

David Kelleyhouse

State Veterinarian
Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Dear Sirs:

As a former director of the Division of Wildlife Conservation, I must comment on the new proposed testing requirements for domestic sheep and goats to protect populations of wild Dall sheep, mountain goats and muskox in Alaska from *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* (Movi).

I strongly support testing all domestic sheep and goat for Movi prior to importation into Alaska. Exempting young sheep and goats under 2 months old from testing is not acceptable because young sheep and goats can carry and transmit Movi just like adults.

Once introduced into wildlife populations diseases can devastate those populations and are nearly impossible to eradicate. The best wildlife disease control is to prevent introduction in the first place. This is why I consistently opposed game farming in Alaska.

Mandatory testing of all domestic sheep and goats, regardless of age, is the best way to protect Alaska's valuable wildlife populations from Movi. The long-term economic value of wild sheep, goat and muskox populations far exceeds the minimal value of domestic sheep and goat husbandry in Alaska.

Sincerely,

David G. Kelleyhouse
Former director
Division of Wildlife Conservation
State of Alaska