



California Wild Sheep

Summer 2015



IN THIS ISSUE

From the Editor	3
President's Message	5
Patience, Persistence, and	
Candy Bars	6
Not a "Bad Hunt" in Asia	18
Photos from the Field	23
A Hunt of a Lifetime	25
2014 in Review	29
So You Want To Be a	
Sheep Hunter	32

Russ Renner
Desert Bighorn Ram
Clark / Kingstons
Dry Creek Outfitters, 175"



CONTACT: DONALD C. MARTIN 310-766-3921



From the Editor's Desk

I hope you enjoy this issue. It includes some great hunting stories, more from DFW than we've received in a good while, fun humor, a LOT about the fun time we had at our annual fundraiser, more interesting desert insights from Carlos, an article from Dick Weaver, the original CA Mr. Sheep, AND MORE!

Your feedback, ideas, articles & requests are always welcome.
Best way to reach me is email: mike.borel@contextnet.com.
Due date for input to the 3Q15 issue is August 21.



RICHARD'S RAMBLINGS

by Richard Weaver

I am very pleased that Carlos Gallinger has been writing articles for our newsletters. He is a careful observer, with a very keen eye and a writing style that is a pleasure to read. I envy his ability to spend time visiting, studying and documenting our diverse desert environments. He recently wrote an article entitled "A Petroglyph is worth 1000 words (or 1145 words)" that described a petroglyph depicting an ancient hunter killing a bighorn sheep. His interpretation of this petroglyph is conjecture of course, but it is also very believable and could quite possibly even be correct. What I believe about these ancient hunters and their use of blinds and short bows is obviously conjecture as well and can not be proven anymore than Mr. Gallingers interpretation of that particular glyph. However, I think I may very well be the last person that can tell this particular story, and for the record, my information is third hand.

Early in my career, my job duties included finding and documenting water sources located in remote areas of the Mojave Desert and improving those sites if needed. Most of these sites were not mapped and were very difficult to access. During this time, I observed several ancient hunting blinds located near remote water sources. The first one was in the Coso Mountain Range, located in Inyo County California, just north of the Navy range site. This was in the early 1950's and I described the water source and blind I had seen to the Fish and Game Local Unit Manager that was assigned to that area. His story to me was based upon a relationship he had formed with a Native American from that area. That relationship was very strong, lasted many years and he indicated to me that he believed every word he had been told.

The story told by his Native American friend had been told to him by his grandfather and included tales of hunting from blinds constructed of small piles of flat rock. The Native Americans used a short bow and a small arrow that could be described as similar to a dart. This is similar to the bow described in Mr. Gallinger's article. They would hide in the blinds and when the game would come to the water source to drink, they would shoot them with the darts. These projectiles were first steeped in a brew made from a collection of native desert plants, designed to immobilize the animal. Once the animal was hit, the hunters would not pursue them, but would merely wait in the blind until enough time had passed for the "poisoned dart" to take effect. After this, they would track the game and would eventually come upon the sleeping animal. Once the game had been located, a "blessing ceremony" would be conducted prior to harvesting the animal.

The Native American fellow said that his grandfather had wanted to teach him about this type of hunting and show him the specific desert plants required to make the brew. His interests at the time, however, were breaking horses and earning money working on a ranch and so the knowledge was not passed on to him. It has always made me wonder what other information may have been lost as well. It wasn't until about 1960 that we developed a weapon capable of shooting a syringe at a bighorn and even later before an effective chemical compound was developed that would immobilize such an animal. And we think we are so damned smart...

Board of Directors

Officers

President

Paul A. Brisso (2015)

Northern California Vice President

Adam Casagrande (2015)

Southern California Vice President

Donald C. Martin (2015)

Vice President, Operations

Mike J. Borel (2016)

Secretary

Ken Crother (2015)

Treasurer

Ron Del Toro (2015)

Board of Directors

Aaron Armstrong (2016)

Vic Mancusco (2016)

Ken D. Fish (2016)

Don C. Martin (2016)

Ben Gordon (2016)

Roger L. McCosker (2016)

Bob Keagy (2015)

Don Priest (2016)

George C. Kerr (2015)

Cliff St. Martin (2016)

California Wild Sheep is published quarterly.

Please email all articles and photos to
mike.borel@contextnet.com

Photos should be high resolution and in color.
It is recommended that digital photos be sent by email.
Please include photo credits and captions.

Events

2015

June 18-20 WSF Chapter & Affiliates Meeting in British Columbia

August 21 Due date for articles for 3Q2014 CAWSF Newsletter

Late October DBH Hunter Orientation in Sacramento, exact date TBD

November 20 Sheep Summit XII in Ontario

November 20 Due date for articles for 4Q2014 CAWSF Newsletter

2016

January 19-22 SHOT Show, Las Vegas

January 20-23 WSF Convention Reno, Peppermill

January 21-24 ISE Show - Sacramento

January 23 Youth Wildlife Conservation Experience, Reno Sparks Convention Center/Mt Rose Ballroom

January 27-30 GSCO Convention, Las Vegas, Riviera

February 3-6 SCI Convention, Las Vegas

February 10-14 WHCE - Salt Lake City

February 20 Due date for articles for 1Q2015 CAWSF Newsletter

March 18 Midwest Chapter WSF Fundraiser, Minneapolis, MN

April 29 Sheep Summit XVIII in Rancho Cordova

April 30 CA WSF Fundraiser/Banquet in Rancho Cordova at Marriott

President's Letter

Dear CA Wild Sheep Members and Friends:

A couple of events the weekend of our recent annual banquet and fundraiser had me contemplating the future of wild sheep conservation and hunting even more than usual.

We bid on a youth Blacktail deer hunt donated by Arrow 5 Outfitters for some friends at the auction. Unfortunately, the hunt went for a bit more than our friends wanted to spend. Our friends do not hunt. Their son, a sophomore in high school, is very, very bright (straight A student in an AP program), participates in many school and outside activities, and has an avid interest in hunting. He took a hunter's safety course last year. Some friends had promised to take him hunting last fall. He bought a license and tag but the invitation to hunt never came. We have made it our goal to do everything we can to get him a hunting experience—and hopefully a successful hunt—this fall.



We closed down Casino Night at midnight following the banquet and auction. (For those of you who attended the banquet but missed the Casino, and for those of you unable to attend the event at all, you missed a fun conclusion to the evening. Hopefully you will get another chance next year!!) A few hours later, I got an early morning hour phone call from my sister telling me our 91-year-old father had passed away.

Dad had never hunted. Like the son of our friends, I somehow had an intense interest in hunting since my pre-teen years. I think it is something just hard-wired into my DNA. Fortunately, I had friends willing to help me get started hunting after college.

Dad was always very interested in my hunts. I shared stories and photos. I shared with him not just the harvest of trophies, but of the adventure of travel, the fellowship of camps and campfires, the beautiful country, the disappointment of failed stalks and unsuccessful hunts, nasty weather, and why hunting is such an integral component of environmental and wildlife conservation. He understood and supported my passion.

If wild sheep conservation and hunting is going to survive and thrive in the future, we need to recruit, encourage and enable young hunters, especially those who do not have a ready opportunity to participate, like the son of our friends. We also need to share with our friends, family and acquaintances our love of all aspects of the hunt and why hunting is so important for conservation. There are many, many people out there who do not hunt, but like my Dad are open-minded and fair and will listen to what hunting means to us, and more importantly, why it is critical for successful conservation. Just because they do not personally hunt does not mean they are not willing and able to be a valuable source of support.

Time flies by way too fast. Best of luck in the tag draws this spring and on your hunts this fall. And it's not too early to save the date for next year's banquet—April 30, 2016.

Good Hunting!!

Paul Brisso
President, CA Wild Sheep

PATIENCE, PERSISTENCE AND CANDY BARS

by Lisa Griffiths

My first date with Tom Griffiths was at a Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) banquet in Sacramento. Most girls would not exactly think this was their "ideal date" but it actually was mine. It was one of my most cherished dates I've had with him. We had the pleasure of sharing a table with Stan and Pamela Atwood, along with Tommy's sister Debbie and brother-in-law John. Tommy has known the Atwoods for many years through hunting, but I had no idea what serious hunters we were in the company of. As Tommy left to order some drinks, I moved over to sit in the empty seat next to Pamela. She was so nice and unassuming. I was so naïve, I actually asked her if she hunted much. She had just come back from her Marco Polo hunt and shared so many interesting stories of her hunting experiences. I had so many questions for her. It was my first experience personally meeting such a serious female hunter. Tommy bid on the Alaska Governor's tag for Grizzly Bear and won it at a great price. We all bought raffle tickets for a 270 Remington gun and Pamela won the raffle. She and Stan looked at each other and she slid the winning ticket to me. I had never experienced such generosity from someone I had just met. Every time I hold that gun, it brings me back to that wonderful night. Pamela, thank you. Not just for the gun, but as a woman, for sparking that deep interest of hunting in me. At this banquet, I met such a large but intimate group of down to earth, extremely generous, fun-loving and caring people, all for the sake of conservation. I felt instantly at home.

After marrying Tommy 8/8/08, I have hunted on many occasions from Elk and Whitetail in Canada, Mule deer in Colorado as well as turkey hunting from California to New Mexico. I had also been on numerous scouting trips, including Tommy's ram hunt that he drew the California Desert sheep tag for in the White Mountains, completing his 4 North American sheep (#1433). Our brother-in-law John Cavin (#1434) and Jim Clark (#1435) also completed their 4th rams in Mexico with Nayo Balderrama with Amigo's Guides and Outfitters. I was blessed to have been along on that trip and witnessed the finale of the huge quest these band of brothers set out to accomplish together. I enjoyed all of it as much as if it were my own hunt. Year after year Tommy would say to me, "It's your turn. You should try sheep hunting". But, I always had difficulty in justifying the hunt for myself.

Nayo Balderrama is a dear friend that we consider family. Tommy has hunted with him many times for Mule deer and had been along with friends that have harvested rams, Muleys and Coues with him as well. Year after year, Nayo would ask me when I was going to sign up for my Desert sheep with him. But, as a child, I was infected with Lyme disease from a tick



bite that had gone undiagnosed for most of my life. By the time I was properly diagnosed, I was what they consider "late stage disseminated" meaning it affects my nervous system and can mimic Multiple Sclerosis and ALS. After many years on oral antibiotics and herbal therapies, I was placed on IV therapy twice a day for nearly a year. I will never be rid of it, but it can go into remission. Blessed that most people aren't outwardly aware of my health issues and that I can still enjoy doing what I love.

Let's fast forward to WSF Convention, 2014. Walking the aisles I made the same excuses to Tommy as I had with Nayo as to why I should not sign up for the hunt. We spent the day walking around looking at booths and catching up with friends. But it kept haunting me that I should sign up. I told Tommy I would meet him at the Amigo's booth. As usual, Nayo asked me the annual question of when I was going to hunt rams with him. I looked at my arm with the PICC line in it and realized we live for today and not tomorrow. I replied, "Do you have any openings this December?" With a shocked look on his face he replied in disbelief, "REALLY?????" and we booked a date that would not interfere with our work. When



Tommy got to the booth, Naylo and I were looking very guilty! None of us could believe it. I thought, what have I just done and I better get well fast.

The time went by as slow as it did waiting for Christmas as a kid. I prepared as well as I could but never felt like it would be enough. A month before we were set to go, my specialist in Redwood City, CA, was wanting me to keep the PICC line in longer. After much convincing, I was able to get the line taken out. I would never be able to put a sneak on a ram hauling my IV pole around.

We flew into Hermosillo and drove to camp, all the while reliving my previous hunts and practicing in my head what I would do if given the opportunity I was prayerful would come. We quickly got ready to do some glassing as it had already started getting too dark to hunt. As we surveyed the territory, Naylo with his eagle-like eyes spotted in the far distance a band of rams with one that stood out from the rest. We hurriedly had the spotting scope on him, but he only allowed a quick glimpse before they disappeared over the peak. Even that far away, we decided that would be the one I would hunt. I happened to be eating a candy bar for fuel at the time and dubbed him that name for the entire hunt.

After hunting him the entire day, Naylo, spotted him bedded down in the most awful conditions for harvesting. Literally, all that was visible was the white spot on his nose and the movement of his massive horns through the thick brush. It was an amazing spot by Naylo. He was bedded 200 yards away, uphill, with large rocks, cactus, fallen trees, and thick, thick brush. After getting the best possible vantage point, I held in the prone position for over 45 minutes only taking my eye off the scope long enough to watch the night catch up to us, praying he would make a move and present me with a shot. It was obvious he didn't get that big by being stupid. When he stood for that split second he was still protected by the environment and veiled in near darkness. Fearing I would not have another opportunity since this ram was rarely seen, I took what I thought would be my only chance at a shot. My bullet cleanly missed. In an instant, he was

gone. I knew this was not going to be a "canned" hunt before I signed on and now it "was game on" between me and this magnificent animal.

The next morning, with the help of the guides we found him bedded with another band of rams near the peak of a steep mountain. We made our long, tenuous climb one ridge over, only to spook a Mule deer that was bedded in an inconvenient place. The rams were alerted and over the top they went. It was frustrating but fascinating at the same time to see first-hand how truly agile these rams were. After hours of hiking and finding them again, they were about 900 yards out. We felt confident we were in the ideal location even if it required the long distance shot I had practiced so many times before. Careful they would not see us or wind us, I set up again crouching between boulders and waited patiently. Unfortunately, he never came remotely close to presenting a shot as he ran down the mountain away from us and up another, humbled again by the sheer amount of terrain those animals can cover in no time at all. We regrouped and covered a lot of territory. Shockingly, we were able to spot him at dark surrounded by more great rams. He was again, in an impossible spot to take a shot. As we waited and watched nightfall come, I realized I literally was surrounded by gorgeous rams. It felt unreal to be in the presence of these myth-like magical creatures. Any hunter would be happy to call one of these their trophy. But I wanted my dark chocolate ram. With the ram staying bedded until nearly dark again and confident my window of opportunity was narrowing greatly, I attempted a very challenging shot with him bedded 174 yards uphill and missed him by a fraction of an inch, hitting the log he was bedded behind. End of round two.

I had practiced shooting distances in different conditions and positions prior to my hunt. Even though I had missed twice, they were extremely tough shots for anyone to try. That night I shared with Tommy my concerns that this ram is so scary smart and that he was never going to present me another shot as the area we hunted was thick with brush and cactus and challenging habitat that enabled him to



grow so huge. He and Nayo both stated it was patience and persistence that would win out. Nayo had spotted him only once during the extreme heat of summer at a very long distance through his spotting scope and only for a brief moment. He had no true way of studying this ram as the animal was so elusive.

The fateful morning came and none of the conditions were the same as the previous days of hunting. Nayo instinctively said we were going to check an area that he had a good feeling about. Surprisingly, we saw in the near distance the rams running toward us! The guides most likely spooked the rams as they were scouting and had no way of knowing they were bedded just over the peak. We were busted. No place to hide or back out. I had to make a quick shot. I raced to a large pile of rocks, my heart in my throat, with Tommy and Nayo scrambling with me and laid the pack down. As the ram was moving out fast, Nayo quickly gave the yardage of 168. I found him in the scope of the 270 exhaled and squeezed the trigger, praying that my bullet would be true. The shot hit him perfectly in the vitals through his shoulder, exiting the other side. He took a couple of steps and didn't take another. It all happened so fast, yet in slow motion. Realizing what just happened, I started bawling. In disbelief, I kept repeating, "I just shot "Snik...rs!" I knew he was a GREAT ram, but the look on the faces around me confirmed it. Nayo taped this old brute in camp at just under 191". The Sonoran Fish and Game was closed for the holidays and my ram would not be officially scored until after the first of the year. After we were home, I received a message that F&G scored him at 193". Our intentions were to have him officially B&C scored when we got him to the taxidermist in the states. At the time this article is written, the ram is still in transport to the taxidermist via the exporter.

Tommy could not resist the temptation of hunting a great ram as well. With a very tough shot, he harvested his second Desert ram, scoring in at 181". I was proud of him as usual and that ram meant just as much to me as the one I had harvested. It was another great hunting experience for the books.



I've heard other sheep hunters say their experience was life-changing for them. I now know what they meant. I had been challenged mentally, emotionally and physically to limits that are incomparable for me. Thank you, Nayo and your excellent guides for providing me the opportunity to hunt this phenomenal trophy and having the best time doing it. The accommodations and food were excellent and the conversation always upbeat and very entertaining. Thank you, Tommy for always pushing me toward my goals and making ALL of my dreams come true. I love you. To our family, thank you for understanding why we cut our Christmas vacation with you short and supporting us in all our adventures. Most of all, Thanks to God. He enabled me to take on this physical challenge and have this unforgettable experience with a ram that is irreplaceable to me.

SOME THOUGHTS AND IDEAS ON TERRAIN MANIPULATION FOR DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP

by Carlos Gallinger, www.thewayofthings.org



For many years environmental organizations have concentrated their efforts on maintaining and improving natural and artificial water sources for desert bighorn sheep.

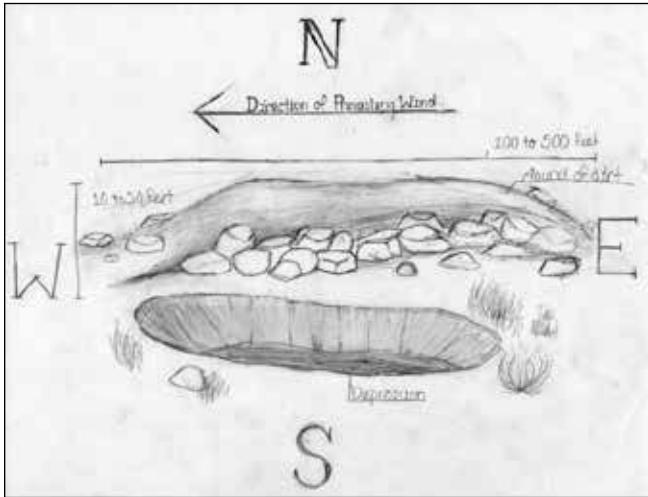
This was certainly both a necessity and the proper priority. The achievements in this effort are both real and measurable throughout the Southwest. Another important outcome of this effort is that it collected, educated, and motivated a large number of people to work on the issues that confronted the various populations of desert bighorn sheep. Now there are people and organizations that have a deep knowledge of desert bighorn sheep, and that are equipped with modern tools such as GIS mapping, radio collars with GPS, and digital trail cameras and so on. This places our society in a position to take environmental mitigation to a new level.

The next step is terrain manipulation and modification on a species specific basis. Most of the time when we think of terrain modification we think of building bridges so that wildlife can cross a busy highway or an underpass to do the same, and perhaps wildlife friendly fences as well. However when it comes to desert bighorn sheep habitat we know that it's all about terrain. Now with the resources and knowledge available to us it's time to think in a more imaginative way on this subject. We must affect such things as maximizing the utilization of available habitat, genetics, and lamb survival rates. These new

projects will also collect, educate, and motivate a whole new generation of people to learn the ways of the desert and the bighorn sheep, thus keeping alive a more traditional view of the desert and desert bighorn sheep within the larger urban culture.

The model that I'm presenting here is an orchestrated assembly of the various attributes that may be used individually or in some combination. Perhaps some time in the future there will be features like this, and their attributes will be studied and debated. Through this process, this technology will be refined into a useful tool for wildlife management and habitat mitigation. Here we can theorize and examine what might be possible and perhaps fire up the imagination of both individuals and organizations that deal with the conservation of desert bighorn sheep.

One of the first things we have to understand about terrain modification is the wide range in size and scale. Sometimes when one is following a game trail he will find that a feature that's just a foot or two higher than the rest of the terrain is utilized, and the same can be said for bedding sites as well. Then on the other end of the scale these artificial features could be 3 or 4 hundred feet long and 100 feet tall. Building such a large artificial feature for wildlife management might seem to be improbable. However when you consider the cost of building a freeway overpass for wildlife, the idea of building a large mound of dirt



seems a little bit more probable. Then one must consider that in effect were already doing large-scale terrain/habitat modification with large-scale mining, freeways, and railroads.

Now let's discuss some of the various attributes in the diagram below, and let's think of this mound of dirt on the smaller end of the scale, let's say 100 feet long and 12 feet high. In this case this mound would've been built by scooping out the depression next to it. Now let's start a discussion on the various attributes that this raised piece of terrain could have and its affect. To start with the shape in this diagram is just one of many shapes that could be utilized or found effective.

In this particular idea there would be a long North and South slope and a deliberately designed wind shadow on the east end, perhaps to encourage a different plant community or bedding site. When the desert bighorn sheep got to this small island of raised terrain they could see if things were safe in all directions. They could also look down into the depression and see if there was anything there to threaten them. If all were safe they might choose to go down in the depression and eat some of the greener feed that might be there, before moving on perhaps to a distant mountain range. So in this case you would have both an advantageous viewpoint and green feed as an attraction to this feature, thus making their travel between mountain ranges more frequent and safer.

On a large artificial terrain feature rocks broken pieces cement and other objects could be used to make a certain amount of the slopes into escape terrain, and the upper portion more suitable for bedding down. Now let's turn our attention to the depression and the range of possibilities that are there. First we want to discuss the size and depth of this depression. Obviously the smaller in diameter and the deeper it is the longer the water will last. Then we have to decide if we want the water to last as liquid water or soak into the soil. If we want liquid water to last, it could either be clay or plastic lined. If we choose a design

to conserve and provide liquid water it could have all sorts of ramifications, some not necessarily desirable in every application. Most predators that would prey on desert bighorn sheep are water dependent animals, such as the mountain lion the bobcat and the coyote. All these animals must have water in liquid form to survive. So an artificial terrain feature that can save liquid water might also attract predators. After monitoring such an artificial terrain feature a certain amount of tuning might be necessary. A terrain feature where the depression collected water but did not maintain a pool of water might actually have some advantages, the first being that it would not be a water source for the predator. Then the plants that grew in this water collecting depression would be greener and hold more water in their leaves and stems than the plants in the surrounding area. This would be a moisture/water resource for the desert bighorn sheep and not for their predators. Then one of the final considerations to take into account is scent. Most of the time the individual installation and the local environment will have to be considered to have any practical effect. However with regards to depression it would probably be advantageous to the bighorn sheep to have the top of this depression even with the surrounding landscape. If a raised shoulder or crater like design was used any predators scent would be blown up and out of the depression and flow above the noses of the desert bighorn sheep leaving them unaware of any predatory presence.

Given all the attributes and possibilities that terrain manipulation could provide I think it is worthy of development. And while there are many habitat issues that this technology could mitigate. It's worthwhile talking about a few to get an idea of the possibilities and fuel the imagination. One use might be to direct the wild sheep away from an area that has livestock and other dangers such as urban sprawl. Another idea is to use this technology to guide the bighorn sheep to cross a two lane highway somewhere where the road is straight and level, giving both drivers and sheep a better chance of avoiding one another. Due to the lower cost this may be a more financially feasible remedy than an overpass. In the end this technology, with the applied imagination of many individual and some financial resources, will prove to be the way forward in mitigating many of the problems facing the various desert bighorn sheep populations in the Southwest.

WATER DEVELOPMENT WORK IN THE DESERT

by Terry Anderson

Fay Dee guzzler R&R is complete. The project took 4, 12 hour days, 32 man days, and 700 mi in Big Red. It is collecting water as I email this. Want to extend my thanks to all the volunteers. Could not have completed the project without you.

Fay Dee guzzler in the Orocopia mountains repair was a "Bitch". The team winched over 3000 pounds of materials and tools using a custom 4ft x 6ft cart. Over 2 weekends for a total of 5 days, the team moved material up 350 yards at a 50 degree angle slope using 1200 feet of rope. All this effort resulted in replacing a 70ft x 60ft rain mat, plumbing, 2000 gal water tank with a 2500 gal water tank at a total cost of \$7000.00 and 65 volunteer man days to accomplish

the complete project. We were blessed with rain the day after the project completion resulting in a 600 gal water collection. Always great to validate that all this hard work has the positive result we are planning for.

Thank you to all the volunteers that came out to complete project and to Tammy for cooking for those that stayed with us at our home.

(FayDee Crew) I apologize if I misspelled any of the names: Terry Anderson, Rob Yates, Ron Yates, Steve William, Terry Thomas, Rich Saxfield, George Sutton, Clint Humphreville, Luke Humphreville, Tom Humphreville, Tim Humphreville, Clay Gilbert, Marty Scottsdale, John Maney, John Mahaney, Steve Hart, Travis Spidle, Andrew Pontious, Nino Vanillo, Zack Mullins



CALIFORNIA DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP PROGRAM

by *Regina Abella*

In April, the Fish and Game Commission met in Santa Rosa and adopted the proposed mammal hunting regulations. Adoptions included changes to tag quotas for hunting big game mammals, including desert bighorn sheep. For more information on bighorn sheep tag quotas, please visit the bighorn sheep hunting page on the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) website at: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Hunting/Bighorn-Sheep#198983-hunts>.

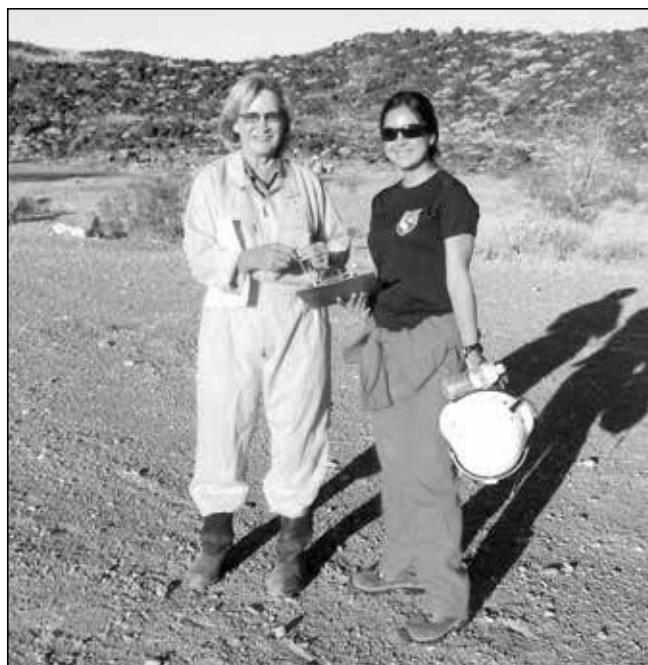
In addition to approving tag quotas, the Fish and Game Commission also approved the required use of non-lead ammunition for hunting bighorn sheep, or while hunting on any CDFW lands for any wildlife species. The requirement will be enforced beginning July 1, 2015. The non-lead ammunition requirement will be implemented to hunting statewide by 2019. For a list of certified non-lead ammunition, please visit: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/hunting/lead-free/certifiedammo.html>.

Following a lengthy bidding process, CDFW has posted a notice of intent to award a 2-year contract to Air Shasta Rotor and Wing for low-level helicopter surveys. CDFW anticipates having a contract in place in time for helicopter surveys this September. The first bout of surveys will include management units with consumptive use for best management practices. California has over 60 herd units of native desert bighorn sheep, and while a statewide inventory will take some time to accomplish, we will now have the necessary tool to accomplish such a task.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has approved a Pittman and Robertson (PR) Grant for 3 positions in the central Mojave. The PR grant will fund one permanent-intermittent environmental scientist and

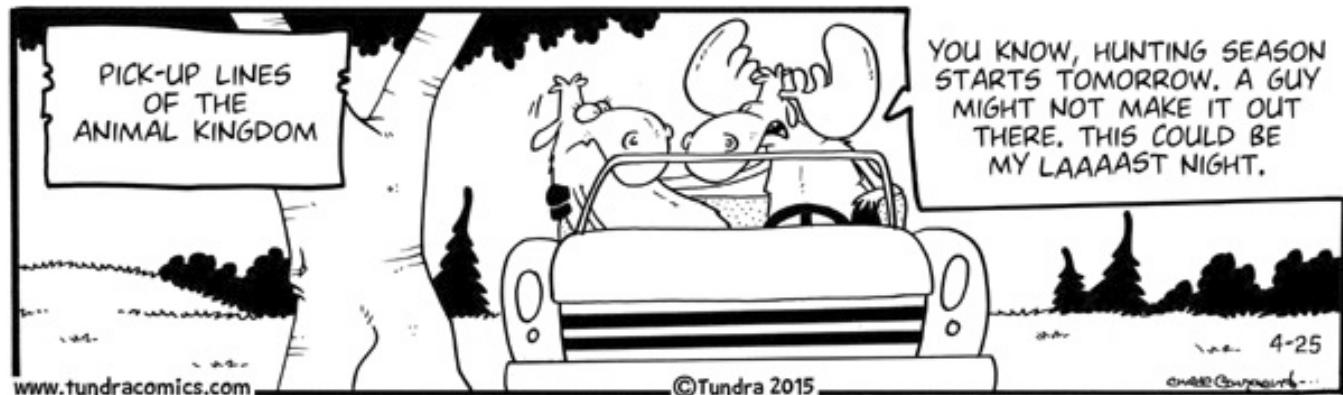
two scientific aides. These positions will focus on habitat work, including monitoring and maintenance of Wildlife Water Developments, and will also assist in the disease monitoring effort. Funding and positions commence on July 1. If you encounter them in the field, be sure to give them a warm, or rather HOT Mojave Desert welcome!

Don't forget! The deadline to apply for big game hunts in California is June 2. You can apply online at: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Licensing/Online-Sales> or at any CDFW license agent.



Regina (right) in the field.

Humor



BIGHORN BIOLOGY ON THE MOVE

by Alex P. Few, Ph.D

After spending an afternoon near Wood River, Wyoming I again realize how important our bighorn sheep conservation work at California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is. In only one afternoon of combing through basins and ridgetops muddy from recent rain, I was overwhelmed by the amount of bighorn sign. Tracks were on every bench, and fecal pellets appeared as fertilizer scattered across the landscape. In our largest herds in the Sierra, numbering just over 100 bighorn, we have only a fraction of the sign that this one small drainage off a large Wyoming river contains. Herds in Wyoming will probably always be bigger; there is much more forage than our arid California environment provides, but the opportunity for growth of bighorn populations exists throughout CDFW's Inland Deserts Region (Region 6).

The Sierra Nevada Bighorn Sheep Recovery Program is capitalizing on this opportunity. Recent mild winters and a decline in mountain lion predation have boosted Sierra bighorn numbers to more than 600. This is a 6-fold increase from the 100

or so bighorn that remained in the Sierra Nevada mountains prior to listing under the Endangered Species Act in 1999. With the reintroduction of 2 new herds this March and a recent natural colonization, the distribution of Sierra bighorn now meets the geographic recovery criteria for downlisting. Sierra bighorn can now be found throughout their historic habitat. As new herds grow and survive without management intervention, increased distribution will assure the overall long-term viability of this unique population.

The reintroductions this March were a continuation of a larger translocation program that began in March 2013 with the reintroduction of the Olancha Peak herd at the southern end of Sierra bighorn's historic range. In March 2014 the distribution of Sierra bighorn expanded to the west with the reintroduction of the Big Arroyo herd to the Great Western Divide of Sequoia National Park. This March an additional 7 ewes and 4 rams were added to the Great Western Divide to create a new herd in the Laurel Creek area, and Yosemite National Park received a new herd of 10 ewes and 3 rams released along the Merced River above Washburn Lake. This herd will likely summer on Mt. Lyell and Mt. McClure in the heart of Yosemite's Cathedral Range. With future augmentations and a little bit of luck the number of bighorn in these new populations will grow, and peak baggers and through hikers along the John Muir Trail will have ample opportunity to see this majestic wilderness icon John Muir called "the bravest of all the Sierra mountaineers".

This spring also marks a new beginning in the desert bighorn program. With the arrival of warden



Alex Few – in the field.



Alex Few and Tom Stephenson releasing ewes into the new Cathedral Range herd in Yosemite National Park.
Photograph by Steve Bumgardner

pilot Kevin Kintz, we have resumed regular survival flights. Three new CDFW scientific aides, Paige Prentice, Stephen Pfeiler, and Jon Weissman, will also be working in the Mojave ecosystem monitoring populations as they respond to and recover from the recent pneumonia outbreak first documented in 2013. These new personnel along with the approval of a helicopter survey contract will allow us to unravel the complex tapestry of bighorn populations in the desert. We will be watching water sources, combing desert washes, searching for signs of recovery from disease, and renewing our investment in desert bighorn.

In the challenging desert and alpine areas of CDFW's Region 6, we strive to protect our precious wildlife from the threats of disease and drought. We are dedicated to understanding dynamics of desert and Sierra bighorn populations, to aid in their recovery, and to return stable populations to the mountain ranges of California.



Leading Edge Aviation pilot Jim Pope posing next to an impressive desert bighorn from the Peninsular Ranges.
Photograph by Grant Cadwallader

53RD MEETING OF THE DESERT BIGHORN COUNCIL

by Kyle Meintzer, Founder, CA WSF

If you ever want to attend a meeting where the top Desert Bighorn Sheep experts in the world will be sharing their expertise and thoughts on Desert Bighorn Sheep management with their peers, the Desert Bighorn Council meeting is a 'must do'!

This year's meeting of the DBC was held in Borrego Springs, CA and was hosted by the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. Sponsors included the CAWSF, SCBS, WSF, UC Irvine, and the Anza Borrego Foundation. Most of the state agencies in the West were represented, as were several top universities, research labs, and private entities.

The first day of the meeting was devoted entirely to the disease issue regarding domestic sheep and goats and wild sheep. What came across to me is that the more we know about this problem, the more we know what we don't know. Researchers have made major progress in identifying and verifying the problem, with over seventy published and peer reviewed papers proving that when wild sheep come in contact with domestic sheep or goats, wild sheep die. There are

no such papers from the woolgrowers, despite their continual denial of the problem. Until a vaccine, treatment or other solution comes to the fore, the only solution is separation.

On Day Two, each state, along with our friends in Mexico, gave twenty-minute updates on the status of desert sheep in their areas. CA DFW's Tom Stephenson then gave a very interesting talk on the relationship between weight and body fat in ewes and resulting lamb recruitment. Vern Bleich followed with a great talk on the effect well used hiking trails have on wild sheep lambing areas and lamb recruitment. Another interesting presentation on the advantages of using high fences to keep wild sheep out of urban areas in Rancho Mirage was next.

The presentations wrapped up with discussions on the effect of predation on wild sheep.

Several excellent other presentations were also part of the meeting, but space does not allow me to delve into those.

REMEMBER TO VOTE FOR YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS — SEE INSERT

2015 BANQUET AND FUNDRAISER

Rancho Cordova, California

Thanks go out to all of our members and friends who attended our most recent California Wild Sheep Foundation banquet and fundraiser in Rancho Cordova April 25, 2015. Your attendance helped us make this event a success and hope all enjoyed the evening as much as we enjoyed entertaining you.

Our afternoon began with a great presentation from Mark Jorgensen regarding his new book, "Desert bighorn Sheep, Wilderness Icon", taxidermy, as well as some wonderful vendors showing off their wares. The afternoon progressed into the evening where all in attendance had the opportunity to enjoy bidding on some beautiful desserts, over 70 silent auction items, and choose their raffle items to take a chance on from one of the nicest lineup of items we have seen in years. Our live auction began shortly after a great dinner provided by the Marriott staff, and proved to be one of our best in the recent past.

Auctioneer Les Ohlhauser kept us all on our toes through the auction and did a fantastic job, thanks Les. At the close of our auction the "Put One Back"

casino opened and proved to be a bunch of fun for those who chose to take on the house. Some great prizes from Leupold were awarded at the close of the casino.

This event cannot happen without the dedication of a handful of folks willing to take the countless hours of preparation, thank you for your dedication. You are appreciated and did a great job. Special thanks to Beverly Valdez, as we have said in the past, you are our "Rock" and without you this would be a difficult task. To all of our donors of art, hunts, condos, guns, books, cakes, underwriting, we cannot do this event and raise the funds we did without your generosity. Thank you so much for making all of this possible.

For those of you that attended and helped us raise funds to "Put and Keep Sheep on the Mountain", thank you so much for your support. Please pass along news about our event so we can build our event next year slated for April 30, 2016. We intend to provide a great night for you to enjoy.



All photos from the fundraiser provided by member Chip Holliser. Please contact Chip (chollister3@yahoo.com) for copies and rights to use.



2015 SPECIAL AWARDS

At the 2015 Banquet and Fundraiser several awards were presented.

Our standard awards for Oldest and Largest sheep taken by a member were BOTH won by Mike Carpinito for his 180-plus desert sheep that was at least 11 years old and probably older! This is the first time that both awards were won by the same member. Congratulations Mike!

The Above and Beyond award was presented to Don Martin in recognition of his support and dedication to the Chapter and to desert bighorn sheep of California. Don has been a member of the Board of Directors of CAWSF since 2010 and an officer of the Chapter since 2011. He works continuously to recruit new members and supporters; has spent countless hours at trade shows manning the CAWSF

booth; helps in all our efforts at educating the sheep hunting community of the work and benefits of WSF. In addition, Don has been active on the fundraising committee for several years. His donations include multiple years of organizing and guiding

- * Dall sheep hunts in Alaska with Ultima Thule Outfitters;
- * Tule elk hunts at the Jim Bardin Ranch in California; and
- * Brown Bear and Alaska Fishing with NWA Outfitters.

These hunt donations have netted over \$35,000 to the chapter since 2010. Thanks Don for your commitment to the sheep and on-going support of CAWSF!

Above & Beyond Award

2015 CA WSF

Presented to

Donald C. Martin

In Recognition Of Your Support And Dedication To The California Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation And The Desert Bighorn Sheep Of California

Board of Directors since 2010 & Officer since 2011
Continuous recruitment of CA WSF membership and supporters
Educating the sheep hunting community of the work and benefits of CA WSF
Countless volunteer hours spent at shows handling the CAWSF booth
Organizing and guiding the following banquet donations netting CA WSF over \$35,000
Ultima Thule Outfitters Dall Sheep Hunt Raffle 2013, 2014 & 2015
Jim Bardin Ranch CA Tule Elk Hunt Auction 2013, 2014 & 2015
Ultima Thule Outfitters Four Species Hunt Auction 2013
NWO AK Brown Bear Hunt Auction 2011
NWO AK Fishing Trip Auction 2011

CA WSF

April 25, 2015

"Putting and Keeping Sheep on the Mountain"



Don Martin (center) with Paul Brisso and Mike Borel receiving CA WSF's highest recognition – the Above & Beyond Award.



OLDEST & LARGEST DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP CALIFORNIA

2014 / 2015

by a CA WSF MEMBER

Presented to

Mike Carpinito

Score - 180 7/8

Age - 11+

Unit - Marble/Clipper Mountains

California Chapter Wild Sheep Foundation

April 25, 2015

"Putting and Keeping Sheep on the Mountain"



**Mike Carpinito
Desert Bighorn - California 2014
Statewide Tag - 180+”**



NOT A "BAD HUNT" IN ASIA

by Donald C. Martin

I've always felt that life is about balance. If I do enough good for others, then good things will happen for me. It's a philosophy that I've had most of my adult life. This last year, I've experienced a wealth of "Good" and I am very thankful.

Dr. Wayne Dyer in one of his books, I can't remember which one, states, "Miracles come in moments. Be ready and willing." This is not a new idea. "Carpe Diem" or "Seize the day" has been around for over 2000 years. More recently, Nike was able to spin that into the wildly successful "Just Do It!" ad-campaign. And even more recently, an elderly gentleman with many sheep to his credit remarked, in regards to wild sheep hunting that, "...you must simply have the will." And so with all of this in mind, when the opportunity to go to Tajikistan literally fell out of the sky last Fall, it was without hesitation that I committed to fulfill a lifelong dream of mine to go to Asia on a hunting expedition.

Thanks to my network of hunting clients, I was asked to accompany Amy Martin of Colorado on a hunt for Marco Polo Sheep with her brother Bryan's, Asian Mountain Outfitters. I would tag along on the hunt as cameraman and capture the action on digital video and if we were successful on sheep, I would get an opportunity to hunt for Mid-Asian Ibex and Amy, also a professional videographer, would film my hunt.

Both hunts were successful though not without drama. I won't divulge many details of the hunts, you'll just have to watch the show/film when it comes out. However I would like to share a few observations about my first hunt in Asia in the hopes that it will help others.

First and foremost, trust in "your team" is the key to committing to such an expedition in the first place. Tajikistan is not a first world nation. The former Soviet Republic is 90+% Muslim and it borders Afghanistan and China; countries that hold no shortage of individuals who don't like us and want to kill us. Amy Martin has been a professional in the hunting industry for 20 years. Her company, Pro-Hunt Concierge, has handled the paperwork and details for hundreds of hunting expeditions all over the world. Couple that experience with her brother's, Bryan, and his outfit, Asian Mountain Outfitters and it was easy to commit to go with only days to prepare. I knew Amy would take care of all the paperwork and Bryan would handle all of the details on the ground once we arrived in Dushanbe.

Secondly, there are a few critical preparations to an expedition of this magnitude. One is a membership to a medical evacuation service such as Global Rescue. Bad things happen to good people every day. It's important to be prepared for the unexpected. Other



safety considerations would include an Iridium satellite phone. Pre-programming your Sat-phone with all the pertinent #'s including those of the US Embassy is important. It's also important to call those #'s and insure they are accurate and functioning. With those considerations in place, I'd also suggest a GPS so you could communicate your location if needed.

On our hunt, the base camp was at 12,500 feet in elevation and we rarely saw any game below 14,000, with most of the trophy animals at 15,000 feet and higher. On our trip, day 6 we topped out at over 16,700 feet. Everyone reacts to the elevation differently, but I can assure you that it will impact you and your performance. It's important to consult your physician regarding your susceptibility to Acute Mountain Sickness or forms of High Altitude Edema. If your doctor recommends a regimen of medications, STICK TO THE REGIMENT! My doctor, who is a hunter, suggested Wilderness Athlete's product, Altitude Advantage. I can't speak to its performance versus Diamox, due to a lack of experience with Diamox, but I was able to function at high altitude for all 9 days of the hunt. Never the less, talk to your doctor.

It goes without saying, be in "sheep shape", but I'm saying it! The Pamir Mountains in the Wakhan Corridor are brutal and combined with the elevation, they will test any hunter. You have to be in the best possible shape if you hope to be successful. Just an example of how demanding the hunt can be, on day 3 of our hunt, we followed a 60+'' Marco Polo ram all day at over 16,000 feet in minus 17 fahrenheit with 30 MPH winds and were unable to get a shot. We were then forced to hike out 7+ miles in the dark through a jagged canyon of treacherous rock and ice. The high country is a wasteland. There is no shelter and you



cannot stop and start a fire for warmth as there is nothing to burn but the occasional pile of yak dung. Be as fit as possible, your life may depend on it.

Safety considerations aside, it's all going to come down to the "Shot". The only reason I was successful on my ibex hunt is because Amy Martin had the right tool for the job. Amy Martin had brought a Montana Rifle Company Custom 7MM with Leupold VX-6 that Bryan literally rebuilt, resighted and fabricated a "Custom Target Turret" with some Athletic Tape and a Sharpie. Couple that rifle with some Premium RCA Ammo and we had a recipe for success.

Tajikistan is a unique hunting environment due to the many factors that force hunters into long range shooting situations. The game is very spooky due to a high density of predators that include wolves, bears, snow leopard, and poachers. They also prefer to be on the very top of the ridges or very bottom of the wide open canyons making approach difficult. I would suggest that due to the game and terrain, if you and your rifle are not capable out to 650 yards, you will find the hunt to be very challenging and potentially disappointing. There's always a chance for a close shot, but don't leave the hunt of a lifetime to "chance". On our hunt all the "Trophy" animals were in excess of 550 yards with no way to approach closer. If you're going to invest in the hunt of a lifetime, invest in a long range shooting system, and more importantly, enroll in a long range shooting course

that will help you get the most out of yourself and your rifle.

I won't go into a long list of suggested gear, but there are few things very critical to your safety and comfort on an Asian expedition. Most toilets in Tajik are of the Turkish variety, which is essentially a hole in the ground. Most public restrooms and even the restrooms in some of the restaurants will not have toilet paper or a place to wash your hands. Bring your own TP, Baby Wipes, and Hand Sanitizer and bring plenty because at some point either the food, water, or both will not agree with you. Anti-diarrheal medication is also a must.

If you wear eyeglasses take an extra pair. If you wear contacts, like I do, take more than you think you need. With no vegetation at elevation, the camp crew burned yak dung to heat the cabin. The smoke it produces is especially harsh and can ruin your contact lenses. And on the subject of eyewear, don't forget a pair of polarized sunglasses, because when the sun is out it can be blindingly bright in the snow-covered mountains.

Like any sheep hunt, Tajikistan requires top quality gear. It's a harsh environment with extremely low temperatures and high winds. I wore a mish-mash of Sitka, Kuiu, and professional mountain climbing apparel and was very comfortable. Cover up whites or snow camo is a must and as for boots, a highly insulated mountain boot is recommended.



I wore the Koflach Arctis Expe and they worked but I wouldn't recommend them for Tajikistan. We actually hiked more than we climbed when hunting Marco Polo and the Koflach boots didn't perform as well on the windswept ridge tops, however they really stood out on the Ibex portion of the hunt which involved climbing steep rocky mountain faces. A better alternative to consider would be the Kennetrek Mountain Extreme 1000, though your feet will still get cold.

A top quality day-pack in the 3500 cubic inch range would be recommended though you might want a smaller pack so you can't carry too much. Don't be afraid to let the guides carry your stuff, they are acclimated to the elevation and it's part of their job. Let them carry anything except your rifle. In addition to a good pack, lever-lock trekking poles, such as those made by Black Diamond are a must for navigating the rock, snow, and ice.

Hydration is often overlooked in colder environments, but it is no less important. Staying hydrated will help keep your muscles from cramping up on the mountain. An insulated water bottle and a water purifying device such as a Life-Straw will be of great help, though blow out the filter of your water purifying device every time you use it or it will freeze solid and be useless. A better option to consider would be a UV water purifier such as the Camelback All Clear. The water purifier however is not a necessity as you'll often have to chop a hole in the ice to get to any water and once you reach a certain elevation, there will be no water in liquid form except the water you carry with you. Keeping your water in liquid form will be the biggest challenge. For this reason, I would discourage the use of any in-pack hydration system that utilizes a bite-valve and tubing as they quickly freeze.

I believe the most important thing you can take with you is the right attitude. You need to be open minded and "go with the flow." Things will not be what you expected. Things will go wrong. Jeeps will get stuck, etc, etc. Someone once wrote that



"Adventure begins when things really start to go wrong". I would suggest that this is very true and the entire experience may be horribly unpleasant at the time, but later on when you're in the comfort of a warm, dry place, ...you will fondly reflect on all that happy suffering.

Choose the right team, manage yourself, your attitude, and your expectations and you cannot have a "bad hunt."



LEGISLATIVE NEWS AND VIEWS

Thanks to Bill Gaines, Gaines & Associates

CALIFORNIA FISH & GAME COMMISSION – April Meeting – RECAP The California Fish and Game Commission met on April 11th and 12th in Santa Rosa. All five Commissioners – Commission President Jack Baylis, and Commission members Jim Kellogg, Jacquie Hostler-Carmesin, Mike Sutton and Richard Rogers were all in attendance. Note that under the Commission's new "two-day" meeting format, fishery related items were placed on the agenda for April 8th, with all wildlife-related issues slated for the April 9th agenda. Agenda items of concern are listed below, along with a recap of any notable discussion or Commission action. To view the full agenda, [click FGC – April 2015 Meeting Agenda](#). To view DFW's Legislative Update for April 2015, [click DFW Legislative Update - 4 2015](#)

Agenda Item 22 – Other Informational Items (B)
Legislative Update Several bills were discussed in this section, led by Commission Executive Director Sonke Mastrup who opened by noting that this agenda item focused only on legislation which, in some way, could impact the Commission's authority and/or function. AB 395/AB 711 were discussed along with AB 665.

The Commission did not take any action on any of the bills discussed.

Agenda Item 24 – Wildlife Resources Committee
(A) Work Plan Development I. Update on Current Work Plan and Timeline Mastrup opened this item by noting that the items presently in front of the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) are: a) Predator Management Policy Review; b) DFW Lands Visitor Pass; c) Feral Pig Management; and d) Possession of Game for Processing for Food. Mastrup also commented that, at the Commission's request, the Predator Policy Workgroup met on March 12th to identify and address structural flaws associated with predator management regulations. He noted that a summary of the Workgroup's effort would be provided at the May meeting of the WRC. II. Discuss and Approve New Topics Mastrup stated that staff's initial recommendations for topic areas for the May 6th meeting of the WRC are: a) to continue work on Predator Management Policies and Regulations; b) Feral Pig Management – noting that Commission staff has been working with some State Legislators on how to deal with the feral pig issue; and c) Possession of Game for Processing for Food – adding that there was a bill introduced last year dealing with waterfowl and there also has been interest in fish. This was a 'hot' topic for the meeting -- Mastrup said that the Predator Workgroup is "getting its feet wet" by first focusing on possible changes to regulatory sections 472 and

465.5. Mastrup went on by noting that section 465.5 is basically the trapping regulations and section 472 is non-game, with primary concern being coyotes and the current allowance for unlimited take. He continued that the Commission wanted the WRC to explore how they could improve those sections to better distinguish between sport and depredation take. Also, specifically in regards to section 472, to evaluate whether or not the unlimited take on coyote and other identified non-game species is appropriate. Following robust public testimony, Mastrup trimmed his recommendation to three "core" items for the Commission to consider for the May WRC agenda: 1) continued work on Predator Management policy; 2) an update from the Department on DFW Lands Visitor Pass; and 3) Feral Pig Management – striking the previously noted Possession of Game for Processing for Food from the agenda.

Agenda Item 27 – Adoption of Proposed Regulations Regarding Authorized Methods of Take for Wildlife Using Lead Ammunition – Phasing Out the Use of Lead Ammunition After more than a year of discussion at the Commission and WRC level, extensive public testimony and thorough public outreach by DFW, this agenda item served as the final discussion, public testimony and consideration of adoption of DFW's proposed implementation schedule of non-lead ammunition for hunting in California, as mandated by the passage of AB 711 in 2013. Following some brief opening remarks by DFW Director Chuck Bonham, Commissioner HostlerCarmesin commented that she would like to see a working group which helped track implementation of the non-lead ammunition mandate over the course of the next few years. Director Bonham agreed, stating that the working group could allow for a regular dialog between DFW, the Commission and stakeholders on how the phase-in is working. At the close of testimony, Director Bonham agreed to move forward with the working group, as requested by Commissioner Hostler Carmesin and supported by Gaines & Associates on behalf of their clients (including CA WSF).

(A) Certification of Final Environmental Document Before the Commission could vote on the adoption of the implementation schedule proposed by DFW, they had to certify the final environmental document on the topic. They quickly did so with a unanimous vote of approval. To view the DFW Final Certification of the Environmental Document/ Findings of Fact, [click DFW Final Cert of Enviro Doc.](#) To view the DFW Final Environmental Document,

[click DFW Final Enviro Doc.](#) To view the DFW final proposed regulatory language, [click DFW Proposed Reg Language](#).

Agenda Item 28 – Adoption of Proposed Changes to Mammal Hunting Regulations This item began with a presentation by the DFW Wildlife Branch Chief, Dr. Eric Loft, who opened his comments by stating that, after a few decades, DFW has recently released a new Deer Management Plan for public review

and comment. Dr. Loft followed by noting that the Department's Sheep Plan and Elk Plan will also be out shortly. Dr. Loft then went through the Department's proposed tag quotas for deer, sheep, elk and antelope. To view the proposed tag quotas for bighorn sheep, [click 2015 Proposed Wild Sheep Tag Quotas](#). Other quotas are at the same web site.

LUCKY, SMART AND COMMITTED

Ralph Adams draws Utah DBH Tag!

(See copy of letter below).

Note: Ralph MOVED to Utah to increase his odds. THAT IS DEDICATION!

May 29, 2015

RALPH E ADAMS

Dear RALPH :

Thank you for your recent application for Big Game. Your results are as follows:

SUCCESSFUL: Desert Bighorn Sheep

Hunt: Zion

Weapon: Any Legal Weapon

Your season date(s): Oct 12 - Nov 10, 2015

The Division may be conducting aerial surveys or big game captures during the season dates of this hunt.



Bob suddenly realized his wife had fallen off her horse, which was quite a relief to him as just an hour earlier he thought he'd gone deaf.



PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



Brad Peters
Bezoar Ibex – Turkey
March 2015



Chris Nixon
Ram – San Gorgonios
2015
Dry Creek Outfitters, 176"



Gary Schenone
Dall Sheep – Northwest Territory
2011



Gary Schenone
Stone Sheep – British Columbia
2009



Russ Renner
Ram – Clark / Kingstons
Dry Creek Outfitters, 175"



Caleb Crother
Bull Elk – youth hunt
2015



Cole Casagrande
Cow Elk – youth hunt
2015



Cole Casagrande
Turkey – youth hunt
2015

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD



These photos are from a 2014 SCBS guzzler inspection. Nice to see that we have sheep at Argos and Sunshine Peak and both guzzlers were full and had overflowed through the outlet. The Bullion Guzzler was damaged due to flash flooding and so the next inspection will involve some pipe repair



RAM TOUGH – TOUGH RAM!

Photos captured by Dan Ryan a few miles north of Hill City, SD

Alex Few – Translocations

A HUNT OF A LIFETIME

by Jeremy and Brandon McDonald



I never thought I would be driving through Barstow, Ca on my way to a small island of mountains in the middle of the desert to scout for a desert sheep hunt but that's exactly what my son Brandon and I did in 2014. I'm like most guys out there, I put my two sons and myself in for multiple hunts in most western states, most of the time expecting the same news "try again next year". Well this year when I checked the California results it said "YES" South Bristol Hunt. I quickly made a phone call to our local fish and game office and confirmed the tag was really his. That began a summer of decisions and hopeful thinking followed by quite a bit of excitement and a long wait for December to arrive.

Before long the time for the hunt had approached and because of the fact that my son had the only tag for this particular unit we decided not to hunt the opening week but wait until school was out so he wouldn't have to take any extra time off. I headed out on Tuesday to get our camp set up and try to find a ram. When I arrived at camp I met up with Terry Anderson of San Gorgino Outfitters and his guide Andrew who needless to say were ready to get to hunting. Andrew had to head home to take care of some business so Terry and I spent the next couple of days looking at sheep in the area. We found one really good ram in the process but after really going over him we found he had one horn broke off on his right side. So the last evening before my brother Ryan was to show up with my sons Brandon and Justin to begin hunting we took a drive to one area that usually held a good ram or two. As we made our way into the canyon our idea of finding a good ram quickly passed as we saw nothing, not even a track. So we set up at the end of the road and began one last glassing session for the afternoon. It wasn't

long before Terry came around the back of the truck looking like he was choking on his lunch. He proceeded to let me know we were being watched by a great ram less than 600 yards from us. We slowly backed out of the area and headed back to camp to formulate a plan for the morning.

That night the rest of our crew showed up to camp and the mornings hunt was discussed. Everyone was ready to go and sleep was a premium that night. The morning arrived and the time to hunt was here. We slowly made our way up the desert canyon we were in the night before, glassing as we went not to miss any sheep on the way. When we got to the end we set up to glass the entire area the ram was seen in the previous day. After an hour or so we could not locate the ram so Andrew, Brandon and I decided to hike to the top of a ridge and take a look into the only canyon we couldn't glass from the road.

When we reached the top we slowly crested the ridge, scanning the whole area with no sign of the ram. Suddenly Andrew hit the dirt with us following, he had spotted the ram directly across from us on the opposite hillside. We were in plain view of the ram and that began a two hour nap on the ridge with the fear if we moved the ram would detect movement and leave the area. Finally he fed away from us and we were able to slip off the ridge out of sight of the sheep. We had to figure out how to get closer. Brandon was confident out to 400 yards but we couldn't get closer than 580. So after talking about it we decided to head for the bottom of the ditch we were in with hopes we could get below the ram and come up on him. From the bottom we found that plan would not work and sat and watched as the ram fed around the hill. It wasn't long when the ram started making his way down the hill he was on directly towards us. At 480

yards he stopped walking and looked right down the valley where we were sitting. All of a sudden he started to run across the valley that separated us from him and disappeared behind a small pile of rocks. Andrew was certain that he would come across the hill directly above us, giving us a shot of around 200 yards.

Quickly Brandon set up on Andrews pack and settled in for the shot. I wasn't sure I was going to make it. All I could think is that I hope my son was calmer than myself which he most certainly was. It seemed like an hour we sat there but was probably 10-15 minutes when suddenly Brandon spotted the ram as he came over the ridge. It seemed like the ram had us pegged and a quick shot from Brandons rifle rang out. He had missed and in the process the ram bolted forward and gave Brandon a perfect shot at

206 yards. He took the shot and down he went. He was shaking like a leaf but it didn't matter at that point the magnificent ram was down. The cool thing is that even the guys back at the truck watched the whole hunt go down. Needless to say the celebration began. Walking up on him was such a thrill and a culmination of months of waiting. He was 11 ½ years old and grossed 167, a perfect ram and great hunt.

Thanks to Terry and Andrew of San Gorgino for their help and making us feel as if we were hunting with friends. These guys love what they do and it shows. Also thanks to Justin his brother and his Uncle Ryan who both are always there to help on any adventure that comes along. A HUNT OF A LIFETIME!!!!!!!

DFW UPDATE: GOOD NEWS AND GREAT NEWS

by Kyle Meintzer

The happenings at the California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife the past few weeks have been very positive for California's Desert Bighorn sheep.

After a six-year hiatus, the Department will once again be doing aerial surveys for Desert Bighorn Sheep! Three qualified bids from helicopter companies were received and Shasta Air Rotor and Wing from Redding was selected as the winning bidder. Assuming nothing goes wrong in the contracting process, aerial surveys for Desert Bighorn Sheep will be conducted this coming fall. The lack of such surveys is the primary reason tag numbers have fallen. Now that the Department is 'back in the air,' we expect tag numbers to begin moving back up.

On another front, on May 20, the Big Game Advisory Committee unanimously approved two important grant requests from CA WSF. The first grant, for \$54,559, will be used to continue a study regarding the respiratory disease outbreak that occurred in the Mojave Desert early in 2013. The study is headed by Dr. Clint Epps of Oregon State University, one of the most qualified Desert Bighorn Sheep scientists in the world. This is the second year of a three year study.

The BGAC also approved a grant for CA WSF in the amount of \$77,500 for aerial surveys in several areas that are not currently hunt zones. These include the Rodman, Ord, Newberry, Old Woman and Chemehuevi mountain ranges. We believe there is a strong possibility that the surveys will show there are enough sheep in the Rodmans, Ords and Newberry ranges to create a new hunt zone.

The BGAC also decided to create a more formal organizational structure. This lead to CA WSF's founder, Kyle Meintzer, being appointed as the BGAC



Congratulations to Kyle Meintzer! Named as Chair of the CA DFW Big Game Advisory Committee (BGAC) and the liaison for the BGAC to DFW, the Commission, and the legislature.

Chair, Rick Travis of the CA Rifle and Pistol Assn. as Vice-Chair, and Mike Ford of RMEF as Recording Secretary. Kyle will organize the meetings and be the liaison for the BGAC to DFW, the Commission and the Legislature.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A SHEEP HUNTER

by Gary Lewis, (reprinted from Sportsman's E-Blast May 2015)



It is the pinnacle of hunting. Sheep live in difficult places and there are not enough for everyone. Permits are hard to get and the demand is so high a person may apply for 20 years in his or her home state and never draw a tag. A person who wants to be a sheep hunter should start today.

The North American Grand Slam consists of one each of the four different North American wild sheep: Dall, Stone, bighorn and desert bighorn and all sheep must be taken by fair chase methods.

A California bighorn from California, Oregon and Washington will also count as a bighorn and a Fannin sheep (a very light Stone or Dall with some black hair and a dark tail, will count as a Stone sheep).

A World Slam consists of one each of 12 different subspecies from around the world.

One person who has made the subject his life's work is Bryan Martin, a 43-year-old outfitter, who grew up in Oregon and now makes his home in Kamloops, British Columbia. Martin owns Canadian and Asian Mountain Outfitters and specializes in guiding hunters in pursuit of critters in hard-to-reach places.

"Start young. You're going to have to make an income higher than the normal guy. Sheep hunts require money and time."

"Most people have the time and money to hunt whitetail deer, as they are fairly common," Martin said. "Going sheep hunting is like going to the Ferrari dealership. If you want to own a brand new Ferrari, you're going to have to earn a great deal of money."

One option is to move to British Columbia, Alberta or Alaska, where you can hunt them on a workingman's budget.

Martin, who has guided hunters from all over North America, says anyone can hunt sheep if they start now. But a person who is 18, 19 or 20 has the

best odds at completing a Grand Slam.

"Let's say you graduate from high school and decide to work for the government or be someone else's employee. Don't plan on hunting the world slam unless you are a big saver of money and/or you decide to remain single."

If your state doesn't have sheep to hunt, move to one that does, then start applying for tags. Some states allow a hunter to build up preference points, in others, a hunter relies on the luck of the draw, sometimes applying for a lifetime, for one chance.

"My recommendation," Martin said, "is start applying for sheep when you are in high school, when you're 17 or 18 and you want it for yourself." Martin points out he has seen kids draw sheep tags at 14- or 15-years-old, but they are usually hunting for their parents' sake and not on their own passion.

Apply in your home state and in the states you can afford to. Best bets for drawing odds are Wyoming, Colorado and Idaho, "if you're willing to put in for 15 years." Those are bighorn hunts.

The best chances of a Dall sheep tag or a Stone sheep hunt are in one of the two or three hunt raffles offered by organizations like the Wild Sheep Foundation. There is another option. "If a guy is tough, he can hunt in Montana in the unlimited Bighorn areas, just for the cost of the tag, "You will get to hunt sheep." It is the only place in the lower 48 left where you can go sheep hunting every year until you kill one. Plan on backpacking-in for many days or hunting with horses.

When making a long-term plan, a hunter should apply in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Montana and Nevada, to accumulate points.

For desert sheep, the best opportunities are in Arizona and Nevada, where a person can apply for



both desert and Rocky Mountain bighorns in the same year. Colorado has desert bighorns, but they only issue permits to residents. States like Oregon, Idaho and New Mexico offer limited entry hunts, but there are no bonus point systems.

At today's rates, the average cost for application is \$200. Apply in five states for 15 years and the tab could run upwards of \$15,000 before the first hunt!

The process is daunting and there are services that help a person navigate the maze of state regulations.

Martin recommends Epic Outdoors and Hunter Application service. Some state deadlines are in January, some in March, some in May and if you apply you'd better be in "sheep shape" in case you draw the tag. Sometimes there is little notice. The tag could come in the mail in June and the hunt might start in August.

Plan on being in a high level of fitness all the time. "You can't date a supermodel unless you go to the gym," Martin says.

And a hunter might have to drop other plans. "Even if it means you have to cancel your son's wedding, you're going sheep hunting."

There is a road map to success, but it means being prepared, informed, forward-thinking and ready to travel.

"Canada has all the North American sheep subspecies except the desert bighorn. If you're young and smart and apply in all the western states and provinces, you will draw a tag for sure in your 40s," Martin said.

Getting Back in Sheep (or Goat) Shape
For the hunter getting a late start, it helps to live

in sheep country. The odds are decent an Oregonian could draw a sheep hunt at some point. Special raffles can raise a person's odds, but it is still like gambling. The Oregon odds are a lot longer for a nonresident. The same thing goes for California.

All of the sheep states have raffle systems and the few permits that are available come with odds between 1 and 100 and 1 in 1,000. "You're going to have to gamble \$1,000 to \$2,000 each year if you want a reasonable chance."

People 40 and older should get into the application process like a younger person, but play the odds for off-the-radar opportunities.

Idaho's Salmon River country offers interesting opportunities, both for the hunter that will hire an outfitter and for the do-it-yourselfer. "If you are really tough, put in for the Salmon River," Martin said. "Some of those tags are still a 1-in-20 or 1-in-30 draw, but the odds can change every year."

When you are getting up in age, don't put in for the best units that are the hardest to draw. Instead, apply for hunts in tougher terrain. Then try to work harder than the next guy.

People may come to hunting (or into money) later in life and their chances of going for a sheep hunt or going for a grand slam are slim unless they raise their cards in an auction and put up the big money.

"Don't overlook mountain goat hunting," Martin advises. "It's like sheep hunting but at a quarter of the price. In some ways goats are harder. It is easier to find them, but it can be harder to kill them."

Get in shape and start booking sheep (or goat) hunts now. "Don't go for the cheapest one," Martin said, "they are for the guys that are tough."

This is the time to hunt smarter. Don't rush it. Book the hunt when there is an opportunity to pay a bit more and stay longer if sheep aren't located early on.

If a person is going to the gym four times a week, he should also be going to the rifle range at least once a week. Remember, if you want to date a supermodel. . . There may only be one chance on the mountain. Contrary to what the average person thinks, it isn't easy to make the shot, given high elevation, thin air, rationed water and backpack food.

Every outfitter is going to work hard for a client, but if a person misses the first shot and the second and maybe a third, a guide's time and patience begin to run out. Learn to shoot a rifle well. The 7mms are a good place to start. The 6.5mm and the .270 calibers make good sheep rifles. The new 26 Nosler is a good choice.

Look at Asia and Europe. Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have Marco Polo sheep, argali and ibex. Azerbaijan is home to the Dagestan tur. Russia has sheep that look like British Columbia Stones.

Other options for a mountain hunt this season are Spain, Turkey or New Zealand for ibex, chamois or tahr. Some of these are far less expensive than

applying for years and hoping to get drawn at home in the States or Canada.

There are options that can fit a variety of budgets and time frames, but the hunter that would aspire to sheep must start today.

After the quarry has been spotted, in that span of hours or days it takes to make the stalk, the hunter is at the top of the world. There is only earth and sky and the weight of a rifle in hand. Everything he or she needs – shelter, food and water – is carried in a backpack. And the only way to get there is on foot or on the back of a good mountain horse. Start climbing.

2014 IN REVIEW

by Mike Borel, VP Operations

CA WSF continues to be active on all fronts related to Bighorn sheep in California, as we have since our founding in 2001. We continue to collaborate with CDFW, the Mojave National Preserve, BLM, our sister organization SCBS, Oregon State University, Washington State University, and others – To monitor, study and learn from the 2013 disease outbreak and resulting die off of sheep in the Old Dad and Marble mountains.

To lead a collective effort to achieve maximum sustainable populations of bighorn in as many areas of historical presence as possible.

2014 was another strong year for CA WSF. In addition to MANY, MANY hours of effort leading, supporting, influencing, and raising money, we invested another \$101,185.00, mostly in water developments and research projects. We continued our contributions to Washington State University to help fund their ongoing effort to develop a vaccine or other method that will prevent domestic sheep from passing on a deadly form of pneumonia to wild sheep. Significant progress has been made in this effort. We are also ACTIVELY participating in CDFW's Big Game Management Account grant process. We were awarded our first grant for a project we are collaborating with Dr. Clint Epps and Oregon State University - "Characterizing the spread and consequences of respiratory disease for desert bighorn sheep in the eastern Mojave Desert".

In the last decade we have raised and invested over \$1.5 million for the benefit of wild sheep in California.

All parties involved in the "Sheep Summit" believe we are on the threshold of achieving some great things for wild sheep in California. The CA Sheep Summit was initiated by CA WSF to bring together all stakeholders in the stewardship of bighorns in California. The meeting just held April 24, 2015 is

the 17th biannual meeting of this group, which has become the guiding committee for bighorn sheep conservation in California. The major result of the Sheep Summit is the Bighorn Sheep Comprehensive Management Plan (BSCMP). The BSCMP is expected to be finished shortly; land and locations for more water projects have been identified; the helicopter roadblock looks to soon be a thing of the past; we have more people working on wild sheep now; and the CDFW funding is available to move forward!

In addition, AB 2105 (sponsored by the California Chapter of the Wild Sheep Foundation, with the assistance of Gaines & Associates) will allow ALL non-profit conservation organizations that sell select big game fundraising tags on behalf of the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) at their events to retain 5% of the amount of the sale price of the tag as a "reasonable vendor fee". Allowing them to retain 5% of the selling price will help them cover their administrative and marketing costs, thus maintain and enhance their incentive to participate in the sale of the tags for DFW and put more revenue towards conservation goals.

None of this would have been possible without the support of our members. You folks are the reason we've accomplished so much and you will be the reason we will accomplish far more in the years ahead! Thanks to each of you for your membership and your support. Our goal is to achieve maximum sustainable populations in as many areas of historical presence as possible. A natural, critical and important result of achieving healthy sustainable populations is greater opportunity for hunting!

Please help us increase the number of bighorns in California, and with that the hunting opportunity for big, gnarly, old rams! Much has been done, AND more is left to do! Please do what you can ... the sheep, sheep hunters, and sheep enthusiasts continue to need all our efforts!

INFORMATIVE AND USEFUL NEWS CLIPS FROM CDFW

Thanks to Clark Blanchard

The death and life of the world's biggest ram:
On the night of January 19, 2010, a vehicle on Highway 940 west of Longview struck a bighorn sheep. The rancher who found the dead animal the next morning applied to the provincial government to keep its massive horns. He also reported them to the Boone and Crockett Club, a wildlife conservation organization in Missoula, Mont. that keeps official records of North American big-game trophies.

[Calgary Herald, 5-22-15](#)

California's Ban On Lead Ammunition Approaches Enforcement Date: Starting July 1, 2015, nonlead ammunition will be required when hunting on all California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) lands and for all Nelson bighorn sheep hunts anywhere in the state.

[Ammoland.com, 5-15-15](#)

More women see hunting as quality time with family: Increasing numbers of women are learning to shoot rifles and bows to enjoy hunting and the meat they can put on the table.

[The Spokesman-Review, 5-10-15](#)

USSA Works to Change Complexion of California Fish and Game Commission: While working to protect the interests of predator hunters and trappers, as well as the use of lead ammunition, in California during recent weeks, the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Western U.S. office has also spent countless hours addressing a larger threat to the state's long-term game management plans.

[Ammoland.com, 5-5-15](#)

California's State Wildlife Action Plan 2015 Available for Public Review: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has released the draft California State Wildlife Action Plan 2015 Update (SWAP 2015) and is seeking public input. Public input will help shape the final SWAP 2015, which will be completed by October 2015. The draft SWAP 2015 is available online at www.wildlife.ca.gov/SWAP. Written comments on SWAP 2015 can be submitted on the website, by emailing SWAP@wildlife.ca.gov or by mail to SWAP 2015 Update, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, 1416 Ninth Street, 12th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814. The comment period is open from May 18 through July 2, 2015.

[CDFW News Release, 5-18-15](#)

CDFW to Hold Public Meetings on State Wildlife Action Plan Update: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will hold public meetings to discuss the 2015 update to the California State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The meetings will be held in Sacramento, Oakland, San Diego and Los Angeles.

[CDFW News Release, 5-7-15](#)

USSA Works to Change Complexion of California Fish and Game Commission: While working to protect the interests of predator hunters and trappers, as well as the use of lead ammunition, in California during recent weeks, the U.S. Sportsmen's Alliance Western U.S. office has also spent countless hours addressing a larger threat to the state's long-term game management plans.

[Ammoland.com, 5-5-15](#)

CDFW Scientist Recognized for Conservation Work on Sage Grouse: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Senior Environmental Scientist Scott Gardner has received a Special Thanks for Achieving Results (STAR) Award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for his extensive work on sage grouse.

[CDFW News Release, 5-18-15](#)

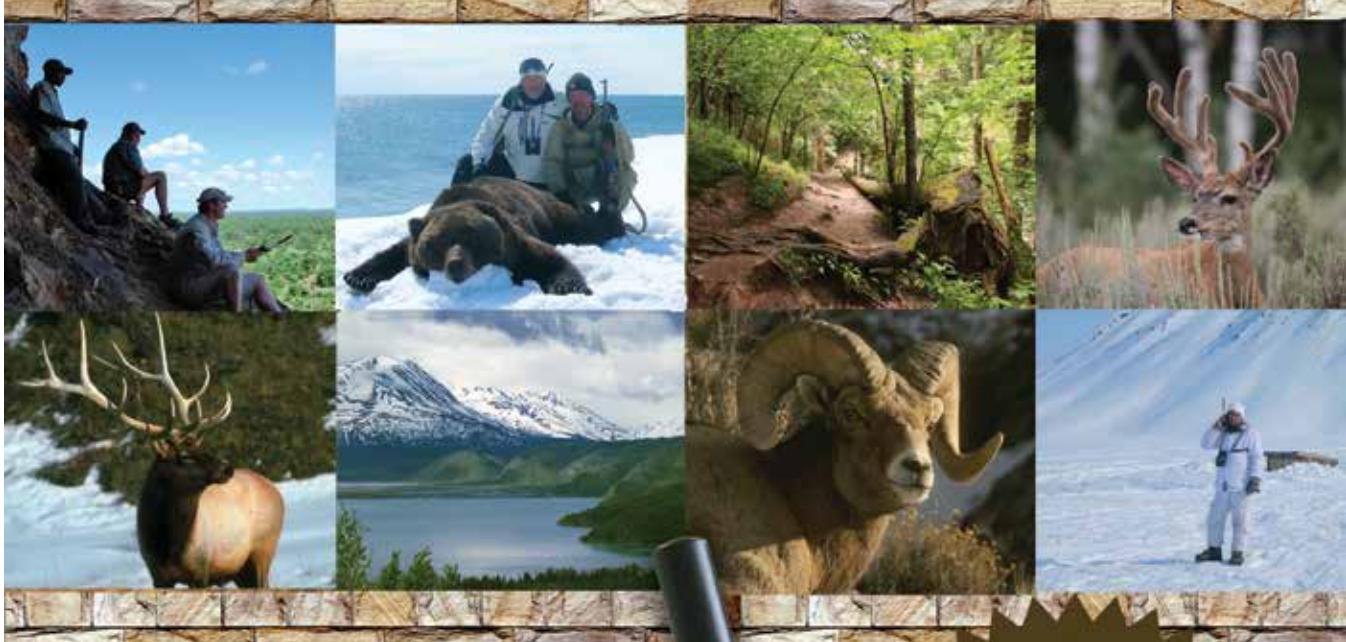
Do We Need Wildlife Preserves In The Sky?: As drones start to crowd airspace, birds and bats will become even more threatened than they are by planes. Amazon is just starting to test delivery drones, but in a decade, some experts predict that there will be a million drone flights every day over U.S. soil. As the FAA finalizes its rules for commercial drones, there's something missing from the debate: What do a million new flying aircraft mean for birds and other wildlife?

[Fast Company, 5-11-15](#)



We would love to meet you -
here's our convention schedule for 2015:

Wild Sheep Foundation "The Sheep Show" Reno, NV Jan 7-10, 2015
Dallas Safari Club "Traditions" Dallas, TX Jan 15-18, 2015
Grand Slam Club/OVIS, Reno, NV Jan 28-31, 2015
Safari Club International, Las Vegas, NV Feb 3-6, 2015



www.explorersatellite.com
www.eschunting.com

Explorer Satellite Communications rents and sells Iridium, Inmarsat and Thuraya handheld satellite phones and Inmarsat BGAN equipment for remote internet access. We understand the needs of Hunters, Guides and Outfitters and have proudly served the hunting industry for over 10 years and offer the services and know how to keep you in touch with your loved ones and business while out hunting.

We offer sales and rentals of satellite phones and data terminals that allow you to spend more time in the field - away from your desk and TV - without missing a beat back home!

All of our equipment is sent with a fully charged battery and easy-to-understand instructions so you can hit the ground running. Please mention CAWSF when you contact us.

Register on our hunting website for special promotions and updates on what is new in satellite communications

sales@explorersatellite.com

Please mention CAWSF when you contact us

1.866.662.2665 • 954.763.8650

**DISCOUNTED
PRICES & RENTAL RATES
FOR CAWSF MEMBERS**

CALL NOW!



**Stay in touch
wherever your
adventures
take you!**



Mark your calendar **TODAY** for **April 30, 2016** and our next CA WSF Fundraiser/ Banquet. You can see how much fun it is!

See more photos on pages 15-16. Heck, send us a couple hundred dollars – and you will be **ASSURED** of early bird entry! Seriously, the sheep need and appreciate your support.



CA WSF
423 Broadway #617
Millbrae, CA 94030

Non-Profit Org.
US POSTAGE PAID
Millbrae, CA 94030
PERMIT 31