

# **BARBARY SHEEP, ORYX, AND PERSIAN IBEX PROPOSED RULE CHANGE SUMMARY (1/9/2026)**

## **SPECIES BIOLOGY**

Exotic species in New Mexico are managed using species-specific strategies based on biological considerations, management objectives, and land-use constraints.

**Ibex** are managed with the objective of maintaining a high-quality, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to harvest mature males. The Department also seeks to keep ibex geographically isolated to the Florida Mountains. Historically, ibex license numbers have fluctuated widely. The Department is working to move away from these large swings toward a more stable population size and more consistent annual license numbers. Ibex populations are monitored through aerial surveys.

**Barbary sheep** are managed to provide sustainable hunting opportunities in southeastern New Mexico. The Department is not managing for population expansion outside of these areas; therefore, licenses are offered over the counter. Population trends for barbary sheep are monitored primarily through hunter harvest index data.

**Oryx** are managed for sustainable hunting opportunities on White Sands Missile Range (WSMR). The Department works closely with WSMR personnel to develop hunt structures that are compatible with the Range's primary mission as a Department of Defense military installation. Oryx hunts on WSMR are unique and most either sex oryx hunts on range are offered as once-in-a-lifetime opportunities. Off the Range, the Department offers more liberal oryx hunting opportunities with longer seasons.

## **PROPOSED CHANGES TO EXOTICS HUNTING**

For all over-the-counter (OTC) license sales the Department is considering requiring hunters who wish to use the electronic tagging (e-tag) option to purchase their license before the start of the hunt. Once a hunt has started the selection of an e-tag option would not be available at the time of license purchase and hunters licenses would need to be obtained in person from a qualified license vendor.

### *Persian ibex*

- Reduce license numbers in response to declines in the ibex population.
- Maintain a limited number of female/immature (F/IM) licenses to allow for population growth under a monitored management framework.
  - o The framework being considered would include “up to” numbers in rule, recognizing that zero F/IM licenses may be recommended in some years.
- Adjust some hunt dates to align with calendar shifts.

### *Oryx*

- Consider increasing the number of off-range licenses, as harvest success rates for off-range oryx are high.
- Evaluate a potential “ranch registration” process for OTC private-land oryx licenses, similar to the current registration process used for private land elk hunting in Secondary Management Zones.

***Barbary sheep***

- Evaluate harvest success and management strategy for female/immature (F/IM) Barbary sheep hunts on McGregor Range.
- Adjust hunt dates to align with calendar shifts.

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

The Department continues to receive public comment. If you would like to comment on the proposals, please send an email to: [DGF-Exotics-Rule@state.nm.us](mailto:DGF-Exotics-Rule@state.nm.us)