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# Donald Trump Jr.'s Hunting Of Endangered Mongolian Sheep Under Scrutiny

By [Rachel Sandler](#) Forbes Staff

**Topline:** Donald Trump Jr.'s long and controversial history of big-game hunting has suddenly come under intense scrutiny, as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confirmed it is reviewing a complaint by an environmental group following reports he may have illegally hunted an endangered sheep in Mongolia and possibly imported parts of the animal back to the United States.

- The agency is reviewing claims that first surfaced in a *ProPublica* [article](#) last week alleging that Trump Jr. violated Mongolian law by killing argali sheep without proper permits on a hunting trip earlier this year.
  - The Center for Biological Diversity, a conservation group, called on the agency in a [letter](#) to investigate whether Trump Jr. imported argali parts back into the country, which would run afoul of U.S. law. (The *ProPublica* story reported that it was unclear what happened to the animal after the trip.)
  - In a [statement](#) to *Roll Call*, a spokesperson for Trump Jr. denied any wrongdoing, saying he bought the hunting trip at a National Rifle Association raffle in 2015, before his father launched his run for president. The spokesperson added that all permitting for the trip was handled by a third-party hunting group.
  - "Mr. Trump paid for his trip to Mongolia on his own, flew commercial and timely applied and secured all required permits through a third party outfitter—as is standard in the industry," the spokesperson continued.
  - Trump Jr. was eventually granted permits after the hunting trip, but the process is coming under scrutiny because Trump Jr. appeared to have gotten special treatment by the Mongolian government. Complicating matters, the *Palm Beach Post* [reported](#) last week that both the Mongolian ambassador to the U.S. and Trump Jr. were in Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort before the hunting trip.

**Key background:** Trump Jr. has a long history of hunting for sport and [defending the](#) practice. He was a frequent target of animal rights activists during the 2016 presidential campaign after [photos](#) of him and his brother, Eric, posing with big-game hunting trophies leaked in 2012 went viral. He has been photographed with a dead leopard, an elephant's tail and the body of large elk.

**What's next:** In a statement to *Forbes*, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledged it received the Center for Biological Diversity letter and was "reviewing" the matter. The agency reviews all letters that it receives, and it did not say in the statement that it launched an official investigation.