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**TOHONO O'ODHAM LEGISLATIVE  
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## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

**TO:** Nation's Members  
Nation's Districts  
Executive Branch  
Judicial Branch  
Members of the Public

**FROM:** /s/ Marlakay Henry, Chairwoman  
Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee  
[Marlakay.Henry@tonation-nsn.gov](mailto:Marlakay.Henry@tonation-nsn.gov)

**CC:** Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee  
Domestic Affairs Committee  
Tohono O'odham Legislative Council Representatives

**DATE:** April 26, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Bighorn Sheep Hunting on Nation's Lands by Nation's Members

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Hunting is an important cultural practice for many O'odham families. Traditional O'odham teachings have taught us to treat all living things with respect and sensitivity, and that as hunters, we need to respect the desert and take only what is necessary to provide for our families. Trophy and sport hunting are contrary to these teachings. Overhunting damages our resources.

Unfortunately, the Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee recently received an image showing four bighorn sheep that allegedly were taken from a single herd by two Nation's members. It is essential that bighorn sheep hunting on the Nation's lands be sustainable. Removing too many individual animals from a single herd erodes the herd's health and population, and could ultimately result in the herd's collapse.

The Nation's Constitution vests the Legislative Council with the authority "to manage, protect, preserve and regulate the use of the property, wildlife, land, air and natural resources (including surface and ground waters) of the Tohono O'odham Nation." (Constitution, Article VI, Section 1(i)(2).) The Council has not enacted laws regulating bighorn sheep hunting by members on Nation's lands because of an understanding that members will be respectful of traditional teachings when they hunt. If hunters disregard those teachings, it may become necessary for the Council to enact laws regulating bighorn sheep hunting on Nation's lands.

Finally, as a reminder, it is currently illegal for nonmembers to hunt bighorn sheep or other game on the Nation's lands.