

Additions to Dall's Sheep Working Hypotheses

WAYNE E. HEIMER,¹ 1098 Chena Pump Road, Fairbanks, AK 99709, USA

ABSTRACT In 1999, the Second North American Wild Sheep Conference focused on producing working management hypotheses for Rocky Mountain bighorns (*Ovis canadensis*), California bighorns (*Ovis canadensis californiana*), desert bighorns (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*), and a generalized thinhorn sheep. Additionally, these hypotheses predicted the probable responses of sheep to anticipated challenges. The idea was to help planners or new managers grasp the rudiments of wild sheep management. As conceived, the working management hypotheses were to be predictive statements that integrated available biological knowledge with management experience and summaries of the known aspects of wild sheep species biology. These summaries focused on distribution, abundance, and population strategy; predation and harvest management; disease; parasites; and disturbance. Integral to the usefulness of these documents as working management hypotheses was the idea that they would be updated as new knowledge and experience increased over time. Developments in Dall's sheep (*Ovis dalli*) management in Alaska since 1999 invite a contemporary reevaluation of the Dall's sheep working management hypotheses there. Knowledge of the existing elements is examined and updated. Additionally, the importance of putative genetic impacts of harvest management and human involvement in management allocation in Alaska is specifically discussed.

Biennial Symposium of the Northern Wild Sheep and Goat Council 19:80; 2014

KEY WORDS Alaska, bighorn sheep, Dall's sheep, genetics, harvest management, *Ovis dalli*, *Ovis canadensis*, thinhorn sheep.

¹ E-mail: weheimer@alaska.net