

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
DECISION NOTE**

Date: March 2, 2007
Date of previous note:
File:
CLIFF/tracking #: 91864.

- I. PREPARED FOR: Minister Barry Penner**
- II. ISSUE: Final Negotiations and Implementation of the Harvest Allocation Policy**
- III. RECOMMENDATION OPTION**

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IV. BACKGROUND:

After more than two years of consultation with stakeholders, a new Harvest Allocation Policy and Procedure was completed in November 2006. The new procedure outlines a more transparent and objective approach to allocation decisions, and ideally, will lead to more achievable and efficient outcomes.

In spite of the improvements made to government policy on this issue, the BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF) has continued to lobby for additional changes to the policy and procedure. As a result, several small changes have been made to the November 2006 version of the documents. One key issue has, however, created a stalemate between Ministry staff and the BCWF: the allocation of stone's sheep in Regions 6 and 7B.

These regions are the only two in the province, and among the only world-wide, to offer hunters the unique opportunity of hunting a stone's sheep. Indeed, harvesting a stone's sheep (a sub-species of thinhorn sheep) is one of the requirements for hunters to complete the Grand Slam of North American Wild Sheep, a highly prized honour amongst trophy hunters. Stone's sheep allocations are shared between resident hunters and guide outfitters, with the harvest objective currently being 60/40 and 50/50 for residents and non-residents in Regions 6 and 7B respectively.

V. DISCUSSION:

Applying the new Harvest Allocation Procedure suggests the allocation shares should shift to 55/45 for Region 6 and 57/43 for Region 7B. Although a thorough analysis has not yet been completed for Region 6¹, this allocation split is expected to lead to an annual economic loss of \$1.1 million for guides in Region 7B, when compared to current harvest levels:

- Since 2004, guides in Region 7B have had a collective quota of 137/year for thinhorn sheep.
- Although guides' quotas will only be reduced by 20% during the transition period (2007-11), they will be further reduced to 78/year in 2012, assuming the Annual Allowable Harvest and calculated split of 57/43 stays constant.
- The outcome of the reallocation in 2012 will be approximately 40 fewer guided hunts in region 7B.
- Based on the estimated reduction of guided hunts (clients) the Fish and Wildlife Branch estimates an economic loss to the guide industry of 1.1 million dollars annually.

¹ Stone's sheep in Region 6 will not be re-allocated until 2008 and as a result, a full evaluation of the policy implications has not yet been completed.

However, the BCWF is adamant that a minimum share of 60% for resident hunters be applied to all grizzly bear, goat, and sheep hunts, despite the potential impacts on the guiding industry. In their view, this change would better reflect resident hunters' priority to the wildlife resource province-wide. At this stage

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VI. OPTIONS:

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VII. RECOMMENDATION OPTION: s.13

Approved by Chris Trumpy
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Barry Penner, Minister

April 2, 2007
Date

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MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

INFORMATION NOTE

Date: March 23, 2010

File: 0280-20

CLIFF/tracking #: 124453

- I. PREPARED FOR:** The Honourable Barry Penner, Minister of Environment in preparation of a March 25, 2010 meeting with the Guide Outfitters Association of BC (GOABC).
- II. ISSUE:** GOABC have requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss the Allocation Policy, reducing limited entry hunts, and release of grizzly bear kill location data.
- III. BACKGROUND:**
- The Guide Outfitters Association of British Columbia (GOABC) has recently expressed a number of concerns with current government direction. These include: (1) the decision to fully implement the allocation policy in 2012 which they believe will have unintended consequences to some guide outfitters; (2) a direction to reduce the number of limited entry hunts which they believe will impact quality hunting opportunities for their clients; and, (3) the decision to release grizzly bear kill location data to environmental groups.
 - The GOABC has stated that they support the Allocation Policy. Notwithstanding, GOABC believes there will be numerous unintended consequences when the Allocation policy is fully implemented in 2010. These consequences are starting to become apparent to the industry as both the Ministry and guide outfitters start to forecast guide outfitter quotas in 2010. Numerous guide outfitters are expected to receive a substantial drop in their quota in 2012.
 - The Ministry has established a goal to reduce the number of limited entry hunts (LEH), by converting LEH where there is not a conservation concern to general open seasons (GOS).

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The GOABC is concerned as LEH caps the amount of resident hunting activity, and helps to ensure that a quality product (trophy) is available for their clients.
 - In 2004, the Raincoast Conservation Society issued an FOI request for the release of detailed kill location data for grizzly bears. This information has been considered to be confidential, as most hunters do not wish to divulge the exact location where they harvested an animal. The FOI request went to the Court of Appeals for a decision, and the Commissioner's order was for the Ministry to release the information. In 2009, the David Suzuki Foundation requested a complete list of all known kill locations for grizzly bears in British Columbia. The information was released and both guide outfitters and resident hunters remain very concerned with this action.

IV. DISCUSSION:

- With regard to the allocation policy, the Ministry will work closely with GOABC to provide them with more certainty on the outcomes of their allocations in 2012. This will include holding regional workshops with guide-outfitters to address individual guide-outfitter concerns. While the guide outfitting industry will remain viable under the Allocation Policy, some guides will be impacted to a much greater degree than others, and some operators with small guiding territories may cease to remain viable.
- The Ministry is taking a cautious approach with reducing LEH hunts. In 2010-11, the number of hunts was reduced by 8 per cent, rather than 15 per cent. While the Ministry will continue to work to reduce the number of LEH hunts over the next four years, these hunts will not be removed if they are required to be on LEH for conservation reasons.
- While the Ministry lost the court challenge to not release grizzly bear kill location data, we will continue to show discretion in releasing this information, and will work to establish data sharing agreements. We will continue to manage the grizzly bear harvest based on science, and will continue to be transparent in order to demonstrate this. We are also considering only recording kill location data by geographic area, not by Universal Transverse Mercator grid location. This could reduce the guide outfitter concerns. However, before that decision is made, we need to be sure that the data will continue to be sufficiently accurate and precise for management purposes.

V. MINISTRY POSITION:

The Ministry will continue to work closely with the GOABC to resolve these issues.

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