 and 4902, Fish and Game Code.

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

**ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

DEPARTMENT NAME <b>California Fish and Game Commission</b>	CONTACT PERSON <b>Dixie Van Allen</b>	EMAIL ADDRESS <b>fgc@fgc.ca.gov</b>	TELEPHONE NUMBER <b>916-201-6201</b>
DESCRIPTIVE TITLE FROM NOTICE REGISTER OR FORM 400 <b>Amend Section 362, Title 14, CCR: Re: Bighorn sheep hunting 2026-27</b>			NOTICE FILE NUMBER <b>Z</b>

**A. ESTIMATED PRIVATE SECTOR COST IMPACTS** *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.*

1. Check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate whether this regulation:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a. Impacts business and/or employees  | <input type="checkbox"/> e. Imposes reporting requirements                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b. Impacts small businesses           | <input type="checkbox"/> f. Imposes prescriptive instead of performance   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c. Impacts jobs or occupations        | <input type="checkbox"/> g. Impacts individuals                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d. Impacts California competitiveness | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> h. None of the above (Explain below): |

**Proposed annual updates to Bighorn sheep hunting regulations have no new private sector costs. See addendum.**

***If any box in Items 1 a through g is checked, complete this Economic Impact Statement.***

***If box in Item 1.h. is checked, complete the Fiscal Impact Statement as appropriate.***

2. The \_\_\_\_\_ estimates that the economic impact of this regulation (which includes the fiscal impact) is:  
(Agency/Department)

- ☐ Below \$10 million
- ☐ Between \$10 and \$25 million
- ☐ Between \$25 and \$50 million
- ☐ Over \$50 million *[If the economic impact is over \$50 million, agencies are required to submit a [Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment](#) as specified in Government Code Section 11346.3(c)]*

3. Enter the total number of businesses impacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the types of businesses (Include nonprofits): \_\_\_\_\_

Enter the number or percentage of total businesses impacted that are small businesses: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Enter the number of businesses that will be created: \_\_\_\_\_ eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Indicate the geographic extent of impacts: ☐ Statewide  
☐ Local or regional (List areas): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Enter the number of jobs created: \_\_\_\_\_ and eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the types of jobs or occupations impacted: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Will the regulation affect the ability of California businesses to compete with other states by making it more costly to produce goods or services here? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, explain briefly: \_\_\_\_\_

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

**ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)****B. ESTIMATED COSTS** *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.*

1. What are the total statewide dollar costs that businesses and individuals may incur to comply with this regulation over its lifetime? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

a. Initial costs for a small business: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual ongoing costs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Initial costs for a typical business: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual ongoing costs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Initial costs for an individual: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual ongoing costs: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Years: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Describe other economic costs that may occur: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If multiple industries are impacted, enter the share of total costs for each industry: \_\_\_\_\_

3. If the regulation imposes reporting requirements, enter the annual costs a typical business may incur to comply with these requirements.  
*Include the dollar costs to do programming, record keeping, reporting, and other paperwork, whether or not the paperwork must be submitted.* \$ \_\_\_\_\_4. Will this regulation directly impact housing costs? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If YES, enter the annual dollar cost per housing unit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of units: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are there comparable Federal regulations? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Explain the need for State regulation given the existence or absence of Federal regulations: \_\_\_\_\_

Enter any additional costs to businesses and/or individuals that may be due to State - Federal differences: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**C. ESTIMATED BENEFITS** *Estimation of the dollar value of benefits is not specifically required by rulemaking law, but encouraged.*

1. Briefly summarize the benefits of the regulation, which may include among others, the health and welfare of California residents, worker safety and the State's environment: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are the benefits the result of: ☐ specific statutory requirements, or ☐ goals developed by the agency based on broad statutory authority?

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the total statewide benefits from this regulation over its lifetime? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

4. Briefly describe any expansion of businesses currently doing business within the State of California that would result from this regulation: \_\_\_\_\_

**D. ALTERNATIVES TO THE REGULATION** *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record. Estimation of the dollar value of benefits is not specifically required by rulemaking law, but encouraged.*

1. List alternatives considered and describe them below. If no alternatives were considered, explain why not: \_\_\_\_\_

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

**ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

2. Summarize the total statewide costs and benefits from this regulation and each alternative considered:

Regulation: Benefit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative 1: Benefit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative 2: Benefit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. Briefly discuss any quantification issues that are relevant to a comparison of estimated costs and benefits for this regulation or alternatives: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_4. Rulemaking law requires agencies to consider performance standards as an alternative, if a regulation mandates the use of specific technologies or equipment, or prescribes specific actions or procedures. Were performance standards considered to lower compliance costs? ☐ YES ☐ NOExplain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_**E. MAJOR REGULATIONS** *Include calculations and assumptions in the rulemaking record.****California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) boards, offices and departments are required to submit the following (per Health and Safety Code section 57005). Otherwise, skip to E4.***1. Will the estimated costs of this regulation to California business enterprises **exceed \$10 million**? ☐ YES ☐ NO***If YES, complete E2. and E3******If NO, skip to E4***

2. Briefly describe each alternative, or combination of alternatives, for which a cost-effectiveness analysis was performed:

Alternative 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative 2: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Attach additional pages for other alternatives)*

3. For the regulation, and each alternative just described, enter the estimated total cost and overall cost-effectiveness ratio:

Regulation: Total Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative 1: Total Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Alternative 2: Total Cost \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cost-effectiveness ratio: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

4. Will the regulation subject to OAL review have an estimated economic impact to business enterprises and individuals located in or doing business in California exceeding \$50 million in any 12-month period between the date the major regulation is estimated to be filed with the Secretary of State through 12 months after the major regulation is estimated to be fully implemented?

☐ YES ☐ NO*If YES, agencies are required to submit a [Standardized Regulatory Impact Assessment \(SRIA\)](#) as specified in Government Code Section 11346.3(c) and to include the SRIA in the Initial Statement of Reasons.*

5. Briefly describe the following:

The increase or decrease of investment in the State: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_The incentive for innovation in products, materials or processes: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_The benefits of the regulations, including, but not limited to, benefits to the health, safety, and welfare of California residents, worker safety, and the state's environment and quality of life, among any other benefits identified by the agency: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT****A. FISCAL EFFECT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 6 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*

- ☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year which are reimbursable by the State. (Approximate)  
(Pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution and Sections 17500 et seq. of the Government Code).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ a. Funding provided in \_\_\_\_\_  
Budget Act of \_\_\_\_\_ or Chapter \_\_\_\_\_, Statutes of \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ b. Funding will be requested in the Governor's Budget Act of \_\_\_\_\_  
Fiscal Year: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ 2. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year which are NOT reimbursable by the State. (Approximate)  
(Pursuant to Section 6 of Article XIII B of the California Constitution and Sections 17500 et seq. of the Government Code).

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Check reason(s) this regulation is not reimbursable and provide the appropriate information:*

- ☐ a. Implements the Federal mandate contained in \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ b. Implements the court mandate set forth by the \_\_\_\_\_ Court.

Case of: \_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ c. Implements a mandate of the people of this State expressed in their approval of Proposition No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Election: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ d. Issued only in response to a specific request from affected local entity(s).

Local entity(s) affected: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ e. Will be fully financed from the fees, revenue, etc. from: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized by Section: \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ Code;

- ☐ f. Provides for savings to each affected unit of local government which will, at a minimum, offset any additional costs to each;

- ☐ g. Creates, eliminates, or changes the penalty for a new crime or infraction contained in \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ 3. Annual Savings. (approximate)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ 4. No additional costs or savings. This regulation makes only technical, non-substantive or clarifying changes to current law regulations.

- ☒ 5. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any local entity or program.

- ☐ 6. Other. Explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**ECONOMIC AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(REGULATIONS AND ORDERS)**

STD. 399 (Rev. 10/2019)

**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT (CONTINUED)****B. FISCAL EFFECT ON STATE GOVERNMENT** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 4 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*It is anticipated that State agencies will:*☐ a. Absorb these additional costs within their existing budgets and resources.☐ b. Increase the currently authorized budget level for the \_\_\_\_\_ Fiscal Year☐ 2. Savings in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 3. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any State agency or program.☒ 4. Other. Explain The tag limit is increasing by 0-28 for the 2026-2027 season, which will bring in up to \$23,209.25 in additional revenue, as well as a potential increase in fundraising tag revenue, see addendum.**C. FISCAL EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDING OF STATE PROGRAMS** *Indicate appropriate boxes 1 through 4 and attach calculations and assumptions of fiscal impact for the current year and two subsequent Fiscal Years.*☐ 1. Additional expenditures in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 2. Savings in the current State Fiscal Year. (Approximate)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

☒ 3. No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any federally funded State agency or program.☐ 4. Other. Explain \_\_\_\_\_

FISCAL OFFICER SIGNATURE

DATE

*The signature attests that the agency has completed the STD. 399 according to the instructions in SAM sections 6601-6616, and understands the impacts of the proposed rulemaking. State boards, offices, or departments not under an Agency Secretary must have the form signed by the highest ranking official in the organization.*

AGENCY SECRETARY

DATE

*Finance approval and signature is required when SAM sections 6601-6616 require completion of Fiscal Impact Statement in the STD. 399.*

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE PROGRAM BUDGET MANAGER

DATE



**STD. 399 Addendum**  
**Amend Section 362**  
**Title 14, California Code of Regulations**  
**Re: Nelson Bighorn Sheep**

### **Proposed Regulations**

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) recommends that the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) amend Section 362 of Title 14, California Code of Regulations, to add three new hunt zones in San Bernardino County, add tag quotas for the new hunt zones, modify tag quotas for existing hunt zones, and identify new zones for the single zone fundraising tags. Some non-substantive edits are also proposed.

### **Background**

Periodic adjustments of tag quotas in response to dynamic environmental and biological conditions are necessary to maintain sustainable populations of Nelson bighorn sheep and hunt opportunities, as well as keeping with mandates and management recommendations. Statutory requirements and Commission procedures lead to the need for the Commission to receive proposed changes to existing regulations and to initiate the rulemaking process prior to the Department completing bighorn sheep surveys and analyses in Spring 2026), in order for any regulation changes to be effective for the next hunting seasons; thus, a range of numbers are proposed for bighorn sheep tags.

The Department's goal is to increase bighorn sheep hunting opportunities where feasible and compatible with population objectives, in which case specific recommendations for tag changes within the identified ranges will be proposed to the Commission in April 2026.

The total net number of tags (new hunting zones bolded and underlined in the table below) are proposed to increase from the previous year (see Table 1), so no adverse economic impacts to individuals or to businesses that support Nelson bighorn sheep hunts are anticipated from a loss of hunting opportunities. The proposed increase in hunt quotas by up to 28 additional tags is anticipated to add to the demand for goods or services related to bighorn sheep hunting. If greater numbers of hunters visit the areas in the state with increased opportunities, businesses that provide goods and services to bighorn sheep hunters could benefit from small increases in sales for that license year..

**Table 1: Proposed Nelson Bighorn Sheep Tags by Hunt Zone**

<b><i>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</i></b>	<b><i>Current Tags</i></b>	<b><i>Proposed Tags</i></b>
Zone 1 -- Marble/Clipper Mountains	1	0-3
Zone 2 -- Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains	3	0-4
Zone 3 -- Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	4	0-4
Zone 4 -- Orocopia Mountains	1	0-2

<b><i>Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones</i></b>	<b><i>Current Tags</i></b>	<b><i>Proposed Tags</i></b>
Zone 5 -- San Geronio Wilderness	1	0-3
Zone 6 -- Sheep Hole Mountains	1	0-2
Zone 7 (Period 1) -- White Mountains	3	0-4
Zone 7 (Period 2) -- White Mountains	2	0-4
Zone 8 -- South Bristol Mountains	1	0-3
Zone 9 -- Cady Mountains	2	0-4
Zone 10 (Period 1) -- Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	0-6
Zone 10 (Period 2) -- Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	0-6
<b><u>Zone 11 -- Granite and North Bristol Mountains</u></b>	--	0-3
<b><u>Zone 12 -- Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains</u></b>	--	0-3
<b><u>Zone 13 -- Castle Mountains and Piute Range</u></b>	--	0-4
Open Zone Fundraising Tag	1	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 1: Zone 10	1	1
Single Zone Fundraising Tag 2: Zone 1-13	1	1
Total:	30	3-58

## **Economic Impact Statement**

### ***Section A. Estimated Private Sector Cost Impacts***

**Question 1.** Answer h. None of the above.

No new private sector costs are necessarily incurred with the proposed bighorn sheep regulatory amendments. 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 because the proposed amendments will set hunting quotas in specific areas throughout the state without imposing new private sector costs. The net increase in

bighorn sheep hunting opportunities is expected to have no changes to individual or business fees, equipment, and reporting requirements.

## **Fiscal Impact Statement**

### ***Section A. Fiscal Effect on Local Government***

**Answer 5:** No fiscal impact exists as the regulation does not affect any local entity or program.

### ***Section B. Fiscal Effect on State Government***

**Answer 4.** Other.

Department workload is projected to be unchanged from currently existing budgets and resources, as the monitoring required for expansion of the bighorn sheep hunt into Zones 11, 12, and 13 is expected to be folded into the existing budget and enforcement duties. However, Department revenue will potentially increase with a proposed increased number of available bighorn sheep tags. If up to 28 more bighorn sheep tags become available from the 30 tags (baseline), at the 2026 price of \$558.50 for a resident and \$2,072.75 for a non-resident, the projected increase in revenue in 2026-2027 could be up to \$23,209.25 (assuming an increase of 23 resident tags and 5 non-resident tag sold due to non-resident tags being limited to 10% of tags issued out of the potential increase to 58 total tags).

Additionally, the expansion of the hunting zones beyond zones 2 and 10 for one of the three fundraising tags may renew interest in the auction from hunters. While it is difficult to predict the amount of revenue that this will generate, historically the Department has earned an average of approximately \$321,736 from the annual fundraising auction, and presumably the Department would raise a similar amount of revenue from the interest in accessing novel hunt zones. Revenue from the fundraising from 2021-2025 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: CDFW Bighorn Sheep Fundraising Tag Revenue

Year	Revenue
2021	\$285,561.80
2022	\$321,994.26
2023	\$301,101.25
2024	\$230,021.75
2025	\$470,000.00
Average	\$321,735.81

### ***Section C. Fiscal Effect on Federal Funding of State Programs***

**Answer 3:** No fiscal impact exists. This regulation does not affect any federally funded State agency or program.





# DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP HUNTING: PROPOSALS FOR REGULATORY CHANGE

Presentation to the California Fish and Game Commission  
December 10, 2025

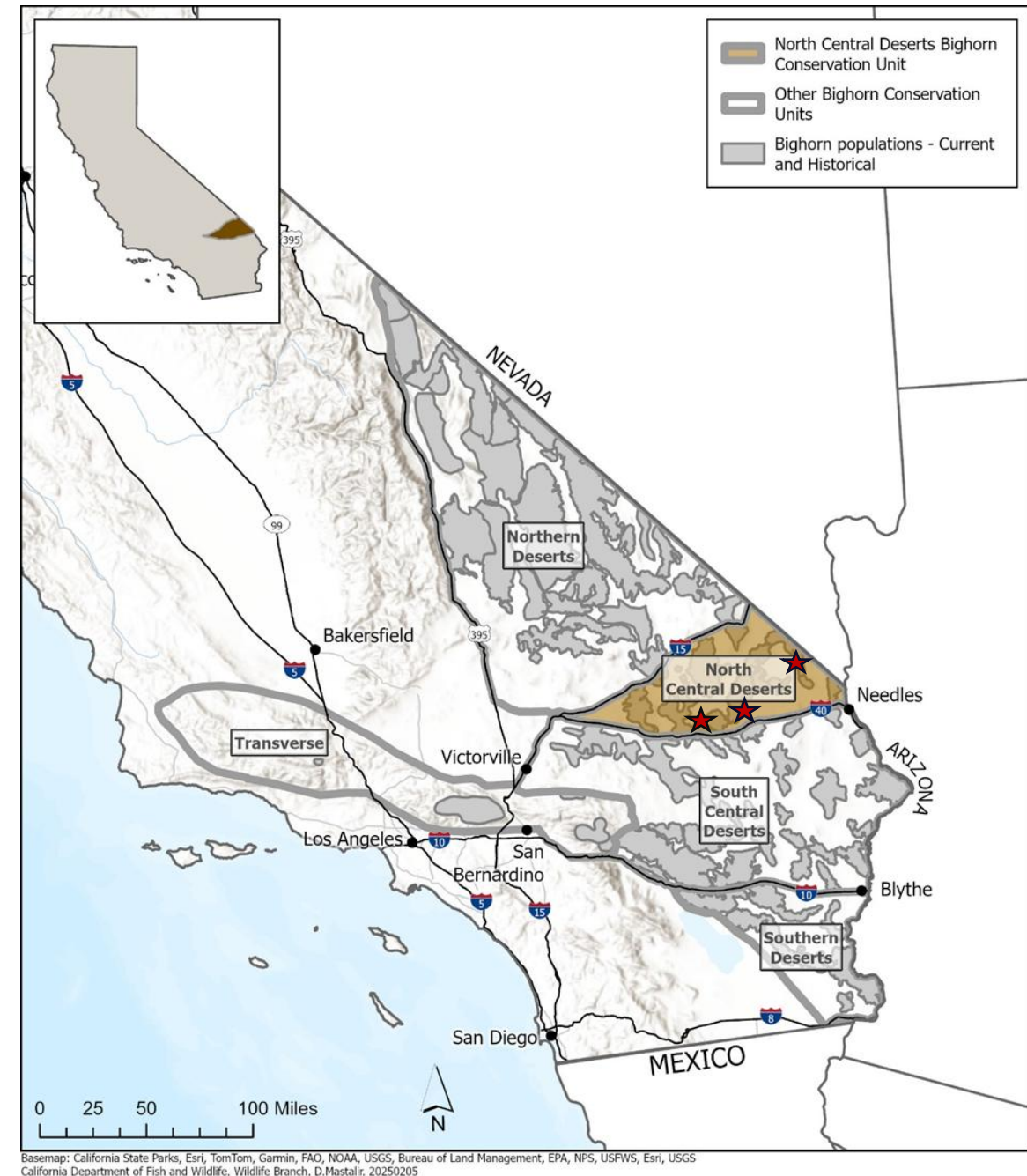
Paige Prentice, Statewide Bighorn Sheep Coordinator

Photo Credit: CDFW



# New Hunt Zones

- Propose to add three zones:
  - Zone 11: Granite and North Bristol Mountains
  - Zone 12: Providence, Wood, and Hackberry Mountains
  - Zone 13: Castle Mountains and Piute Range
- Located in NCD BCU, in and around Mojave National Preserve



# Reallocate Single Zone Fundraising Tags



Photo Credit: CDFW

- Reallocate one of the Single Zone Fundraising Tags (SZFT)
- Maximize fundraising potential while maintaining general tag opportunity
- Current:
  - SZFT 1: Zone 10 (keep)
  - SZFT 2: Zone 2 (change)

# Modify General Drawing Tag Quotas

Nelson Bighorn Sheep Hunt Zones	2025 Tag Allocation	2026 Proposed Tag Allocation
Zone 1 Marble/Clipper Mountains	1	[0-3]
Zone 2 Kelso Peak/Old Dad Mountains	3	[0-4]
Zone 3 Clark/Kingston Mountain Ranges	4	[0-4]
Zone 4 Orocopia Mountains	1	[0-2]
Zone 5 San Gorgonio Wilderness	1	[0-3]
Zone 6 Sheep Hole Mountains	1	[0-2]
Zone 7 (Period 1) – White Mountains	3	[0-4]
Zone 7 (Period 2) – White Mountains	2	[0-4]
Zone 8 South Bristol Mountains	1	[0-3]
Zone 9 Cady Mountains	2	[0-4]
Zone 10 (Period 1) – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	[0-6]
Zone 10 (Period 2) – Newberry, Rodman, Ord Mountains	4	[0-6]
Zone 11 Granite and North Bristol Mountains	--	[0-3]
Zone 12 Providence, Woods, and Hackberry Mountains	--	[0-3]
Zone 13 Castle Mountains and Piute Range	--	[0-4]
Total	27	[0-55]

Pending final analysis of survey data, including population estimates, recruitment rates.





# Questions | Contact

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Paige Prentice, Statewide Bighorn Sheep Coordinator  
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