

**From:** [Donna Claus](#)  
**To:** [Miller, Shannon D \(DEC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae  
**Date:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 8:37:00 PM

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To whom it may concern regarding regulations for domestic sheep and goats:

We live in the Wrangell St. Elias National Park. We take recreational guests out exploring this great park and one of their joys is seeing the Dall Sheep and mountain goats that surround us along with all the other wild animals. The sheep and goats are special to the wild places. They live in some of the most beautiful landscapes of Alaska and their majestic stances in these places cannot be quantified. We can see sheep and goats right from our house and there is so much joy for all to see the seasons of life lived. The lambs and kids in the spring, white on green all summer and then the battles in late fall that we can hear and see. There is a family of goats that lives among the sheep above us. Their antics are unbelievable in all seasons. Now it is winter, the ground all around us is white and they have become camouflaged but we still know they are there. Just knowing the sheep and goats are there is enough.

We are also hunting guides specialising in sheep and goats as concessionaires in our park. We take only a few hunters per year. The stories and joys these hunters have out in this wilderness watching the animals and then seeing one on their walls at home everyday, reminding them of this magnificent place cannot be calculated.

We have hunted musk ox on Nunivak Island several times. Seeing them shaking their heads with the wind whipping their long hair around and witnessing their fights and their defensive circles are a storybook tale. To realise how long they have been on the landscape of the northern lands makes one feel the ages fall away.

I support the new regulation that is proposed to require domestic sheep and goats be tested for and clear of the Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae before they can be imported no matter their age at the time of testing and import. The testing should be done through AAVLD accredited diagnostic laboratories. Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae should be added to the Reportable Disease listing with same day reporting to the proper authorities.

This is a not something we can put off. There is plenty of evidence that shows the devastating effects of this pathogen on groups of sheep, goats and musk oxen in other locales. Let's be ahead of the curve for a change. I understand why domestic breeders do not want this regulation, it is one more thing in a whole list of things to do and the costs for testing will have to be borne by them. BUT, those are not strong enough reasons to put the wild sheep, goats and musk oxen in the cross hairs of this disgusting disease.

Please, please protect these animals. Let's not squander this chance. Please support the regulating of domestic sheep and goats in relation to Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae.

Thank you for your time and attention to this problem.

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