



THE WILDLIFE SOCIETY

ALASKA CHAPTER

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society strives to enhance the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve biological diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife.



29 October 2020

Animal Health: Notice of Proposed Revisions to Animal Importation, Animal Testing, and Disease Reporting (18 AAC 36)

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) offers the following comments on the Notice of Proposed Revisions to Animal Importation, Animal Testing, and Disease Reporting (18 AAC 36).

The Alaska Chapter of The Wildlife Society has about 200 members representing wildlife scientists and resource managers, including those working for state and federal agencies, Native organizations, universities, non-profit groups, and consulting biologists. As current president of the Alaska Chapter representing all of these professionals, I would like to comment on the proposed regulation change requiring that domestic sheep and goats be tested for, and be clear of, *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (*Movi*) prior to import.

Our group has long been concerned about the possibility of this disease and others affecting wild populations of sheep and goats in Alaska. The *Movi* pathogen, like others, could quickly move through an immunologically naïve population and has the potential to result in catastrophic mortality. Since healthy wildlife populations available for both hunting and non-consumptive uses are integral to the spirit and economy of Alaska, we strongly support this proposed regulation.

In particular, we urge you to require *Movi* testing of all domestic sheep and goats, regardless of age, prior to import into Alaska, and that the testing be conducted through accredited diagnostic laboratories. Further, we request that *Movi* be added to the Reportable Disease List, requiring same-day reporting of positive test results.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kim Jochum, PhD
President, Alaska Chapter of the Wildlife Society